





Strategic Land Use Plan

McLean County | City of Bloomington |Town of Normal

June 2025

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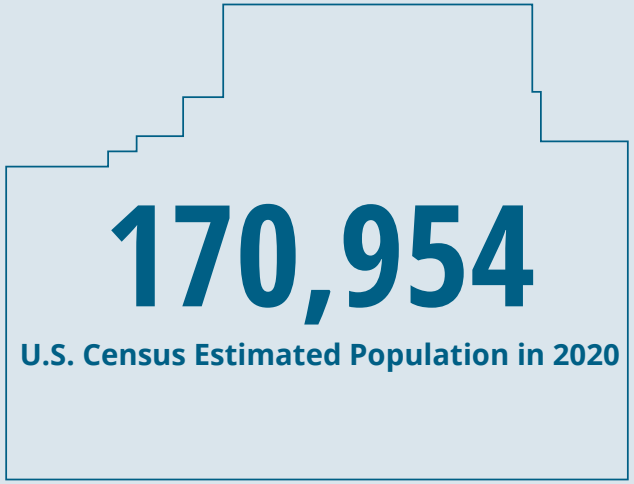
MCRPC
McLean County
Regional Planning Commission



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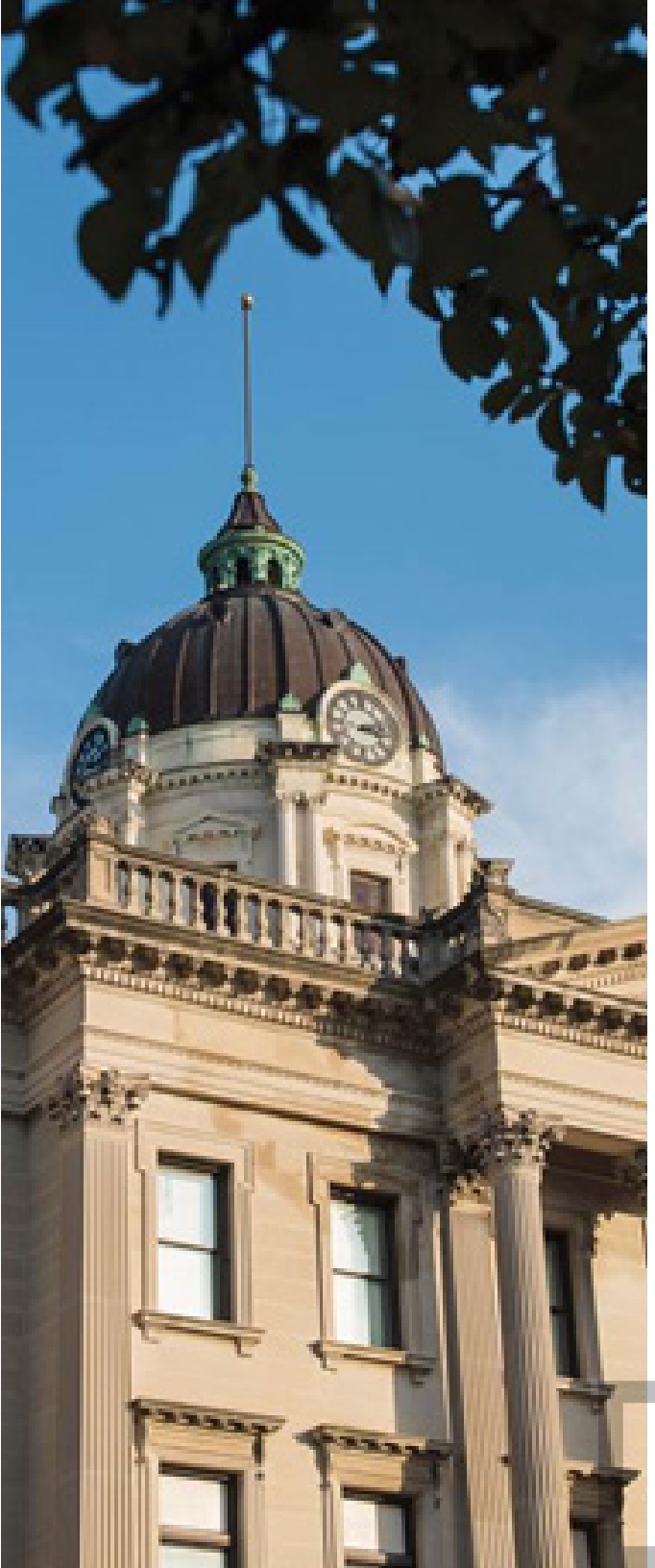

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The **McLean County Strategic Land Use Plan** envisions a well-balanced, resilient community that respects the unique characteristics of both urban and rural environments. The plan promotes sustainable growth, smart land-use practices, and the preservation of natural resources to foster a vibrant quality of life for future generations.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **McLean County Strategic Land Use Plan** aims to create a cohesive framework for the future development, conservation, and management of land in the Bloomington-Normal metropolitan area and the unincorporated areas of McLean County. This plan is designed to guide growth, ensure the efficient use of resources, and maintain a balance between urban and rural areas for the next 20 years.

What is a Strategic Land Use Plan? How do we use it?

With a constantly growing population and ever-changing economy, strategic land use planning is essential for shaping sustainable futures. Bloomington-Normal's recent influx of new industrial development, economic opportunity, and a growing workforce has increased the necessity for an updated land use inventory.

Strategic land use planning involves developing a long-term vision for how land will be used and establishing goals and objectives to achieve that vision. This plan serves as a guide for local stakeholders and municipal staff to understand future development priorities, gain clarity on potential land use changes, and make informed decisions regarding zoning and infrastructure. By collaboratively defining a vision for future land uses in McLean County, this plan allows each municipality to eventually develop their own set of goals and implementation practices using a standardized land use plan.

The development of this plan required an extensive process of examining existing conditions, collaborating with multiple jurisdictions, identifying future needs, and creating a unified land use plan . During the planning process, representatives from MCRPC, McLean County, the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, and the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District evaluated options for future development based on factors such as development pressures, environmental impact, infrastructure availability, and existing developments.

Why a Strategic Land Use Plan and not a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a long-term document outlining the vision, goals, and strategies for the physical, economic, and social development of a community. It acts as a guide for decision-making and policy development, ensuring future changes align with the values and priorities of the community. Comprehensive plans are intended to be used for decades and take years to update. This Strategic Land Use Plan will allow Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County to accurately address development pressures in the immediate future and in the coming years.

As MCRPC works on the McLean County Regional Comprehensive plan update, development pressure in Bloomington-Normal continue to grow. This is a key reason as to why the development of a Strategic Land Use Plan was initiated. This plan is intended to address the immediate development pressures without having to wait on the City of Bloomington and Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan updates, which are expected to be updated after the Regional Comprehensive plan is complete . To be clear, this plan is only the first step in a long process of land use and comprehensive planning. The Strategic Land Use Plan will ultimately provide the foundation for a more in-depth review and analyisis of land use in the McLean County Comprehensive Plan update, as well as the City and Town Comprehensive plan updates.

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HISTORY & REGIONAL CONTEXT

McLean County is located in central Illinois, two hours southwest of Chicago and an hour northeast of the state capital of Springfield. The County was established in 1830, and by 1840 had a Census population of 6,565 persons. As of 2023, the County's population exceeded 170,000. It is the largest county by land area in Illinois at 1,186 square miles, of which more than 1,000 are productive farmland.

McLean County is served by three major interstates, Amtrak passenger rail, three Class I freight railroads, and the Central Illinois Regional Airport (BMI) that hosts both passenger and cargo service.

The county seat, Bloomington, was established in 1831. The city has a long history of being a hub for industry and employment centers. It is home to insurance giants such as State Farm and Country Financial. McLean County's other large municipality is the Town of Normal which was established in 1854 under the name "North Bloomington." The town got its current name in 1865 after the "normal" school that became Illinois State University.

McLean County experienced rapid growth in the latter half of the 20th century, but like many regions in the U.S., the economy was impacted to an unprecedented degree by the 2008 global economic recession, the aftereffects of which still exist today.

In recent years, McLean County has been embroiled in a housing crisis. This trend is influenced by the recent substantial economic growth through the development of the Rivian Automotive factory on the grounds of the former Mitsubishi factory.



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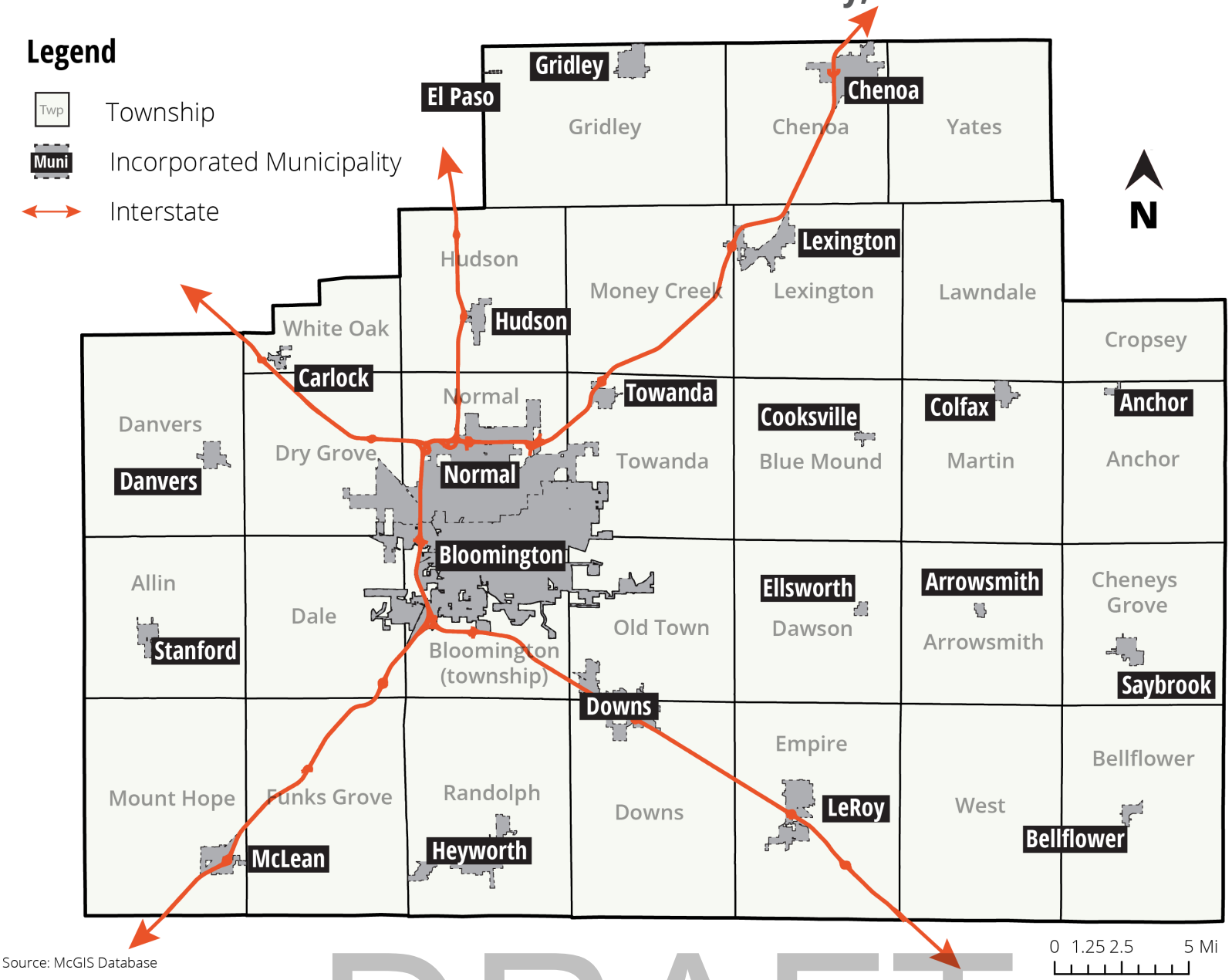
Overview of McLean County, 2025



Source: McGIS Database

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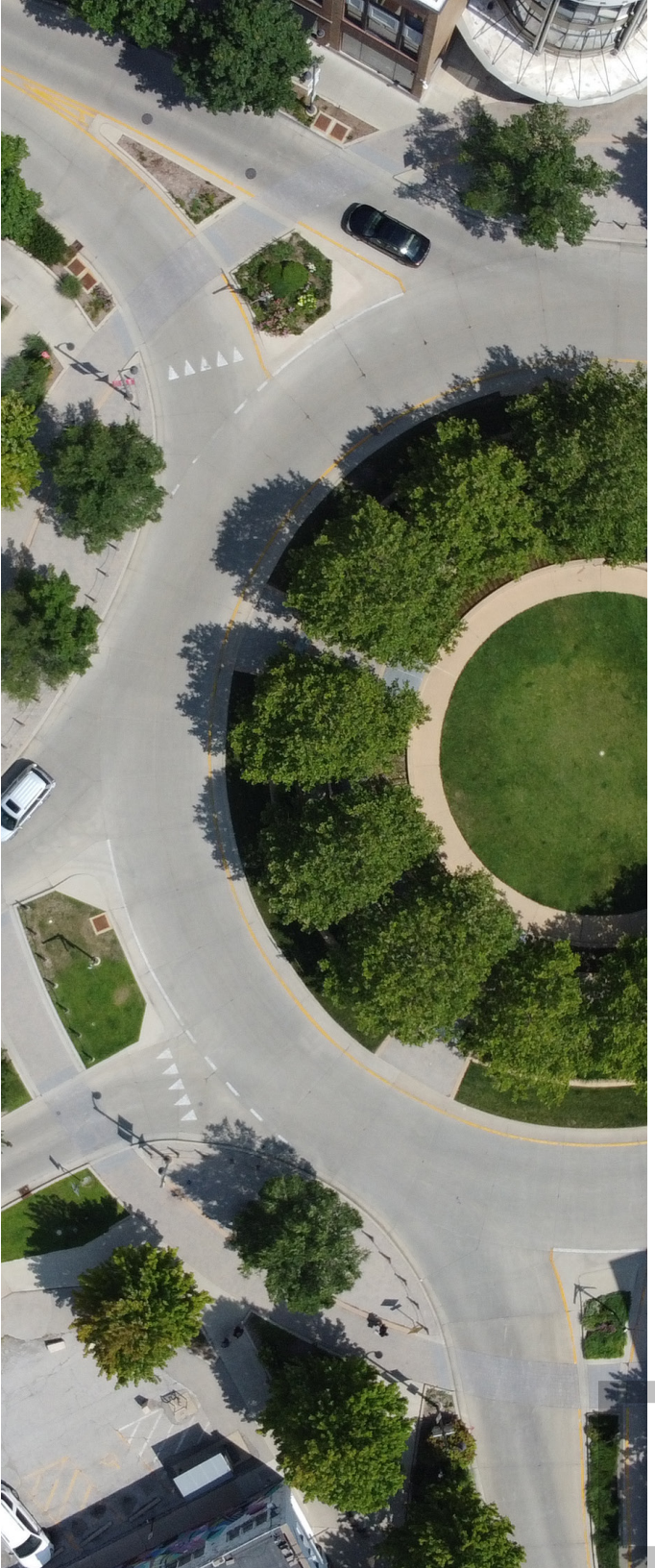

CHAPTER 2
LAND USE PLANNING

Land use planning is an essential process for shaping the future of McLean County, guiding how land is developed, preserved, and utilized in ways that reflect the values and needs of its residents. This chapter outlines how the existing and future land use maps were developed, focusing on strategic growth, sustainability, and economic prosperity. Themes of smart growth, agricultural preservation, infill development, and infrastructure coordination guide every aspect of the plan.

The Land Use Plan is a flexible guide that will assist all of McLean County in managing its growth and resources over time. This plan helps municipalities within the county make informed decisions about zoning, infrastructure development, and resource management. It aims to balance urban development with preservation of the county's rural character, natural resources, and agricultural lands. The plan encourages smart growth, community-enhancing development, and the sustainable use of the land while ensuring the county remains a great place to live, work, and visit. This chapter outlines the current land use conditions, the vision for the future, and the tools needed to make that vision a reality.

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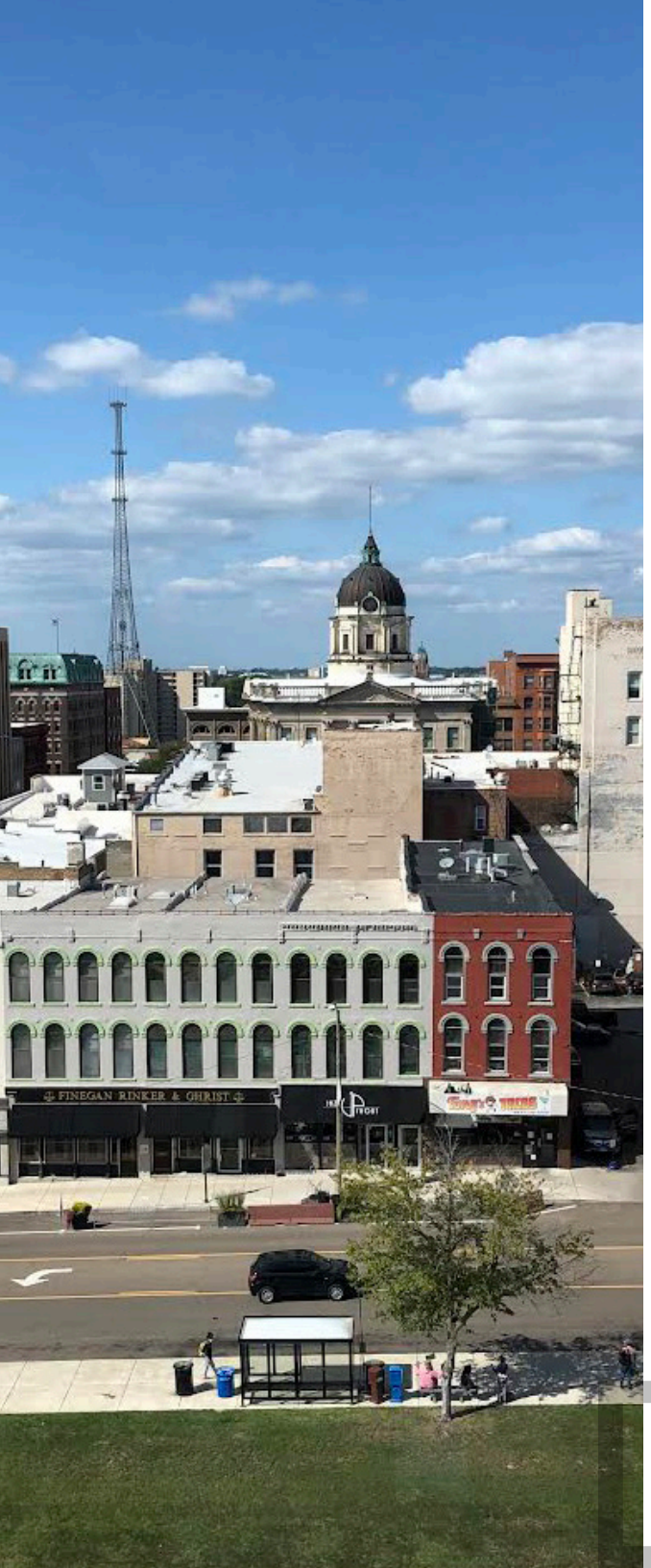





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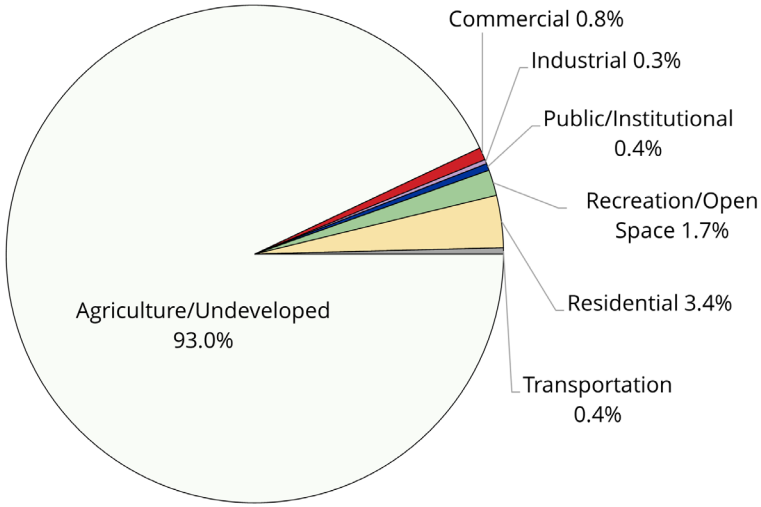
EXISTING LAND USE

The Existing Land Use Map provides a snapshot of how McLean County's land is currently utilized. It highlights established land uses, such as agriculture, residential neighborhoods, commercial hubs, industrial centers, recreation areas, and public and institutional facilities. By comparing existing land use patterns with the proposed future land use designations, the county can identify areas where growth is encouraged and where more focused preservation efforts are necessary, fostering a balanced and strategic approach to development.

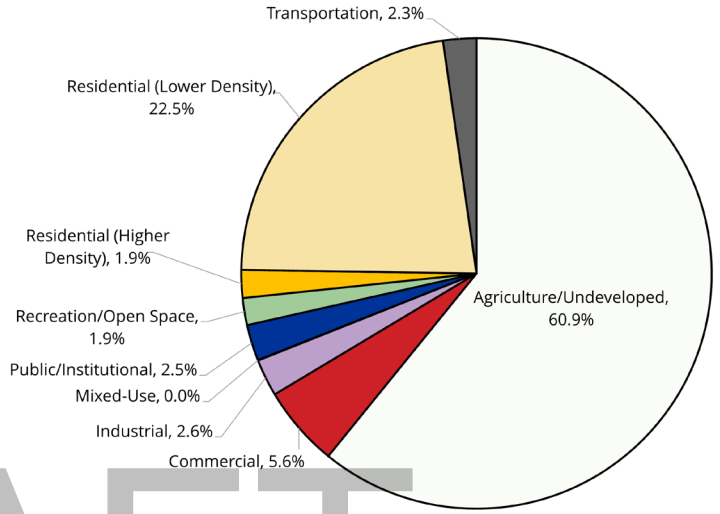
The development of the Existing Land Use Map for McLean County involved a comprehensive analysis of various data sources to accurately capture the current distribution of land uses across the county. Data from the McLean County Supervisor of Assessments, as well as the City of Bloomington Township Assessor and the Normal Township Assessor, were integral in identifying and classifying existing land use types. This data provided detailed property and land use classification information, allowing for a more accurate representation of "On-the-ground" land uses.

Additionally, throughout the planning process, representatives from the Planning Departments of the local municipalities, including the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, and McLean County, were actively engaged in regular meetings. Their involvement ensured that the map would be as accurate as possible while fostering collaboration across jurisdictions. The feedback from these municipal representatives was invaluable in refining the map and ensuring that the existing land use patterns aligned with the county's vision for future growth and development.

2025 Existing Land Use Distribution
McLean County, IL



2025 Existing Land Use Distribution
Bloomington-Normal, IL
Combined 1.5 Mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction



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Assessor Use Codes & Existing Land Use Category Assignments

Existing Land Use Category	Use Code as Defined By **McLean County Assessor**	Use Code as Defined By **COBT Assessor**	Use Code as Defined By **Normal Twp. Assessor**
Agriculture/Undeveloped Recreation/Open Space	11 – Farmland with Buildings 21 – Farmland 26 – Solar Farm 27 – Wind Farm 28 – Conservation Stewardship	11 – Rural Improved 21 – Rural Not Improved	11 – Farmland with Buildings
Commercial	50 – Commercial Vacant Land 52 – 10-30 Subdivider Commercial Vacant 60 – Commercial with Buildings 62 – Subdivider Commercial Vacant Land 65 - Commercial Entity on Farm 8060 – Leasehold Commercial 70 - Commercial Office	60 – Commercial Business 20062 – Commercial Developers Rate 70 – Commercial Office	52 – Comm Vacant Land 60 – Comme cial 70 – Commer ial Office
Industrial	80 - Industrial	80 - Industrial	
Public/Institutional	90 – Tax Exempt	90 – Tax Exempt	0000 - Exempt
Residential – Lower Density	30 – Residential Vacant Land 32 – Subdivider Residential Vacant Land 40 – Residential with Buildings 41 – Residential Model Home	30 – Residential Vacant Land 40 – Single Family 44 – Zero Lot Line 20032 – Residential Developers Rate	40 - Reside ial
Residential – Higher Density	--	42 – Conversion 43 – Apartments <=6 Units 50 – Apartments > 6 Units	50 – Comm Res More than 6 Uni s
Transportation	4500 – State Assessed Railroad 5060 – Commercial Railroad	8021 – Airport Farmland Leased 8060 – Airport, Land Not Improved	

Normal Township use code information (described as "propclass" in the raw data) was discarded in favor model names instead (albeit residential high density only)

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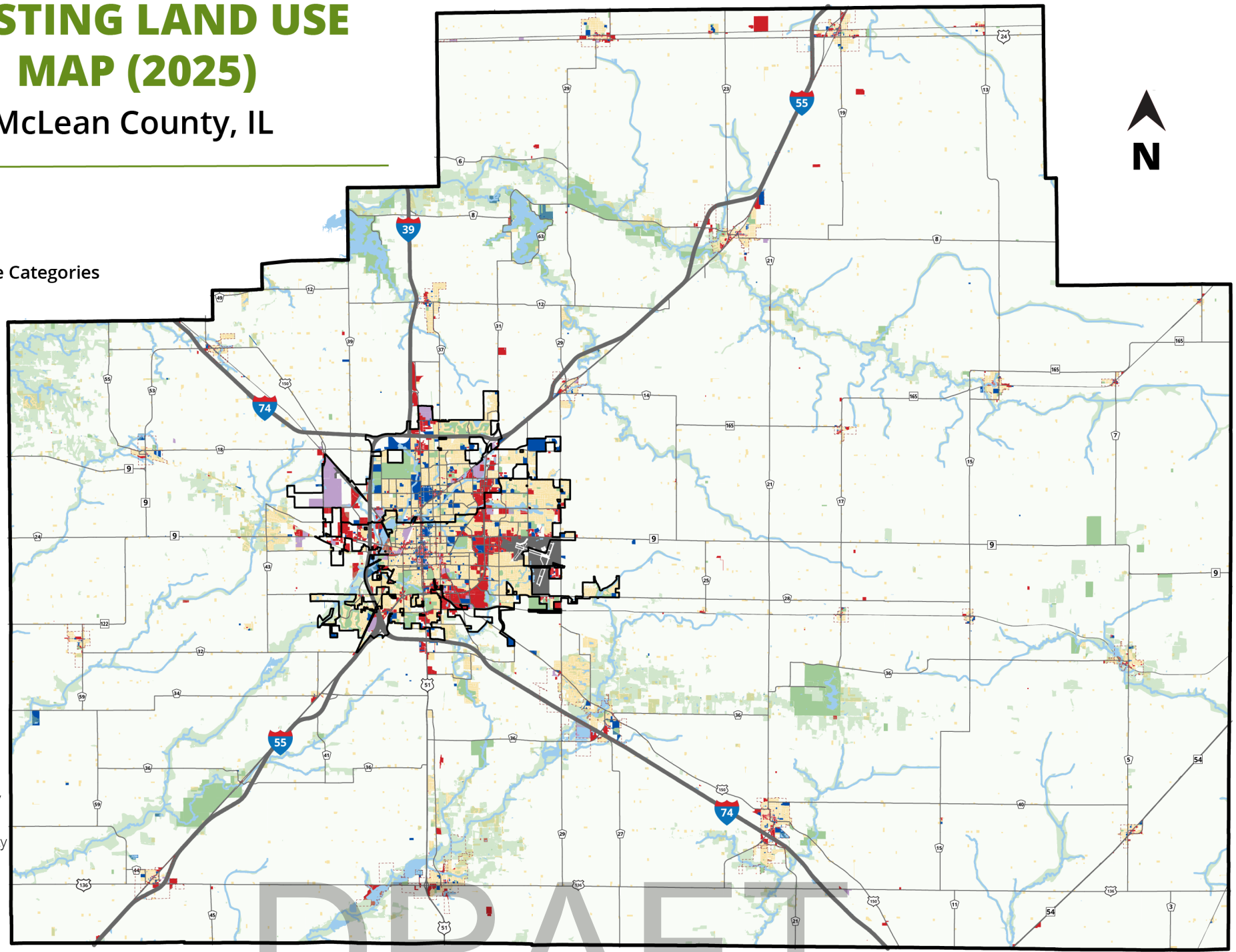
EXISTING LAND USE MAP (2025)

McLean County, IL



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Existing Land Use Categories

- Agriculture/ Undeveloped
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/ Institutional
- Recreation & Open Space
- Residential
- Transportation

Roadways

- Interstate
- U.S Highway
- IL. State Route
- County Highway

Other Elements

- McLean County Border
- Forests Overlay (NLCD)
- Rural Municpality Boundary
- Urban Municpality Boundary
- Water

Map As of 06/11/2025

Source: McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) Staff; McLean County Building & Zoning Staff; Town of Normal - Planning & Zoning Staff
City of Bloomington - Planning & Zoning Staff

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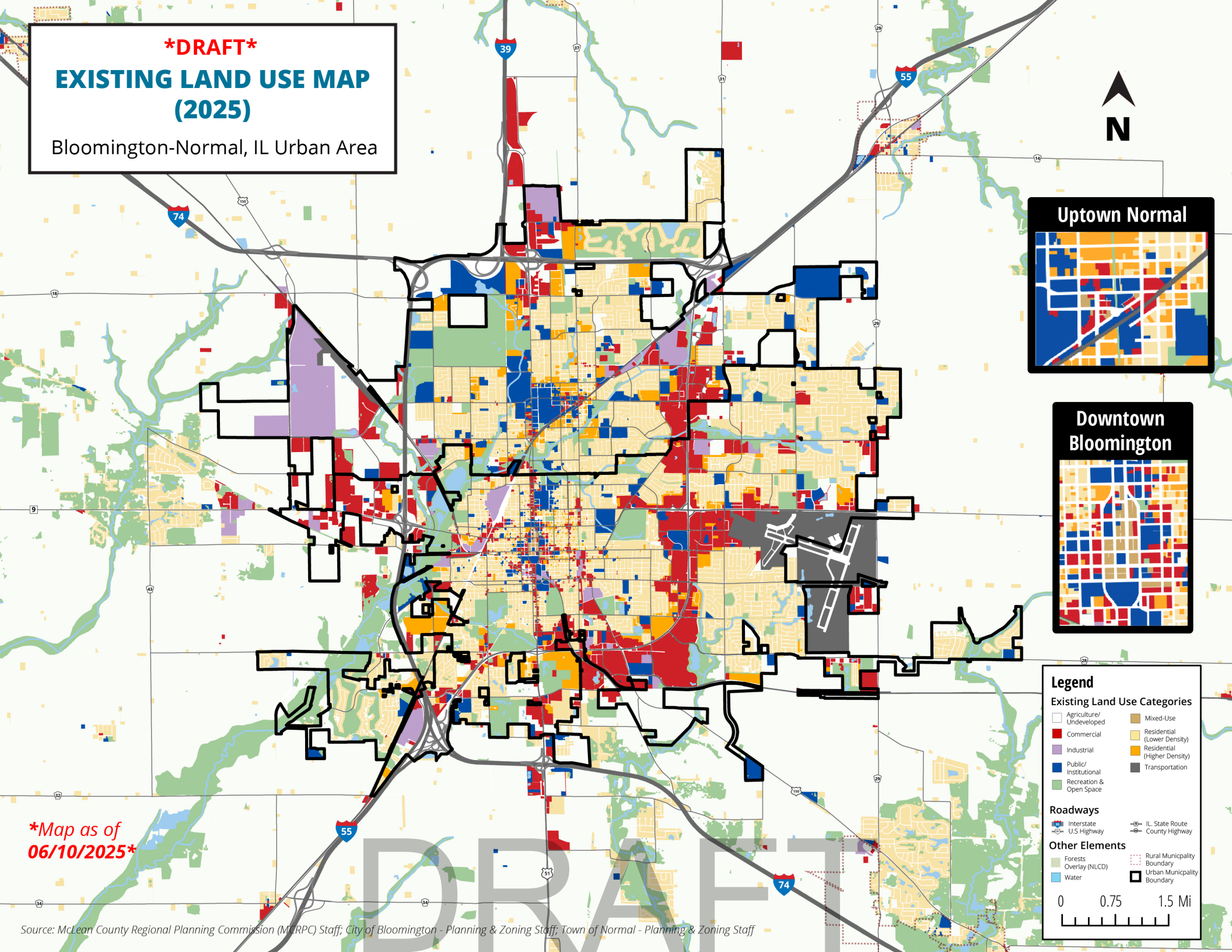
EXISTING LAND USE MAP (2025)

Bloomington-Normal, IL Urban Area



Source: McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) Staff; City of Bloomington - Planning & Zoning Staff; Town of Normal - Planning & Zoning Staff

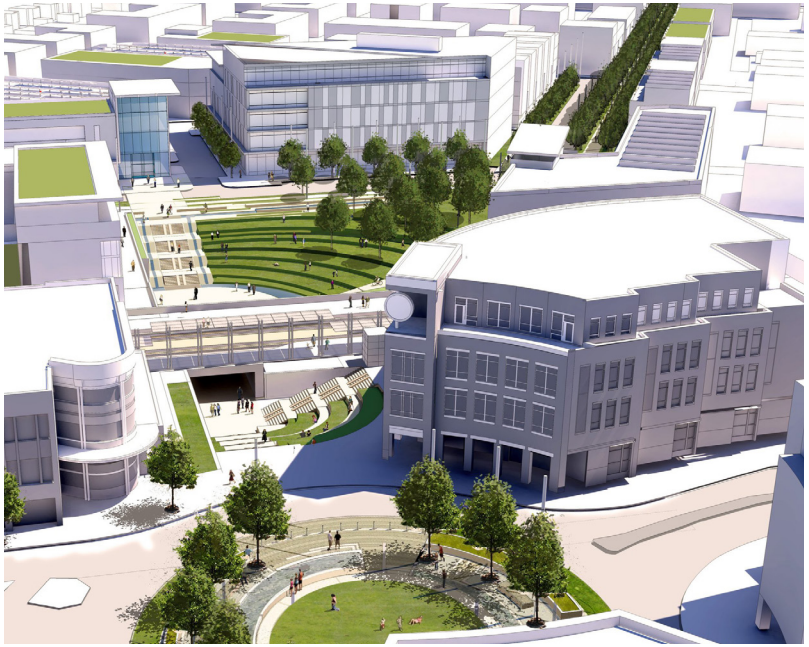
FUTURE LAND USE

The development of the Future Land Use Map for McLean County was a collaborative and data-driven process that aimed to provide a long-term vision for land use patterns and development within the county. Informed by the analysis of existing land use data as well as influence from the existing comprehesive plans for the city, town, and county, the Future Land Use Map reflects the projected growth, demographic trends, and evolving needs of the region. Throughout the planning process, key input from local municipalities, including the City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, and McLean County, was gathered through regular meetings, ensuring that future land use designations aligned with local priorities and regional growth strategies. This collaborative approach helped to create a map that balances urban growth with the preservation of rural character, while also considering infrastructure capacity, environmental resources, and community goals. The Future Land Use Map serves as a guide for decision-making, providing a clear framework for the sustainable development of McLean County over the coming decades.

The Future Land Use Map serves only as a strategic guide for shaping development in McLean County by identifying appropriate areas for growth, preservation, and infrastructure investment. It will inform zoning decisions, ensuring that land use regulations align with the county's goals for sustainable growth, economic development, and environmental protection. The map will help prioritize infrastructure investments in areas designated for future development, support coordinated planning across municipalities and provide a clear framework for developers and local governments to ensure that new projects align with the desired vision for the community. Regular updates and monitoring will ensure the map remains relevant and responsive to changing needs.



Proposed Downtown Bloomington Transit Center



Proposed Uptown South Development

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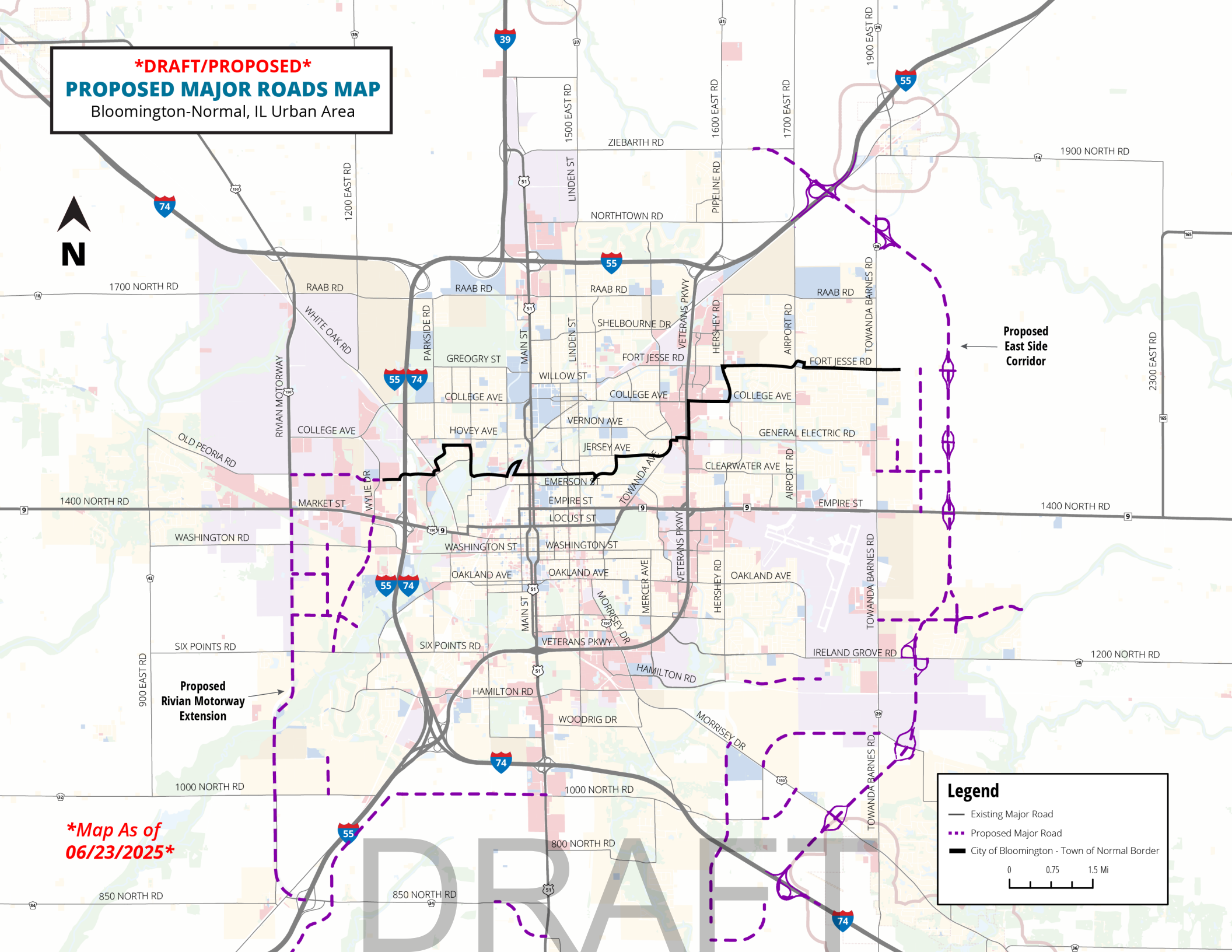
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PROPOSED MAJOR ROADS MAP
Bloomington-Normal, IL Urban Area
N
Proposed East Side Corridor
Proposed Rivian Motorway Extension
Map As of 06/23/2025
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Existing Major Road
Proposed Major Road
City of Bloomington - Town of Normal Border
0
0.75
1.5 Mi
1700 NORTH RD
1400 NORTH RD
1200 NORTH RD
1000 NORTH RD
800 NORTH RD
850 NORTH RD
1900 NORTH RD
ZIEBARTH RD
NORTHTOWN RD
RAAB RD
SHELBOURNE DR
GREOGRY ST
WILLOW ST
COLLEGE AVE
HOVEY AVE
VERNON AVE
JERSEY AVE
EMERSON ST
EMPIRE ST
LOCUST ST
WASHINGTON ST
OAKLAND AVE
FORT JESSE RD
GENERAL ELECTRIC RD
CLEARWATER AVE
MARKET ST
WASHINGTON RD
SIX POINTS RD
IRELAND GROVE RD
HAMILTON RD
WOODRIG DR
VETERANS PKWY
MORRISEY DR
OLD PEORIA RD
WHITE OAK RD
RIVIAN MOTORWAY
1200 EAST RD
1500 EAST RD
1600 EAST RD
1700 EAST RD
1900 EAST RD
2300 EAST RD
900 EAST RD
LINDEN ST
MAIN ST
PARKSIDE RD
PIPELINE RD
HERSHEY RD
AIRPORT RD
TOWANDA BARNES RD
TOWANDA AVE
MERCER AVE
WYLIE DR

EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION (ETJ) & RURAL MUNICIPALITY PLANNING BUFFERS

Extraterritorial Jurisdictions (ETJ):

- In Illinois, extraterritorial jurisdictions refer to the ability of incorporated municipalities to regulate subdivisions, land use, and zoning within one and one-half miles of their corporate limits. ETJ's are established when an official comprehensive plan, or part thereof, is adopted by the corporate authority. This may include a full Comprehensive Plan, Subdivision Ordinance, Zoning Ordinance, or any other officially adopted document that clearly defines an intention to regulate an area up to one and one-half miles from their corporate limits.

- In the case where multiple ETJ's overlap, there are a few options to remedy the issue. The first being an intergovernmental boundary agreement where municiplaities agree on an ETJ boundary line. The second is an equadistant line bewteen the two municipalities' ETJ overlap. This is the case between the Town of Normal and the Villages of Hudson and Towanda as well as the City of Bloomington and the Village of Downs.

- The only ETJ shown on the maps below is that of Bloomington and Normal. The rural municipality ETJ's are not shown. More information regarding the rural municipalities ETJ's can be found by contacting the individual municipalities.

Rural Municipality 0.25 Mile Planning Buffer:

- The Rural Municipality 0.25 Mile Planning Buffer is vastly different than the legal authority of the one and one-half mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. This planning buffer is an aknowlegdement from the McLean County Building and Zoning Department that there may be some development pressures surrounding the rural municiplaities. This planning buffer allows more flexibility in the unincorporated areas surrounding the rural municipalities.

- The intent of this planning area is to allow potential Residential, Commercial/Retail, Mixed-Use, Industrial/Employment Center, or Natural Resources land use development in the areas immediatly surrounding these rural incorporated municipalities.

- These planning buffers reflect the current county zoning map for the unicorporated areas surrounding the rural municiplaities. The current map shows a residential zoning designation surrounding these rural municiplaities.

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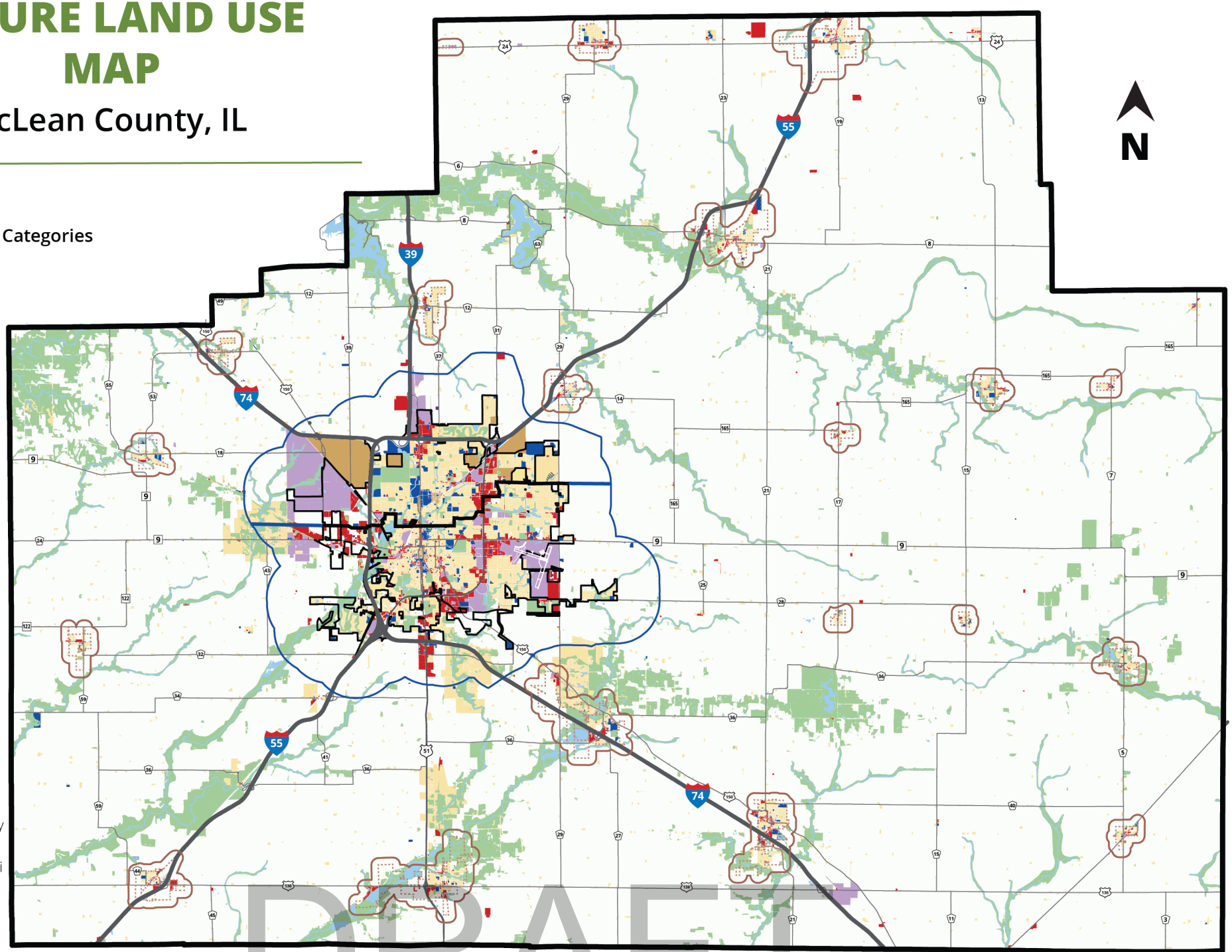
FUTURE LAND USE MAP

McLean County, IL



Legend

Future Land Use Categories

- Agriculture/ Undeveloped
- Commercial/ Retail
- Industrial/ Employment Center
- Public & Institutional Development
- Mixed-Use Development
- Natural Resources
- Residential Development

Roadways

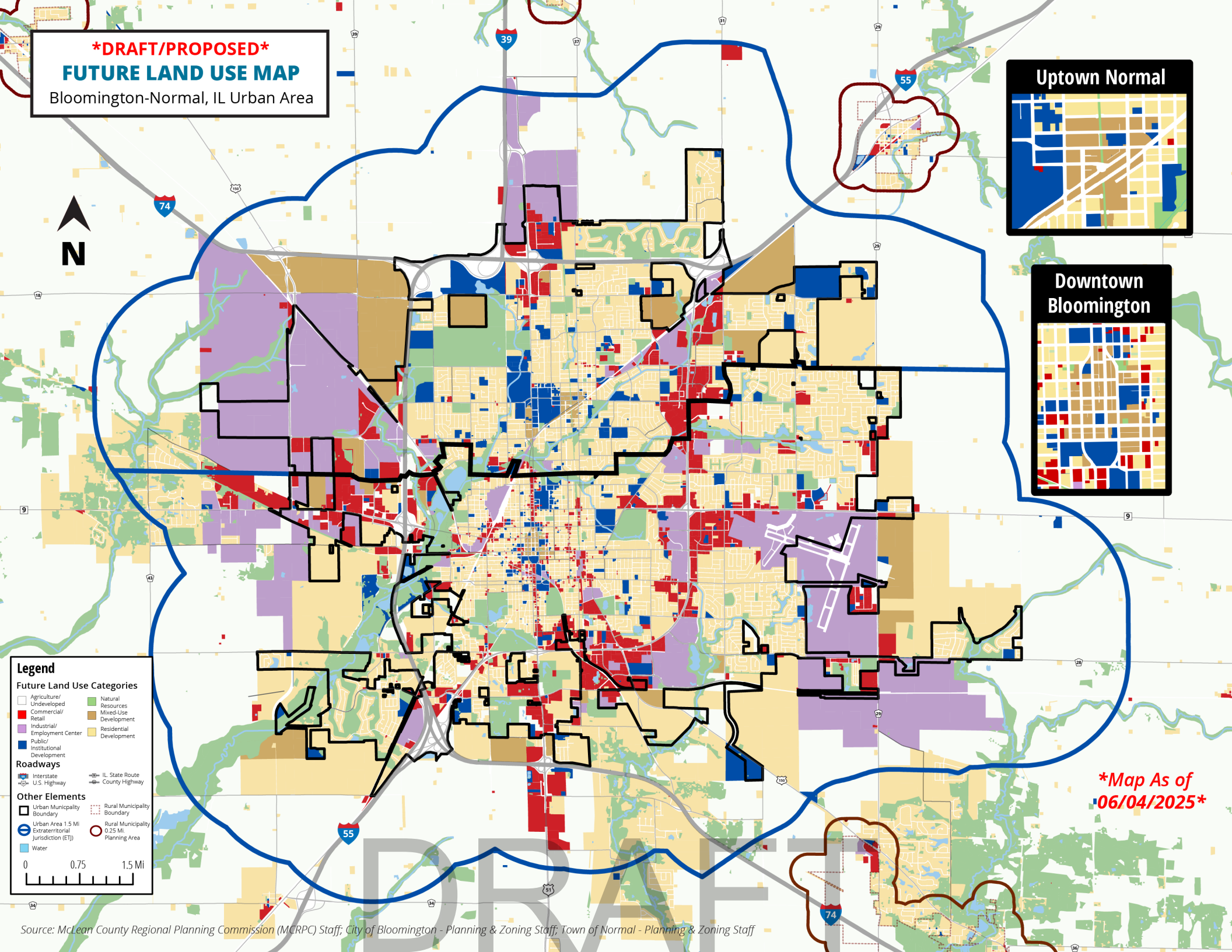
- Interstate
- U.S Highway
- IL. State Route
- County Highway

Other Elements

- McLean County Border
- Rural Municpality Boundary
- Rural Muncipality 0.25 Mile Planning Area
- Urban Municpality Boundary
- Urban Area 1.5 Mi Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Water

Map As of 06/04/2025

Source: McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) Staff; McLean County Building & Zoning Staff; Town of Normal - Planning & Zoning Staff City of Bloomington - Planning & Zoning Staff



Source: McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) Staff; City of Bloomington - Planning & Zoning Staff; Town of Normal - Planning & Zoning Staff






Agriculture / Undeveloped

This land use type primarily includes active row crop agriculture, pastureland, and related farm structures such as pole barns and livestock facilities. Compatible uses may also include renewable energy projects, which align with the area's agricultural character. Outside of Bloomington-Normal , the highest priority for the agriculture/ undeveloped land use is the preservation of prime farmland and the protection of the county's rural character. Limited single-family residential, small-scale commercial, light industrial, and institutional uses may also be present, typically on large lots with buildings set back from roadways. These areas are generally served by private wells and septic systems rather than municipal utilities. Land within the 1.5-mile municipal extraterritorial jurisdiction may experience greater development pressure, in turn, allowing for more flexibility in development decisions.

INTENT

- Support and preserve agricultural activities while minimizing incompatible land uses.
- Preserve and enhance natural resources and scenic areas.
- Encourage renewable energy development that aligns with agricultural character.
- Regulate non-agricultural development in areas less suitable for farming.

PRIMARY USES

- Agriculture
- Renewable Energy (wind, solar, etc.)

SECONDARY USES

- Single-family residential
- Small-scale commercial/retail
- Light industrial
- Public and institutional uses

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Residential Development

This land use designation encompasses a range of housing densities and typologies intended to support diverse community needs across both urban and unincorporated areas of McLean County. This category includes both low-density residential developments, such as detached single-family homes, and higher density housing options, including duplexes, townhomes, apartments, and multi-family buildings with three or more units. The intent of this generalized category is to promote the development of residential dwelling units in a time where the housing crisis is one of the biggest issues facing McLean County and the nation. This designation encourages development patterns that align with smart growth principles, supporting compact urban form while minimizing sprawl and infrastructure strain. In unincorporated areas, the Residential Development designation allows for carefully planned growth in proximity to existing infrastructure. It encourages clustered residential development that preserves surrounding farmland and open space, consistent with agricultural land conservation goals. Growth boundaries and rural design guidelines may be applied to maintain rural character and prevent unmanaged expansion.

INTENT

- Provide flexibility in housing options for future development.
- Encourage infill development to reduce the impacts of urban sprawl and infrastructure strain.
- Improve streetscape features such as consistent sidewalks, lighting, green space, and safety.
- Allow neighborhood-scale commercial or mixed-use development where appropriate.
- Regulate residential development in agriculturally productive areas of the county as well as areas with limited access to public water and sewer.

PRIMARY USES

- Single-family (attached & detached)
- Two-family residential
- Multi-family residential

SECONDARY USES

- Local-scale commerical/retail
- Parks and open space
- Public and institutional buidlings

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Mixed-Use Development

This land use designation is designed to blend residential, commercial, institutional, and sometimes light industrial uses in a compact, walkable environment. These areas are typically located near downtowns, major corridors, or transit hubs, and are intended to support vibrant, livable neighborhoods where people can live, work, and shop within the same area. Developments may include buildings with ground-floor retail or services and residential or office spaces above. This land use type encourages efficient use of infrastructure, reduces reliance on cars, and supports public transit. It also helps create dynamic community spaces and fosters economic growth by concentrating activity and investment. Mixed-use areas are essential for promoting infill development, supporting housing diversity, and building stronger, more resilient communities.

INTENT

- Encourage a blend of residential, commercial, and institutional uses within walkable, well-connected areas.
- Foster infill and redevelopment of underused or vacant properties in urban areas.
- Create flexibility that allows for evolving community needs and innovative development patterns.
- Align mixed-use development with existing transit corridors to reduce car dependency and improve mobility.

PRIMARY USES

- Residential development
- Neighborhood scale commercial/retail
- Public and institutional buildings
- Parks and open space
- Transit nodes

SECONDARY USES

- Light industrial
- Employment centers

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Industrial / Employment Center

This land use type is intended to support a wide range of employment-generating uses such as manufacturing, warehousing, logistics, research and development, and emerging technologies. It includes larger-scale facilities like factories, distribution centers, business parks, and innovation hubs, often located near major highways or transportation corridors to ensure efficient freight movement and regional access. These areas may also accommodate light industrial uses, office space, and limited commercial support services that serve workers and businesses within the district. Site layouts typically include larger building footprints, outdoor storage or staging areas, and buffers to mitigate impacts on nearby residential or agricultural uses. Utility infrastructure, roadway capacity, and broadband access are critical to support continued growth in these areas. Thoughtful land use planning in Employment Centers ensures job creation, supports economic resilience, and balances industrial development with environmental stewardship and community compatibility.

INTENT

- Support a diverse range of employment opportunities.
- Facilitate economic growth by providing flexible spaces for large-scale businesses.
- Promote efficient use of transportation infrastructure by locating employment centers near major highways and transportation corridors.
- Encourage development that is compatible with surrounding uses through buffering and proper site planning.

PRIMARY USES

- Light industrial
- Heavy industrial
- Large-scale commercial
- Business/Office parks
- Hospitals//Large medical centers
- Transit Nodes

SECONDARY USES

- Parks and open space
- Public and institutional buildings
- Retail

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Commercial / Retail

This land use designation focuses on areas intended for businesses that provide goods and services to the public, such as retail stores, restaurants, and offices. These areas are typically located along major roadways and serve as regional anchors that support the local economy while also being well-connected to the surrounding area. They may include pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, surface parking lots to accommodate customers, and public amenities. Integration into existing transit nodes is highly encouraged to ensure that commercial/retail centers can serve the entire community. Mixed-use developments combining commercial, retail, and residential spaces may be encouraged in appropriate locations to enhance walkability and reduce vehicle dependency. The primary goal is to create thriving commercial/retail hubs that serve both residents and visitors.

INTENT

- Support the development of retail, dining, and office spaces that meet the daily needs of residents and visitors.
- Prioritize placement of commercial centers along major transportation corridors for maximum visibility and access.
- Encourage pedestrian-friendly design elements, such as sidewalks, lighting, and streetscape amenities.
- Integrate commercial areas with existing and planned public transit routes to enhance connectivity.

PRIMARY USES

- Commercial/Retail
- Office
- Mixed-uses
- Transit Nodes

SECONDARY USES

- Parks and open space
- Public and institutional uses
- Multi-family residential

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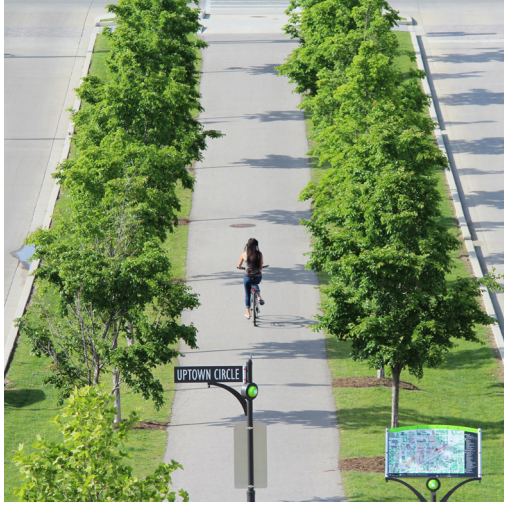

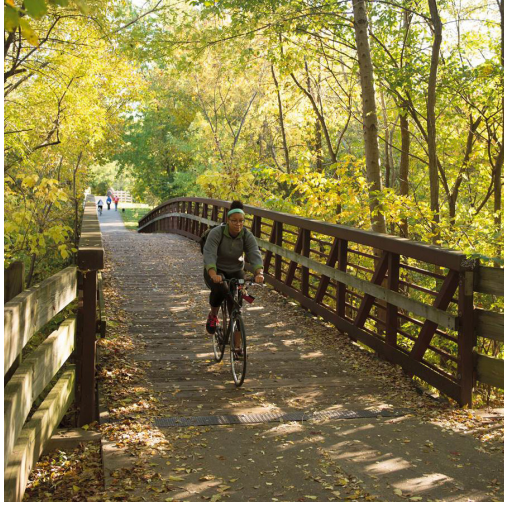


Natural Resources

This land use designation is intended to protect and preserve areas with significant environmental, ecological, and recreational value. It includes forested lands, nature preserves, wetlands, flood hazard areas, public parks, cemeteries, golf courses, and campgrounds. These areas provide critical ecosystem services, contribute to the county's natural character, and offer important recreational and cultural amenities. Development within these zones should be limited and carefully managed to maintain natural features, minimize environmental impacts, and preserve open space. Future land use decisions in these areas should prioritize conservation, stormwater management, habitat protection, and opportunities for passive and active recreation, while also supporting public access where appropriate. Integrating these areas into a broader greenway or open space network will help enhance connectivity, ecological health, and overall community well-being

INTENT

- Prioritize the long-term conservation of environmentally sensitive and ecologically valuable areas.
- Limit development in flood-prone or high-risk areas to reduce environmental hazards and property damage.
- Maintain and enhance public access to parks, trails, and open spaces for recreation.
- Integrate natural resource areas into a countywide greenway network to promote environmental connectivity.
- Use natural areas for stormwater management and climate resilience, especially in flood hazard zones.

PRIMARY USES

- Parks and open space
- Recreation
- Trails
- Transit Nodes

SECONDARY USES

- Public and institutional uses
- Agriculture

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Public & Institutional Development

This land use designation includes properties dedicated to civic, educational, religious, and governmental functions that serve the broader community. This category encompasses schools, college campuses, hospitals, government buildings, libraries, community centers, places of worship, and facilities operated by non-profit organizations. These uses are essential for supporting public services, fostering social interaction, and maintaining a high quality of life for residents. Public and institutional sites are often located within neighborhoods and along major transportation corridors to ensure accessibility for all populations, including underserved and rural communities. These areas may also include supporting infrastructure such as parking, open space, and pedestrian pathways. In some cases, shared-use facilities and adaptive reuse of existing structures are encouraged to maximize land efficiency and community benefit. Planning for this land use type prioritizes long-term community needs, equitable access, and integration with surrounding development.

INTENT

- Support the development and maintenance of essential community services such as education, government, and public safety.
- Ensure public and institutional uses are accessible to all residents, including those in underserved or rural areas.
- Preserve and expand civic spaces that foster community engagement and social well-being.
- Plan proactively to accommodate future growth in public services as the population increases.

PRIMARY USES

- Government facilities
- Places of worship
- Schools
- Community centers

SECONDARY USES

- Parks and open space
- Commercial/retail

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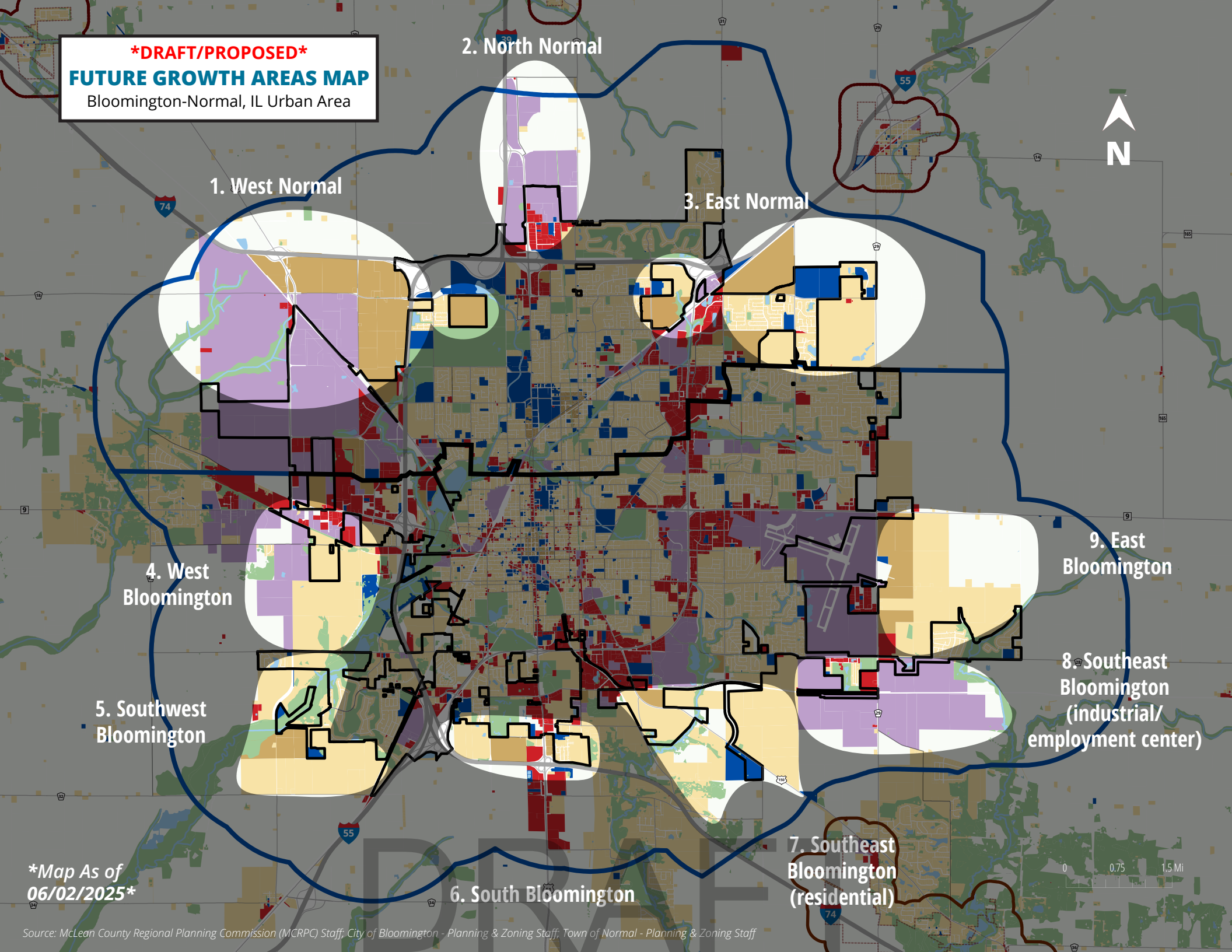
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FUTURE GROWTH AREAS MAP
Bloomington-Normal, IL Urban Area
2. North Normal
1. West Normal
3. East Normal
N
4. West Bloomington
9. East Bloomington
8. Southeast Bloomington (industrial/ employment center)
5. Southwest Bloomington
7. Southeast Bloomington (residential)
6. South Bloomington
Map As of 06/02/2025
0
0.75
1.5 Mi
DRAFT
Source: McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) Staff; City of Bloomington - Planning & Zoning Staff; Town of Normal - Planning & Zoning Staff

FUTURE GROWTH AREAS - TOWN OF NORMAL

1. West Normal

Future Industrial/Employment Center

- Similar existing industrial land uses that are not in close proximity to major residential areas.
- Proximity to the interstate and rail.
- Public utilities are either available or under study for expansion south of I-74 and west of Rivian Motorway.
- It is not currently recommended to go north of I-74 because utilities are not as available.

Mixed-Use

- Existing agro-tourism (Rader Farms), proximity to Heartland Community College, and the Rivian Manufacturing Plant would support commercial pockets for nearby residents and commuters to access. This also creates opportunities for mixed-housing for students and employees of nearby employment centers to reside.
- A well-connected transportation system with the Interstate, Raab Road, and White Oak Road also create opportunities for commercial corridors and mixed- density residential units, as well as an opportunity for regional destinations.

2. North Normal

Future Industrial/Employment Center

- Currently a mix of light industrial and commercial businesses.
- Access to Interstate and Main Street.
- Utilities available south of Northtown, but plans are underway to bring them further north.

3. East Normal

Future Residential

- The 2017 Comprehensive Plan points to these areas as future residential neighborhoods, which could be integrated into the fabric of the New Suburban Neighborhoods to make them more complete, connected, and compact.
- Emphasis on mixed densities and typologies with a high-quality public realm with street trees, pedestrian connections, natural areas, public parks, and green infrastructure.
- Utilities available between North Pointe and Airport for infill developments off Shepard and Airport and Raab, but sewer is not available east of the Vineyards and Trails on Sunset Lake.

Future Mixed-Use (south of Raab, west of Veterans Parkway)

- The 2017 Comprehensive Plan shows this area as a Local Center and residential development.
- Opportunities for regional detention basin south of Raab Rd. and east of Towanda that could incorporate natural areas and spur mixed development.

Future Mixed-Use (between Ft Jesse Rd. and Shepard Rd.)

- Identified as a Local Center in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan.
- Current land use includes offices and Shepard Park, and is adjacent to a well-connected street network, which lends itself to being a neighborhood destination for commercial and recreational activities, as well as supporting multiple forms of housing.

Future Mixed-Use (between Raab Rd. & Old Route 66)

- Proximity to a mix of land uses including institutional, industrial, commercial, and residential.
- Connectivity of roadways including Old Rt 66, Veterans Parkway, and Interstate 55, and Rt. 66/Constitution Trail line offers an opportunity for commercial, light industrial/ employment center, and a variety of residential typologies.

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4. West Bloomington

Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan points to these areas as "Future." This classification is no longer appropriate. Many of these areas are now incorporated or immediately adjacent (contiguous) to City limits, and significant current development pressure exists due to the distinctly different and physically separated nature of this part of the City because of the I-55/I-74 corridor. Connecting the residential population to the south with the large commercial and industrial area to the north is of paramount importance for the integrated, long-term success of both areas.

Public Utility Servicing: Public water and sewer services are not yet available for large portions of this area, but it sits in a "pocket" of surrounding utilities that run the Constitution Trail/W. Washington St. and Six Points Road, as well as planned and proposed improvements along the north, east, and southern boundaries of this area. Many of the existing utilities have been oversized to accommodate future growth, making this area a practical option for expansion that still holds many of the characteristics and benefits of infill. A newer fire station, with currently low use, has already been constructed nearby.

Future Considerations: The extension/connection of Rivian/Mitsubishi Motorway will be the primary generator of commercial development in this area. It is important to note that this area will never have connectivity across I-55, between W. Market St. and Six Points Rd.

Future Residential (approximately bounded by W. Washington St. (N), Rabbit Hill Rd. (E), Six Points Road (S), and future Rivian/Mitsubishi Motorway (W):

Emphasis: Short-to-mid-term uses that do not require significant infrastructure access (Utilities, Agricultural, Storage). Long-term low-to-moderate density, primarily automobile-based residential uses and development patterns, surrounding more moderate-to-high density, connected and/or mixed-use neighborhoods near primary road network components.

Growth Restriction: A transportation project as significant as connecting Rivian and Mitsubishi Motorways can typically not be constructed via relying upon private development.

Future Industrial/Employment Center and Mixed Use (approximately surrounding future Rivian/Mitsubishi Motorway Extension from W. Market St. (N) to Six Points Rd. (S):

Emphasis: Large lot industrial uses and/or employment centers supportive of the more intensive industrial/commercial uses northeast of Rivian/W. Market St. Mixed Use with "Neighborhood Commercial" type uses with focus on serving the immediately needs of the nearby residential population could be supported near Six Points Road and possibly near W. Washington St.

Growth Restriction: The future alignment of Rivian-Mitsubishi Motorway is at a "high point" that may result in splitting sewer sheds, with the east side becoming quickly serviceable and the west side servicing potential not yet evaluated.

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5. Southwest Bloomington

Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan points to these areas as "New Neighborhood" and "Conservation Neighborhood," with everything west of the future Mitsubishi Motorway alignment not assigned to a type. This classification is still somewhat appropriate but does not reflect the full extent of existing infrastructure investment and need for commercial uses in this area.

Public Utility Servicing: Public water and sewer services are already installed in much of this area, and are oversized to accommodate future growth, making this area a practical option for expansion that still holds many of the characteristics and benefits of infill. A newer fire station, with currently low use, has already been constructed to serve the surrounding area. Park space has been allocated and an Elementary School has been constructed on the outer edge of this area.

Future Considerations: Development of this area could result in the creation of a western access point for the Fox Creek subdivision, improving the connectivity and safety of this entire section of the City, particularly once Mitsubishi Mtwy has been connected to Rivian Mtwy to the north.

Future Residential (approximately bounded by Six Points Rd. (N), Carrington Ln./Fox Creek Rd. (E), Scottsdale Ave. (S), and Timberwolf Tr./Bloomingdale Rd. (W):

Emphasis: Low-to-moderate density, primarily automobile-based residential uses and development patterns, surrounding more moderate-to-high density, connected and/or mixed-use neighborhoods near primary road network components.

Growth Restriction: Without connecting this area to W. Market St., via Rivian and Mitsubishi Mtwy, sales tax from residents in this area may be lost to other nearby communities that are easier to reach, despite being physically further away. Development of the proposed Mixed Use area with an appropriate diversity of uses may help alleviate this potential issue.

Future Mixed Use (approximately surrounding future Rivian/Mitsubishi Motorway Extension from Sugar Creek (N), Timberwolf Tr. (E), Scottsdale Ave. (S), and Bloomingdale Rd. (W):

Emphasis: Medium-to-high density residential types and moderate commercial intensity, including anchor retail and grocery. Structured to integrate with the long-term development of the regional park planned just to the north of this area, could become a vibrant hub for southwest Bloomington, the way that the McGraw Park or Tipton Trails Park areas have become for the northeast.

Growth Restriction: A transportation project as significant as connecting Rivian and Mitsubishi Motorways can typically not be constructed via relying upon private development, and this segment includes a large expanse of bridgework to cross Sugar Creek.

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6a. South Bloomington (West of Main)

Comprehenive Plan: The comprehensive plan points to these areas as "Future". This classification is no longer appropriate. These areas are now incorporated or immediately adjacent (contiguous) to Bloomington's corporate limits, and current development pressure exists.

Public Utility Servicing: Public water and sewer services are not yet available for large portions of this area. Water can be extended reasonably, but public sewer access would require the use of lift station(s).

Future Considerations: Installation of a proposed interceptor sewer along I-74 to the south would drastically alter the financial viability of utility servicing in these areas.

Future Residential (approximately bounded by Lutz Rd. (N), S. Morris Ave. (E), I-74 (S), and Veterans Parkway (W):

Emphasis: Short-to-mid-term uses that do not require significant infrastructure access (Utilities, Agricultural, Storage). Long-term low-density, automobile-based residential uses and development patterns, once utility servicing becomes financially feasible.

Growth Restriction: Transportation network is permanently restricted due to bounding by I-74 and Veterans Parkway, without direct access to either. All access to this area will be from the north and (primarily) east, preventing successful implementation of most commercial and/or mixed uses.

Future Mixed Use (approximately bounded by Brigham School Rd. (N), US HWY 51/Main St. (E), I-74 (S), and S. Morris Ave. (W):

Emphasis: Short-to-mid-term uses that do not require significant infrastructure access (Utilities, Agricultural, Storage). Long-term Mixed Use with "Neighborhood Commercial" type uses with focus on serving the large residential population expected in the immediate area, long-term.

Growth Restriction: Drainage pattern is somewhat restrictive in the northwest but could be transitioned to lower-density residential uses in this specific area or conserved as part of a Conservation focused master planned development.

6b. South Bloomington (East of Main)

Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan points to these areas as "Commercial Activity Center" and "New Neighborhood." This expectation is still reasonable today.

Public Utility Servicing: Public water and sewer services are in the vicinity but not extended to the point of encouraging incremental development. Water is easily extended from the west in both areas, but quite a distance from the northeast.

Future Considerations: Public sewer main extension north (~0.4 miles) and west (~0.5 miles) from an existing point near I-74 and Bunn St. would likely accelerate both commercial and residential growth in this area.

Future Residential (approximately bounded by Woodrig Rd. (N), Hendrix Dr. (E), I-74 (S), and Breezewood Blvd. (W):

Emphasis: Moderate-to-medium density residential neighborhoods with a combination of automobile-based neighborhoods and more walkable neighborhoods with connectivity when near schools/parks and areas of "neighborhood commercial" character.

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6b. South Bloomington (East of Main) Cont.

Growth Restriction: Sewer access (N-S run of public main just west of Bunn St.) and the improvement of Bunn Street to "City Collector" standards are the restrictions in this area.

Future Commercial (approximately bounded by Woodrig Rd. (N), Breezewood Blvd. (E), I-74 (S), and S. Main St/US HWY 51. (W):

Emphasis: Tractor Lane access properties can expect "Neighborhood Commercial" type uses, with focus on serving the residential population in the immediate area, which will continue to grow. Larger commercial uses/anchors may be successful at the northern portion of this area, accessing from Woodridge.

Growth Restriction: Sewer access will be the primary restriction in this area; it falls from north to south so gravity feeds would be toward the public main that is still 0.5 mile to the southeast. The feasibility of installing a public lift station at the south end of this area should be studied.

7. Southeast Bloomington (residential)

Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan points to these areas as "New Neighborhood" and "Conservation Neighborhood," with limited "Commercial Activity Center" uses along the Abraham Road corridor. This expectation is still reasonable today.

Public Utility Servicing: Public water and sewer services are relatively available; public mains surround most of this area and have been oversized to accommodate significant future growth. Future Considerations: Land acquisition and funding for an above-grade railroad crossing that would extend Hershey Rd. into this area could significantly alter the future character of this area to reasonably include Commercial and Mixed Use areas surrounding the Hershey Road extension corridor, between Hamilton Rd. and US HWY 150, as well as southwest of that intersection.

Future Residential E (approximately bounded by Hamilton Rd./RR (N), Abraham Rd. (E), and US HWY 150/Morrissey. (S, W):

Emphasis: Low-density, automobile-based residential uses and development patterns. Possible higher residential density and minor commercial/mixed use adjacent to Morrissey Dr. and/or near Long Lane Rd/George Evans High School.

Growth Restriction: Transportation network is severely restricted without a railroad crossing at the southern end of Hershey Rd. With restricted access this area will likely grow slowly, at low density that does not take full advantage of the installed and oversized water and sewer infrastructure.

Future Residential (approximately bounded by Hamilton Rd. (N), US HWY 150/Morrissey Dr. and Long Lane Rd (E), Harevest Hill Ave. (S), and Capodice Rd. (W):

Emphasis: Low-density, automobile-based residential uses and development patterns, significant potential for conservation neighborhood areas due to topography and natural resources present.

Growth Restriction: Single, long-term landowner for much of the area between existing development and the public school in the southeast part of this growth area may prohibit contiguous infill development.

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8a. Southeast Bloomington (industrial/ employment center) West of Towanda Barnes

Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan points to these areas as "Employment Center" (north of RR only) and "Future" south of the RR, with a small area of "Commercial Activity Center" in an area at Ireland Grove and Abraham that is—in all practicality—not developable. These expectations are no longer accurate.

Public Utility Servicing: Public trunk lines for water and sewer services have been installed along and oversized in this area, to accommodate significant future growth on both side of Abraham.

Future Considerations: A new east-west transportation corridor must be identified and constructed before the area south of the RR can be significantly developed; the long-term vacation of Brokaw Road and the existing substandard road status is restrictive. The northern portion of Abraham is also planned for vacation or privatization in the long-term, restricting access from the north.

Future Industrial/Employment Center (approximately bounded by Ireland Grove/Brokaw Rd. (N), Towanda Barnes (E), Little Kickapoo Creek (S), and Abraham Rd. (W):

Emphasis: Large lot, light-to-moderate (north of RR) and moderate-to-intensive (south of RR) industrial, and large-scale employment center uses, in an "Industrial Park" or "Business Park" setting. Connectivity to rail is a potential consideration here, unlike elsewhere in the City.

Growth Restriction: The portion of this area north of the RR has extremely limited access to public roads, and therefore limited development potential, until Hamilton Rd. is extended to Abraham.

8a. Southeast Bloomington (industrial/ employment center) West of Towanda Barnes

Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan points to these areas as "Employment Center," "New Neighborhood," "Future," and undesignated. These designations could be appropriate if the Eastside Highway is eventually realized but are not reflective of the current status of installed or committed infrastructure and today's development pressure(s).

Public Utility Servicing: Public water and sewer has been extended along Ireland Grove Rd., all the way to N. 2100 E. Rd., including a public lift station past Kickapoo Creek Rd. to allow private development to implement gravity feed systems in most areas.

Future Considerations: The future trajectory of the Eastside Highway project will significantly impact whether and how this area can develop. Construction of a large-scale transportation corridor could result in the same segmentation of this part of the City—and the same long-term issues—that have resulted from expansion of the City on the west side of the I-74/55 corridor.

Future Industrial/Employment Center (approximately bounded by Ireland Grove Rd. (N), N. 2100 East Rd. (E), Cheney's Grove Rd. (S), and Towanda Barnes (W):

Emphasis: Large lot, light-to-moderate (north of RR) and moderate-to-intensive (south of RR) industrial, and large-scale employment center uses, in an "Industrial Park" or "Business Park" setting. Some Mixed Use could be integrated, depending upon the preferences of the dominant development parties and financial feasibility.

Growth Restriction: North-south connectivity between Towanda Barnes and N. 2100 East Rd. is severely restricted by the Norfolk Southern Rail line that spans the entire area, from west to east.

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9. East Bloomington

Comprehensive Plan: The comprehensive plan points to these areas as "Employment Center" and "Conservation Neighborhood." This expectation is still reasonable today, with slight modification.

Public Utility Servicing: Public water and sewer services are relatively available; public mains surround most of this area and have been oversized to accommodate significant future growth.

Future Considerations: The future trajectory of the Eastside Highway project will significantly impact whether and how this area can develop. Construction of a large-scale transportation corridor could result in the same segmentation of this part of the City—and the same long-term issues—that have resulted from expansion of the City on the west side of the I-74/55 corridor.

Future Commercial/Mixed Use (approximately bounded by E. Empire St. (N), Prairie Commercial Park (E), Ireland Grove Rd. (S), and Towanda Barnes (W):

Emphasis: Moderate-to-high intensity commercial park and retail uses near the Towanda Barnes corridor, accessing primarily from the developments to the east. Mixed Use transitioning from the commercial area into higher density residential, and suburban neighborhoods to the east.

Growth Restriction: Without the Eastside Highway a linear, connected pattern of development is feasible, relying heavily on existing oversized public infrastructure; with it, the neighborhoods that would support the commercial development appropriate for proximity to Towanda Barnes will be located further from the borders of existing development and separated from that commercial use.

Future Residential (approximately bounded by E. Empire St. (N), N. 2100 East Rd. (E), Ireland Grove Rd. (S), and Prairie Commercial Park (W):

Emphasis: Low-density, automobile-based residential uses and development patterns. Possible higher residential density as you approach the Mixed Use area further toward Towanda Barnes.

Growth Restriction: Without the Eastside Highway a linear, connected pattern of development is feasible, relying heavily on existing oversized public infrastructure; with it, the neighborhoods that would support the commercial development appropriate for proximity to Towanda Barnes will be located further from the borders of existing development and separated from that commercial use.

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CHAPTER 3
CONCLUSION

Ultimately, this Strategic Land Use Plan is more than an advisory document, it is a shared vision and collective commitment to shaping a prosperous and sustainable future for all of McLean County.

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CONCLUSION

The McLean County Strategic Land Use Plan represents a critical step forward in proactively guiding the county's growth and development amid rapid economic changes and growing population demands. Rooted in collaboration, data analysis, and a commitment to sustainability, the plan serves as a living document that reflects the shared vision of regional stakeholders. By balancing the needs of both urban and rural areas, the plan provides a flexible yet strategic framework to address immediate development pressures while laying the groundwork for future comprehensive planning efforts.

As Bloomington, Normal, and McLean County continue to evolve, this Strategic Land Use Plan will be instrumental in shaping policies and decisions that protect natural resources, preserve agricultural land, and support vibrant, well-connected communities. It ensures that growth is managed thoughtfully, with an eye toward long-term resiliency, economic prosperity, and quality of life for all residents. Ultimately, this plan is not the end point, but the beginning of a dynamic planning process that will adapt over time to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Continued collaboration between municipalities, regional agencies, and community members will be essential to the plan's success. As conditions change and new opportunities arise, open communication and public input will help ensure that the Strategic Land Use Plan remains a responsive and inclusive tool for shaping the future of McLean County. The next major planning process will be the development of the McLean County Regional Comprehensive plan update. This update will set the stage for a more in-depth analysis of the region using the information developed in the Strategic Land Use Plan seen here. It will also allow for expansion on certain planning topics and the ability to begin the development of individual comprehesive plan updates for local municipalities.

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