

# 2013

## City of Highland, IL Comprehensive Plan



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ORDINANCE 2787



# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

## **Mayor and City Council**

Joseph R. Michaelis, Mayor  
Peggy Bellm, Councilwomen  
Aaron Schwarz, Councilman  
Neill Nicolaides, Councilman  
Rick Frey, Councilman

## **City Staff**

Mark Latham, City Manager  
Kelly Korte, Director of Finance  
Lisa Schoeck, Director of Human Resources  
Joe Gillespie, Director of Public Works  
Dan Cook, Director of Light and Power  
Mark Rosen, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Terry Bell, Director of Public Safety  
Kevin Limestall, Building and Zoning Official  
Rick Bloemker, Fire Chief

## **Combined Planning and Zoning Board**

Brad Korte, Chairperson  
James Gallatin, Vice Chair  
William Koehnemann  
Shirley Lodes  
Robert Vance  
Shaun Voegele  
Leo Painter

***Chapter 1: Existing Conditions***



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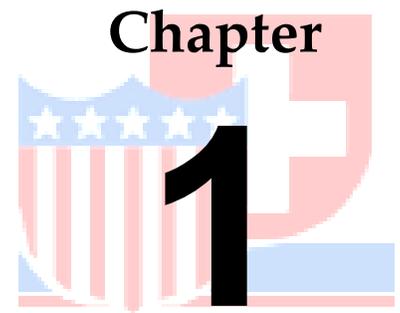
**INTRODUCTION**

**Section 1.1 Comprehensive Plan Purpose & Intent**

**A** comprehensive plan is the official document adopted by the Plan Commission and the City Council (Highland’s Combined Planning & Zoning Board and City Council) to serve as the legal and conceptual foundation of the City’s zoning code and all other land use regulations. The primary purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the community by preserving and protecting four (4) key interrelated quality of life factors which include social, economic, physical and natural. The intent of the comprehensive plan is to serve as a rational land use guide to help direct future land use, zoning, subdivisions and the quality, timing, and intensity of future growth. According to Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS):

*“Such plan may be adopted in whole or in separate geographical or functional parts, each of which, when adopted, shall be the official comprehensive plan, or part thereof, of that municipality. This plan may include reasonable requirements with reference to streets, alleys, public grounds, and other improvements hereinafter specified. The plan, as recommended by the plan commission and as thereafter adopted in any municipality in this state, may be made applicable, by the terms thereof, to land situated within the corporate limits and contiguous territory not more than one and one-half miles beyond the corporate limits and not included in any municipality. Such plan may be implemented by ordinances (a) establishing reasonable standards of design for subdivisions and for resubdivision of unimproved land and of areas subject to redevelopment in respect to public improvements as herein defined; (b) establishing reasonable requirements governing the location, width, course, and surfacing of public streets and highways, alleys, ways for public service facilities, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, street lights, parks, playgrounds, school grounds, size of lots to be used for residential purposes, storm water drainage, water supply and distribution, sanitary sewers, and sewage collection and treatment; and (c) may designate land suitable for annexation to the municipality and the recommended zoning classification for such land upon annexation”.*

The City of Highland’s commitment to sound growth and development through planning was initiated in 1977 with the adoption of the City’s first Comprehensive Plan, which was then revised in 1991. In 2001 the City Council authorized the update of the 1991 Comprehensive Plan due to changes in demographic and economic factors, housing and regional growth trends, annexations, improvements to the transportation system, and the expansion of community facilities and utility services. The 2006 Plan presented a comprehensive approach to the overall development of the City of Highland, drawing upon and updating existing plans and policies, as well as creating new



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ones, that will help guide the City and its residents towards the desired image and character of the community.

The 2013 Highland Comprehensive Plan reviews, updates, and expands upon the City's 2006 Comprehensive Plan, including the proposed updates thereto. It is a "policy" document that includes a "vision" statement and goals that help define the City's future economic, natural, physical and social environment desired by its citizens. The plan should be recognized as a flexible document that is reviewed annually and updated as needed to respond to the ever-changing social and development conditions and market trends. The essential characteristics of the plan are comprehensive, general, and long range. "Comprehensive" means the plan encompasses all geographic parts of the city and all functional elements that affect the physical development of the community. "General" means the plan summarizes policies and proposals, but does not necessarily indicate specific locations or detailed regulations. "Long range" means the plan looks beyond the foreground of pressing current issues and focuses on addressing the problems and possibilities 10 to 20 years in the future.

**Section 1.2 Zoning Ordinance**

Zoning is the "legal" tool the City uses to carry out the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The City is granted this regulatory authority by the State Statutes, Chapter 65. Specifically, a zoning ordinance regulates items relative to the use of land, including, but not limited to, height and size of buildings, size of lots, building setbacks and parking. It establishes definitions, standards and procedures for the City's governing body to review and approve specific land developments. There are other ordinances and regulations that supplement the zoning ordinance, such as subdivision regulations, landscaping requirements and sign controls. According to Illinois State Statutes, the purpose of the zoning ordinance is to provide:

*“ . . . adequate light, pure air, and safety from fire and other dangers may be secured, that the taxable value of land and buildings throughout the municipality may be conserved, that congestion in the public streets may be lessened or avoided, that the hazards to persons and damage to property resulting from the accumulation or runoff of storm or flood waters may be lessened or avoided, and that the public health, safety, comfort, morals, and welfare may otherwise be promoted, and to insure and facilitate the preservation of sites, areas, and structures of historical, architectural and aesthetic importance”.*

To increase the legal defensibility of the City's decision-making, the City's zoning code and Comprehensive Plan should be compatible. Furthermore, decisions regarding land use and zoning should be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations.



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### **Section 1.3 Subdivision Regulations**

Subdivision regulations are another legislative tool used to implement the comprehensive plan by guiding the subdivision and development of land. Subdivision regulations provide coordination of otherwise unrelated plans as well as internal design of individual sites. Subdivision regulations should be continually reviewed for needed amendments to be drafted and adopted in response to policy and development changes. The general purposes of the subdivision regulations, according to Illinois State Statutes are to:

- *protect and promote the public health, safety, convenience, comfort and general welfare;*
- *guide the future growth and development;*
- *provide for the proper location and width of streets, roads, building lines, open space and recreation and to avoid congestion of population;*
- *protect and conserve the value of land, buildings and improvements and to minimize conflicts among the uses of land and buildings;*
- *establish reasonable standards for subdivisions to further the orderly layout and use of land;*
- *ensure that public facilities, including roads, water, sewer and drainage facilities are adequate to serve the needs of proposed subdivisions.*

The process of establishing consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and regulatory documents meant to implement the Plan should be the focus of the next phase in Highland's planning process.

### **Section 1.4 Comprehensive Planning Process**

The community planning process will include a series of public meetings, citizen surveys and one-on-one stakeholder interviews. The purpose of the planning process is to engage the public in the planning process to obtain citizen input and build consensus regarding the future of Highland. The intent of these activities is obtain a citizen defined vision for the future and formulates goals and objectives coauthored by participants in the comprehensive planning process. This information will help develop achievable planning recommendations and reasonable development guidelines as they pertain to land use, transportation, infrastructure, public facilities and future growth that are supportable, sustainable and economically responsible.

The process of planning for the City is ongoing. The City of Highland Comprehensive Plan's principle value will be in its daily use. The creation and adoption of this document is only one step in the comprehensive planning process. The Plan seeks to direct and empower City Officials, residents, business owners and future generations to contribute to the positive development of the community and preserve the small town character, traditional values and promote the entrepreneurial spirit the City of Highland offers and cherishes. Critical work will continue as elected and appointed officials, City staff, property owners, developers, and citizens strive to implement the City of Highland Comprehensive Plan goals & objectives.



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**Section 1.5 Overview of the Comprehensive Plan**

To formulate a plan that accurately reflects the needs of the community of Highland, a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was formed. The Steering Committee consisted of members of the City’s Combined Planning & Zoning Board and City Council. The resulting Comprehensive Plan Update will include chapters summarizing the City’s Existing Conditions, Critical Issues, Goals and Objectives, Public Facilities and Services, Future Land Use and an Implementation Program. The following is a brief summary of the key comprehensive plan components:

The **Existing Conditions** chapter includes an executive summary of the comprehensive planning process and resulting plan and a demographic analysis of Highland’s population, economic conditions and a description of its existing zoning and land uses.

The **Critical Issues** report is a summary of the most important concerns the community faces. Feedback from the public steering committee meetings, town planning workshops, public hearings(s) stakeholder interviews and citizen survey’s will provide the basis for the development of the critical issues contained in this section. The goals and objectives developed for the Comprehensive Plan will directly respond to the citizen-driven critical issues facing the City of Highland.

The **Goals and Objectives** of the community provide the framework for the Comprehensive Plan. This section will include policy statements and development recommendations that emerge during the public engagement process, interviews with city officials and research for the plan. The development and growth decisions a city makes should reflect the community’s values and sense of what constitutes a reasonable quality of life. To help guide these decisions, the Comprehensive Plan provides a goals and objectives for each of the critical issues that reflect the citizen-driven values of the City of Highland.

The **Future Land Use Plan** reviews the geographic and functional regions of the City and identifies future development, redevelopment and preservation opportunity areas. The entire project area will be classified with a future land use designation. Prior to approving future development, annexations or subdivisions, the City must review each for compliance with this Plan. An analysis of the City’s current transportation system, public utilities, public facilities, natural/preservation areas and other development constraints and opportunities will be considered in future land use decisions and recommendation provided in this Plan. A Future Land-Use Map will be included in this section. The Future Land Use Map does not replace the zoning map; rather it illustrates the recommended location for general types of land use, such as residential, commercial, industrial, recreation, and open space as determined at the time of this writing.

**Summary**

The local government is the primary body with jurisdiction to coordinate the overall pattern of physical development of the community. As growth and development occurs, elements of the Comprehensive Plan should be adhered to. Therefore, the local government should review the planning documents periodically and implement its objectives as needed to meet the growing demands of the community. Over time, the 2013 Comprehensive Plan may need to be supplemented with additional, more focused planning studies that address the ever-changing climate of a growing, prospering community. By



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taking careful steps to create a long-range plan and listening to community feedback, Highland is taking positive steps to plan for the future and protect the investments made within the city and to preserve its heritage.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

**Section 1.6 History & Stages of Occupancy**

**Pioneer & Settlement Stage (1831- 1860):** The first group of Swiss settlers were the Suppiger who arrived in 1831. In 1833, seventeen (17) emigrants, most of whom belonged to the Suppiger family, arrived in the area today known as “Highland”, and in 1835 about fifty (50) more people came. Most of these new-comers settled in Townships 4-5, where they soon established a very friendly intercourse with the pioneers who had already made their homes there. The township settled by the Swiss was named Neu Schweizerland. On October 15, 1836, the town of Helvetia (pronounced *hell-veesha*) was founded in this township, the town site being selected by James Semple, then speaker of the House of Representatives, Joseph Suppiger and Solomon Koepfli. In honor of Mr. Semple, a Scotchman, the town was named after the Highlands of Scotland to commemorate the heritage of the town's Swiss-German founding. The town was formally platted in 1837 and the name “Helvetia” was changed to the English version “Highland” because James Semple thought it would market better to English speaking settlers than the Swiss name. Highland is one of the oldest Swiss settlements in the United States.

During the pioneer and settlement stage, Highland was very much isolated. No streets had been laid out and the town was not connected with St. Louis, only thirty-two (32) miles away. All household furniture and many other necessities had to be brought from St. Louis in carts drawn by oxen. Streams had to be forded because bridges had yet to be constructed. Travel in those days was very rough and difficult. These early settlers, through much hard labor, built rude log cabins in which they made their homes. All cooking and baking had to be done over the open fire in the large fireplace. The women and girls busied themselves with spinning wheel and loom, providing themselves and the men with homemade clothes. The hide of the deer was tanned and was then sometimes made into clothes for the men. The men were on horseback most of the time, carrying their rifles and powder horn and were usually accompanied by dogs.

As a result of the economic panic of 1837, this Swiss community was left without any circulating medium in the form of money. All buying and selling became a matter of exchange. Notwithstanding these discouraging conditions, a certain amount of activity was developed, spearheaded by the Swiss and German immigrants. A steam mill was erected in 1837 and a saw mill was attached to it which operated from 1840-1850. In 1839 a store was opened and once a week mail was delivered from Troy, twelve (12) miles away. In 1833 Mr. Eggen, a very influential man in the village, started the first brick-yard and kiln which also included the manufacturing of pottery. He also started the first distillery and the first bakery.

The accounts which were published of this growing and prosperous settlement were overdrawn



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and this fact becoming known in Europe, proved injurious to the colony. For a time emigration slowed, however, after 1840 families began arrived again from Switzerland. On August 22, of this year, sixty-eight (68) people from the Canton of Graubunden came to Highland. Some of these Swiss settled in Highland, while others went to St. Jacobs, six (6) miles west of Highland or north into Saline Township. In 1834 Dr. A. F. Beck, a native of Canton Berne, Switzerland, arrived and settled permanently in the Marine settlement, north of Highland. Sylvan Utiger, another Swiss, located a few miles north of Marine in a German settlement in what is now called the Handsbarger neighborhood.

In 1843, the most important event, up to that time, took place. A stage route was established between Vandalia, the old State capital, and St. Louis and it proved a great day to Highland when the first stage coach, drawn by four horses, came into the town. On October 6, 1848, an omnibus brought a dozen or more immigrants from St. Louis who had come from French Switzerland. Among these were A. E. Bandelier, Constant Rilliet, in later years the successor of Bandelier in the Swiss Consulate and Associate County Justice in 1861, Francis Vulliet, a minister of the Free Evangelical church of the Canton of Vaud, who had come to America in hope of finding that freedom of religion which had been denied him in his native country.

Mr. A. E. Bandelier published a very interesting account of the beginning and development of this colony at Highland. Mr. Vulliet and Mr. Rilliet together issued a guide to immigrants and sent copies of it to their friends in the homeland. Through the influence of this guide, others in French Switzerland became enthusiastic to migrate. Between the years 1848 and 1850 families bearing the names of Estoppey, Majonnier, Junod, Bran, Decrevelle and Thalman from the Cantons of Neuchatel and Vaud, came to America. They belonged to a religious sect called the Plymouth Brethern, which suffered persecution in the native land. In order that they might worship God in liberty according to the dictates of their own consciences, these people came to our country. They established themselves on farms near Sugar Creek, east of Highland and there fared prosperously. This settlement was called the Sugar Creek settlement. Several years later a number of immigrants from France joined these French Swiss and the increased colony was then named Sebastopol in 1859.

The Swiss people have some of the characteristics of the north as well as the south German. Their mountain life, surrounded by many dangers, has made them cautious and vigilant. The Swiss have sometimes been called the Yankees of Europe, because of their calculating shrewdness and active energy, and also because of their familiarity with self-government. They are, as a people, also greatly interested in education. This fact was shown in naming the streets of Highland, a great many of which were given names of Swiss and of American educational leaders like: Pestalozzi, Zschokke, Jefferson and Franklin.

Joseph Suppiger, a man who always bore at heart the interests of others, succeeded in raising funds to build a little school house in 1840. Before this time, a lady teacher had been employed to give private instruction at the homes of the children. The quaint school building was also used as a house of worship whenever a stray minister happened to appear in the neighborhood. The gospel was preached to these early settlers regardless of the faith in creeds. In 1844 Father

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Maragno, who was the first Catholic priest to come to Highland, united with the Protestants and helped to erect a church which was used by all Christians.

Just ten years after coming to this country, Dr. Koepfli returned to Switzerland with his family in 1841. He found his native Canton the scene of war, and because he no longer felt safe in his own birthplace, he returned to the United States after a lapse of seven and a half years. Both of his sons, Joseph and Solomon, had returned after a stay of only two and a half years in Switzerland. Solomon Koepfli became very prominent in Highland. He was forever planning something for the advancement and the progress of the community. He never tired of striving for the improvement of roads and later on for railroad connections. His efforts won him influence and favor among the American settlers. Mr. Koepfli became interested in politics without making claims upon any public office for himself. In 1862 he became a member of the convention which was to form a new Constitution for Illinois. His untiring activity in this assembly affected his health, and though he took several trips back to his native land, he never completely regained good health and strength.

**Agricultural & Manufacturing Stage (1855-1900)** Highland is located on what is known as the "Looking Glass Prairie", which possesses some of the most fertile agricultural land in the world. The City served as an agricultural center and grew into a manufacturing destination before the turn of the Twentieth Century.

When the National Turnpike was extended to St. Louis, volunteers from Highland built the segment from Pocahontas to St. Jacob, and a hotel emerged as a station for the new stage line that operated along the new road. A bank was founded in 1854. On October 13, 1858, the first printing press appeared in the settlement. The first newspaper printed was called "Der Erzahler." This changed ownership several times until it became the "Highland Bote" of which the "Union" became a rival, 1863. In 1869 the "Bote" was moved to Edwardsville. These papers are no longer printed.

Highland was not incorporated as a village until April, 1865. Mr. Jacob Eggen became president and Jas. Speckars, Henry Weinheimer, Xavier Suppiger and Frank Appel, trustees. About 1867 the Vandalia railroad was constructed providing rail service to Highland. This railroad expanded Highland's connection to world markets.

In 1883 the Highland Embroidery Works was established and employed a great many people while in operation. All the machinery used in this industry came from Switzerland. A large output of embroidered goods was sent to the eastern cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Buffalo, while a considerable quantity of goods was also sold to major department stores in St. Louis.

In 1885 the Helvetia Milk Condensing Company was established, now known as the Pet Milk Company. The product of this industry is today known all over the world. Highland was home to Louis A. Latzer (1848-1924), who perfected the process of condensing milk, thus making milk more widely available to the masses. He is called the "Father of Pet Milk." Great quantities of the condensed milk are exported to foreign countries. The enterprise has had a wonderful

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development since its beginning. Recently, a new plant was constructed at Highland. Besides this, the company now owns two branch factories, one in Greenville, Illinois and one in Delta, Ohio, and is planning to establish another factory in Pennsylvania. The manufacture of the condensed milk makes dairy farming very profitable for farmers in the vicinity of Highland and provides employment to the area's workforce.

Besides the two (2) important industries already mentioned, there was a flour mill, a grain elevator, a large brewery, a distillery, a soda water works, three (3) large general stores, several grocery stores, bakeries, drug stores, furniture stores and hardware stores in Highland during its early Agricultural and Manufacturing Stage.

**Modern Day Highland:** Today, Highland is known for the entrepreneurial spirit and success of its businesses and residents (both past and present), including, but not limited to; Wicks Organ Company, Highland Supply Corporation (largest supplier of Easter basket grass) and Korte Construction (today known as The Korte Company). Many of Highland's most prosperous industries were founded by local citizens, often growing their operation from garage or basement to multimillion dollar corporations. Currently, Highland is home to many worldwide trade industries, such as the Basler Electric Co., Inc., The Korte Company, Korte & Luitjohan Contractors, Highland Supply Corp., Highland Machine, and the Wall Street Journal's Midwest printing operation. Many smaller businesses also call Highland, Illinois home, offering a diversity of products and services usually only found in larger cities.

During its 175 years of development and progress, the City of Highland has retained much of its Swiss population and Swiss characteristics. Highland has a long history of being a progressive municipality, successfully blending industry among its small town atmosphere. There are more than 20 social/service organizations in Highland, each with active membership. Highland has shared the title of "Sister City" with the town of Sursee, Switzerland, since 1976. Additionally, Highland is proud to be home to a highly rated school district, library, and hospital. City utilities are municipally owned and operated and include the electrical system, water and sewer systems, and most recently, the Highland Communications Service- which offers fiber broadband internet, telephone and data services. Highland celebrated her 175th anniversary in 2012.

**Section 1.7 Study Area**

The City of Highland is located 35 miles east of St. Louis in Madison County just off Interstate 70. The project area includes the present city limits of Highland and the adjacent unincorporated areas that support future growth through annexation. According to the 2010 census, the City had a total area of 7.59 square miles, of which 6.55 square miles is land and 1.04 square miles is water.

Highland is located in a rapidly changing region, and is experiencing pressures associated with its evolution from rural to suburban community. The City of Highland has a significant capacity for new growth, with an estimated population increase that could likely reach over 12,000 by the year 2020. The impact of regional changes and influences will require a proactive approach in defining what the community desires to be and the character it wants to maintain and create. City officials  
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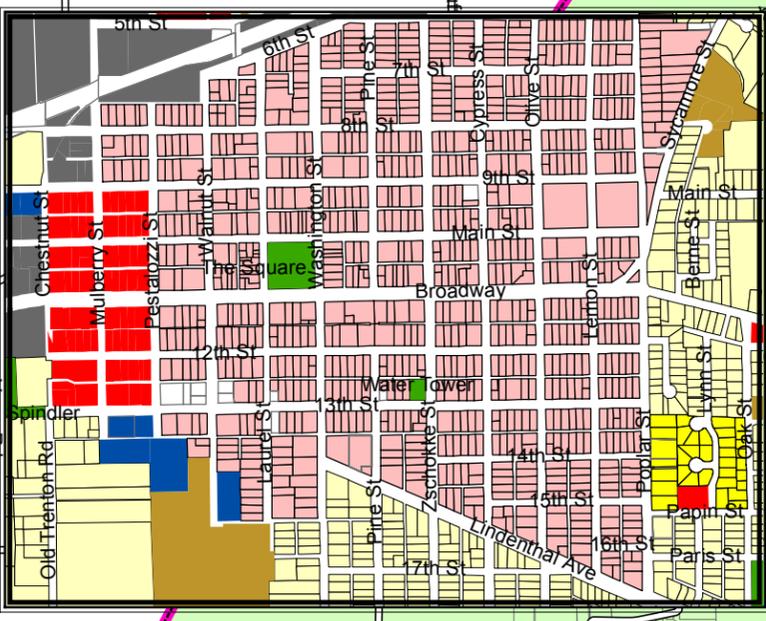


and residents have expressed the desire to maintain the character and quality of the community through the provision of services and recreational opportunities, preservation of open spaces, and development of high quality residential areas.

The other significant condition that will affect Highland's future is the competition for economic growth from the surrounding communities east of St. Louis. Most of these communities have either a substantial existing commercial and industrial tax base, or have established policies that encourage economic development. However, Highland's location along the I-70 growth corridor and its close proximity to I-55 offer significant advantages to capitalize on economic opportunities that are emerging as the St. Louis region expands.

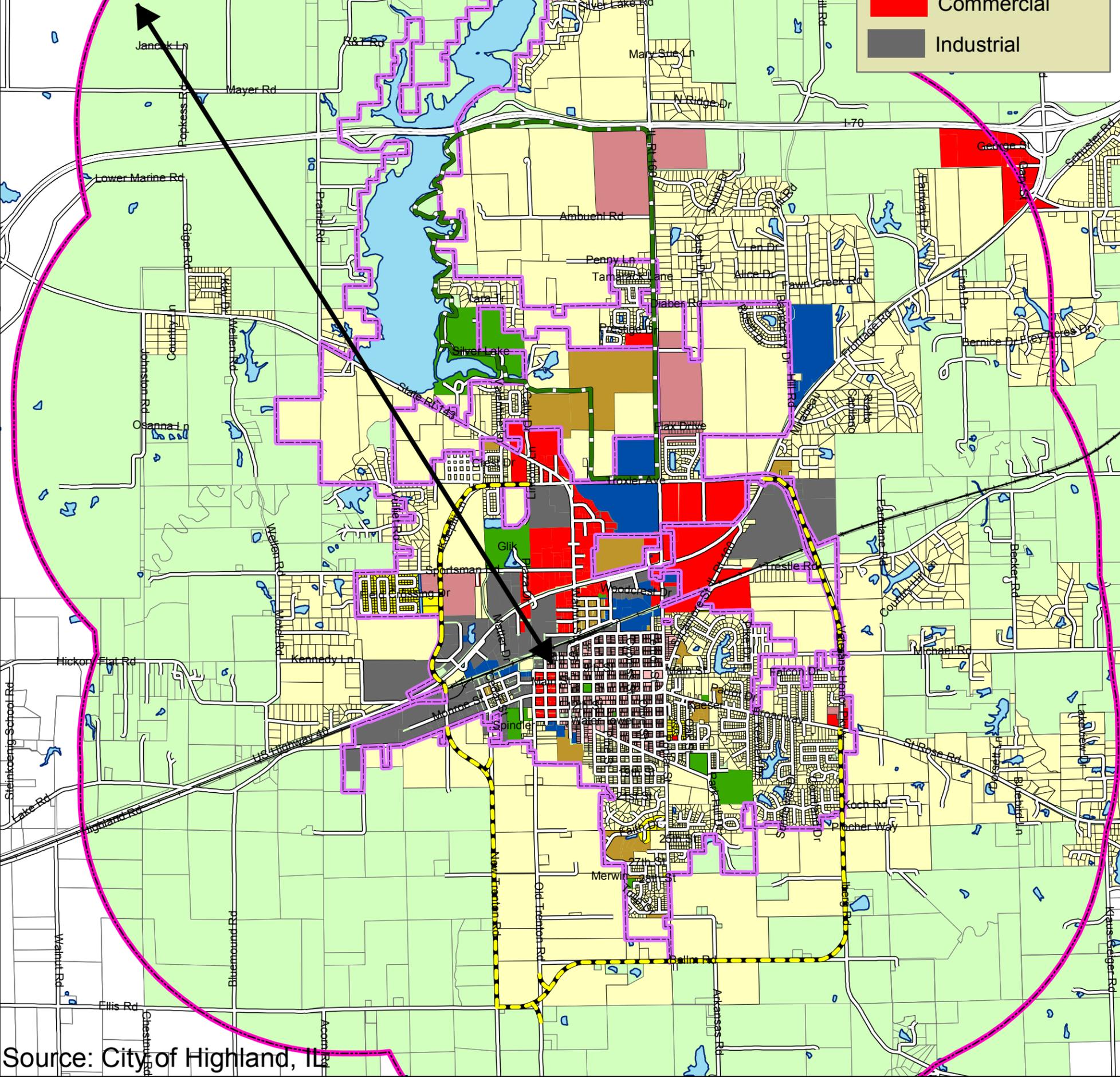
The growth of Highland and the adjacent communities will strengthen its commercial market potential stimulated by an increasing number of younger households and retirees that have high spending per capita and whom tend to occupying new homes. Furthermore, Highland supports a diverse age group and housing products. These issues, combined with the inherent constraints and opportunities created by Highland's regional location and road network, public utilities and entrepreneurial spirit form the basis on which the recommendations of this Plan have been developed.

# City of Highland, IL Future Land Use Map



### Future Land Use

- Non-Urban/Ag
- Residential
- Med. Density Res.
- Multi-Family
- Institutional/Public
- Downtown
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Industrial



Source: City of Highland, IL

### Legend

- Corporate Boundary
- 1.5 Mile Buffer
- Lakes
- Streams
- Gateway Trail
- Peripheral Route
- Proposed Interchange
- Railroads
- City Parks



May 15, 2017

**STREILER PLANNING**



## **DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS**

### **Section 1.8 Historic sites**

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources.” While there are numerous criteria for listing, it is required that a property must be at least 50 years old to be eligible for consideration. Currently, there are no listed properties in the City of Highland; however, many of the City’s existing properties are now more than 50 years old. Post WWII architectural styles, structures and neighborhoods are now seen as being potentially eligible for such listing.

### **Section 1.9 Environmental Framework**

The environment provides the natural and physical context within which land use activities take place. The intent of this plan is to minimize the negative impacts on the environment. This section provides a brief overview of the environmental framework of Highland and highlights some of the more sensitive environmental elements that must be considered in future development and land use decisions.

### **Section 1.10 Floodplains**

The riparian zone of a river, stream or other body of water is the land adjacent to the centerline of the channel and includes the stream banks and floodplain. Riparian zones can be broad alluvial valleys or narrow strips of stream bank. Riparian zones help control the intensity and frequency of flooding and contain very sensitive ecosystems that support a diverse range of species and vegetation. Riparian areas are prone to periodic flooding, which helps support and maintain these fragile ecosystems. For these reasons, and the fact Highland’s riparian areas are very scenic and pristine, this plan recommends preserving riparian areas in the form of a greenway system.

Riparian areas are classified into "zones" which refer to the probability of annual flooding. The “100 Year Floodplain” is an area that is expected to flood at least once in a 100-year period. For the purposes of this plan, the 100-year floodplain is also the limits of the “riparian zone” and delineates the recommended greenway locations. The 100-year floodplain can be further divided into two areas based on flood hazard potential. The **floodway** is the area within and adjacent to the stream banks required to discharge the 100-year flood without raising the water surface elevation more than one foot above base flood level at any point. Obstacles in the floodway can disrupt this function, increasing the both the frequency and severity of flood damage. Therefore, no structure, fence or other permanent, manmade obstruction should be constructed in the floodway. The **floodway fringe** is the area bordering the floodway. This area provides storage during a flood event and functionally reduces the frequency and intensity of downstream flooding by holding floodwaters until they are carried away in the floodway channel. While the floodway fringe’s capacity decreases with the presence of obstacles, such as a fence or building, their presence is generally acceptable when regulated properly.

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prepared Flood Insurance Relief Maps (FIRM) for the Highland region. The maps define the boundaries of the areas 100-year floodplains to help identify areas prone to flooding. Any future development proposed near a river, stream or other flood prone areas should be identified on the FIRM maps to verify their location within the floodplain and special precautions taken, as needed, for any future development activity. Refer to the Citywide Resource Plan for the location of floodplains and natural drainage areas.

**Section 1.11 Wetlands**

The State of Illinois defines a wetland as, "land that has a predominance of hydric soils and that is inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions". Wetlands perform many valuable functions including decreasing the frequency and severity of flooding, water purification, provide feeding and breeding grounds for aquatic habitat and support vegetation that absorb harmful greenhouse gasses. They also offer diverse recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing and wildlife observation. However, Illinois has lost over 90 percent of the wetlands. Southern Illinois currently contains 49 percent (approximately 612,300 acres) of the state's total wetland resources.

This plan recommends preserving and enhancing wetlands in accordance with the Federal and state regulations that mandate "no net loss" of wetlands. If a wetland or portion of a wetland is disturbed or eliminated, replacement of that wetland with a wetland of equal quality and quantity is required. Development should be prohibited from encroaching upon wetland areas found within the project area. The designation of wetlands in itself does not necessarily prevent development, but is an indicator that development will need to be approached in a more sensitive manner. The appropriate state agencies should be contacted prior to any alteration of any wetland area.

**Section 1.12 Topography**

Topography is the natural terrain of an area; its slopes, valleys, hills, and similar landscape features. Topography can be a critical element to development. When severe slopes are developed, they frequently become unstable which creates a great deal of erosion. This erosion further destabilizes the slopes and all of the soil that washes off the slope ends up in creeks, streams, and rivers. This degrades the quality of the water body and can increase the severity of local flooding.

Phase II Stormwater regulations by the State are an attempt to control these sorts of impacts through the use of Best Management Practices. One such practice can be limiting development to areas without severe slope issues. This plan recommends focusing development where slope erosion will not be a problem. Topography will be expressed on the Slopes and Wetland Map.



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**Section 1.13 Soils**

Soil develops as a result of the weathering of water, wind, and ice on the geology of a location. We tend to think of them as something that just “exists” but they are ever changing bodies of organic matter, sand, silt, and clay. Soils are often identified by what their capability, limiting attribute, or best use is, such as Prime Farmland Soils or Expansive Clay Soils. This latter group of soils can be problematic for development as they tend to swell when wet, which can crack and even break concrete foundations.

**Community Utilities & Services**

**Section 1.14 Electric System**

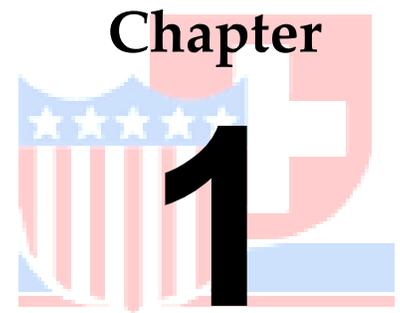
The City, as a member of the Illinois Municipal Electric Agency, owns, operates, and maintains its own electric utility system. The Highland Electric system, with annual operating revenue of over \$12.5 million, has been owned and operated by the City since 1899. The system presently serves 5257 residential, 572 commercial and 193 industrial users spread out across a geographic area of approximately 64 square miles. Total electrical load for 2011 was 142,951 megawatt-hours, with a peak load this past summer (2011) of 37.4 megawatts.

A dedicated 138KV Transmission line and a 138/34.5KV substation, which were placed in service in 1999, serve the City. This line, which is the main electric supply to the city, runs from Collinsville to the power plant yard. It consists of 176 poles spaced along a route that is 14.7 miles in length, connecting an Ameren-IP transmission line to the Highland 138 kV substation. Two 34.5KV sub-transmission lines serve as backup. A second service point will be provided that will permit the City’s load to be split and served independently from each of the 34.5KV back lines further ensuring the reliability of the City’s power delivery system from either Greenville or Collinsville. The distribution system consists of 6,672 poles, 1,780 pole mounted transformers, 627 pad mount transformers and 5 substations. The City has a firmly delineated service area, which stretches far outside the actual city limits (see Utility/Service Boundaries Map). The City of Highland has agreed to service boundaries with Southwest Electric Co-Op, Clinton County Co-Op, and Ameren-IP. There are 250 miles of overhead circuits and 85 miles of underground circuits. In addition, the City of Highland has 20 Megawatts of diesel backup generation (just over 50 percent of the 2011 peak summer load) to offset supply shortages and bridge power outages during system problems. Redundancy of the system supply along with the City owned backup generation ensures maximum power reliability under all but the most catastrophic situations.

**Section 1.15 Highland Communication Services**

Established in 2010, Highland Communication Services (HCS) is both owned and operated by the City of Highland. We provide advanced fiber optic services, including voice, data, and video to the Highland community in order to better service the needs of our businesses and residents.

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and as Amended (Map Only) May 15, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2787**



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HCS is a growing, enthusiastic organization that is striving to improve Highland's quality of life and strengthen business opportunities. We take pride in our ability to maintain a true sense of community and an unwavering dedication to proactively developing the communication services in our area.

HCS currently passes 3000 customers, both commercial and residential. Our television services range from 24 channels to more than 225 channels, internet services range from 1.5 Megabyte download/512 Kilobyte upload speeds to 30 Megabyte download/6 Megabyte upload speeds, and telephone services include both limited and unlimited local and nationwide calling.

**Section 1.16 Water and Sanitary Sewer Utilities**

The City of Highland operates its own water treatment plant and distribution mains. Water is drawn from Highland Silver Lake, a reservoir constructed in 1960 with its primary use as a source of drinking water. The plant was upgraded in 1993 to a capacity of 4.2 MGD. The average daily flow is 1.2 MGD with an average maximum of 2.2 MGD. The storage capacity consists of a 1 million gallon ground storage tank, 1.5 million gallon standpipe, 200,000 gallon elevated storage, and 100,000 gallon clear well.

The distribution mains are located primarily within the corporate limits; however, there are customers located outside the limits. The Highland water system supplies wholesale water to St. Jacob, Grantfork, Pierron, and Country Hills Subdivision. The distribution system serves a population of 12,825 with over 4,100 services.

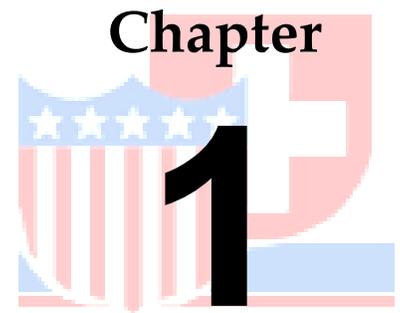
The city of Highland operates its own water reclamation facility and collection system. The treatment process is an Orbal Process (oxidation ditch) that is an activated sludge process consisting of single sludge, continuous flow multi-reactor system. The plant was upgraded in 1997 to a design average flow of 1.6 MGD, with a peak flow capacity of 4.0 MGD. The current flow is 1.155 MGD with excess capacity of 445,000 GPD.

The collection system serves over 3,800 customers including 5 significant-user industrial customers in the pretreatment program.

As growth expands into outreaching areas, it is necessary to plan for a well-looped distribution system with adequate main sizes always planning towards the future. In addition, it is necessary to plan for future trunk lines in strategic locations to assure adequate collection capabilities.

**Section 1.17 Emergency Medical Services**

The City of Highland first rendered ambulance service in the 1920's with a vehicle that was used by the Red Cross in the First World War. Local funeral homes took over service until June 1974 when Federal and State regulations forced them to give up the service and the City of Highland



***Chapter 1: Existing Conditions***

again took over. Currently, Emergency Medical Services handles all calls for assistance for an area approximately 185 square miles which includes the Highland Fire District, Highland-Pierron Fire District, Saint Rose Fire District, Saint Jacob Fire District and the Grantfork Fire District.

Highland Fire-EMS maintains a fleet of three Advanced Life Support (Paramedic) ambulances from its location in Fire Station #1 at 1122 Broadway, staffing two units 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with the third in reserve.

Emergency Medical Services responds to Emergency scene calls (including first alarm structure fires), Emergency Inter-facility transfers, Non-emergency transfers to extended care facilities or private residences and standby at local events such as Schweitzerfest, Kirchenfest and football games.

**Section 1.18 Fire Protection**

The Highland Fire Department is a volunteer department servicing about 160 calls per year. In 2011 only one of those calls was a structure fire.

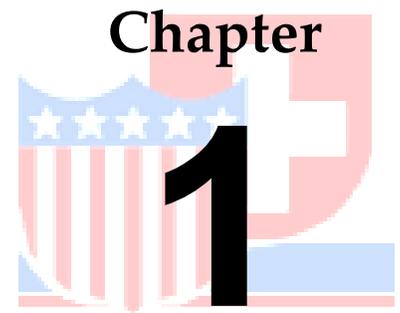
The department is staffed by on call volunteers and maintain two fire stations housing the following equipment; one 75' Quint ladder truck, one 50' Telesquirt, 3 pumpers, an administrative vehicle and one rescue boat.

**Section 1.19 Police Department**

The Highland Police Department is a full service police department which currently consists of twenty-eight full time employees. This includes a chief of police, four sergeants, fifteen patrol officers, an office manager, and five telecommunicators. Of the fifteen patrol officers, two serve as investigators. The police department also employs part-time telecommunicators to supplement its communication's staff and five part-time school crossing guards.

While the police department provides a wide range of services to the City of Highland in regards to law enforcement and related areas, the department also provides emergency EMS and Fire dispatch 911 services for the Highland Fire Department as well as neighboring communities and unincorporated areas. The police department augments its ability to suppress and investigate crime through the department's cooperation with the St. Louis Metropolitan Major Case Squad, the Illinois Child death Investigation Task Force, the ILEAS Mobile Field Force, and the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System. The police department will utilize these organizations as well as the Illinois State Police, Madison County Sheriff's Office and other Federal, State and Local law enforcement agencies as the need presents itself.

Along with its law enforcement obligation the Highland Police Department is tasked with emergency management responsibilities. This calls for coordination with Madison County Emergency Management, Illinois Emergency Management Agency, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The purpose of emergency management is to 1) mitigate loss of life,



***Chapter 1: Existing Conditions***

injuries, and damage to property; 2) respond too; and 3) recovery of natural, technological, human error, or terrorist created catastrophes.

The police facility s located at 820 Mulberry which is accessed by residential streets which feed off Broadway and Walnut. The facility was constructed in 1982 for a staff of approximately seventeen employees. The current police vehicle fleet consists of six marked patrol vehicles, two administrative vehicles, two detective vehicles, a patrol boat, and a command post vehicle.

**Section 1.20 Parks & Recreation**

The Highland Parks & Recreation Department can be traced back to the 1800’s, but really came into its existence with the opening of the Weinheimer Community Center in 1954. The department maintains 12 parks and facilities, 180 acres of park land and oversees the 700+ acres of timber surrounding Silver Lake.

The parks that are maintained can be classified as Neighborhood, Athletic, Regional, Historical, Recreational, and Native. Granted, some of our parks are considered to be multi-dimensional.

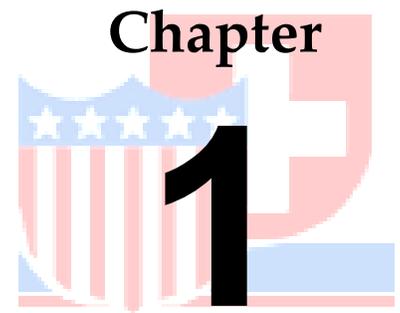
The ratio of citizens to park acres, using the anticipated new census data equals 51:1. As growth expands into areas that are on the fringes of the established boundaries, plans will need to be considered to add recreational services such as trails, playgrounds, green-space, etc.

The department also provides both athletic and non-athletic programs for people of all ages. The majority of the programs offered accept those residing in not only the City of Highland limits, but also the Highland Community School District #5. There is a fee differential for most programs, except for the programs that utilize school district facilities where there is no differential.

**Section 1.21 Louis Latzer Memorial Public Library**

The Louis Latzer Memorial Public Library was established in 1929. It was presented to the City of Highland by the family of Louis Latzer. Additions to both the side and back of the building were completed in 1972, and the Jennie Latzer Kaeser Children’s Library was opened in 1983. The building is 15,552 square foot in size and underwent a complete exterior renovation including a new roof, tuckpointing, and cleaning/sealing of the limestone in 2010. A new, fully accessible 38 space parking lot was constructed by the City of Highland in the empty lot next to the library in 2011.

The Library is a part of the Illinois Heartland Library System which covers over 28,000 miles and includes 1,131 libraries. Each year, there are approximately 70,000 visitors to the Library. Many types of materials are available to serve a variety of patrons and a variety of interests. The Library holds in its collection over 40,000 print items, 2,000 DVD’s, and 1,800 audio books/music CD’s. Downloadable e-Books and audio books are also available to card holders. All city residents, property owners, and business owners are entitled receive a Library card. Non residents living outside of the City limits, yet in the Highland Community School District may purchase a card for \$72 a year.



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Other services include:

- Meeting Room & Auditorium Space
- Faxing & Photocopying
- Voter Registration
- Notary Public
- Internet/Public Access terminals
- Free WiFi
- Interlibrary Loan

The Library offers many programs throughout the year which includes story hours, summer reading programs, reading to service dogs, book signings, book club, and a genealogy group.

**Section 1.22 Education**

Education has always been a vital part of community life in Highland. The opportunities available in Highland and the surrounding areas give access to the best the region has to offer. Students will have positive classroom experiences, smaller class sizes and a choice of numerous extracurricular activities to promote growth both inside and outside of the classroom.

Highland schools offer high quality education and are aligned with most national education statistics. The local elementary and secondary parochial schools offer faith based educational opportunities.

Highland provides access to 17 colleges, universities, and vocational institutions within a 40 mile radius. With such an impressive selection of institutions, Highlanders have access to diverse areas of study, ensuring that the education opportunities they desire are close to home.

**Section 1.23 Healthcare**

Healthcare is a vital part of community life in Highland. St. Joseph’s Hospital, operated by the Hospital Sisters Health System, sponsored by the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis has had a presence in Highland for over 134 years.

Highland has numerous specialty physician offices and clinics offering services located within the community. In addition, there are two urgent care facilities that provide fast, reliable and economical services to the community.

**Existing Socio-Economic Conditions**

The current and past socio-economic trends for Highland provide the foundation for the future. The socio-economic data evaluated for this Plan includes statewide population trends, age, housing, workforce, income, employment and commute. This section also compares selected



***Chapter 1: Existing Conditions***

Highland demographic data with peer cities to provide a more meaningful socio-economic analysis and help differentiate between local, isolated events and regional trends. For the purposes of this Plan, the cities of Swansea, Waterloo and Columbia were selected as “peer” cities. National, State and Madison County demographic characteristics were also included in some socio-economic comparisons. An understanding of the regional socio-economic trends and local issues will help the City plan for the future and meet the needs of its resident population and business community. The data for this analysis is from the US Census Bureau’s 2010 decennial census.

**Section 1.24 Comparison of Socio-Economic Conditions**

The estimated population of the City of Highland, IL in 2010 was 9,919, a 16% increase over the last ten (10) years. Table 1.0 shows a comparison of the City of Highlands general demographic characteristics with the peer cities of Swansea, Waterloo, Columbia and the State.

<b>Table 1.0: Peer City Demographic Comparisons:</b> Source: 2010 US Census					
	Highland	Swansea	Waterloo	Columbia	Illinois
Population	9,919	13,430	12,934	9,707	12.8 m
Households	4,284	5,704	4,046	3,977	5.3 m
# of Companies	901	1,109	1,079	1,017	1.1 m
Median age	36.8	41.7	39.8	39.6	36.6
Median HH Income	\$54,591	\$61,957	\$62,813	\$67,813	\$56,576
Individuals below poverty level	5.5%	7.9%	4.9%	4.7%	13.1%

**Section 1.25 Southwestern Illinois Demographics**

Madison and St. Clair counties remain the second most populous region in the State of Illinois with a combined population of 539,338 in 2010. Median household income continues to rise for area residents, jumping 24.6 percent in the last decade. Per capita income is also on the rise, up 29 percent since 2000. Southwestern Illinois also continues to make gains in educational attainment. The percentage of individuals earning a high school diploma or higher has increased from 82.6 percent in 2000 to 88.4 percent in 2010, and the percentage earning a bachelor's degree or higher is 23.5 percent for 2010.

**Section 1.26 Racial Composition**

According to a report by the National League of Cities, the Hispanic population in small cities at least doubled, growing over 100% in the Midwest. The Asian population is also on the rise, growing by more than 60 percent in the Midwest (61%). Similarly, the African American population in small cities also increased across all regions, particularly in the Midwest (114%).



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However, the City of Highland’s population is likely to continue to show low concentrations of minorities, due to the City’s distance from the urban core of St. Louis and competition from Metro East and Metro West areas where minorities have migrated over the last twenty years. Table 1.2 provides a comparison of the racial composition for Highland, the peer communities, Illinois and the US.

<b>Table 1.2: Racial Composition Comparison-2010</b>						
<i>Source: 2010 US Census</i>						
<b>Race</b>	<b>Highland</b>	<b>Swansea</b>	<b>Waterloo</b>	<b>Columbia</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>US</b>
<b>African American</b>	0.2%	16.6%	0.1%	0.4%	14.5%	13.1%
<b>White</b>	97.0%	78.5%	97.9%	97.4%	71.5%	78.1%
<b>Hispanic</b>	1.4%	2.3%	1.50%	2.0%	15.8%	16.7%
<b>Asian</b>	0.9%	1.8%	0.30%	0.7%	4.6%	5.0%

**Section 1.27 Age Characteristics**

For the most part, Highland has followed a demographic pattern similar to the US which is characterized by a growing percentage of people over age 65 (baby boomers). Highland, Madison County, Illinois and the US have all experienced similar changes in the age of its population. The age characteristics of Highland are also very similar to the various peer cities.

A closer look at the younger age cohorts show the percentage of Highland’s total population under 5 years old (6.8%), much higher than all other peer cities, the State and US. The City’s high percentage of population under 5 indicates that the city is popular among young families.

The City’s over 65 age cohort is also growing strong, again leading State, Nation and all peer cities with the exception of Waterloo. Highland’s population over 65 represents 16.2%, well above the State (12.5%) and US (13.3%). This indicates that the city is a desirable place from aging residents, including Baby Boomers. While the over 65 age cohort is increasing, the City’s median age is well below the State and National median ages; which were 42.2 and 37.3 in 2010, and all peer cities. This is due in part to the high percentage of persons under the age of 18 living in Highland.

As a whole, the age characteristics indicate that Highland is a popular place for households with children under 18 to live as well as a popular place for seniors to live. Therefore, it is important for the City to offer the services and amenities required and desired of young families and children under the age of 18 as well as the appropriate housing, services and medical facilities necessary to serve the City’s aging population. Table 1.3 provides a snapshot of the city’s age structure during the last decennial census.



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**Table 1.3 General Age Characteristics**

*Source: 2010 US Census*

Age Characteristics	Highland	Swansea	Waterloo	Columbia	Illinois	USA
Persons under 5 years, percent, 2010	6.8%	5.6%	6.50%	6.3%	6.5%	6.5%
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2010	24.8%	23.2%	24.0%	25.0%	24.4%	23.7%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2010	16.2%	16.0%	16.4%	14.3%	12.5%	13.3%
Median Age	36.8	41.6	39.8	39.6	42.2	37.3

**Section 1.28 Gender & Household Relationships**

The City of Highland’s female population is 5% higher than the male population. Nationally there is only 1.6% more females than males and statewide there is only a 2.0% difference in favor of females. The City of Highland (tied with Waterloo for percentage of females) and Swansea had the highest percentage of females in 2010 when compared to the other peer cities. The fact that Highland has more females than males is a noteworthy finding. This may indicate that Highland has more female head of households and more single mothers than the state and national averages.

**Table 1.4: Gender Comparison**

*Source: 2000 US Census*

Gender	Highland	Swansea	Waterloo	Columbia	Illinois	US
<b>Male</b>	47.5%	46.7%	47.5	48.6%	49.0%	49.2%
<b>Female</b>	52.5%	53.3%	52.5	51.4%	51.0%	50.8%

**Section 1.29 Education**

An analysis of the 2010 education statistics for people 25 and over shows a higher percentage of Highland’s adult population have graduated from high school than the State, US and all peer cities. However, the percentage of people age 25 or older with a bachelors or advanced degree in Highland is below nationally and state averages and all peer cities, with exception of Waterloo. Waterloo had the lowest percentage of adults with a bachelors or advanced degree.

**Table 1.5: Educational Attainment**

*Source: 2010 US Census*

Educational Attainment	Highland	Swansea	Waterloo	Columbia	Illinois	US
<b>High School Grad. or higher</b>	93.1%	92.6%	90.5%	91.2%	86.6%	85.4%
<b>Bachelors or Advanced Degree</b>	26.2%	34.6%	22.6%	28.5%	30.7%	28.2%



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**Section 1.30 Income**

The 2010 median household income for the City of Highland was \$54,590, which is less than the State and the peer communities, but slightly above the National average. However, the percentage of persons below the poverty level is less in Highland than the National, State and all peer communities. This suggests Highland attracts relatively lower income residents, possibly due to the abundance of affordable housing and centralized services, however, relatively few residents are living below the poverty level. A more comprehensive look at the earnings in Highland and the greater trade area in general are provided in the following sections.

<b>Income</b>	<b>Highland</b>	<b>Swansea</b>	<b>Waterloo</b>	<b>Columbia</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>US</b>
<b>Median household income</b>	\$54,590	\$61,957	\$62,813	\$67,333	\$56,576	\$52,762
<b>Median family income</b>	\$69,557	\$80,756	\$83,418	\$90,486	\$69,658	n/a
<b>Per capita income</b>	\$27,747	\$30,669	\$32,288	\$32,243	\$29,376	n/a
<b>Unemployment</b>	8.7%	5.9%	4.1%	6.7%	9.3%	n/a
<b>Persons below poverty level</b>	5.5%	7.9%	4.9%	4.7%	13.1%	14.3%
<i>Source: 2010 US Census</i>						

**Section 1.31 Employment**

Highland’s major employers include representatives from manufacturing, retail, and services sectors. A majority of these employers have been established in Highland for more than twenty-five years. These employers take advantage of Highland’s central location and proximity to the airport and major highways. However, the city’s major employers draw employees primarily from the surrounding region, rather than within Highland’s workforce. Interviews with Highland stakeholders indicated that most of the salaried jobs within the city are filled by non-Highland employees, forcing much of the City’s workforce to commute to their jobs outside of Highland. The City’s workforce travels an average of 22.6 minutes to work. This is just below the State average (28.1) and slightly less than all peer communities; however, this indicates that most of the City’s workforce is traveling well beyond the city limits for employment.

The most common occupation of the City’s workforce is management, business, science and arts occupations (35%) followed by sales and office occupations (26%). These top two (2) occupations combined for over 60% of all occupations, which is very similar to the State’s occupation characteristics. The top three (3) industries in Highland, in order of percentage of workforce are education (20.5%), manufacturing (10.8%), followed very closely by professional, scientific, and management and administration and waste management (10.6%). See Table 1.7.

<b>OCCUPATION</b>	<b>Highland’s Workforce</b>	<b>Illinois Workforce</b>



**Chapter 1: Existing Conditions**

Management, business, science, and arts occupations	35.0%	35.90%
Service occupations	18.3%	16.70%
Sales and office occupations	26.0%	25.60%
Nat'l resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	10.8%	7.90%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	9.9%	14.00%
<b>INDUSTRY</b>		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.4%	1.10%
Construction	8.3%	5.70%
Manufacturing	10.8%	12.80%
Wholesale trade	3.9%	3.30%
Retail trade	8.9%	10.90%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5.0%	5.90%
Information	3.7%	2.20%
Finance and insurance, and real estate, rental and leasing	4.6%	7.70%
Professional, scientific, and mgt, and admin and waste mgt	10.6%	11.00%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	20.5%	22.10%
Arts, ent, and rec, and accommodation and food services	9.6%	8.70%
Other services, except public administration	7.8%	4.80%
Public administration	5.9%	3.90%
<b>COMMUTING TO WORK</b>		
Drove alone	86.5%	73.4%
Carpooled	4.0%	9.1%
Public Transportation	2.0%	8.8%
Walked	1.7%	3.1%
Worked at Home	4.2%	4.0%
Mean travel time to work	22.6min	28.1min

**Section 1.32 Housing**

The City's housing values are among the lowest in the County, See Table 1.8. By way of comparison, the median home value in Highland is \$148,500, while the median value in the State is \$198,500. Consequently, the City's median mortgage is also among the lowest in the County, and the lowest of all peer cities (Table 1.9). While the City's housing stock is positioned well for those seeking affordable housing, the housing stock may lack larger, modern homes that support growing families, executives and those wanting more than three bedrooms or over 2,000 square feet of living space.

<b>Table 1.8 Housing Cost Comparisons</b>			
<i>Source: 2010 US Census</i>			
<b>Area</b>	<b>Median Value</b>	<b>Home Ownership</b>	<b>Housing in Multi-unit Structures</b>



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<b>Highland</b>	\$148,500	71.1%	25.8%
<b>Swansea</b>	\$162,800	76.0%	27.2%
<b>Waterloo</b>	\$191,000	75.6%	20.6%
<b>Columbia</b>	\$203,000	77.6%	17.3%
<b>Illinois</b>	\$198,500	68.7%	35.5%
<b>US</b>	\$186,200	66.1%	25.9%

<b>Table 1.9 Housing Characteristics</b>						
<i>Source: 2010 US Census</i>						
	<b>% Family Households</b>	<b>% Renter occ'd</b>	<b>% Owner occ'd</b>	<b>% Vacant</b>	<b>Avg. Household Size (owner occ'd)</b>	<b>Avg. Household Size (renter-occ'd)</b>
<b>Highland</b>	65.6	31.8	68.2	6.3	2.57	2.10
<b>Swansea</b>	66.1	24.5	75.5	6.0	2.58	1.98
<b>Waterloo</b>	70.5	25.1	74.9	4.6	2.59	2.16
<b>Columbia</b>	71.0	21.5	78.5	4.7	2.68	1.99

**Single-family new house construction building permits:**

- 1997: 40 buildings, average cost: \$108,100
- 1998: 44 buildings, average cost: \$130,900
- 1999: 32 buildings, average cost: \$145,100
- 2000: 27 buildings, average cost: \$129,600
- 2001: 23 buildings, average cost: \$147,300
- 2002: 69 buildings, average cost: \$127,800
- 2003: 74 buildings, average cost: \$140,100

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- 2004: 108 buildings, average cost: \$132,000
- 2005: 113 buildings, average cost: \$135,300
- 2006: 94 buildings, average cost: \$142,600
- 2007: 50 buildings, average cost: \$155,700
- 2008: 16 buildings, average cost: \$178,400
- 2009: 20 buildings, average cost: \$135,300
- 2010: 16 buildings, average cost: \$144,700
- 2011: 15 buildings, average cost: \$181,000

**Section 1.33 Housing Affordability**

Housing affordability is a key component of the long-term vitality of a community. Housing affordability is not simply the price one pays for rent or mortgage; it is a function of household income or wealth relative to a housing unit’s price or rent. One basic way to measure housing affordability is to look at how much a household spends on housing costs as a percentage of their total household income. Affordable housing is defined as housing that costs occupants less than 35% of their gross income for gross housing costs, including utility costs. Planners and most lenders consider a household that spends 35% or more of its income on housing costs to be financially burdened.

The percentage of Highland homeowners who spend 35% or more of their income on housing should be monitored to make sure this percentage stays below state average, which is 29.5%. It is estimated that 15% of U.S. homeowners pay more than 50% of their income on housing. Since the percentages of homeowners who are considered “financially burdened” have reached such high numbers nationally, (an estimated 19 million), the benchmark is moving up from 35% to 50%.

The median mortgage cost in the City of Highland is lowest among communities surveyed. The City’s median rent was also the lowest. The State had the highest mortgage and rental rates. Despite the City of Highland having the lowest mortgage rates, the percentage of homeowners who pay more than 35% of their income on housing, was above below the State and National average, but above the peer cities of Swansea and Columbia.

This plan recommends the City develop a plan to assist residents that spend more than 35% of their income on housing. The plan should first and foremost seek to diversify the City’s housing stock to provide alternative housing options that are more affordable than single-family homes and seek out funding sources to assist with housing costs for the poor. This plan also recommends recruiting more, higher paying jobs, offering housing subsidies to low income families and seeking other educational and financial solutions to minimize the effects of the housing and financial crisis on the City of Highland’s residents.

<b>Table 1.10 Housing Cost &amp; Affordability (2010)</b>						
<b>Housing Cost</b>	<b>Highland</b>	<b>Swansea</b>	<b>Waterloo</b>	<b>Columbia</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>US</b>



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Median Mortgage Cost	\$1,374	\$1,675	\$1,661	\$1,665	\$1,727	\$1,224
% of homeowners paying $\geq$ 35% of income on housing	20.7%	19.6%	18.1%	21.6%	29.5%	21.5%
Median Rent	\$669	\$788	\$744	\$787	\$860	\$693
% of renters paying $\geq$ 35% of income on housing	35%	41.4%	29.1%	16.5%	42.4%	39.1%
<i>Source: 2010 US Census</i>						

**Section 1.34 Daytime Population**

Daytime population estimates have many uses for planning and policy development in cities. This data has implications for transportation planning, such as dealing with potential traffic congestion and long commuting times. It also has implications for disaster and relief planning, such as understand the number of people that may be affected if a disaster was to occur. Another feature of the data is a measure of the number of workers who work and reside in the same city. The City of Highland’s daytime population is 12,748, which is an increase of 33.5% or 2,829 over the latest estimated full-time population for Highland.

**Section 1.35 Trade Area Profile**

While the City’s demographic characteristics are important in determining the level of municipal services and housing needs, a much larger area is typically analyzed by planners and retail experts when looking for new locations for development; one such area is the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The City of Highland is part of the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). The SMSA includes the City of St. Louis and the surrounding counties in Missouri (Lincoln, St. Charles, St. Louis, Jefferson, Franklin and Warren) and Illinois (Madison, Jersey, St. Clair, Clinton and Monroe). According to the 2000 census, the St. Louis MSA had a total population of 2.6 million people with 25% residing in Illinois and 75% residing in Missouri. The average growth rate of the MSA over the last twenty years was 3.9% or approximately 100,000 residents. The defining characteristic of the St. Louis region over the last several decades has been a period of population stability coupled with geographic sprawl. As the population continues to age and transportation costs increase, in-migration from the suburbs to the urban core and inner-tier cities is anticipated to increase. This is especially true in neighborhoods and cities where housing is affordable and daily services, shopping and jobs are centrally located, such as the case in the City of Highland.

Planners and retail experts also look into various locational factors such as accessibility, commute, income levels, education and the density and intensity of population (i.e. rooftops). Table 1.11 goes outside the City’s jurisdictional boundaries and provides a summary of the 1, 3, and 5 mile trade area profiles for the Highland City Hall. The data shows that the City’s commercial districts have access to a significant population and a solid income base with relatively inexpensive housing- when looking at the greater Highland Trade Area. Therefore, the City’s trade demographics would support a wide range of retail and commercial service offerings, provided the City’s commercial districts were promoted to this greater trade market area and **2013 Highland, IL Comprehensive Plan as Amended March 20, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2773, and as Amended (Map Only) May 15, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2787**



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positioned to accommodate a wide range of market driven, destination-type uses that would attract consumers from a greater regional trade area.

<b>Table 1.11 Trade Area Profile</b>						
	<b>1 Mile</b>		<b>3 miles</b>		<b>5 miles</b>	
Total Population	6,764		12,486		15,770	
Total Population 2000	6,808		10,636		13,308	
Change in Pop. 2000-2010	-44	-2.3	1,850	12	2,462	14
Males	3,186	47	6,009	48	7,687	49
Females	3,578	53	6,477	52	8,083	51
Land Area Sq. Miles	2		27		78	
Under 5 Years	401	5.9	790	6.3	974	6.2
Age 5 to 9 Years	414	6.1	879	7	1,094	6.9
10 to 14 Years	417	6.2	897	7.2	1,178	7.5
15 to 17 Years	249	3.7	518	4.1	657	4.2
18 to 19 Years	166	2.5	306	2.5	398	2.5
20 to 24 Years	475	7	751	6	888	5.6
25 to 34 Years	952	14	1,627	13	1,912	12
35 to 44 Years	796	12	1,606	13	2,101	13
45 to 54 Years	882	13	1,776	14	2,386	15
55 to 59 Years	378	5.6	764	6.1	1,012	6.4
Age60 to 64 Years	341	5	658	5.3	825	5.2
65 to 74 Years	512	7.6	879	7	1,162	7.4
75 to 84 Years	467	6.9	672	5.4	804	5.1
85 Years and Over	314	4.6	363	2.9	379	2.4
Median Age	40.2		39.3		39.9	
Age 0 to 17	1,481	22	3,084	25	3,903	25
18 to 24 Years	641	9.5	1,057	8.5	1,286	8.2
25 to 44 Years	1,748	26	3,233	26	4,013	25
45 to 64 Years	1,601	24	3,198	26	4,223	27
62 Years and Over	1,503	22	2,312	19	2,831	18
65 Years and Over	1,293	19	1,914	15	2,345	15
<b>Relationship of Persons in Households</b>						
Total Persons in HH	6,566	97	12,288	98	15,572	99
Householder	2,838	42	4,920	39	6,086	39
Spouse	1,306	19	2,736	22	3,639	23
Child	1,864	28	3,830	31	4,856	31
Own Child Under 18 Years	1,364	20	2,908	23	3,666	23



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Other Relatives	200	3	302	2.4	400	2.5
Non Relatives	358	5.3	500	4	591	3.7
Non-rel Under 18	43	0.6	54	0.4	72	0.5
Non-rel Over 65	16	0.2	20	0.2	23	0.1
<b><u>Households by Type</u></b>						
Total Households	2,838		4,920		6,086	
Family Households	1,740	61	3,409	69	4,391	72
With Own Children Under 18 Years	773	27	1,586	32	1,999	33
Married Couple Family	1,306	46	2,736	56	3,639	60
With Own Children Under 18 Years	498	18	1,156	24	1,535	25
Female householder, No Husband Present	318	11	485	9.9	522	8.6
With Own Children Under 18 Years	199	7	315	6.4	330	5.4
Non Family Households	1,098	39	1,511	31	1,695	28
Householder Living Alone	940	33	1,291	26	1,436	24
Householder 65 Years and Over	820	29	1,227	25	1,479	24
Households With Individuals Under 18 Years	820	29	1,665	34	2,110	35
<b><u>Housing Occupancy and Tenure</u></b>						
Total Housing Units	3,055		5,214		6,424	
Occupied Housing Units	2,838	93	4,920	94	6,086	95
Owner Occupied	1,833	65	3,606	73	4,719	78
Renter Occupied	1,005	35	1,314	27	1,367	23
Vacant Housing Units	217	7.1	294	5.6	338	5.3
Vacant for Rent	84	2.7	97	1.9	100	1.6
Vacant for Sale	45	1.5	69	1.3	85	1.3
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	2.4		1.88		1.77	
Rental Vacancy Rate	7.71		6.87		6.82	
Pop in Owner-occ units	4,505	67	9,522	76	12,673	80
Pop in Rented Units	2,061	31	2,766	22	2,899	18
Average Size of Owner-occupied Units	2.46		2.64		2.69	
Average Size of Renter-Occupied Units	2.05		2.11		2.12	



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**Section 1.36 Community Tapestry – The Fabric of American’s Neighborhoods**

The Community Tapestry™ system is a proven segmentation methodology that utilizes 65 segments called “Tapestry Lifestyles” to classify communities based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition. These segments are broken down to the U.S. Census Block Group level throughout the United States. The system is used by planners and national retailers to determine localized purchasing patterns and within the site selection process.

The following paragraphs detail the top “Lifestyle Clusters” that make up the greater City of Highland trade area. It is included in this Plan to provide a better understanding of the spending habits and lifestyles of the consumers within the City of Highland trade area. This information provides retailers a profile of the local trade area and provides some quality of life indicators the City should be prepared to address in the future. These include, but are not limited to, the following conditions;

- ✓ Providing continuing educational and training to the areas workforce;
- ✓ access to quality, salaried jobs;
- ✓ providing healthy meals to a culture “on-the-run”; and
- ✓ diversifying the housing stock to provide more choices, especially in the affordable housing/1st time homebuyer market segment.

**Segment 17 Green Acres**

A "little bit country", Green Acres residents live in pastoral settings of developing suburban fringe areas, mainly in the Midwest and South. The median age is 40.7 years. Married couples with and without children comprise most of the households, which are primarily in single-family dwellings. This upscale market has a median household income of \$65,074 and a median home value of \$197,519. These do-it-yourselfers maintain and remodel their homes, painting, installing carpet, or adding a deck, and own all the necessary tools to accomplish these tasks. They also take care of their lawn and gardens, again, with the right tools. Vehicles of choice are motorcycles and full-sized pickup trucks. For exercise, residents ride their bikes and go water skiing, canoeing, and kayaking. Other activities include bird-watching, power boating, target shooting, hunting, and attending auto races.

**Segment 24 Main Street, USA**

Main Street, USA neighborhoods are a mix of single-family homes and multiunit dwellings found in the suburbs of smaller metropolitan cities, mainly in the Northeast, West, and Midwest. This market is similar to the United States when comparing household type, age, educational attainment, housing type, occupation, industry, and household income type distributions. The median age of 36.8 years matches that of the U.S. median. The median household income is a comfortable \$56,882. Homeownership is at 65 percent, and the median home value is \$205,391. Active members of the community, residents participate in local civic issues and work as volunteers. They take care of their lawns and gardens, and work on small home projects. They



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enjoy going to the beach and visiting theme parks as well as playing chess, going bowling or ice skating, and participating in aerobic exercise.

**Segment 18 Cozy and Comfortable**

Cozy and Comfortable residents are settled, married, and still working. Many couples are still living in the pre-1970s, single-family homes in which they raised their children. Households are located primarily in suburban areas of the Midwest, Northeast, and South. The median age is 42.1 years, and the median home value is \$174,687. Home improvement and remodeling are important to Cozy and Comfortable residents. Although some work is contracted, homeowners take an active part in many projects, especially painting and lawn care. They play softball and golf, attend ice hockey games, watch science fiction films on DVD, and gamble at casinos. Television is significant; many households have four or more sets. Preferred cable stations include QVC, Home & Garden Television, and The History Channel.

<b>2008 Summary</b>	<b>ZIP 62249</b>	<b>US</b>
Total Population	15,216	309,299,265
Total Households	5,920	116,384,754
<b>2008 Population by Race</b>		
White Alone	98.3%	72.3%
Black Alone	0.2%	12.6%
American Indian Alone	0.1%	0.9%
Asian or Highland Islander Alone	0.5%	4.6%
Some Other Race Alone	0.3%	6.7%
Two or More Races	0.6%	2.9%
Hispanic Origin	1.4%	15.4%
<b>2008 Population by Sex</b>		
Male	48.5%	49.1%
Female	51.5%	50.9%
<b>2008 Households by Income</b>		
Median Household Income	\$63,100	\$54,749
HH Income Under \$50K	40.4%	45.5%
HH Income \$50K-\$100K	45.3%	34.8%
HH Income Over \$100K	14.3%	19.6%
<b>2008 Average Home Value</b>	<b>\$188,998</b>	<b>\$260,559</b>
<i>Source: ESRI: www.arcwebservices.com</i>		

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*Chapter 2: Critical Issues, Vision, Goals & Objectives*

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## **Public Engagement Summary**

### **Section 2.1 Public Engagement Process**

The following is a summary of the issues raised during the City of Highland's Town Planning Workshop, stakeholder interviews, citizen survey and ongoing meetings with the Joint Planning & Zoning Commission which were open to the public and took place throughout the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The Joint Planning & Zoning Commission served as the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and directed the development of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

### **Section 2.2 Town Planning Workshop**

The Town Planning Workshop was held on March 20, 2013 at the Highland City Hall. The workshop included approximately 20 participants ranging from City Officials, business owners, students and concerned citizens. During the Workshop, the participants discussed several prepared topics relating to the past, present and future of Highland. The Consultant recorded notes throughout the workshop. The citizen survey was distributed at the close of the meeting. The results of the Town Planning Workshop and citizen survey are included in the following sections.

### **Section 2.3 Stakeholder Interviews**

The public engagement process included meetings with stakeholders from the community. Stakeholders ranged from individuals knowledgeable of the community to entire organizations based in Highland. Stakeholder organizations included the Highland Chamber of Commerce, Helvetia Sharpshooters Society, Highland Historical Society, the Rotary Club and the Kiwanis Club of Highland. The results of the Stakeholder Interviews are included in the following sections.

### **Section 2.4 Critical Issues – *Public Engagement Summary***

The public engagement process helped define what residents want Highland to be in the next ten (10) years. Most participants in the public engagement process agree that Highland is a great place to live and raise a family and that the City should continue doing what it does best- providing quality municipal services and utilities. The community's biggest concerns over the next 10 years are business retention and revitalization and maintaining quality, affordable city services.

The discussion topics used throughout the public engagement process were developed with the intent of identifying citizen defined values and critical issues as they relate to the past, present and future of Highland. The responses to these questions, more specifically, helped identify Highland's **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats**. The following is a summary of the critical issues as defined by the participants in the public engagement process.

### **Section 2.5 Strengths**

1. **Highland Residents:** "The residents of Highland are Highlands's biggest strength. The city is gifted with a committed core of citizens (residents and non-residents) who are willing



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to work for the Chamber, the foundation, and a myriad of other institutions and clubs for improvements to the quality of life in Highland. The community is also a very generous community; if a family needs help with housing costs, the community helps out. The local food pantry is one of the best in the region. The community is very philanthropic.”

2. **Location.** “Good highway access and proximity to St. Louis and Edwardsville”.
3. **City services.** City services were ranked very high. The community values the services the City provides and ranks the quality of services very high. “The City Manager and City Staff do so many things well. They are visionary, think big and get things done. Keep it up!”
  - HCS Fiber.
  - “The roundabouts and transportation improvements are great.’
  - “The City has good landscaping and sign requirements.”
  - “Great park system, ball fields and related sports programs.”
4. **The Square.** “Downtown Highland has benefited from several public and private reinvestment efforts, such as the fountain / square improvements / wheelchair accessible-sidewalks.”
5. **Downtown / Heritage.** “Highland has some lovely historic places such as the Square, the cemetery, Lindendale Park, Old Homes (some lovely, some neglected) and a very rich history.”
6. **School.** “Historically schools would have been the #1 strength, but with the lack of funding, it has declined. Too many financial cuts. Quality is declining. Students wishing to get involved in sports or extracurricular activities have to pay a lot.”
7. **Highland’s image.** “The “Scrubby Dutch” works well, it’s unique. Incorporate it in new development when applicable.”
8. **“Small town atmosphere”.**
9. **“Festivals and seasonal events.”**
10. **“Hospital”**
11. “Agricultural roots.”
12. “Highland doesn’t need anything. We have everything a small community needs.”
13. “Family-friendly and safe neighborhoods.”
14. “Local industries.”
15. “Historically low crime rate.”
16. “Johnson’s Garden”

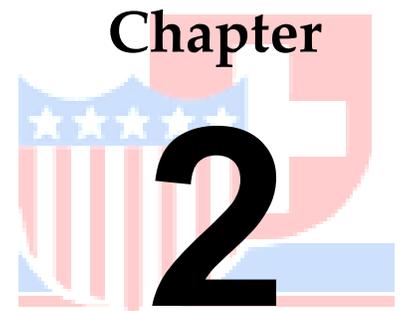
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- 17. “Becoming more and more walkable. People walk at all hours- a sign that the community is safe and active.”
- 18. “Affordable housing”
- 19. “Good stores and restaurants downtown.”
- 20. “Great access to outdoor recreation; lakes, streams, hunting and fishing.”
- 21. “Healthy, active community: strong Chamber of Commerce, civic groups, clubs, organizations, and churches.”
- 22. “Korte Sports Complex”
- 23. Weinheimer Building
- 24. “Library (Louis Latzer Memorial Public Library)”

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*Source: themainstreetproject.net*



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**Section 2.6 Weaknesses**

1. **‘Homeownership declining’**. “Many of the old brick homes are now rentals. Too much rental property or neglected property; lack of landlord enforcement code. The people that follow the rules are not the problem. The rules are fine, focus on enforcement and the few bad apples. Renters do not take care of yards, gardens or homes. How can we increase home ownership? Wish the City had financial incentives for people to buy old homes and upgrade bathrooms and kitchens. The City needs to intervene before the issue spirals out of control. The City should consider implementing Crime Free Housing initiatives and take serious steps towards the elimination of substandard housing. Landlord registration should be mandatory. City staff needs to have direct contact with landlords so property maintenance, nuisance issues and any other violations can be addressed in a timely manner- with direct consequences to the landlord if needed.”
2. **“Limited retail”**: “Too often residents (young and old) travel outside the city to shop, eat and for entertainment.”
3. “Retention of the youth...brain drain”
4. “Water pressure is very poor in some areas- this needs to be fixed prior to future growth and annexation.”
5. “No sidewalks on some routes. Tyson needs a sidewalk (Tyson is outside the city limits).”
6. “Codes are not enforced. Or perhaps we don’t have good codes.”
7. “Need Truck Route (The Peripheral route should address this).”
8. “The State’s funding crisis is impacting Highland locally, especially the cuts in education.”
9. “Unemployment rate and resulting foreclosed homes.”
10. “Parking at the Square. When parking fills up, customers go elsewhere.”
11. “Lack of new businesses coming to town.”
12. “The homes for sale near the downtown are awful.”
13. “The business parks west of town are not attractive.”
14. “The City needs to have a business license registration program.”
15. “Change all plans relating to the proposed 160 extension- unless the State has funding. Lack of control of 160. “Northtown” development has taken place without much thought to pedestrian traffic crossing the tracks or the installation of bike/pedestrian ways.”
16. “Unlimited parking access in hazardous areas – Sixth Street at Highland Supply.”
17. “Putting the needs of business owners and corporations before the citizens.”

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**Section 2.7 Opportunities**

1. “Establish a business incubator to attract entrepreneurs to Highland and help entrepreneurs in Highland succeed.”
2. “Retention of Highland’s youth offers opportunities to grow the city’s population, bring the community together and pass along the City’s heritage and small town, family-friendly values.”
3. “Isolated unincorporated pockets that are compact and connected should be annexed-most are currently farmland. Annexation of isolated regions will create more uniform application of city services and improve tax base.”
4. “Peripheral route will help solve traffic problems and provide future land use and development opportunities.”
5. “Fiber needs further development, expansion, stability and reliability of the HCS fiber system.”
6. “Highland needs to focus on restoring its beauty.”
7. “Continuation of trails for public walking, recreation and transport.”
8. “Highway 40 west – good opportunity for commercial development.”
9. “Trionics closed leaving room for industrial growth (approximately 17 acres).”
10. “Route 160 north to Grantfork Road has opportunities for future growth and development.”
11. “Implementation of the Master Trail Plan. Highland needs to develop true walkability throughout the City. Bike lanes and walking trail on designated streets are badly needed”. Consider the following citizen-defined recommendation:
  - “Create a lake trail/walking system. The community envisions a “water walk” along Silver Lake accentuated with sculpture, arts, an art related store and pedestrian and bike trails- connect to visitor center”.
  - “Incorporate bike/ped lanes with the Perimeter Route.”
  - “Install a sidewalk from VFW Road south to 30<sup>th</sup> Street. The tax payers want it.”
  - “New bridge at Walnut to Glick Park is needed. Currently there is no safe bike/ped crossing.”
  - “Look at railroad crossings- not very safe.”
  - “5th Street towards Wicks / Wal-Mart need better bike/ped access.”
  - “Require subdivisions to have sidewalks and green space.”
12. “Holiday Manor (Future growth/annexation opportunities).”



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13. “We don’t need new growth- Revive downtown! It would be nice to develop the Square and surrounding area similar to downtown Edwardsville with unique shops, restaurants and sidewalk cafés. Allow small areas outside of bars to allow sidewalk bistro, al fresco dining.”
14. “Take care of what we have.”
15. “Annex existing neighborhoods with the goal of incorporating more people (residents) into city activities and committees. If there is a developed subdivision with utilities & roads, the City should annex. Isolated / adjoining areas need to be annexed to consolidate and coordinate the delivery of city services/utilities. Consider annexing the rest of Helvetia Drive.”
16. “Completion of the peripheral route is very important. Once the NE quad of the peripheral route is completed – develop that area.”
17. “St. Rose Road (Route 40) would be a good place to plan future growth.”
18. “The City needs to identify and promote reasons someone outside the city would want to be annexed. The city should prepare a fact sheet that spells out the advantages of annexation – cost/benefit analysis. Identify if, and to what extent, the property owner will save in service costs, improvements in the quality/capacity of water, sewer, broadband and better police and fire protection. If there are any reductions in the insurance rates or premiums for homeowners- provide examples (case studies). Provide examples (case studies) of any reductions in the rates/quality of trash removal, winter maintenance and other city services/ utilities.”
19. “The City needs more restaurant options and family entertainment.”
20. “Integrating alternative or renewable energy (i.e. solar or wind turbine) in our electric grid.”
21. “Increase tourism.”
22. “Dot the area with ball diamonds or open play fields with picnic or meeting areas and public art.”
23. “Develop area north of Troxler.”
24. “Farm fresh local produce, locally raised meat & other agricultural products.”
25. “Make sure Highland remains Highland. The community should capitalize on the authenticity of the downtown; continue the preservation of historic buildings and reinvestment in streetscape improvements, façade enhancements and light poles/banners.”
26. “Continued investment in the Downtown. The Square is our identity. Provide all the comforts needed on the Square: clean public restrooms, organized parking, bike racks, benches, convenient food, lots of active window treatments/storefronts with views of commercial vitality occurring inside.”
27. “Make landowners accountable for their property.”

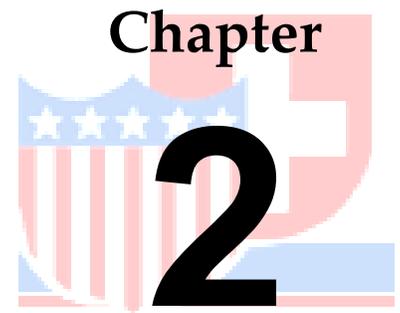


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28. “Limited activities at the lake. More development of Silver Lake would be nice. The City should acquire more property for park development along the lake. This area should be primarily residential with amenities to enhance the quality of life in Highland. A winery with views of the lake would be nice.”
29. “Develop with the same order and consistency that the original town was developed, with updates that are in time with what people want. “

**Section 2.8 Threats**

1. **Business retention and revitalization.** “Competition for tax money. Business retention is very important- take care of what/who we have. Stop recruiting new businesses and waiving taxes. Too often businesses are recruited to the City and do not have to pay for infrastructure- the burden then gets passed down to the residents and other businesses- this is not fair or sustainable The city needs to bring in retail businesses to generate sales tax- this is the City’s life line.”
2. **Economy/unemployment.** “The city needs more good paying salaried jobs with benefits. Highland does not offer the amenities necessary to attract top level executives and fortune 500 companies. Trying to draw salaried jobs and regional retail and restaurant chains in a down economy.”
3. **Declining school system.** “How do we maintain the level of quality we have come to expect from our schools when the State has slashed funding? Fees are too high for sports (\$150/student or up to \$225 max or \$600/family.) This really brings down the school system. Meanwhile some programs are being threatened to be cut, i.e. track.”
4. **“The State’s financial situation.”**
5. **‘High taxes.** Highland is a high tax city in a high tax county in a high tax State.”
6. **“Substandard housing.** Sub-standards homes, many of which are foreclosed homes are a problem- they are bringing down the value of neighboring homes and the housing stock in general.”
7. **“Brain Drain.** The community needs young professionals and salaried workers. Attracting and keeping young adult residents should be a priority.”
8. **“Retail Seepage.** Big box stores capture the majority of local spending, making it very difficult for smaller scale, specialty shops or locally owned businesses. Many residents shop outside of Highland where price and selection are better. “
9. **“Mechanization:** Highland was founded on an industrial based economy- which offered lots of decent paying jobs with benefits. Today many industries rely on machines – resulting in higher productivity but fewer jobs. The City needs more middle class, middle management jobs.”
10. “More population growth will result in more crime and increased taxes; meanwhile the schools are struggling and infrastructure aging.”



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11. “Protection from adverse land uses (in unrestricted unincorporated areas) at the fringe of the City limits is needed. The City should annex these areas to gain zoning control to avoid land uses such as confined feeding operations next to residential neighborhoods, parks or commercial areas.”
12. “The city should avoid growth that over-extends the cost, capacity or quality of infrastructure or delivery of public and/or emergency services.”
13. “Highland is pouring a lot of concrete. This allows folks to get out of town easily.”
14. “HCS is installing old technology. Power outages are excessive.”
15. “The area is not industry / business friendly.”
16. “TIF is not good for the City. No TIF.”
17. “The City is attracting transients.”
18. “Lack of money for future development, road improvements, bike paths, etc.”
19. “Loss of quality agriculture land (the most productive in the nation),”

**Section 2.9 Positive Community Elements**

Participants were asked to identify positive features such as opportunity areas, positive development, town character, and/or special amenities. The following items were identified:

1. **“City services and facilities.”**
2. **“Trees:** except for the Sweet Gum Trees.”
3. **“Seasonal events.** Annual events such as Homecoming and the Peanut Butter & Jam festival do a good job of bringing people together and exploiting the best of Highland.”
4. **“Downtown-** has retained much of its original charm. The bandstand, sidewalks, lighting and other improvements are great.”
5. **“Low crime.”**
6. **“Affordable housing.”**
7. **“Healthy, active community:** Chamber, churches, schools and other organizations do a good job of hosting events, helping the disadvantage and bringing people together.”
8. **“Business is pretty good in Highland.** Businesses do a good job attracting customers and sharing their customer base by promoting local businesses/services (i.e. crossing selling).”
9. **“Parks and recreation.** There are indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities for all ages.”
10. “Strong Chamber.”



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11. “Korte Sports Complex and trails.”

12. “Silver Lake.”

**Section 2.10 Critical Issues Summary**

The critical issues, as defined by the citizens who participated in the public engagement portion of this plan, are summarized in the following sections. The critical issues are divided into following eight (8) categories:

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Economic Stability                     | 5. Parks & Recreation           |
| 2. Historic Preservation                  | 6. Transportation               |
| 3. Quality of Life                        | 7. Public Services & Facilities |
| 4. Housing and Neighborhood Stabilization | 8. Future Growth & Annexation   |

Goals have been developed for each of the above planning elements. The goals respond directly to the critical issues and priorities summarized in the previous sections. The objectives or implementation strategies that correspond to each goal have been carefully developed based on the information gathered during the public engagement portion of this plan. The goals and objectives were developed to help guide the City’s elected and appointed officials in making decisions regarding public services, land use, future development, downtown revitalization and neighborhood preservation. Making the goals of this plan a reality will require the coordination and leadership of all levels and forms of government, both internal and external to the City, plus strong support from Highland’s many organizations and local businesses.



## **Vision, Goals and Objectives**

### **Section 2.11 Vision, Goals & Objectives**

The formulation of a vision, goals and objectives, co-authored by the community, is a key focus in the preparation of a comprehensive plan. Goals are general statements that address the City's long-range plans and desired outcomes. They provide the framework upon which the objectives of the comprehensive plan are based. Objectives more specifically define how a goal will be achieved. The next level, policies or implementation strategies, discussed in greater detail in the Implementation Section, provide physical actions or steps that help achieve the goals and objectives of this Plan.

#### **What Highland's residents want:**

*"We need to closely monitor the school system."*

*"We live in the country, let's keep it that way"*

*"Attract more retail businesses to generate sales tax- this is the City's lifeline."*

*"The residents of Highland are Highlands's biggest strength"*

*"Public services are good, but don't let the City get complacent- there is always room for improvement"*

Source- Anonymous  
Citizen statements

The identification of goals and the formulation of objectives in support of these goals is the first part in the process to establish a common vision. Goal and objective statements provide the policy framework upon which all land use decisions, both now and in the future, must be supported. The Comprehensive Plan is a declaration of intent, it is advisory and does not itself constitute a regulation. When the Plan is adopted by the City Council – via an ordinance - all goals, objectives, principles, and standards therein become policy. The following goals and objective statements are based on the established goals for growth and development identified in the 2012 Draft Comprehensive Plan Update. These updated goals and objectives incorporate new information, ideas, and direction obtained from citizens, property owners, business persons and public officials from the City.

The stability and future growth of Highland depends directly on its ability to provide the desired public services, utilities, administrative duties and well informed decision-making. These and other factors that influence the growth of Highland have been considered in the development of the following vision, goals and objectives.

### **Section 2.12 Vision**

The vision, as determined after studying the values and critical issues shared by the community, is to:

***"Make Highland a great place to live, work and play by preserving Highland's small town, family-friendly atmosphere and increasing the confidence to invest in the city's businesses and neighborhoods."***

The intent of this plan is achieve this vision by providing Highland's elected and appointed officials the information and direction needed to make well informed decisions.



### **Section 2.13 Goals & Objectives Overview**

The goals adopted for the Highland Comprehensive Plan represent measurable conditions that Highland should strive to achieve in the next 10-20 years. This plan also includes several objectives and implementation strategies that provide the focus and direction needed to obtain the Plan's vision. The implementation strategies form a work program the City should follow to achieve the goals and objectives adopted as part of this plan. Some strategies are clear actions the City should take; others are recommendations for additional planning, more study or further public input.

## **Comprehensive Plan Goals**

The following sections include the community-defined critical Issues and the goals, objectives and implementation strategies developed for each of the eight (8) planning elements.

### **Section 2.14 Business Stability & Economic Development**

#### **Critical Issues**

Highland's residents want more variety in shopping and entertainment. Participants support businesses and community investments that offer new jobs, better retail and commercial service selection and more things to do and see. There was a consensus that Highland residents spend too much money and time driving to other towns to shop, dine and seek entertainment. The business stability and economic development critical issues include the following:

- Better retail selection needed. More shopping would be nice, but keep the shops unique. Highland needs more quality retailers.
- Highland would benefit from a better selection of full-service restaurants offering a memorable dining experience.
- Highland needs more jobs. Recruit industry that provides places for people to work.

**Business Stability & Economic Development Goal:** Create an economically diverse tax base for the City which expands the employment base and commercial opportunities, through careful land planning that provides appropriate locations and distribution of revenue-generating business uses.

#### **Business Stability Objectives & Implementation Strategies**

Entrepreneurs help build local communities through their contributions in the area of technological innovations, job creation, creating and participating in entrepreneurial networks and investing in community projects. The City should focus on nurturing existing, local businesses, farmers and entrepreneurs, a strategy known as **economic gardening**.



Economic gardening is an economic development approach that embraces the fundamental idea that entrepreneurs drive economies. Economic gardening seeks to create local jobs by supporting existing companies in a community. The concept, pioneered in 1987 in Littleton, Colorado, when the state was in a recession, is an alternative to traditional economic development practices. It initially was based on research by MIT’s David Birch, who suggested that most new jobs in any local economy were produced by the community’s small, local businesses. Economic gardening connects entrepreneurs to resources, encouraging the development of essential infrastructure and providing entrepreneurs with information needed to survive and succeed.

Another economic development challenge facing the City of Highland is reducing retail leakage, which occurs when local residents leave Highland to shop, dine and be entertained. The following objectives include strategies to reduce retail leakage and promote economic development, including economic gardening; This Plan recommends the City concentrate efforts and resources into existing businesses, assisting local entrepreneurs and minimizing retail leakage by implementing the following economic development objectives and implementation strategies:

- 1. Access to Information:** This plan recommends the City of Highland work with the County, the Chamber of Commerce and other local and regional entities to provide local entrepreneurs and small business owners with access to competitive information on resources, markets, technology, customers and competitors. Additionally, the City should develop a brochure and include information on the City’s website promoting Highland’s locational strengths, excellent schools, low crime, strong work ethic, safe neighborhoods and low cost of living.
- 2. Target Niche Businesses:** Identify and pursue businesses that fill a unique niche. Promote the recruitment and expansion of commercial uses that establish viable retail development “niches” and/or cater to the daily needs and lifestyles of the City’s resident population and daytime workforce. These uses include, but are not limited to:
  - Businesses that support existing, established industries.
  - As the population ages, the percentage of income spent on housing related costs and medical expenses will increase. The housing, medical and retail industries that provide the aforementioned services will benefit from the increased demand. The City should encourage the development of these markets and service delivery sectors.
  - Additional uses mentioned during the public engagement process included: an internet café, coffee house, tea room, ice crème parlors, candy shops, specialty food/beverage/retail, book stores (family oriented), quality clothing, art studio/gallery, crafts and hobby store, sit-down restaurants and other establishments that provide a place for people to gather, shop, work and linger as well as attract tourists.
- 3. Development Strategic Partnerships to Promote Highland:** Support and encourage the development of community and regional organizations that promote civic activities and professional relationship building. This Plan recommends the City work with the Chamber,

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County and private entities to create strategic economic development partnerships to promote regionalism obtain grants and build the confidence to invest in the community.

- This Plan recommends the City, Chamber and local businesses work together in developing a brochure, website and encouraging key stakeholders within the City to attend conventions to promote the locational strengths of Highland and the greater trade area.
  - Advertise vacant building and undeveloped sites in the City's business parks on the City's website and with commercial realtors knowledgeable with the area.
  - The City should continue aggressive business development efforts and seek out outside funding to help implement the goals and recommendations contained herein.
  - Promote the City's low taxes, hardworking, educated workforce and strategic location to help attract new industry and encourage the expansion of existing industry.
  - Promote the City's new internet services and excellent public utilities.
  - Use the internet and social media for economic development and as a tool to inform residents, create a sense of community and attract visitors.
- 4. Industry Recruitment and Expansion:** This Plan recommends the City of Highland promote and restore Highland's economic health, community pride and quality of life by taking an active role in improving the local business climate, facilitate local business expansion and ongoing business recruitment. The City must evaluate and work towards expediting the review/approval process and facilitate future reinvestment efforts that promote economically sustainable and locally supportable business and industry. The City cannot do this on its own. Ultimately, it will take a coordinated effort between the public and private sectors in order to achieve the desired community results.
- 5. Diversification:** Promote economic diversification that facilitates long term economic stability and reduces the City's economic dependence on a few industries and/or revenue sources.
- Establish an on-going, proactive business retention and expansion program to coordinate countywide economic development opportunities and partnerships.
  - Identify potential sources of funding, promote civic activities and coordinate with local and regional economic development agencies to help attract targeted businesses and commercial/medical service providers to Highland.
  - Support cultural heritage tourism. Cultural heritage tourism provides opportunities for local communities to prosper economically while holding on to the characteristics that make them special.
  - Ensure adequate parking for buses to encourage bus tours stop in Highland.
  - Diversify the economic base by reducing the reliance on residential tax base.
  - Coordinate and/or consolidate government services to provide optimum efficiency.

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- Expound a cooperative policy for offering economic incentives to lure desired business/industry to the area, of which will benefit multiple taxing agencies.
  - Continue to support the many seasonal festivals, events and activities that bring people together and support local businesses and tourism.
- 6. Promote a “Buy Highland First” Campaign:** Seepage/Leakage is a serious problem for the local economy. Local businesses cannot survive if residents do not support them. This Plan recommends creating a “Buy Highland First” program that offers incentives for supporting local businesses.
- 7. Strengthen Highland’s work force.** Improve and maintain the supply, diversity and employability of Highland’s work force. It is important that the City’s workforce is prepared for the new economy and that the City’s economic climate fosters industrial growth and nurtures small business and entrepreneurs
- ***Promote local employment.*** Increase local jobs for Highland’s workforce to maximize the number of Highland residents who work in Highland. Providing jobs within the City helps reduce spending outside the city and increases revenue within the City.
  - ***Prepare the City’s Workforce for the new economy.*** Work with colleges and continuing education providers to establish classrooms and training that meets the needs of existing and anticipated businesses.
  - ***Prepare Students for the Workplace.*** Work with local school districts and economic development agencies to develop programs providing school-to-career readiness to better prepare Highland’s students for future employment.
  - ***Incubator:*** Work with the County’s Community Development Specialists to assist in creating an incubator facility to assist small businesses and workforce training.
- 8. Expand and promote the Agricultural Industry & Agri-tourism:** Build upon the success of local farmers, the Highland Farmers’ Market, local festivals and past successes in agriculture to strengthen Community-Based Food Systems (CBFS) locally and statewide. The following implementation strategies are recommended to help support and promote the local agriculture industry and strengthen CBFS:
- Assist farmers in improving their economic viability and diversity of their farming operations and promote businesses that support local harvesting, distribution and the procurement of local crops and livestock.
  - Promote the understanding that the development of local food systems provides an economic opportunity and healthier diet for the community. CBFS increases the number of entrepreneurial businesses, including processors, distributors, grocers, chefs and food services, serving the demand for locally produced foods.
  - Work with local farmers, business owners and state and local organizations to explore ways to create more demand for locally grown and raised products.

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- Expand and promote events and festivals that raise awareness of locally grown and raised products and help identify local, regional and international markets.
- Support the formation of an organization and/or partnerships made up of local farmers for the purpose of increasing the economic strength, information sharing and collective bargaining among local growers, suppliers and entrepreneurs.

**Section 2.15 Historic Preservation**

**Critical Issues**

A leading concern among participants of the public engagement process was preserving the historic character and vitality of downtown Highland. The recent public and private investments to the Square are signs that the future of downtown Highland is bright.

**Historic Preservation Goal:** To preserve and enhance all local historic and cultural resources that contributes to the unique character of Highland.

**Historic Preservation Objectives & Implementation Strategies**

1. To protect and maintain those resources that contributes to the unique physical character and attractiveness of the City of Highland and provides a sense of identity to the community at large.
2. The City should partner with outside agencies to assist in the designation of historic structures, develop a plan, and set standards for local historic preservation.
3. To coordinate local preservation efforts with state and federal agencies and organizations.
4. To encourage economic development and increased property values through historic preservation and restoration.
5. To provide educational opportunities regarding the value of the community's historical and architectural resources and heritage.
6. **Preserve Existing Buildings:** Promote the adaptive reuse and revitalization of the city's older buildings and homes. The City's historic buildings and homes give Highland its character. Adaptive reuse is recommended as the preferred historic preservation strategy. Adaptive reuse is a term used when describing the process of transforming older buildings that have outlived their usefulness into buildings that are suitable for new uses-while retaining their unique and architecturally significant characteristics.
7. **Develop Guidelines for Downtown:** Develop guidelines that address signage and architectural design to protect the visual and physical characteristics of Downtown Highland. Update the City's zoning code to include restrictions that limit or restrict uses that create conditions that are uninviting to pedestrians to the downtown area.

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8. **Promote and Coordinate Streetscape Improvements:** Continue to maintain and preserve the streetscape improvements and other characteristics of the Square that make it an inviting, walkable, unique destination. Extend these characteristics and streetscape improvements into the adjacent residential neighborhoods to improve safety, access and promote pedestrian activity.
9. **Create and Promote Seasonal Events:** Continue to invest time and resources in seasonal events, decorations and festive/outdoor marketing activities that bring people downtown and increase the duration and frequency of visits to the Square.
10. **Strengthen and Expand Residential Use:** Improve living conditions in the neighborhoods near the Square by encouraging property owners to reinvest in the existing housing stock. Successfully establishing housing within and adjacent to Downtown will make the area feel more vibrant and safe, which in turn will help attract people to shop, socialize and eat downtown.

**Section 2.16 Quality of Life:**

**Quality of Life Critical Issues**

There is a consensus among the participants of the public engagement process that maintaining the local school system and residential neighborhoods would have the most positive impact on the quality of life in Highland. The following quality of life comments were also identified during the public engagement process:

- Continued organized promotion is needed- improve upon the City's website, create a brochure listing places to go, stay, shop, Silver Lake and other outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Make Highland known as a healthy community by improving and expanding recreation programs and developing a walking/hiking/biking trail and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Provide ongoing maintenance and improvements to the City's public utilities, but keep them affordable.
- Step-up code enforcement efforts to improve curb-appeal and eliminate sub-standard housing.
- Take a proactive role in talking with County and State representatives regarding financing opportunities.

**Quality of Life Goal:** To create a positive community identity that is built upon the unique qualities of a rural, safe, family-oriented, sustainable community that distinguishes itself from other area communities and provides Highland residents with a high quality of life.

**Quality of Life Objectives and Implementation Strategies**



1. **Make Highland a “Healthy Community”**. This plan recommends the City promote healthy, active living by providing ongoing maintenance, repair and expansion of sidewalks, lighting and landscaping throughout the City to encourage walking, running and other healthy community initiatives. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines a healthy community as; “one that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources that enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing to their maximum potential.” Healthy communities strive to provide the following quality of life objectives:
  - A clean, safe, high-quality physical environment (including housing quality)
  - An ecosystem that is currently stable and sustainable for the long term
  - A strong, mutually supportive and non-exploitative community
  - A high degree of public participation in and control over the decisions affecting one’s life, health, and well-being
  - The meeting of basic needs (food, water, shelter, income, safety, work) for all the city’s people
  - Access to a wide variety of experiences and resources with the possibility of multiple contacts, interaction, and communication
  - A diverse, vital, and innovative city economy
  - Encouragement of connectedness with the past, with the cultural and biological heritage, and with other groups and individuals
  - A city form that is compatible with and enhances the above parameters and behaviors.
  - An optimum level of appropriate public health and sick care services accessible to all
  - High health status (both high positive health status and low disease status)
2. **Keep Highland Affordable**: Continue to maintain the city’s low cost of living through the provision of quality, competitively priced public services and reasonable tax rates. Police, Fire, Water, Sewer, Parks and other City Services are currently very good, the intent of this plan is to maintain the current level of service and expand only as needed to accommodate growth.
3. **Support Continuing Education**: Plan for the development of training facilities to provide the education and job skills needed to position Highland’s workforce for new and emerging technologies, trends and opportunities.
4. **Branding**: Promote and restore Highland’s economic health, community pride, and quality of life by “Branding” the City. This Plan recommends focusing branding efforts on the City’s website, gateway entry signage, events, and marketing campaigns. Build from the lifestyles, strengths, school spirit and heritage of the community. Revisit past branding efforts to memorialize the City’s rich history, entrepreneurial spirit and other nostalgic qualities.



Fountains would be a good theme. Highland is known and remembered for its fountain on the Square.

5. **Open Space Preservation:** Preserve the areas' agricultural land, open spaces and other resources that characterize Highland's small town atmosphere, agrarian roots and make Highland a great place to live. The numerous stream and wetland corridors that constitute a large percentage of the open space corridors provide the City with opportunities for further expansion of the existing trail and pathway network, which was viewed as a highly valuable resource by the community. Silver Lake Park offers unique recreation opportunities for the residents, and further access could be provided through such path extensions. Efforts should be made to link future trails so that the City can capitalize on the recreational amenities already provided by this trail. A Bikeway and Park System Network draws on the importance of interconnected bike paths and trails that link residential neighborhoods with other uses throughout the City. The Citywide Resource Plan should be consulted when determining developments and open space corridors. Open space shall serve as ideal location for pathways and trails and high priority attention should be placed on identifying future parks, green space, and pathways.
6. **Education:** Continue to partner with the school district and to improve the utilization of existing facilities, create more programs for adult learning, and expand upon options available to graduates. This can be accomplished by establishing a mentoring program to encourage young professionals to return home to Highland after they go off to college, in addition to the attraction of young professionals throughout the region.
7. **Library:** Continue to partner with the library to make better use of existing facilities and develop new, improved programs for children and adult learning opportunities.
8. **Future Growth:** Define priority growth areas to guide future extensions of infrastructure.
9. **Square Revitalization:** Promote downtown development which offers a broad range of shopping, service, and employment opportunities.
10. **Promote Cultural/Heritage Tourism:** Expand upon the City's existing entertainment and recreation venues, activities and events and encourage the development of new activities. Recruit new entertainment venues that build upon or create new recreational, cultural and historical destinations and activities in town and promote active lifestyles. These activities are needed to help bring people together and promote the businesses and people of Highland and the area's rich heritage.
11. Encourage home-based businesses to relocate to a retail location utilizing incentives.
12. Identify and encourage the preservation of areas having scenic, architectural, or historic significance.
13. Provide industrial sites which are sensitive to the space, access, and utility needs of a wide range of industrial establishments and encourage jog growth.
14. Address existing businesses/industries which influence blighting or environmental conditions upon surrounding land uses.



15. Diversify land uses and provide appropriate transitions between uses to maintain a high standard of quality.
16. Prevent randomly scattered and strip commercial development; keep commercial development uniform.
17. Utilize small-scale professional office development as infill and transition between intense uses and less intense uses.
18. Concentrate community enhancements in areas of highest traffic and major City focal points and entryways which have the highest potential to convey a positive visual image.
19. Establish standards of excellence in site planning, architecture, and the design of landscaping, lighting, and signage in all commercial, industrial and residential areas.
20. Implement the Annexation Plan / Growth Management Plan.

**Section 2.17 Housing & Neighborhood Stability:**

**Housing & Neighborhood Stability Critical Issues**

- Housing stock is good. The City has a good balance of housing types.
- Enforce ordinances to address overcrowding and poorly maintained properties.
- Expand city limits in areas where residential neighborhoods already exist.
- Consider immediate annexation of unincorporated pockets.

**Housing & Neighborhood Stability Goal:** To encourage a variety of attractive and safe housing and neighborhoods within the City of Highland.

**Housing & Neighborhood Stability Objectives & Implementation Strategies**

1. **Preserve Neighborhood Character:** Prevent blight and preserve the character and stability of existing neighborhoods through appropriate zoning, code enforcement, redevelopment, and rehabilitation. Continue code enforcement efforts, as needed, to prevent property deterioration and to protect property values.
  2. **Diversify the City's Housing Stock:** Promote new residential development that fulfills unmet market demands for entry-level homes, estates-style homes and be responsive to the latest trends in subdivision design.
  3. **Preserve Highland's rural, small-town character:** Promote efforts that make the city more attractive to those wishing to live in a rural community.
  4. **Identify Housing Solutions for low income households:** Address needs of low income households utilizing Rebuilding Together, Habitat for Humanity, local efforts, etc.
  5. **Accommodate Smart Growth:** Promote and initiate annexation efforts that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and where the costs to provide utilities, roads and other
- 2013 Highland, IL Comprehensive Plan as Amended March 20, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2773,  
and as Amended (Map Only) May 15, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2787



infrastructure is either already provided or paid for in whole or at least in part by the developer. The City should closely review all proposed annexation plans to control the timing, type and density of future development.

6. Encourage well-designed, walkable residential developments which are accessible to open space and recreation facilities, commercial and employment centers, and basic community services.
7. Establish standards of excellence for the design, construction, and maintenance of all residential structures.
8. Provide buffering to separate residential areas from incompatible uses in order to ensure environment friendly and safe neighborhoods.
9. Locate multiple-family residential development in distinct neighborhoods that minimize impacts on residential quality and quantity in the community and special attention that does not affect the property values of single residents.
10. Ensure that development and redevelopment processes incorporate planning for sidewalks, bike trails and lanes, and greenway areas through the City.
11. Establish a neighborhood beautification program that encourages the citizens/owners to maintain and enhance their property (homes and yards).

**Section 2.18 Parks & Recreation:**

**Parks & Recreation Critical Issues**

Each participant was asked to describe the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the City's parks and recreation activities. The following findings were reported:

- Maintain what we already have.
- Improvements to the City pool are needed. Consider replacement of the pool with a modern aquatic facility.
- Promote outdoor activities, active lifestyles
- Develop a regional trail for walking, hiking, and biking.
- Improve signage and way-finding for all city parks and recreation destinations. Develop a consistent signage theme to help "brand" the Highland's Parks with the City's logo.

**Parks & Recreation Goal:** Ensure the availability of year-round recreational activities for all ages and excellent park and recreational facilities to serve the City's present and future needs.

**Parks & Recreation Objectives & Implementation Strategies**



1. **Parks:** Continue to maintain, enhance and expand the City's parks and recreation system. This includes making improvements, as needed, to keep pace with the latest trends in park and recreation services, facility market demands, the acquisition of additional park land and the establishment of open spaces, trails, restrooms and parking areas as needed to serve the City's growing resident population.
2. **Upgraded Pool Facility:** Conduct a study to determine the feasibility of developing modern pool / Aqua Park. The study should explore funding options, partnerships (public and private), site locations and which amenities are most supported within the community.
3. Provide annual evaluations of the City's park and recreation services, public safety, public transportation, code enforcement and water and sewer services to ensure they meet the needs of the community.
4. Locate large active recreation complex (ball fields, game courts, etc.) near visible traffic corridors and promote the interrelationship of passive recreation sites and open space environmental corridors.
5. Require local neighborhood parks, such as all age (universal) parks, in residential development.
6. Continue to expand upon the Sursee Trail system to link neighborhoods to park facilities to key retail locations throughout Highland.
  - a. The Sursee Trail system plan was adopted by the city council as part of the city's comprehensive plan.
  - b. Immediate future plans are to install a trail along Sportsman Road (summer 2012) and in the very near future, Lindendale Park.
  - c. As new sections of the peripheral route are constructed, so will the trail.
7. Expand recreational services on and around Silver Lake
8. Continue upgrading park amenities to meet ADA standards
9. **Aquatics Facility:** Replace or relocate an aquatics facility that can be multi-functional. With the future expansion of the peripheral route on the northeast quadrant, construct a new pool/aquatics facility in this area. The justification for constructing a new aquatics facility here is based on a number of factors
  - a. The land in which the existing pool is located is not owned by the City of Highland
  - b. The existing infrastructure of the pool as well as the bathhouse make upgrades difficult and costly
  - c. With a vast number of homes located on the east end of the city and with the trail eventually linking Iberg Road to Broadway and Lindenthal; via Cambridge Meadows, a safe route to and from this location is realistic for bicyclists and pedestrians
  - d. There is currently no park or recreational features in this area for the residents to access via non-vehicular means



- e. Parking is inconvenient; particularly for those with disabilities
  - f. Conflicts during Fair Week and Saturday evening dances held at the Helvetia Ballroom
- 10. *Silver Lake:*** Purchase property surrounding Silver Lake to implement structures that will aid in reducing run-off from entering the city's water supply. This is vital to protecting the integrity and longevity of Silver Lake.
- a. Estimates show approximately one-third of the lake's original capacity has been lost
  - b. It is estimated that approximately 35,331 cubic yards of sediment enter the lake annually.
  - c. Identify fragile and highly impaired areas within the watershed
  - d. Implement conservation easements, installation of ponds, cost-share for expanding grass waterways, etc.
- 11. *Expand Korte Recreation Center.***
- 12.** Maintain adequate staffing to meet the needs and expectations of our citizens
- 13. *Weinheimer Community Center:*** Continue upgrades and maintain the integrity of the Weinheimer Community Center
- a. The Weinheimer Building is nearing its 60th year of existence. Over this time millions of people have utilized it for wide ranges of recreational and athletic services.
  - b. In 2000 a portion of it was renovated to remove the Highland Health Club and replace it with the Senior Drop in Center.
  - c. Future improvements will certainly require upgrades to the HVAC, tuck-pointing and roof replacement.
- 14. *Highland Regional Arboretum:*** Continue making improvements to the Highland Regional Arboretum
- a. The arboretum is in Silver Lake Park and its ultimate purpose is to provide an "outdoor classroom" for local students as well as citizens interested in trees that are native to Illinois and the area.
  - b. It is also an opportunity for Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists to work at to maintain their continuing education units
- 15. *Develop a Nature Center/Lodge.*** A building of this nature would be usable for many aspects. It would have the opportunity to provide school children, families and guests to Highland the chance to learn about such things as our past, the water-shed, native flora and fauna and geology of the area. In addition, it could be fitted with a kitchen to provide people with a unique place to host receptions, meetings or workshops.



**16. *Special Events:*** Develop and promote activities, competitions and other events. Consider the following:

- Events that raise awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles, active living and over-coming obstacles (i.e. Komen Foundation Runs/walks, MS 150, etc.).
- Events that bring the community together.
- Events that showcase local talents (artisans, sportsmen, athletes).
- Events that attract people to Highland.
- Events that encourage healthy, active lifestyles.

**17. *Tourism:*** Promote outdoor recreation tourism. Highland is in a unique geographical position to capitalize on ecotourism, agri-tourism, conservation and recreation opportunities.

### **Section 2.19 Transportation**

#### **Transportation Critical Issues**

Connecting residential neighborhoods to schools, downtown, recreation areas and employment destinations is important according to Highland residents.

**Transportation Goal:** Develop a balanced, efficient, safe, and attractive transportation system that allows for the movement of motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists through, around, and into the community; while keeping in mind regional transportation provisions for the immediate area.

#### **Transportation Objectives and Implementation Strategies**

1. Develop a transportation capital improvement plan with recommendations for sustainability, safety and capacity-related traffic improvements to accommodate future traffic demands and safe travel in older neighborhoods.
2. Implement traffic improvements for key roads and intersections to improve traffic flow and to encourage traffic to remain on the major routes.
3. Utilize public input and strategic planning when developing traffic strategies for implementation, as appropriate, to help preserve neighborhoods.
4. Widen and improve 143 w/ a middle turn lane with sidewalks from 143 to 160 (Steve Schmidt – roundabout)
5. Install sidewalks along 160 from Troxler – roundabout with grass area in between sidewalks and street. (Not like sidewalk along South Poplar – too close to street.)



6. **Gateways:** Major entrances into the city and the downtown are ideal locations for the development of primary focal points. These are highly visible locations that offer prominent areas for beautification opportunities. The following implementation strategies will provide an immediate impact on the visibility and economic vitality of the city.
  - Install landscaping and gateway features that integrate the road system within the community and enhance and preserve the scenic character of the streets, without sacrificing safety.
  - Utilize public/private partnerships to implement gateway features whereby private industries may incorporate corporate logos, etc. within the gateway improvements in exchange for sharing in the costs of implementation and maintenance.
  - The use of direct and indirect lighting and other signage/branding elements should be incorporated in these locations to reinforce the strengths and unique qualities of Highland.
7. Improve pedestrian circulation by continuing sidewalk improvement efforts and establish a new sidewalk program as well as implementing trail and bicycle facilities.
8. Consider the establishment of designated truck routes to help prevent the premature deterioration of City streets.
9. Explore and encourage other options of public transportation uses and facilities.
10. **Ongoing Maintenance.** Continue to repair potholes, dips and provide ongoing resurfacing and road replacement as needed.
11. **Complete the installation of sidewalks City-wide.** Continue to seek funding, right-of-way, materials and installation assistance to facilitate the construction of new sidewalks and the rehabilitation of old sidewalks. Make it a priority to provide sidewalks to connect schools, parks, commercial district and other major destinations to Highland's neighborhoods.
12. **Parking:** Address parking problems at the Square. The use of signage and enhancing the streetscape leading to parking areas near the Square is recommended to help enhance the downtown experience and dispel the perception that parking is a problem downtown (when in reality, customers would walk the same distances or further at the mall or big box stores).
13. **Transit:** Continue working with State and regional partners to take advantage of any funding or other programs that would make it feasible to bring mass transit to the Highland area.
14. **Future Planning:** This plan recommends the City take a holistic approach to future transportation planning by considering land use, transportation, economic development, environmental quality, and community aesthetics in all transportation decisions to ensure planned improvements meet today's needs without compromising the ability to address the needs of future generations.



### **Section 2.20 Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure**

Public utilities and infrastructure include, but are not limited to water, sewer, electric, fiber, stormwater, code enforcement, fire, parks, and other community services. Public services and utilities are provided directly by Highland, through the private sector or through other governmental agencies.

#### **Public Services, Utilities, & Infrastructure Critical Issues**

According to information gathered during the public engagement process, generally, the existing utilities and public facilities meet the City's current needs. However, the City's public utility infrastructure is aging and will require improvements in order to meet future growth and increased demands. Participants in the public engagement process would like the city to focus on incremental updates and ongoing maintenance of the City's existing water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure to avoid costly emergency replacements and associated repairs/replacements. While the ongoing maintenance and future improvements to the City's infrastructure have significant costs associated with them, this City should avoid increasing utility rates to existing customers.

**Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure Goal:** Ensure existing and future facilities and services meet the needs of the citizens and business community and promote new economic development while being fiscally responsible.

#### **Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure Objectives and Implementation Strategies**

- 1. Incremental Improvements:** This Plan recommends the City provide continued investment in the City's infrastructure and services (water, sewer, electric, internet and telecommunications) to ensure quality, affordable utilities to serve Highland's present and future needs. Incremental upgrades to the city's aging infrastructure are recommended to avoid costly one-time expenditures and allow the city to spread the costs out over several years.
- 2.** Establish intergovernmental agreements with adjacent municipalities and special districts regarding municipal boundaries, land uses, and public services.
- 3.** Work cooperatively with the school districts to establish an adequate number and location for new schools to serve Highland's students, and create safe accessible pedestrian traffic access to the schools.
- 4.** Where possible, maintain municipal administrative services in the downtown area to serve as a major activity generator (anchor) to enhance the business climate.
- 5.** Develop 20-year utility master plans for all utilities.
- 6.** Identify areas that will provide Public Safety facilities to allow adequate response by emergency services within minutes.



7. Reviewing and evaluate existing public facilities and establish a maintenance policy/program.
8. Consider the feasibility of providing trash and recycling collection to reduce the overall cost of waste hauling to each household.
9. Promote incremental upgrades to police and fire facilities, equipment, vehicles and ongoing training. This Plan recommends the following implementation strategies:
  - Provide upgrades as needed to police and fire facilities to ensure they provide the necessary office, storage and equipment needs.
  - Develop an emergency preparedness manual, co-authored by each department head or chief, and adopted into city policy.
10. Concentrate capital investments into areas that are contiguous to currently developed land and that is currently served by existing facilities.
11. Initiate development agreements that help pay for the direct and indirect costs of new infrastructure development and continue to plan and budget for near-term capital improvements.
12. Hire an additional code enforcement officer to increase the presence of code enforcement and administer the consistent enforcement of city codes.
13. This plan recommends the City pursue grant funds and low-interest loans to help cover the costs of future utility and infrastructure improvements.

**Electric System Goals & Objectives**

1. To continue updating and implementing an overall electric system plan that meets growth demands for the next 20 years.
2. Install a second 138/34.5KV main substation transformer for system redundancy and future system growth.
3. Continue upgrade and modernization of the electrical and generating systems. Upgrading line capacity, converting the older 2.4KV distribution circuits to 13.2KV, replacing deteriorated poles, installing automation and monitoring capability, and maintaining generators at a high state of operational readiness are on-going and critical to maintaining the best service possible for the community.
4. Investigate and implement appropriate “Smart Grid” technologies which will allow us to better monitor our system and proactively address issues as they arise.
5. Continue to expand public awareness programs regarding energy use and conservation.
6. Plan and prepare for a new Northwest Quadrant Substation which will allow us to supply key customers with redundant electric sources and provide the flexibility necessary to perform substation maintenance without creating planned outages.

***Chapter 2: Critical Issues, Vision, Goals & Objectives***

7. Strive to maintain, improve, and expand The City of Highland Electrical Distribution System to meet and exceed the electrical requirements and expectations of our customers.
8. Bury utility lines wherever possible and encourage the use of attractive poles to mitigate the appearance of above-grade utility lines.

**Highland Communication Services Goals & Objectives**

1. Maintain a Fiber Optic System that provides high quality Television, Internet and Telephone services; and to provide “hometown” service to the Highland Community.
2. Complete outside plant to service all City of Highland Electrical Customers.
3. Continually look for alternative revenue streams such as selling content to nearby communities, leasing dark fiber, leasing rack space, etc.
4. Continually improve and upgrade HCS services as technology advances to ensure the Community of Highland receives state-of-the-art services.
5. Increase customer base to 5000 active customers.
6. Attract businesses that need large amounts of bandwidth such as; Data Centers, Call Centers, etc. to help the economic growth of Highland.
7. Use profits generated by HCS to invest back into the City of Highland community projects.
8. Research and implement technologies that enhance the HCS Fiber System.

**Water & Sewer Goals & Objectives**

1. Plan for and perform incremental replacement of old water lines and routine maintenance to the City’s water supply, treatment and storage facilities.
2. Plan for and perform incremental replacement of old sanitary lines and ongoing maintenance and improvements to the City’s sanitary collection system to meet current and anticipated regulations.
3. Develop a program to replace existing older undersized and problematic mains and loop dead ends.
4. Upgrade system controls and equipment in the water treatment plant.
5. Complete a Comprehensive Sanitary Sewer Collection Analysis for prioritizing improvements to existing sewer mains, address inflow and infiltration, manhole rehabilitation, and new trunk main infrastructure.
6. Purchase property for the water reclamation plant’s expansion and buffer protection.
7. To expand both water and wastewater system responsibly for new developments.



8. Continue providing customers with adequate, safe drinking water and efficient and reliable sewers.

**Emergency Medical Services Goals & Objectives**

1. To provide the highest level of emergency medical care to the citizens of Highland, Pierron, St. Jacob, St. Rose and Grantfork areas and enhancing their quality of life.
2. Construct new fire / EMS station on north side of City
3. Maintain efficient ambulance response times
4. Hire additional staff to meet the needs and expectations of our citizens
5. Strengthen hospital / EMS relationship
6. Expand community education programs
7. Maintain relationships with contracted fire districts.

**Fire Protection Goals & Objectives**

1. Continue recruitment programs for volunteers
2. Update pre-planning and implement fire inspections
3. Do fire safety programs for the community
4. Work on maintaining the current ISO rating of 4 and lowering it to a 3
5. Train with and keep strong ties with fire districts
6. Keep all equipment in response ready condition
7. Completion of a new Public Safety Center to house Police, Emergency Medical, and Fire Services
8. Continue working to achieve an ISO rating of 3.

**Police Protection Goals & Objectives**

1. Address facility needs. There is a three year plan in place to replace the current facility with a combined police/fire/EMS facility. Ten acres have already been purchased and a needs assessment is underway as of 2012.
2. Maintain adequate personnel. As of now the police department operates at times with a minimum staffing of two police officers on the street. The department is now looking at increasing minimum staffing to three officers for designated peak times. In order to continuously have a three officer minimum, and provide for leave time four additional officers will need to be added. Over the next ten years the need for an additional sworn

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supervisor will become more evident; this supervisor would be placed in a command position over other supervisors and will be able to occasionally fill in for absent supervisors. As the patrol division grows so will the need for additional patrol vehicles and associated expenses, i.e. training etc.

3. Continue to address communication / dispatch needs. Future police/fire dispatch needs are dependent upon the outcome of current County initiatives to centralize dispatch services. The City will choose to participate or not participate with a centralized dispatch based upon benefits and cost. As of this time it appears that some of the funds and equipment made available to local dispatch centers for E-911 may be reduced or eliminated if they choose not to centralize. If the City chooses to join centralized dispatch, additional building space within the police facility will be made available.
4. Maintain quality of equipment. The Highland Police Department has been fortunate in that it has been provided many of the most current tools available to law enforcement especially in regards to officer safety. The department needs to continually assess the condition of current equipment and consider timely replacement with financial soundness, such as the replacement of police vehicles before major and timely repairs occur. There must also be consideration towards new innovative products that should be evaluated as to its related service to the police department.
5. Continue to address City's ability to mitigate, respond to and recover from disasters. This calls for collaboration with City Departments, St. Joseph Hospital, community volunteers and County, State and Federal Governments.
6. Continue to explore funding alternatives such as grants for equipment and programs.
7. Provide the highest level of police service and remain fiscally responsible to the citizens of Highland.
8. Continue to meet the ever growing unfunded mandates directed by the State and Federal Government as they relate to law enforcement, emergency management and homeland security.

**Library Goals & Objectives**

1. Develop new strategic plan.
2. Increase marketing through regional media, Facebook, newsletters, service clubs, and utilizing Internet communication to send the community newsletters, announcements, and notifications.
3. Increase marketing through schools.
4. Continue to build the Library website.
5. Continue adult outreach by working with assisted living and nursing facilities.
6. Continue to provide excellent programs for a diverse audience.

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7. Improve accessibility and signage in the building.
8. Work with the Illinois State Library to begin digitization and preservation of local history and genealogical documents.
9. Seek additional funding through organizations, private donations, and other fundraising.
10. Relocate the board room to increase public space in the main library and provide public meeting space with technology upgrades in the new board room.
11. Replace single pane windows and doors and lighting with energy efficient ones.
12. Continue to upgrade technology.
13. Provide ongoing learning resources, information services and excellent programs that support and enhance the quality of life for individuals, families, and the community.

**Education Goals & Objectives**

1. Expand services while reducing costs.
2. Reduce dependence on outside revenue factors for funding daily operations.
3. Provide training for staff to help them utilize the latest technology in the classroom.
4. Maintain relationships with adjacent school districts to look at sharing resources.
5. To provide the best education at the most reasonable and affordable cost to the citizens.

**Healthcare Goals & Objectives**

1. Provide high quality, expanded and efficient healthcare services locally.
2. Provide streamlined, efficient, quality services care locally
3. Expand wellness and prevention opportunities
4. Provide local ancillary services to meet the needs and expectations of our citizens
5. Maintain/expand state of the art healthcare services
6. Maintain/strengthen relationships with physicians, Emergency Medical Services and other local hospitals
7. Continue working to contain cost of services
8. Enhance the quality of life of the community by providing excellent quality healthcare in an efficient and compassionate manner.

**Section 2.21 Future Growth and Annexation**

**Future Growth and Annexation Critical Issues**

1. The Highland Community strongly desires to retain its small town, family-friendly atmosphere, while recognizing the diverse and evolving needs and desires of its citizenry. In order to maintain Highland's high quality of life and improve economic stability, the City



must carefully consider future growth that does not stifle the City's ability to providing adequate municipal services and create an environment ripe for economic growth. The highest ranking commercial uses the community desires include:

1. Boutique Cafes, Coffee Houses, Ice Crème Parlors, Candy Shops.
2. Hospital, Clinic or Medical Related
3. Mixed-Use Lifestyle Shopping Center
4. Book Stores (family oriented)
5. Mixed-Residential aka- New Urbanism/TND (like New Town)
6. Restaurants-Sit-Down
7. Winery
8. Outdoor Dining & Entertainment
9. Active/Senior Living
10. Retail

**Future Growth & Annexation Goal:** Promote future growth, development and human activities that are in balance with the environment and minimizes its impact on natural, historical, agricultural and cultural resources.....***“Progress with Tradition”***

### **Future Growth & Annexation Objective and Implementation Strategies**

1. **Commercial:** Encourage commercial reinvestment in the city's existing commercial districts. Annex commercial growth areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
2. **Industrial:** Encourage new industrial development as shown on the Future Land Use Map; however, prioritize industrial locations in the existing platted industrially zoned areas which are already served by improved roads and infrastructure prior to permitting new industrial sites. Develop and promote “shovel ready” sites for future industrial development in the City's exiting industrial areas.
3. **Residential:** Preserving and stabilizing the City's existing, well established neighborhoods should be a priority. This plan also recommends the following residential stabilization and future growth strategies:
  - Annex residential growth areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
  - Develop better ordinances and code enforcement policies to more effectively address absentee landlord issues.
  - Facilitate affordable housing for first-time home-buyers on infill lots within the City or where lots are created due to the demolition of an existing home.

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4. **Downtown:** Utilize vacant buildings and underutilized lots to accommodate prospective businesses, entertainment and residential units.
  - Promote reinvestment in the existing building stock and infrastructure in and around the downtown. The City has done a good job so far, but the success of downtown will require ongoing historic preservation and revitalization efforts.
  - Encourage the development and redevelopment of lofts downtown.
5. **Annexation:** Facilitate future annexations that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the future growth and annexation goals, objectives and implementation strategies contained herein. Pursue and execute preannexation agreements with property owners to facilitate the annexation and future land use goals of this Plan.
6. **Recreational/Vacation Housing:** Consider a planned weekend getaway community for limited residential living and second homes/chalets – like Innsbrook in Warren County, MO. Consider incorporating winery in these plans.
7. **Farmland & Open Space Preservation:** Preserve the areas’ agricultural land, open spaces and other resources that characterize Highland’s small town atmosphere, agrarian roots and make Highland a great place to live.
8. **Zoning:** Adopt and enforce zoning to promote planned growth and encourage commercial, residential and industrial growth in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan. All rezoning applications or development plans should be reviewed for consistency with this Plan and the City’s Zoning Ordinance.
9. **Sustainability:** Promote compact, low impact development throughout the community that addresses the following land use principals.
  - Low impact development (LID) is development that utilizes green building and site design strategies to reduce its impact on the environment. Examples include “restorative development” (improving an existing home or building); “redevelopment” (demolishing a building or home that has outlived its usefulness and replacing it with a new building) and “infill development” (constructing a home or building on an empty lot along an existing developed block). Low impact development uses Best Management Practices (BMP). Examples of BMP include the use of rain gardens, alternative energy (i.e. solar), well insulated windows, walls and roofs, high efficiency HVAC, geothermal and compact building and site design.
  - Compactness can be achieved by building up (vertical) instead of out (horizontal) and by encouraging development within or adjacent to developed areas rather than allowing “leap-frog” development, which skips over large tracts of undeveloped land.
  - This Plan recommends the above LID, BMP and compact development strategies and also recommends clustering future development and uses which have the greatest need for fire and police protection. Clustering uses increases service delivery efficiency by concentrating the need for services and infrastructure and minimizing the length of utility runs, streets/sidewalks and other infrastructure costs and public



services (police, fire, code enforcement, etc.). This plan recommends updating the City's subdivision code to include these concepts.

- Ensure all development utilize the City-wide Resource Plan and design all new development to create a minimum disturbance to natural drainage patterns, natural landscape, vegetation, and the ability of land to absorb rainfall and prevent erosion.
- Use regional or planned development techniques to reduce floodplain development by transferring density to non-flood areas.
- Encourage land use patterns which preserve the integrity of existing environmental corridors as a means of natural erosion control and protecting the environmental quality of the community.
- Establish minimum setback and buffer areas along creeks, streams, and wetlands to reduce the impact of development on water quality while preserving existing trees and vegetation, and provide additional trees and vegetation where necessary.
- Ensure that all new developments provide storm water retention capacity equal to the capacity displaced by that development and whenever possible, safe, and practical, retention areas should be set aside for recreational uses.
- Participate in regional storm water planning and utilize regional storm water detention/retention programs.



## **Vision, Goals & Objectives Summary**

This Plan calls for balanced and carefully considered growth, downtown revitalization and economic stabilization. The intent of the Plan is to protect Highland's rural character and promote economic development that creates jobs while protecting the City's revenues to ensure they remain reliable for the long-term. It foresees:

- Commercial redevelopment focused along the City's existing commercial corridors and commercial districts;
- Preservation and continued revitalization of the City's historic downtown (the Square);
- Promote existing Highland businesses and recruit key industries to the City's commercial and industrial areas;
- Preserving and diversifying the city's housing stock to provide a wide variety of housing options while addressing conditions associated with substandard housing;
- Improving pedestrian and bicycle accessibility;
- Preserving the City's small town atmosphere while maintaining the current level of public services, quality of the City's schools, family-friendly activities, parks, recreational programs and seasonal events;
- Protecting the quality of life in Highland by maintaining high standards of living and working conditions;

Expectations for the implementation of this Plan need to be placed in a realistic context. The goals and objectives will not be obtained overnight. Economic and financial conditions have slowed or in some markets brought new development and redevelopment to a standstill. As a result, major development or changes will take time and considerable coordination. As the economy recovers it will become more economically viable for development to occur. This development, in some cases, will create synergies that could create additional opportunities and challenges. The goals and objectives contained herein should be viewed as plan of action that will become reality through daily, incremental implementation efforts executed over the next several years. This plan recommends building for the coming era, not the last one; think "long life, loose fit" when making future development or financial decisions.

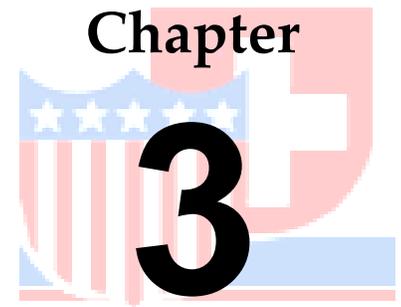
The foundation of the plan rests on the belief that Highland will do what is necessary to respond to changing market demands, accommodate new trends in land use and seize the opportunity to improve downtown, create jobs, compete regionally for industrial and commercial businesses and attract tourists. The community is already taking an active role in the new hospital, revitalizing downtown Highland, investing in the City's transportation system and providing access to quality public utilities. The Plan recognizes that if Highland does not proactively position itself to take advantage of, or even create economic development opportunities, they will occur elsewhere and Highland will see a decline in both its financial situation and the financial situation of businesses located in Highland.

The City must explore partnerships with other entities and governmental jurisdictions to assure that the Plan is not negatively impacted and that growth is being managed as noted in the Plan.  
**2013 Highland, IL Comprehensive Plan as Amended March 20, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2773,  
and as Amended (Map Only) May 15, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2787**



In many instances the recommendations of the plan can only be achieved through cooperation of property owners and through the development review process on a site by site basis. One such example would be the areas noted as floodplain, which could be designated “conservation areas,” consisting of greenspace and woodlands along creek corridors. Many of these areas, if acquired by the public could be linked as recommended in the plan and connect into the “Master Trail Plan”. These corridors would provide additional opportunities for pedestrian/bike paths and protect high quality environmental habitats, thus enhancing the image and quality of life in Highland, which is a key objective of the plan.

Highland is well known for its excellent schools, parks, low property taxes and small town, family-oriented atmosphere. To maintain and enhance these highly valued assets, the City must continue providing excellent municipal services and develop innovative approaches to encourage on-going investment within the community’s industrial parks, downtown and residential neighborhoods.



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## **Introduction**

### **Section 3.1 Purpose**

The Future Land Use Plan serves as a guide for the planned and orderly growth of the City of Highland. The Plan includes the Future Land Use Map, Future Land Use Matrix and supporting text, all of which must be considered when making decisions regarding land use. The future land use recommendations were developed with consideration given to the comments recorded during the public engagement process and collaboration with Highland's elected and appointed officials. The future land use recommendations also consider the compatibility of various land uses, past patterns of growth, the latest development trends and promote land use decisions that help achieve the community's vision to:

***“Make Highland a great place to live, work and play by preserving Highland’s small town, family-friendly atmosphere and increasing the confidence to invest in the city.”***

For the purposes of guiding future land use and preservation decisions, the planning area has been subdivided into various land use categories. The colored areas shown on the Future Land Use Map include all land within the city plus areas identified by the community as desirable for annexation. The future land use categories include.

- Non-Urban
- Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Multiple-Family Residential
- Downtown
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Mixed Use

The Plan anticipates population stabilization and modest restorative development activity provided the long-range goals of this plan are implemented incrementally. The Future Land Use Plan and Map provide the framework to assist the City in planning and regulating future land use and development. Both depict conditions that are generally consistent with existing development patterns and identifies areas for future growth, development or preservation. Zoning changes, land subdivisions, new development and redevelopment should be reviewed for consistency with this Plan as well as the Citywide Resource Plan.

*Chapter 3: Future Land Use & Transportation Plan*

<b>Future Land Use Matrix</b>		
<b>Future Residential Land Use Categories</b>		
<b>Description (Zoning Equivalent)</b>	<b>Density</b>	<b>Recommended Uses</b>
<b>Non-Urban</b> (R-1A, PUD)	Average minimum lot size: No more than 1 dwelling unit per 3 acres.	-Agricultural -Single Family Detached -Conservation Subdivisions -Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Areas designated as “Non-Urban” are primarily agricultural areas located outside the City and not connected to the city’s utilities or served by paved roads and areas within the City limits adjacent to Silver Lake. Uses should be limited to existing agricultural and low density residential uses, new single-family homes located on lots greater than 3 acres and future parks and public recreation areas. Smaller residential lots are recommended on a case by case basis as approved by the City Council as part of a Planning Unit Development (PUD). The cost to extend or improve utilities and roads should be the responsibility of the developer/homeowner and installed prior to the occupancy of any new homes.</p>		
<b>Residential- Single Family</b> (R-1A, R-1B, R-1C, R-1D, PUD)	Average minimum lot size: No less than 5,000 SF per dwelling.	-Single Family Detached -Conservation Subdivisions -Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Areas designated “Residential-Single Family” generally have access to infrastructure such as paved roads and connections to public utilities. Single family residential areas are intended for subdivisions containing an average lot size of 5,000 square feet or more with lots generally measuring at least 50’ in width. Cluster subdivisions are recommended as a planned use in areas that are served by city utilities. The cost to extend or improve utilities and roads should be shared by the developer and installed prior to the occupancy of any new home. Modular homes and cluster homes that blend with the surrounding homes with regard to density, materials and style are recommended as planned uses approved pursuant to the City’s PUD procedures. Homeownership is encouraged.</p>		
<b>Residential- Attached Single Family</b> (R-2A, R-2B, PUD)	Average minimum lot size: No less than 3,000 SF per dwelling unit.	-Single Family Detached -Single-Family Attached -1-4 Dwelling Units -Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Areas designated “Residential-Medium Density” generally consist of existing single-family and attached single-family homes. These areas are characterized by attached single-family homes built on lots containing approximately 3,000 square feet or more and a mix of residential styles and types. New development should follow similar patterns of growth and be served by municipal services, public roads and paved driveways. Modular homes, single-family attached dwellings (duplex and villas) and conservation subdivisions are recommended as planned uses approved pursuant to the City’s PUD procedures.</p>		

***Chapter 3: Future Land Use & Transportation Plan***

<p><b>Multi-Family Residential</b> (R2A, R2B, R3, PUD)</p>	<p>Average minimum lot size: No more than 10 dwelling units/acre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Duplex, permitted use.</li> <li>-Apartments</li> <li>-Zero Lot Line villas</li> <li>-Single Family Homes</li> <li>-Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> <li>-Parks</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated “Multi-Family Residential” generally contains attached single-family homes, apartments, group homes and senior living establishments. Areas designated Multi-Family Residential should be served by municipal utilities and infrastructure including sewer connections and paved streets. Any new use or major redevelopment of an existing multi-family structure should provide buffers between single family residential and non-residential uses and any improvements necessary to bring streets and other infrastructure into compliance with the City’s standards. Single or unified ownership and perpetual control and maintenance of any multi-family structure and common use areas (parking, playgrounds, drainage facilities, etc.) are encouraged.</p>		
<p><b>Downtown</b> “C-2”, “PUD”</p>	<p>Average minimum lot size: As approved by the Joint P&amp;Z Board &amp; City Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-1st Floor Retail-Comm.</li> <li>-2nd Floor Res/Office</li> <li>-Single-family residential</li> <li>-Single-family attached</li> <li>-Multifamily residential</li> <li>-Mixed Use</li> <li>-Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>The area designated “Downtown” should serve as a focal point for economic development and revitalization efforts. Downtown Highland is characterized by multilevel historic buildings containing a vertical mix of uses facing the Square. Downtown Highland consists of several blocks arranged along a grid pattern of roads generally centered around the Square. The Downtown area consists of a wide range of commercial and residential uses; some historic, some not. While the uses vary widely in the downtown, the scale, character and orientation of the buildings establish a level of continuity that differentiates the Square from other commercial districts. All new development or redevelopment should be compatible with the established character of Downtown Highland. Detailed architectural plans should be required to ensure the historic character of the downtown is maintained. Relief from the City’s parking requirements and other restrictions are recommended to encourage redevelopment efforts. The area designated “Downtown” extends well beyond the historic buildings surrounding the Square to include several blocks of residential neighborhoods and important commercial corridors.</p>		



***Chapter 3: Future Land Use & Transportation Plan***

<p><b>Mixed Use</b> "PUD"</p>	<p>Average minimum lot size: As approved by City Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Commercial &amp; Retail</li> <li>-Office, Medical</li> <li>-Residential Lofts, townhomes &amp; apartments</li> </ul>
<p>The mixed use development should integrate a variety of land uses including residential, office, retail, commercial and hospitality in a planned, campus-like development. All future development must include buffering/screening between any parcel zoned residential or being used for residential purposes to maintain the integrity of the rural-residential character of the area. Future development, including the installation of the interchange and ramps, shall minimize the impact on the adjacent neighborhoods. Consideration for Mixed Use developments shall be along Frank Watson Parkway, the Future160 / I 70 interchange, and other areas within the community where a transitional buffer between existing incompatible uses is beneficial.</p>		
<p><b>Commercial</b> "C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, PUD"</p>	<p>Average minimum lot size: As approved by the Joint P&amp;Z Board &amp; City Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Commercial &amp; Retail</li> <li>-Office</li> <li>-Medical</li> <li>-Mixed-Use</li> <li>-Parks &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated "Commercial" are located along major highways and predominately north of the historic downtown. Retail sales and services, office, financial uses, restaurants, entertainment, convenience stores and automobile-oriented sales and services are envisioned in these areas. Commercial developments should have direct access to a major road or Highway. Access control and monument signage (in lieu of pole signage) is recommended to minimize traffic and/or other visual and physical land use impacts. Smaller, less intense commercial uses should be directed to the downtown area or encouraged to be tenants in an existing development. Developments containing drive-through lanes or outdoor storage should require a special use permit. Requirements addressing signage, parking, buffering, screening, sidewalks and landscaping are recommended. Commercial development should be reviewed by the Joint Planning &amp; Zoning Board and approved by the City Council on a case by case basis.</p>		
<p><b>Industrial ("I", "PUD")</b></p>	<p>Average minimum lot size: As approved by the Joint P&amp;Z Board &amp; City Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manufacturing / Assembly</li> <li>- Warehousing</li> <li>- Distribution</li> <li>- Outdoor Storage</li> <li>- Vehicle &amp; Equipment Sales</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated "Industrial" are intended for environmentally "clean" manufacturing and industrial operations, including warehousing, transportation and distribution related uses. All industrial uses should provide on-site buffering to screen negative operational impacts from any property zoned residential or being used for residential purposes. All uses that include the storage of inoperable automobiles, boats, RVs or other such inoperable equipment should contain sight proof screening, approved by the City.</p>		



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<b>Public/Institutional</b>	Average minimum lot size: As approved by the Joint P&Z Board & City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Schools</li> <li>-Churches</li> <li>-Libraries</li> <li>-Government Facilities</li> <li>-Public and Private Parks</li> <li>- Parks &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Public/Institutional uses, such as schools, community centers, pools, parks or any similar use or mix of similar uses should be allowed in all future land use categories, subject to City approval, provided the applicable zoning and design criteria are met for each use. All public and quasi-public uses and facilities should provide access to arterials, public transportation and be served by municipal utilities. Sites designated as Public/Institutional that are no longer used for public purposes shall revert back to the land use designation of the adjacent properties pursuant to the City's rezoning requirements.</p>		



## **Future Land Use Plan**

The following sections provide a more detailed description of each of the future land use categories followed by recommended strategies designed to help achieve the vision, goals and objectives of this Plan. By implementing these strategies and avoiding low-density single-family subdivisions and strip centers that lack connectivity, usable open space and the efficient use of infrastructure, the City of Highland can grow responsibly while maintaining its small town character.

### **Section 3.2 Non-Urban**

The majority of the planning area is designated “Non-Urban”. The Non-Urban category includes rural residential properties, agricultural uses, land adjacent to Silver Lake and undeveloped land generally outside the City limits, but within the City’s territorial boundaries. The City has jurisdiction over the subdivision of land within 1.5 miles from the city limits. The Non-Urban land use classification is intended to manage growth and preserve the natural resources within the planning area, which includes vast areas of prime agricultural land, significant wooded areas, natural corridors, Silver Lake and several tributaries, channels and riparian areas. Uses recommended in the “Non-Urban” areas should be limited to existing agriculture uses or agriculturally related uses, single-family detached residential dwellings, parks and institutions. Multiple-family development should not be located in areas designated “Non-Urban”. Conservation/cluster subdivisions are recommended where utilities are provided and substantial portions of the site can be preserved when approved pursuant to the City’s Planned Unit Development (PUD) procedures.

The areas anticipated for future urban development are categorized under one of the city’s future industrial, commercial or residential land use categories. The “non-urban” land use designation is used herein as a tool to minimize the impact of growth and development, preserve irreplaceable open space & income generating farmland. Urban development is discouraged in areas designated non-urban, such development should therefore be directed to land that has already been disturbed/developed and served by publicly provided roads and infrastructure. The areas designated “Non-Urban” are depicted on the *Future Land Use Map*.

### **Implementation Strategies**

1. Preserve Highland’s farmland, open space, floodplain and scenic vistas.
2. Direct future development to areas already disturbed by human activity.
3. Limit development of land designated non-urban to agriculture uses or agriculturally related uses, low density residential dwellings and parks.
4. Areas not served by city sewer or water should provide at least three (3) acres per house lot.

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5. Areas served by publicly provided sewer and water may be developed at a higher density pursuant to the principals of conservation subdivision design provided in this Plan. Conservation subdivisions are recommended as a tool to help preserve sensitive natural areas on sites served by publicly provided sewer and water. Conservation subdivisions shall be approved via the City's PUD procedures.

**Section 3.3 Single-Family Residential**

Areas designated "Single-Family Residential" are characterized by existing single-family dwellings that are already built at a density of approximately 6-8 dwellings per acre with lots generally ranging between 6,000 to 10,000 square feet in area. Future single-family residential development should be located in planned clusters of single-family dwellings consisting of complimentary construction materials, massing and densities. Areas designated "Single-Family Residential" should be limited to single-family detached residential dwellings, public parks and open space. All proposed residential development that is not served by city sewer or water should provide at least three (3) acres per house lot, or as required by the City's subdivision ordinance.

Single family residential infill opportunities in the city's older neighborhoods exist wherever housing has slipped into disrepair and no longer meet today's housing needs. Well planned infill in these locations serve two urban renewal objectives; eliminating older, outmoded homes; and replenishing the City's housing stock with affordable housing types that are well connected to the City's central business district. Future development of any area designated "Single-Family Residential" should be consistent with the City's "R-1A, R-1B, R-1C and R-1D Single-Family Residential Zoning Districts. Homeownership is encouraged in all areas designated "Residential".

**Implementation Strategies**

1. Areas that are presently being used for residential purposes should remain residential, unless identified with a different land use category on the Future Land Use Map.
2. Promote restorative residential development in the form of In-fill, tear-down or redevelopment projects within the city's established neighborhoods to help revitalize, modernize and expand the city's housing stock.
3. All in-fill and redevelopment proposals should be consistent with the surrounding residential neighborhood and blend with the surrounding land uses with regard to general character, density, structure height and setbacks.
4. When developing in or adjacent to established neighborhoods containing larger lots than those proposed, the proposed lot sizes should best represent the existing neighborhood lot sizes and densities adjacent to the development and transition to smaller lot sizes within the interior of the proposed subdivision.

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5. Update the City's Zoning code to allow waivers, on a case by case basis, for the required front yard setback for infill redevelopment. For example, if an existing dwelling structure has a front yard setback of 20 feet, then the new building should have a front yard setback between 15 and 25 feet. If there is more than one dwelling structure fronting on the same street within 50' of the site, then an average measurement should be taken of the setbacks of the impacted dwelling structures.
6. Consider allowing an increase in density for infill development to help off-set the cost of development and compensate for added site features or other amenities.
7. Promote continued development of quality neighborhoods that reinforce Highland's small town character and family values.
8. Encourage a variety of new single family subdivision designs and housing types to include cluster/conservation, traditional design/new urbanism and conventional large lot subdivisions. A range of housing choices is needed to meet the needs of residents of differing economic levels, age groups and lifestyles. Diversifying the housing stock is recommended so people can "age in place" rather than moving outside the city at any given stage of the life cycle. Neighborhoods should offer a choice of well-designed and low maintenance housing types, sizes and values.
9. Relate the size (bulk) and proportions of new structures to the scale of adjacent buildings. Avoid buildings that violate the existing scale of the area in height, width, or massing.
10. Establish standards for maintenance of all residential structures and yards to specifically address derelict properties and substandard homes and promote preventative maintenance and increase the confidence to invest.
11. Promote Conservation Subdivision Design. While the city's future residential growth areas are largely undeveloped, they contain precious agricultural land and sensitive natural areas that should be preserved. Conservation subdivision design techniques can be used to help preserve these natural areas while permitting residential densities that are consistent with the City's underlying residential zoning districts.

Conservation subdivisions allow relief to conventional lot and setback dimensions thereby allowing the developer to maintain the same density as a conventional subdivision. This is a concept known as "density neutral". The biggest difference between a conventional subdivision and a conservation or cluster subdivision is that a conservation subdivision preserves up to 50% of the development site. This is accomplished by minimizing the development footprint by building compact subdivisions with smaller lots, smaller building footprints and leaving vast areas undisturbed. Lake and golf course developments follow the same subdivision design concept as conservation subdivisions. Conservation subdivisions would require relief from the City's minimum lot sizes and setbacks. Whenever development is proposed containing environmentally sensitive lands, the

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principals of conservation subdivision design should be followed to minimize the development impact. The land conserved as a result of conservation subdivision design should be dedicated in perpetuity as undeveloped common ground, farmland or open space. This Plan recommends utilizing the City's existing PUD District requirements and procedures to guide the plan review process for conservation subdivision and incorporating conservation subdivision design guidelines as part of a Subdivision Ordinance. Figure 3.01 illustrates the difference between conventional and cluster subdivision design.

**Figure 3.01 Conventional Subdivision Design Versus Cluster Subdivision Design**



Source: Randall Arendt- "Conservation Subdivisions"

**Section 3.4 Attached Single-Family**

This land use category promotes a residential character of low to medium density residences on lots where adequate public sewer and water systems exist or can be made

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available. While anticipated to contain primarily single-family detached housing, well planned governmental, educational, religious, and recreational uses are also appropriate in these areas. The intent is to provide a range of single-family residential subdivisions on fully improved lots that respect the natural topography and vegetation, and offer amenities to foster quality neighborhoods.

The majority of the areas designated “Attached Single-Family Residential” have already been developed with or adjacent to single-family attached dwellings, multi-family dwellings or single-family homes on smaller lots. New or redeveloped attached single family buildings should not consist of more than four (4) dwelling units and should be located on lots consisting of at least 7,000 square feet (3,500 square feet per dwelling unit) or as required by the City’s Zoning Code. Areas designated “Attached Single-Family” should be limited to attached single-family dwellings (villas, duplexes and townhomes) where shared wall (zero side setbacks) is permitted.

In-fill, tear-down or redevelopment of existing attached single-family dwellings and parcels zoned for attached single family dwellings is recommended where such activities are needed to help revitalize, modernize and expand the city’s housing stock with attached single family dwellings. All in-fill and redevelopment proposals should be consistent with the adjacent uses and blend with the surrounding buildings with regard to general character, density, structure height and setbacks. Single-family dwellings should be permitted in areas designated single family attached when permitted by the governing Zoning District they are located. Multifamily dwellings should not be permitted in areas designated Attached Single-Family, unless otherwise permitted by the Zoning District the multifamily structure is located. Future development intended for the areas designated “Attached Single-Family Residential” on the Future Land Use Map shall be consistent with the City’s “R-2A and R-2B” Zoning Districts requirements. Homeownership is encouraged.

**Implementation Strategies**

1. Promote higher density residential development north of the High School and in strategic locations that are already developed with higher density residential structures or zoned for higher density residential uses.
2. Promote higher density residential development in locations that offer good access to the City’s transportation system and provide connections to the City’s downtown, schools, churches, businesses and parks.
3. All buildings should be designed using exterior building materials and architectural massing that are complimentary to adjacent dwellings.
4. The site design and architectural recommendations for single family residential shall also apply to single-family attached uses.



### **Section 3.5 Multiple Family Residential Land Use**

This land use category allows for single-family attached residences such as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, villas, town-home buildings, and low rise multiple-family residences. This category allows for a higher density than the preceding residential categories thereby creating opportunities for people whose lifestyles benefit from common exterior maintenance and a more affordable housing alternative. This category may act as a transition between lower density residential categories and non-residential uses. The intent is to provide attached single-family and multiple-family residential (maximum of 4 units per building) with a net density less than or equal to 7.5 dwelling units per acre. Individual unit ownership is preferred.

Future multi-family development is recommended adjacent to existing multifamily structures and in areas where access to public utilities, roads, parks and other amenities are already provided or will be provided by the developer. All future multi-family development, redevelopment or in-fill development should be consistent with the character of the surrounding residential neighborhoods and blend with the surrounding land uses with regard to architectural character, density, structure height and bulk requirements. All future multi-family development adjacent to existing single family dwellings or land zoned for single family purposes should provide on-site buffering and screening. All future multi-family residential development shall have direct access to a major road (collector or higher). Future development intended for areas designated “Multiple Family” on the Future Land Use Map shall be consistent with the City’s “R-3” Multi-Family Zoning District.

#### **Implementation Strategies:**

1. Higher density is recommended to achieve a more affordable housing stock. Higher density housing results in less land per unit, less site preparation, less infrastructure and typically less finished floor area, all of which hold down the hard costs of housing.
2. Awnings, stoops, balconies and porches should be used to establish a connection between indoor and outdoor space.
3. All multi-family structures shall adhere to the design guidelines contained in Section 3.12.

### **Section 3.6 Commercial Land Use**

The Commercial land use category is intended to provide for a wide range of retail, personal service, general commercial, office and hospitality establishments that offer a wide range of goods and services for the convenience of the residents of Highland as well as attract consumers from the extended trade area. Most of the recent commercial development and redevelopment activity in Highland has occurred along areas with access and visibility to major highways (Highways 160, 143 and 40). The City should continue to support well-planned commercial development in areas that are already developed or zoned commercially and at strategic locations offering excellent access and visibility within the current city limits. Troxler Avenue, Sportsman Road and key nodes

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(intersections) along the Peripheral Route should be considered for future commercial development as shown on the Future Land Use Map. Property along the newly improved Troxler Avenue offer an excellent opportunity for new commercial development. The City should specifically target medical related uses and other complimentary businesses along this corridor and in close proximity to the new hospital. Such uses offer land use synergies where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

This plan recommends promoting the City's commercial areas as regional destinations for shopping, entertainment and hospitality. Recommended land uses include retail, financial, business, light manufacturing, office, commercial services, medical, hospitality, business park and any combination thereof. Future development intended for the areas designated "Commercial" on the Future Land Use Map should be consistent with the City's "C-1", "C-2", "C-3" and "C-4" Commercial Zoning District requirements.

**Implementation Strategies:**

1. Identify vacant buildings or vacant lots suitable for redevelopment and help the owners market them to select buyers and/or tenants.
2. Continue to recruit business development within the City's established TIF districts and implementing the goals and objectives of said districts.
3. Work with the County and State to establish an Enterprise Zone.
4. Expedite the demolition process for buildings that cannot be feasibly brought into code compliance, and as needed to protect the integrity of the city's commercial areas.
5. Update the City's zoning code to include procedures that encourage/ incentivize compact, mixed-use development on existing infill lots and regulate undesirable land use conditions.
6. Replace or retrofit old commercial structures by making them more compatible with the latest market trends, demands and promote energy efficiency.
7. Troxler Avenue, Sportsman Road and key nodes (intersections) along the Peripheral Route should be considered for future commercial development as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
8. Recruit medical related uses and other complimentary businesses along Troxler Avenue or near the new hospital.

**Section 3.7 Mixed-Use**

The only area designated for "Mixed Use" is located south of the proposed 160 / I-70 interchange, however, no such development is recommended until such time the proposed interchange is installed. The mixed use development should integrate a variety of land uses including residential, office, commercial, service, and employment typically



found near high traffic areas. This use must include buffering and open space between uses while maintaining the integrity of the rural-residential character of the area. Development agreements should be negotiated with property owners within this highly anticipated opportunity area to facilitate, first and foremost, the installation of the proposed interchange and the recruitment of a wide range of local, regional and national retailers, hotels, corporations and other complimentary uses to occupy the recommended mixed use area.

The latest trend in the retail market, prior to the economic downfall, was “Town Centers or Lifestyle Centers”. Town centers typically include residential dwellings, which bring “life” to the center and fashion-oriented boutique stores which give the center “style”. Lifestyle Centers are not just retail destinations. They provide a festival marketplace that includes entertainment, alfresco dining, unique shopping experiences, creative window displays as well as casual public settings that encourage civic-oriented activities such as meeting, mingling, strolling, exercising and people watching. Town Center designers have learned that the shops alone do not bring back repeat visitors. A successful town center needs quality public spaces that relate to an identifiable architectural theme and interactive storefronts that reinforce the human scale; these are the elements that are recommended to help attract repeat consumers/visitors.

Through good design and thoughtful tenant selection, mixed use developments can successfully integrate a wide range of land uses. The objective is to allow visitors to become citizens again and not feel like consumers, which in turn increases the length of visits to the site and the number of visits. Non-retail activities bring life to shopping districts around the clock and increases public accessibility, creating a spontaneous marketplace. The synergies created between complimentary tenants, well-planned site amenities and pedestrian activity can create a sense of place that visitors want to experience again and again. As a result, mixed use developments have become very successful and are gaining considerable popularity.

**Implementation Strategies:**

1. Develop a plan for immediate annexation of the area designed Mixed Use on the Future Land Use Plan including the 160 corridor that provides direct access to that area.
2. Encourage and promote the installation of a full service interchange at I-70 and 160.
3. Pursue development agreements with property owners to discourage land development that would otherwise interfere with the goals and objectives of this plan and suspend the development rights to the envisioned mixed use town center.
4. Once the interchange is approved, funded and scheduled for installation, promote the development of a lifestyle center or similar mixed-use. Lifestyle centers provide a diversity of shops and activities that compliment, rather than compete



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with, downtown businesses and big box retailers. A successful lifestyle center will increase the city’s share of the regional retail spending attracting consumers from a larger geographic region and limiting the need for local residents to travel outside the city for retail goods and services.

**Section 3.8 Downtown**

The area designated “Downtown” includes the original downtown as it was laid out as well as the surrounding neighborhoods and businesses. As long as people live, work, dine, shop, walk, celebrate and mingle Downtown, the downtown will continue to attract businesses and residents and be successful. This Plan views residential and commercial blocks adjacent to the Downtown Square as integral components of the Downtown, therefore these areas are included in the “Downtown” future land use category. The success of these residential neighborhoods and businesses are directly related to the success of Downtown.

Downtown Highland provides a rich inventory of historic buildings, quaint streetscapes and is centered at the crossroads of the busiest roadways in the City. These factors are responsible for both the success and struggles facing downtown Highland. As a result of the migration of commercial activity to urban areas and busy highways, Downtown Highland needs to be refocused to meet the demand for goods and services that these outlying commercial areas do not fulfill. New emphasis should be placed on residential lofts, cultural arts, shopping, and entertainment. Commercial uses recommended in downtown Highland include; specialty retail boutiques, restaurants, internet cafés, tea/coffee shops, spas, gyms, studios, art galleries, antique shops, theatres, parks, alfresco dining and hobby shops. Buildings are the most fundamental element of any downtown. They give Downtown Highland its character and attract people and their money- when the buildings are occupied, that is. Therefore, buildings should not be removed unless they are replaced with a structure or use of equal or higher aesthetic value as determined by the Joint Planning & Zoning Board. This plan recommends the following implementation strategies for Downtown:

**Implementation Recommendations**

1. Work to eliminate barriers, perceived or real, that might slow or deter the redevelopment process and facilitate ongoing successful revitalization efforts.
2. Pursue grants, technical assistance or tax credits to help fund the adaptive reuse or revitalization of historic or architecturally significant structures or sites.
3. Promote the adaptive reuse and revitalization of the city’s older buildings and homes.



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4. Eliminate dilapidated buildings or facilitate steps toward code compliance and reinvestment. Work with the owners of any vacant lot or building to facilitate beautification efforts and initiate the redevelopment process.
5. Market downtown Highland as the premier location for loft-living and as the cultural, entertainment, recreation and hospitality center of the region. Housing will attract residents (consumers) that will support downtown businesses and make the downtown feel livable, safe and vital.
6. Develop zoning procedures and development incentives to encourage horizontal and vertical mixed-use revitalization efforts and redevelopment and permit mixed use, including lofts, live-work units and relief from parking requirements. One recommended strategy for implementation is the development of a historic downtown overlay district.
7. Give people a reason to come downtown. People are the best way of attracting other people.
8. Continue the successful streetscape enhancements and continue evaluating the conditions of sidewalks, streets and parking area to ensure proper lighting, street furniture, banners, signage and curb/gutter are provided. The downtown area should be festive during all seasons. Trees and light poles in the Downtown area should be decorated for the winter holidays and colorful flags hung from lampposts are recommended seasonally to celebrate special occasions and seasonal changes.

**Section 3.9 Industrial**

Industrial development should be separated from residences and point-of-purchase retail sales. Industrial developments are typically of low design quality and may produce external effects that are incompatible with less intense uses, such as residential. Heavy truck traffic and high traffic volumes at shift changes are common in industrial areas. New industrial development should be directed to the areas designated Industrial on the Future Land Use Map. All future industrial uses should be reviewed for consistency with the design guidelines contained herein. The future Industrial land use category includes a wide range of industrial uses including warehousing, light manufacturing, distribution, office warehouse, contractor yards, motor vehicle repair, wholesale uses and business parks. The City should annex the industrial areas east and west of the city limits along Highway 40 as shown on the Future Land Use Map, to accommodate future industrial growth. This area provides excellent highway access and is surrounded by similar uses. Directing future industrial growth in these areas will consolidate the City industrial development in areas that are already impacted by industrial uses and/or absent of residential development.

**Implementation Strategies:**

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1. Develop programs to attract clean industrial land-uses into the city's future industrial growth areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map. Targeted uses should include technology based enterprises, green industries, warehousing, light assembly, manufacturing and transportation distribution.
2. Develop an economic diversification policy that facilitates long term economic stability and reduces the City's economic dependence on a few industries.
3. All uses that include the storage of inoperable automobiles and other equipment should contain sight proof screening, approved by the City.
4. Future development intended for the areas designated "Industrial" on the Future Land Use Map, should fall under the City's "I" Industrial District.

**Section 3.10 Public/Institutional**

This category includes uses owned and operated by a federal, state, or local government including schools, maintenance facilities, parks and public cemeteries. Institutional uses are private uses that generally serve the public, including churches and private schools. The intent of this category is to allow public or quasi-public uses which provide educational, religious, medical, cultural, or social services. All public facilities and places of assembly should have direct access to a major roadway and employ the use of alternate access roadways. Institutional uses should be permitted in most future land use categories, subject to site plan review and compliance with the applicable zoning and design regulations. If an institutional land use stops being used as an institutional use, the future land use category should revert to the adjacent future land use classification. In the event there are two adjoining uses, the most restrictive use should apply. The following institutional and public improvements are recommended;

**Implementation Strategies**

1. Develop a future infrastructure plan to extend utilities in the city's anticipated annexation areas.
2. Continue improving emergency preparedness/first responder plans relating to homeland security and natural disasters and other acts of God.
3. Promote, expand and continue ongoing maintenance in the City's Parks.
4. Promote, expand and continue support of the Gateway Trails Plan.
5. Develop strategies to increase the utilization and generate more revenue at the City-owned park & recreation facilities and community events. Develop a plan which addresses the location, acquisition of land, and financing for future improvements.

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6. Utilize conservation easements and other preservation techniques to implement the goals and objectives of the Citywide Resource Plan.
7. Adhere to the “Sustainability” goals and objectives contained in Chapter 2 Section 2.21(9) regarding Low Impact Development (LID), Best Management Practices (BMP), energy efficiency, alternative energy and all other applicable recommendations.

**Section 3.11 Gateways**

Primary points of entrance, major intersections and key points of interest are often a visitor’s first and most lasting impression of a city. These areas function as “gateways” and should be aesthetically improved to positively influence visitors’ perceptions of a place. The planning and design considerations given to gateways should be based upon a hierarchy of importance, based upon purpose, location, traffic volumes, street function and visibility. As such, gateways should be identified as primary, secondary and transition gateways.

The locations of the existing “Welcome to Highland” signs should be the locations for future “primary gateway” enhancements. The recommended gateway enhancements should be designed to reflect the heritage and/or the social or physical characteristics of Highland and to make a lasting impression. Features used for primary gateways may include:

1. Landscaping to accent the proposed gateway features. A consistent landscape theme is recommended that includes the use of a particular tree, bush or flower that is or can be used as a symbol for Highland.
2. A prominent feature such as large-scale public art, statuary, fountains, gardens or park-like settings;
3. A building or structure of special architectural significance. The Gateway Arch is the most famous local example of a regional gateway feature of architectural significance. Local landmarks, welcoming centers, museums and other prominent civic buildings or significant architectural features may constitute a primary gateway. If a building or structure is proposed, special consideration should be given to the building orientation, design and material selection.
4. Signage to clearly identify entrance into Highland. Brick, stone or other high-quality materials and the city crest/logo should be incorporated into the signage to further establish the gateway; and

The primary gateway recommended at I-70 and 160 should include a combination of the above elements and should be designed along a common theme. In addition to the I-70/Route 160 primary gateway feature, this plan recommends continuing the gateway design theme along Route 160, leading all the way to the square. The recommended improvements include:

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1. Installing a landscaped median along various sections of 160 to Troxler Avenue;
2. Creating a linear park and multi-purpose trail meandering along Route 160;
3. Providing street trees along both sides of 160 and within the recommended median;
4. Providing pedestrian lighting along both side of 160 and along the recommended multi-purpose trail;

The desired end result would be an artistic and memorable primary gateway feature at the interchange that would be “tied” to the Square via a liner park-like boulevard (Route 160) that supports a variety of travel modes and activities.

The city should work closely with local developers to ensure that adequate aesthetic considerations are given in the development of the recommended primary gateway and associated streetscape improvements. The City should develop incentives that encourage the private sector to fund the acquisition, installation and ongoing maintenance of the gateway and streetscape features. For example, in exchange for the design, installation and maintenance of a gateway feature, the City might allow a private citizen, group or business to be publicly recognized within the design of the gateway in a manner similar to the adopt a highway program. The City may also want to launch a design competition to solicit ideas for the best or most appropriate primary gateway feature.

**Section 3.12 Design Guidelines**

The following Design and Development Guidelines have been established to assist the City of Highland, its business owners and potential developers in maintaining a preferred character of the community as they plan for new development or redevelopment. The purpose of such guidelines is not to dictate a specific development style for the City, but rather establish a set of design and development standards that should be encouraged. While this plan does not dictate a particular architectural style, the repetitive use of the same architectural design, massing, color or materials should be avoided. Architectural features that call undue attention to themselves or create visual clutter should also be avoided. The design recommendations of this plan seeks to create visual and physical continuity within all the city’s neighborhoods and business districts as well as creating settle and/or discreet transition between dissimilar uses or structures. Landscape buffering and/or other means of screening is recommended where the transition of such uses or building cannot be achieved by architectural design alone.

The Design and Development Guidelines described herein are intended as tools for communicating the design intent for future development, redevelopment, and renovation; they also serve as a tool for evaluating proposals presented to the City. The overall goal **2013 Highland, IL Comprehensive Plan as Amended March 20, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2773, and as Amended (Map Only) May 15, 2017 by Ordinance No. 2787**

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is to ensure quality development that employs sound planning design principles. The successful implementation of these guidelines will reinforce the unique image of Highland as a community and inviting place to live, work, shop, and gather. The Design and Development Guidelines are arranged to address the following land uses:

**Section 3.13 Commercial & Industrial**

**Site Planning Principles**

1. Structures and on-site circulation systems should be located to minimize pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and provide cross-access to adjacent properties.
2. Buildings should be oriented with the primary entry facing the street.
3. Building setbacks should be provided proportionate to the scale of the structure and in consideration of existing development adjacent to it. Larger structures require more setback area for a balance of scale.
4. Where proposed uses are adjacent to dissimilar or incompatible uses, appropriate buffering techniques such as setbacks, screening and landscaping need to be provided to mitigate any negative effects of such operations.
5. In order to encourage natural drainage measures, parking lot designs and construction should incorporate the use of drainage swales, vegetated filter strips, and other natural drainage approaches - in contrast to storm sewers, lined channels, and curbs and gutters. Such measures will help to reduce runoff volumes and greatly enhance the removal of damaging pollutants from runoff water. Highland should strive to maintain the natural drainage system, including natural stream channels, wetlands, and floodplains.

**Parking and Circulation**

1. Common driveways which provide vehicular access to more than one site are encouraged.
2. Parking areas should be landscaped, within the interior as well as perimeter areas.
3. Parking access points, whether located on front or side streets must be located as far as possible from street intersections so that adequate stacking room is provided.
4. The number of access points should be limited to the minimum amount necessary to provide adequate circulation. Whenever practical, shared parking between adjacent businesses and/or developments is encouraged.
5. Drive aisle “throats” should be of sufficient depth to avoid vehicle stacking into the street or interfere with on-site circulation.

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6. In order to minimize large expanses of pavement, parking areas are encouraged to be broken up into modules separated by landscaping and other features.
7. Entrances and exits to and from parking and loading facilities should be clearly marked with appropriate directional signage where multiple access points are provided.
8. Vehicles should not be required to enter the street in order to move from one area to another on the same site.
9. Parking lots adjacent to and visible from public streets should be adequately screened from view through the use of rolling earth berms, low screen walls, changes in elevation, landscaping or combinations thereof whenever possible.

**Loading Facilities**

1. To alleviate the unsightly appearance of loading facilities, these areas should not be located at the front of buildings where it is difficult to adequately screen them from view. Such facilities are more appropriate at the rear of the site where special screening may not be required.
2. When it is not possible to locate loading facilities at the rear of the building, loading docks and doors should not dominate the frontage and should be screened from the street. Furthermore, loading facilities should be offset from driveway openings.
3. Backing from the public street onto the site for loading into front end docks causes unsafe truck maneuvering and should not be utilized.

**Landscaping & Screening**

1. Landscaping should define entrances to buildings and parking lots, define the edges of various land uses, provide transition between neighboring properties (buffering), and provide screening for loading and equipment areas.
2. Landscaping should be in scale with adjacent structures and be of appropriate size at maturity to accomplish its intended purpose.
3. Landscaping around the entire base of buildings is recommended to soften the edge between the parking lot and the structure. This should be accented at entrances to provide focus.
4. Landscaping should be protected from vehicular and pedestrian encroachment by raised planting surfaces, depressed walks, or the use of curbs.
5. Landscaping should not obstruct visibility at drive aisle intersections.

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6. When used, walls should be designed to blend with the site's architecture. Both sides of all perimeter walls or fences should be architecturally treated. Landscaping should be used in combination with all walls.
7. When allowed, exterior storage should be confined to portions of the site least visible to public view. Where screening is required, a combination of elements should be used including solid masonry walls, berms, and landscaping.
8. Any equipment, whether on the roof, side of building, or ground, should be screened. The method of screening should be architecturally integrated with the building design in terms of materials, color, shape, and size. Where individual equipment is provided, a continuous screen is desirable.

**Architectural Design**

1. The height and scale of new development should be compatible with that of surrounding development. The development should "transition" from the height of adjacent development to the maximum height of the proposed structure.
2. Building scale can be reduced through the proper use of window patterns, structural bays, roof overhangs, siding, awnings, moldings, fixtures, and other details. The scale of buildings should be carefully related to adjacent pedestrian areas and other structures.
3. Avoid blank front and side wall elevations on street frontages. Large dominating structures should be broken up by creating horizontal emphasis through the use of trim; adding awnings, eaves, windows, architectural ornamentation; use of complementary colors; and landscape materials.
4. Windows, awnings, and arcades shall be used along the primary façade abutting a public street. The use of decorative trim around all windows, doors, roof profile and wall corners is also encouraged.
5. Smaller retail stores that are part of a larger principle building should include display windows and separate outside entrances.
6. Variations in roof lines should be used as a means to reduce the massive scale of these structures and add visual interest. Roofs must have at least two of the following features: parapets concealing flat roofs and rooftop equipment, overhanging eaves, sloped roofs, and three or more roof slope planes.
7. Each principle building should include a clearly defined, highly visible customer entrance with features such as awnings, canopies or porticos, arcades, wing walls, and integral planters.
8. The color palette chosen for new structures should be compatible with the colors of adjacent structures and those established in the area.



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9. Primary colors should be used to accent elements, such as door and window frames and architectural details. The use of the following design elements should be avoided: highly reflective surfaces at the ground level; large blank, unarticulated wall surfaces; exposed, untreated block walls; chain link fence and barbed wire; “stuck on ” mansard roofs on small portions of the roofline; materials with high maintenance such as stained wood, shingles, or metal siding.
10. The use of quality siding or masonry construction of stone or brick on all exterior walls is encouraged.
11. Building entries should be clearly defined within the architecture of the building.
12. Architectural elements used in the primary (front) façade should be incorporated into all other building faces.
13. Wall materials should be able to withstand abuse or accidental damage from machinery and vehicles.

**Signage**

1. All developments should be designed with a precise concept for adequate signage. Provisions for sign placement, sign scale in relationship with the building, and sign readability should be considered in developing the signing concept. All signage should be highly compatible with the building and site design relative to color, material, and placement and should comply with the City’s sign laws. Low monument signs are encouraged as well as integration with landscaping.

**Lighting**

1. Lighting should be used to provide illumination for the security and safety of on-site areas such as parking, loading, shipping and receiving, pathways, and work areas.
2. The design of the light fixtures and their structural support should be architecturally compatible with the architectural design for the buildings they serve.
3. All building entrances should be well lighted.
4. All lighting should be shielded to confine light spread within the site boundaries.
5. All lighting must comply with the City’s lighting codes and regulations.

**Color and Materials**

1. Predominant exterior building materials must be of high quality. These include brick, wood, limestone, other native stone, and tinted/textured concrete masonry units. Smooth-faced concrete block, tilt-up concrete panels, or pre-fabricated steel

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- panels are prohibited as the predominant exterior building materials. EFIS should be used principally for building accents or for sign bands.
2. False windows and awnings of cloth/canvas material are permitted as long as their use relates to the proposed architectural style. False windows must be consistent with and of the same quality and materials as the other windows.
  3. Facade colors must be of low reflectance, subtle, neutral, or earth tone colors. The use of high intensity colors, metallic colors, and black or fluorescent colors is prohibited.
  4. Building trim may feature brighter colors, but neon tubing is not allowed as an accent material.

**Pedestrian Circulation**

1. Sidewalks at least 5 feet in width shall be provided along all sides of the total lot that abut a public street, and a continuous internal pedestrian walkway must be provided from the perimeter public sidewalk to the principle customer entrance, in compliance with the latest accessibility (ADA) requirements. This internal walkway must feature landscaping, benches, and other such materials/features for no less than 50 percent of its length.
2. Internal pedestrian walkways must provide a weather protection feature such as an awning within 30 feet of all customer entrances.
3. The internal pedestrian walkways must be distinguished from driving surfaces through the use of special pavers, bricks, or scored concrete to enhance pedestrian safety and the attractiveness of the walkways.

**Section 3.14 Multiple-Family / Attached Residential**

**Site Planning**

1. Integrate the site plan of the multi-family residential development with the surrounding neighborhood.
2. Multi-family developments should provide pedestrian connections with the community.
3. Avoid separating the development from the neighborhood with high fences, walls, or parking lots.
4. Consider the established street, lot, and building patterns of the surrounding neighborhood (where they exist) in the new site design.

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5. Design the project in response to specific site conditions, including trees, streams, and other significant natural features. Protect stream corridors that cross the site.
6. The site plan should include usable open spaces that are easily accessible by residents and visually removed from parking lots.
7. Plan for pedestrian circulation that conveniently links residential units with common open space, recreation, and parking.
8. The open space network should be well lit at night without intruding into residential units.
9. Setbacks provide the traditional residential neighborhood separation between dwelling and street. Use the setbacks to create a sense of entry and amenities for ground-floor residents.
10. Maintain residential character in the height, bulk, and scale of the multi-family development.
11. Projects adjacent to single-family homes should be sited and designed to provide a transition to the smaller scale of the neighborhood.
12. Employ techniques such as facade and roof modulation, landscaping, or setbacks to achieve a reduction in the visual mass of the buildings.
13. Provide street-facing entries to the individual units whenever possible, to strengthen the residential streetscape and create a sense of neighborhood among residents.
14. Locate parking lots to the side or rear of buildings to minimize their visual impact on the site.
15. Locate garages and carports along non-street facing elevations.
16. Vehicle circulation should not conflict with pedestrian circulation or with children's play areas.
17. Locate dumpsters and mechanical equipment away from the street front, or screen them from view. Trash areas should not be generally visible from the sidewalk.
18. Place mechanical equipment in an unobtrusive location or utilize screening that is consistent with the architectural design of the building.

**Landscaping**

1. Use landscaping to integrate the multi-family development with the surrounding community along public rights-of-way.
2. Sidewalks, planting strips, and street trees should be incorporated into the landscape plan for all new multi-family developments.



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3. The size and scale of proposed buildings should be considered when selecting plant species.
4. Use landscaping in front and side yards to reinforce the neighborhood character of multi-family housing.
5. Use landscaping to emphasize entries to residential units and create a sense of individual front yards.
6. Choose plant materials which add color and form and which will complement the scale of the building at maturity.
7. Define and separate public and private open space with landscaping.
8. Screen the view of parking lots from single-family residential uses, and parking lots visible from public rights-of-way, using shrubs, trees, low walls, berms or a combination thereof.
9. Locate landscaping to soften the view of parking from dwelling units.
10. Reduce the scale and effect of large paved areas by visually breaking up the parking lot with landscaped islands.
11. Select plant materials that are suitable for Highland's climate zone and provide them with a viable irrigation system.
12. Consider selecting a variety of plant materials, some native and others from similar climatic zones.

**Architectural Design Standards**

1. Design with building forms that reflect the residential scale and rhythm of the community's single-family neighborhoods.
2. Use facade articulation to reduce the perception of bulk and to reflect the traditional rhythm of a residential streetscape.
3. Use roof forms and detailing traditional to the residential character of the community.
4. In residential neighborhoods, choose traditional pitched roof lines such as gabled, hipped, or multi-gabled.
5. In commercial and transitional neighborhoods, use roof lines that reflect the surrounding architecture.
6. Avoid blank walls facing the street - design street facades with entries, windows, and/or detailing.



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7. Treat each street facade with the same level of formality afforded to single-family home design.
8. Provide some form of usable exterior living space, such as courtyards, porches, patios or balconies. Outdoor living areas offer residents expanded space and sense of relief from the density of multi-family living.
9. Create common courtyards or patios conducive to outdoor socializing.
10. Design building entrances that offer attractive, convenient, and safe access to the interior.
11. Give entrances fronting the street special architectural emphasis to reinforce neighborhood character.
12. Provide windows that allow maximum interior light, privacy, and exterior rhythm and interest.
13. Consider window design as an opportunity to provide variation and definition along street facades.
14. Choose window designs that reflect traditional residential styles in the community.
15. Use exterior building materials that are typically residential in character.
16. Use exterior color schemes that fall within a traditional range of basic colors and are respectful to the surrounding neighborhood.
17. Install signage that meets minimum sign code requirements, are residential in scale and design, and uses materials consistent with the architectural fabric of the development.

**Open Space/Preservation**

1. Active and passive parks and other open spaces should be provided to serve the new and existing residents.
2. Provide convenient sidewalks of adequate width to promote a safe and comfortable alternative to vehicular travel.
3. Enhance and maintain a strong definition of the public street corridor with mature street trees, lighting, and continuity of building facades. In pedestrian areas incorporate amenities and site furnishings such as: water fountains, news racks, bike racks, and bike parking facilities.
4. All residents should have safe and efficient access to usable open space, whether public or private, for recreation and social activities.
5. Open spaces should provide a focal point for the community both visually and socially.

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6. Common open spaces should be conveniently located for the majority of units.
7. For multifamily developments, private open spaces should be contiguous to the units they serve, have direct access from the unit and be screened from public view.



## **Transportation and Circulation Plan**

### **Section 3.15 Introduction and Statement of Goals**

The history and growth of Highland has been intimately tied to transportation as yesterday's state roads and have grown into today's major roadways. It is evident that the transportation and circulation network has played an important role in defining past and present development patterns within the community, and will continue to play a major role in the City of Highland's future. Since the City last completed its Comprehensive Plan, the transportation network of the City has not been significantly altered with the exception of the peripheral route. The final northern segments of the peripheral route are currently under construction and scheduled for completion in 2015. The proposed layout and design of the southern portion is currently in the planning stages. This will provide improved circulation and land use development opportunities.

As residential, commercial, industrial, and virtually all other forms of activity have always been influenced by their proximity to major transportation corridors with the City, it is essential that City planning be sensitive to the relationship between land use and transportation to maintain efficient circulation patterns as this relationship will continue to be intertwined in the future. This Chapter provides an inventory and evaluation of the current transportation and circulation network in the City of Highland, which includes both an evaluation of vehicles facilities (roadways and intersections), multi-modal facilities (pedestrian and bicycle facilities), and recommendations to address the future needs of the City.

### **Section 3.16 Vision**

***To serve the community with efficient operations in a timely, professional manner providing a safe and ample water supply, adequate sanitary sewer collection and treatment, and a safe and efficient roadway system. To maintain existing infrastructure and prudent guidance for future infrastructure.***

### **Section 3.17 Goals**

This Chapter focuses on the following set of Goals facing the City as it plans for the future and seeks to establish policies and planning design criteria for the future transportation and circulation plan. They are as follows:

1. Develop a transportation capital improvement plan with recommendations for safety and capacity-related traffic improvements to accommodate future traffic demands and safe travel in older neighborhoods.
2. Implement traffic improvements for key roads and intersections to improve traffic flow and to encourage traffic to remain on the major routes.



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3. Develop traffic strategies for implementation, as appropriate, to help preserve neighborhoods.
4. Use of landscaping and gateways to integrate the road system and traffic within the community to enhance and preserve the scenic character of the streets, without sacrificing safety.
5. Improve pedestrian circulation by continuing sidewalk improvements as well as implementing trail and bicycle facilities.

**Section 3.18 Road Network**

Vehicular use constitutes the primary form of circulation and transportation in the City of Highland, which is common for many communities in the region. It is important to ensure that the roadways within the community operate safely and efficiently. Furthermore, it is important that the City of Highland plan accordingly to implement strategies and improvements necessary to accommodate existing and future traffic and, where feasible, to encourage more use of public transit, bicycling, and walking to reduce future traffic congestion.

**Traffic Signals**

There are several intersections of public roadways within the City, of which the majority are unsignalized intersections controlled by stop signs on the minor, side street approaches, or in some cases all-way stop control. The intersections of the most heavily traveled roadways within the City are either controlled by traffic signals or a concept of roundabouts to move traffic through these intersections safely and efficiently.

**Section 3.19 Roadway Inventory and Classification**

The functional classification is an organization method by which roadways are categorized into a system based on the function they serve. These systems designate roadways according to average daily traffic (ADT) volumes, roadway design, relationship to other network roadways, and function (access vs. mobility). Furthermore, highway function classification is a means by which the federal, state, regional, county, and city planners describe the hierarchy of roadway importance based upon the level of service the roads are intended to provide.

The functional classification allows the prioritization of maintenance and improvements. The general classification of roadways in terms of capacity/mobility from the highest-order to lowest-order includes arterial roads, collector roads, and local/residential described below.

**Arterial Roads** provide service to trips of moderate length, usually provide a high degree of mobility, and have relatively controlled access points. Arterial roads provide greater access to the adjacent roadway networks and are intended to carry the highest traffic volumes.



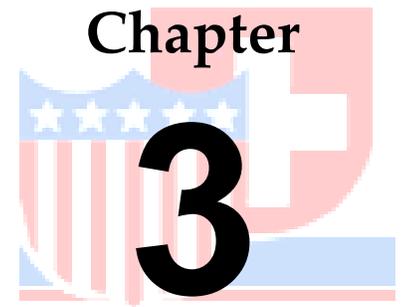
**Major Collector Roads** in general, connect Minor Collector roadways and major traffic generators. These roads are the major contributors to arterial traffic and convey fairly heavy traffic volumes at moderate speeds. Access points are usually controlled on collector roads. It is not uncommon for a major collector road to span the entire length of a municipality.

**Minor Collector Roads** facilitate low volumes of traffic at low speeds. They gather traffic from local roads and direct it to the arterial and major collector road networks. Minor collectors often provide traffic circulation between and within large residential neighborhoods.

**Local/Residential Roads** provide the greatest access to adjacent land. They provide for short distances, low speed of travel, and constitute the majority of the city's owned roads.

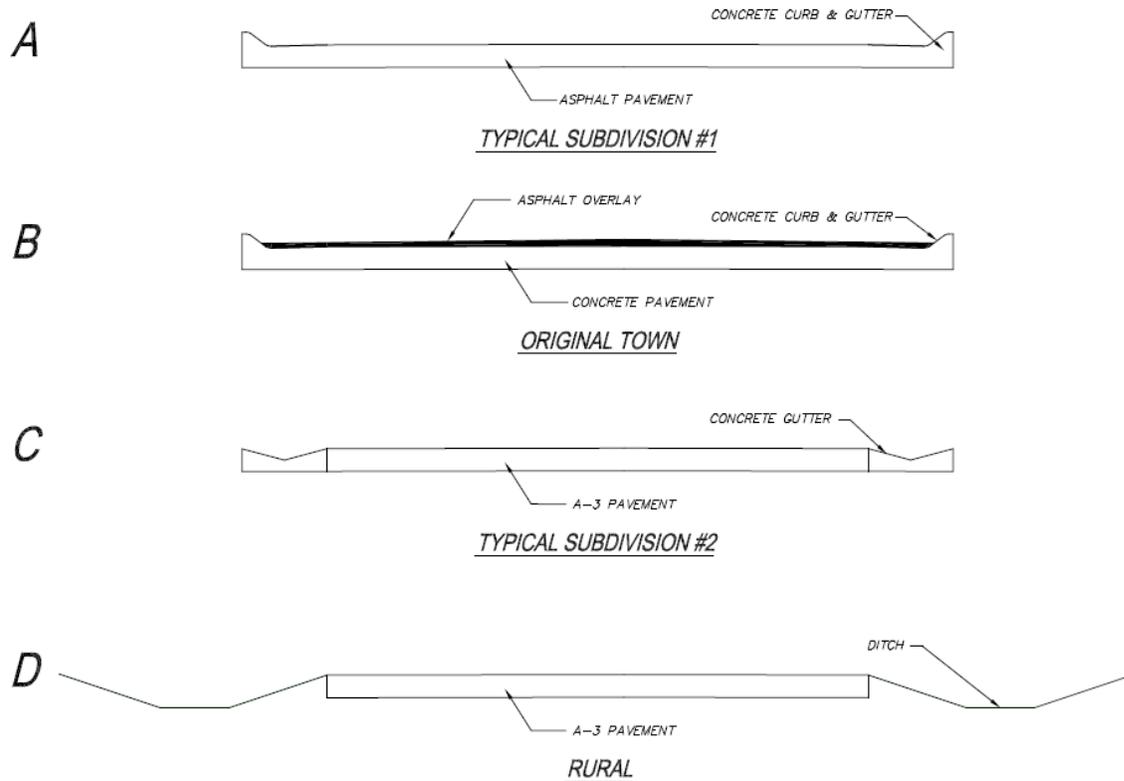
### **Section 3.20 Design Standards**

Street design standards promote traffic safety and continuity in street improvements and orderly development of the roadway system. Right-of-way widths accommodate travel lanes, adequate space between the curb and adjacent property lines, and allow for placement of pedestrian ways and utilities. The typical standards are presented in Table 3.3 and the following roadway cross sections. Marginal Access is a minor street which is parallel to and adjacent to arterial streets and highways, and which provides access to abutting properties and protection from through traffic.



<b>Table 3.3 Street Design and Specification</b>					
Residential Street Classification	Average Daily Traffic	Permitted On-street Parking	Required R.O.W.-Min. (ft.)	Pavement Width (ft.)	Min/Max Cross Slope (%)
Marginal Access	0-100	None	40	10	2%-4%
Local Residential	100-1,000	One side	50	28 min.	1%-2%
Minor Collector	1,000-5,000	Both sides	80	36 min.)	1%-2%
Major Collector	Over 5,000	None	100	36 min.-Rural; 44 min.-Urban	1%-2%
Arterial	To be determined by the Plan Commission and Director of Public Works.	None	100	To be determined by the Plan Commission and Director of Public Works.	1%-2%
Commercial & Industrial Streets		None	65	32	1%-2%

**Section 3.21 Typical Existing Roadway Cross Sections**



Commercial and/or Industrial Streets to be determined by the City Council in consultation with the Director of Public Works.

**Section 3.22 Additional Right-Of-Way**

Right-of-Way width in excess of the standards set forth in the Table of Street Design Specifications (Table 3.3) shall be required where:

- A) Due to topography, additional width is necessary to provide adequate earth slopes; the maximum cut to fill slope resulting from street grading is four horizontal to one vertical.
- B) Due to the location of railroad tracks, additional width is needed to construct overpasses, underpasses, and approaches thereto.



**Section 3.23 Peripheral Route**

The peripheral route circling Highland was designed to intercept collector streets and provide an alternate route. It is intended to help reduce congestion within the city and promote quicker access to various locations throughout the city. Streets intersecting the City’s peripheral route shall be a minor collector not less than eight (800) hundred feet apart. Residential driveway access shall not be permitted except existing driveways and platted lots with no other means of access.

**Section 3.24 Future Functional Classification of Roadways**

The City of Highland’s *Land Development Code* shall establish criteria for the classification of roadways based on daily traffic volumes. While actual current daily traffic volumes are often satisfactory criteria for evaluating the use and purpose of a roadway, it is important that the City also consider the design, location, and intended purpose of each roadway before reclassification.

**Recommended Actions**

The City of Highland shall annually monitor traffic volumes and patterns along local roadway network and take the following initiatives to maintain the adequacy of the roadway network.

1. Continue to annually monitor future traffic conditions to determine if reclassification is needed.
2. Upgrade roadways to satisfy the design criteria of newly reclassified roadways.
3. Future developments should be monitored and regulated so that subsequent traffic generation does not alter the designated function of individual roads unless the design can be upgraded and is consistent with both the future land use and Master Street Plan. Developments should not cause restrictions on the ease of entering or exiting a roadway from adjacent properties, or increase traffic to encroach upon or exceed the capacity of the road.
4. Truck Routes: Identify and designate truck routes as directed by the City Engineer to reroute truck traffic away from the City’s Downtown and residential neighborhoods. Place signage along the designated truck routes and instruct the Police Department to ticket trucks/drivers who disregard said routes.



### **Section 3.25 Traffic Volumes and Operating Conditions**

Traffic volumes provide valuable information when assessing a roadway network, as they indicate the level of usage of a particular roadway and are important for planning and design purposes. Traffic volumes are typically assessed for roadways on a daily basis while intersections are evaluated on a peak hour (the 60 minute period of the day that experiences the highest volume of traffic) basis, typically during weekday morning and afternoon commuter hours.

#### **Recommended Actions**

The City should consider the following to maintain efficient traffic operations along roads and at intersections within the community.

1. Pursue funding opportunities for identified roadway and intersection improvements.
2. Improve interface between automobile traffic and pedestrian movement.
3. Determine roadway and intersection operating deficiencies.

### **Section 3.26 Future Level of Service**

As traffic volumes increase along roadways, the delay experienced by motorist will also increase without a future transportation plan. To properly plan for the future and develop an efficient future transportation plan network, potential improvements to the roadway network must be considered, which include improvements such as traffic signals and roundabouts. The City must continue to evaluate traffic volumes for long-term improvements to accommodate these future traffic volumes.

#### **Recommended Actions**

The City should consider the following improvements and issues in order to maintain efficient traffic operations along all roads and intersections with the community, making sure in all cases that proposed transportation movements are consistent and compatible with all Recommended Actions set forth in this Comprehensive Plan.

1. A long-term intersection improvement plan must be developed and included in 20 year transportation plan.
2. Plan for the potential long-term improvements by acquiring the necessary right-of-way for geometric road configuration improvements when available.
3. Require all developments to dedicate necessary right-of-way for future road improvements.
4. Pursue funding opportunities with Townships, County, and State for identified roadways and intersection improvements. In all of its roadway and intersection improvements, make sure that pedestrian movements is given high priority.



### **Section 3.27 Multi-modal Facilities**

Multi-modal forms of transportation include non-vehicular means of travel including walking and bicycling. Safe, well established non-vehicle networks serving these activities can enhance the transportation network of a community, and in some cases help relieve traffic congestion.

Sidewalks are provided along a significant amount of local roadways within the City of Highland, or at least on one side of a collector road. Sidewalks along some collector roads are provided sporadically, thus requiring pedestrians to walk within roadways with high traffic volumes or on shoulder area.

#### **Recommended Actions**

1. The City should continue to annually evaluate the existing inventory of its sidewalk facilities to determine the adequacy of the current sidewalk inventory.
2. The City should ensure to the extent feasible that all sidewalk facilities, namely curb cuts, are ADA compliant, provide an adequate buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic, and are continuous to promote safe pedestrian travel.
3. The sidewalk network within the Square and Historical areas should be provide consistent standard design of sidewalks, which will help to encourage pedestrian traffic with the areas, and should be considered in the implementation/adoption of any roadway/intersection improvements, streetscape enhancements, access management initiatives, and redevelopment applications.
4. Improve pedestrian circulation by continuing sidewalk improvements as well as implementing trail and bicycle facilities.

### **Section 3.28 Bicycle Facilities**

Currently, the City of Highland is designing bicycle lanes along major roadways. A connective network of sidewalk, trails, and bicycle facilities should be designed to provide a highly desired multi-modal transportation and circulation network, encouraging pedestrian, bicycle and other non-vehicle travel with the community.

Alternative transportation modes are necessary to accommodate the diverse needs of the population. To ensure everyone has access to the City's transportation system, public transit, sidewalks and bike paths should be provided in addition to providing adequate roads and roadway maintenance. The following is a brief summary of some of the recommended alternative transportation modes.

Pedestrian paths and trails provide alternative means for people accessing activity centers and neighborhoods without relying on vehicular transportation. Focus session participants strongly



recommend the implementation of a citywide system of pedestrian ways. The sidewalks on the Square have been replaced; however, the sidewalks along the perimeter of the Square and along most residential roads need repair or replacement. More importantly, sidewalks and/or bike paths need to be installed throughout the City to link neighborhoods, schools, parks, churches, businesses and employment centers.

The City should continue providing on-road bicycle facilities along major roads to enhance bicycle mobility throughout the community and provide links between other bicycle facilities, schools, and businesses. This Plan recommends the installation of sidewalks along all roadways and the creation of a community-wide greenway. The greenway is intended to increase pedestrian travel, encourage active lifestyles and expand year-round park and recreation options for all ages. The implementation of a linear park system is an effective way to create a “preservation corridor” that provides multi-generational recreational opportunities. Equally important is the preservation of the city’s precious signature natural areas that fall within the recommended greenway and that provide key wildlife corridors. Trail locations and sidewalk improvements should link to the City’s roads, historic downtown, schools, churches, businesses, recreational facilities and neighborhoods. The general location of the recommended trails and greenways are shown on the Future Land Use Map. Trailheads, picnic areas, restroom facilities and parking areas should be provided at the major points of access to primary trail/pathway segments. Additionally, educational kiosks should be located at trailhead locations and along trail routes. Trailheads, kiosks and trail way improvements must be designed and located in areas that attract a wide range of users.

### **Section 3.29 Proposed I-70 Interchange**

To effectively provide access to and from the City’s businesses, the Downtown Square, local neighborhoods, parks, roads and schools, the City must plan for the funding, design and installation of an additional point of access to Interstate 70, preferably at Route 160. Better accessibility to Interstate 70 will ultimately reduce costs and delay in the movement of people, goods and emergency vehicles. The recommended interchange provides consumers increased accessibility to existing businesses, employment centers and other destination centers within the city.

The proposed interchange is a major public sector investment; therefore it was necessary to carefully assess the trade-off between location and design during the planning process. The following assessments and considerations were made with regard to the location and installation of the interchange:

1. The location of the Route I-70/160 Interchange, in relation to existing and future land use development, provides substantial growth opportunity within close proximity to the City’s jurisdictional and service locations.
2. A future interchange at I-70 and Route 160 opens up vast areas of currently unused or underutilized property for the purposes of efficiently supporting commercial, industrial and residential growth.



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3. The amount of open land at this location, its close proximity to existing City services, and seamless Interstate access will provide the most desirable location in the region for high quality, high revenue generating enterprises.
4. Due to the potential for a number of developments to co-exist and the large scale of businesses this location can support, there is a great opportunity to amortize the capital improvement costs for supplying utilities, roads and services among several potential property owners incrementally as the area becomes developed.
5. The City had a commitment from IDOT for purposes of constructing a new interchange at this location and has already made IDOT and the appropriate state and local officials aware of the City's interest in having an interchange at this location.
6. An interchange at this location relieves, rather than intensifies, traffic congestion currently experienced within the City's transportation system. This is critical for the movement of everyday vehicles, especially emergency vehicles who need direct and uninterrupted access to and from the interstate.
7. Future land use planning in this area will help preserve significant natural and agricultural areas.

The installation of a full service interchange and access to I-70 at Route 160 is recommended for the following factors:

1. The City is willing to provide police, fire, and maintain the areas that fall within the City's jurisdiction.
2. The interchange and associated improvements follows the principals of "System Planning" by serving the greater need of the region and improving upon the overall local transportation network.
3. There is considerable community support for the proposed interchange and a general consensus that it would improve the health, safety and wellness of the community. The city should adopt a resolution regarding the proposed interchange location and findings of fact to be available to IDOT and any other funding entity.
4. The future interchange is in keeping with the City's current and future land use patterns.
5. Highland has a stable population base that is growing. Furthermore, the proposed interchange provides access to a much larger regional market.
6. The study area has strong incomes and a relatively low cost of living.
7. Daytime Population grows by 33.5% or 2,829. Additionally, there are a high percentage of residents who work in Highland; (47.3%, 1,954). While the robust daytime population provides a strong local market for retailers, it also reinforces the need for good local traffic circulation and access to regional markets/interstate traffic.

In summary, the recommended interchange provides much needed relief from the current traffic loads and improved traffic circulation for the City's entire transportation system. Furthermore, the



future development and sustainability of the planning area relies heavily on the installation of a full service interchange at I-70 at 160. The recommended I-70/Route 160 interchange is also intended to serve as a prominent gateway into the City and is intended to support a broad spectrum of planned development scenarios and market driven land uses, as demonstrated in the following sections.

## **Growth Management Plan**

### **Section 3.30 Growth Management**

Growth management can be described as a conscious public decision to restrain, accommodate or encourage development. Management techniques can be applied to any type of growth, but of particular concern to the City of Highland is the current and future supply of quality commercial and residential development opportunities. The growth of the land uses mentioned above are managed in part by proposing areas of commercial, residential and industrial growth on the Future Land Use Map and developing strategies for each land use. In addition to proposing land uses, the city can manage growth by extending the city boundary and concentrating municipal services within the planning area. This strategy will minimize sprawl and the inefficient use of the land, resources and municipal services. The purpose for managing growth in the City of Highland are multi-fold, they include:

1. The protection of the city's water source (Silver Lake) and its tributaries;
2. The preservation of farmland & the income generating potential and intrinsic values of the natural land;
3. The prevention of overextending municipal services and infrastructure;
4. Minimizing vacancies and economic decline within existing city neighborhoods and commercial areas; and
5. Maintaining control over the types and quality of development within the city as well as gaining control, through annexation, of land recommended for immediate annexation.

Annexation of the growth areas identified on the Future Land Use Plan is recommended to better plan for and implement efforts to preserve the natural character of the planning area and provide for future growth. In response to the community's support, and due to the City's ability to provide centralized services to adjacent unincorporated areas, the city should prepare an organized annexation plan that identifies and prioritizes the annexation of specific parcels within the City's growth areas. The annexation plan should include thorough inspections of all public infrastructure within the proposed annexation area and a thorough service provision evaluation. Once the plan is completed, the City should immediately begin acquiring pre-annexation agreements with adjoining land owners, specifically at the proposed interchange location and other key opportunity areas. Partnerships between the City, property owners and developers should be established



early in the process to help avoid unanticipated repercussions during or after the annexation process. To the fullest extent possible, future development and land uses within the annexation area should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and comply with the City's Zoning Code.

Annexation of any land into the City should be considered carefully. While each situation is different, the end result should provide specific benefits to the city as well as the annexing area. The areas of land shaded on the Future Land Use Map that fall outside the City's limits are the areas the City should consider for future annexation. Before any annexation decisions are made, the following general questions should be considered.

1. Will the annexation lessen demand to develop in-fill property or redevelop existing sites and buildings within the current city boundary?
2. Will the annexation place any unacceptable political, financial, physical or operational demands or expectations upon the city for the provision of services or infrastructure?
3. Will the annexation allow for more appropriate guidance of future development within the annexation area?
4. Will the annexation bring existing land uses into the city that are desirable and have some benefit to the city in terms of revenue or the sense of community?
5. Is the annexation in the best interest of the city as a whole?
6. Does the annexation make economic sense from both long and short range perspectives?

### **Section 3.31 Future Land Use & Implementation Summary**

The rate, manner and location in which the City of Highland allows residential, commercial and industrial land uses will have significant effects on conditions within the city's existing neighborhoods and commercial areas. In the current development environment, it is more economical for commercial and residential developers to construct new buildings on agricultural land than it is to redevelop an existing site or renovate an existing building within the city. As a result, developers' tend to prefer locations at a city's perimeter. When this growth is allowed to progress unchecked, older sections of the city tend to be left to deteriorate. For cities to avoid vacancies, deterioration, and eventual blight in older sections of town, new construction should be balanced with maintenance and renovation of existing buildings. To best accomplish this balance, the city may need to offer incentives to encourage inner city development.

The challenge faced by the City of Highland is finding the balance between new development opportunities and the redevelopment of existing areas. To remain competitive with other cities in the region, the City of Highland must provide a wide range of new and existing commercial and industrial development opportunities. The future of the City relies on its ability to collect sales tax and generate revenue from personal property and utilities. To ensure the City's revenues remain



stable for the long term, the City will need to continue providing excellent city services and facilitate the investment in the City’s residential, commercial and industrial areas. The City will also need to seek out and promote new development opportunities that generate revenue. These efforts are also necessary to expand employment opportunities, provide additional shopping and entertainment to area residents as well as tourists and attract new residents and businesses to Highland.

The recommendations provided herein are intended to work with the other recommendations, goals and objectives provided in the preceding Chapters of the Official Highland Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations of this plan will require the direction and leadership of City staff and the support of the City’s elected and appointed officials, residents and business owners. The City should make sure all improvements are designed to last a long life and accommodate future generations and market changes. “Long-life and loose fitting” improvements will ensure the needs of future generations are met, while meeting Highland’s present needs.

**Section 3.32 Comprehensive Plan Adoption**

Before adopting or amending the Comprehensive Plan, the Joint Planning & Zoning Board must hold a public hearing pursuant to Illinois Statutes, Chapter 65. A notice of the public hearing must be published at least 15 days prior to the public hearing in the official city newspaper. After the public hearing, the Joint Planning & Zoning Board, after hearing public comment shall pass a motion to adopt the Comprehensive Plan to the City Council. The City Council may, by simple majority vote, adopt the Comprehensive Plan by ordinance. Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, or any amendment thereto, a certified copy of the plan along with a written copy of the minutes of the public hearing, shall be forwarded to the City Clerk and filed with the County as required by law.

**Section 3.33 Comprehensive Plan Updates and Amendments**

The Joint Planning & Zoning Board should conduct annual reviews of the Comprehensive Plan or any part thereof to consider any amendments, extensions, or additions to the plan. All amendments to the Comprehensive Plan must be made in accordance with the process for the original adoption of the plan.

*Chapter 3: Future Land Use & Transportation Plan*



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