



# Grow Spring Valley

The City of Spring Valley, Illinois Comprehensive Plan



Adopted June 29, 2020



## Thank you

The Grow Spring Valley Comprehensive Plan would not have been possible without the many residents, business owners, and other stakeholders who devoted their time and ideas to help aid in building a stronger and more vibrant community. We would also like to thank each Steering Committee member for their dedication and commitment throughout this process.

Prepared by:



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# Executive Summary

# Purpose

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## What is a Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan is a citizen driven plan to set long-term goals and objectives for the future of the community. It will guide policy related to where and how development or redevelopment should occur. The Comprehensive Plan works to prioritize the values and aspirations of the community by identifying potential locations for future development by type and intensity, as well as corresponding transportation, utility, and amenity improvements.

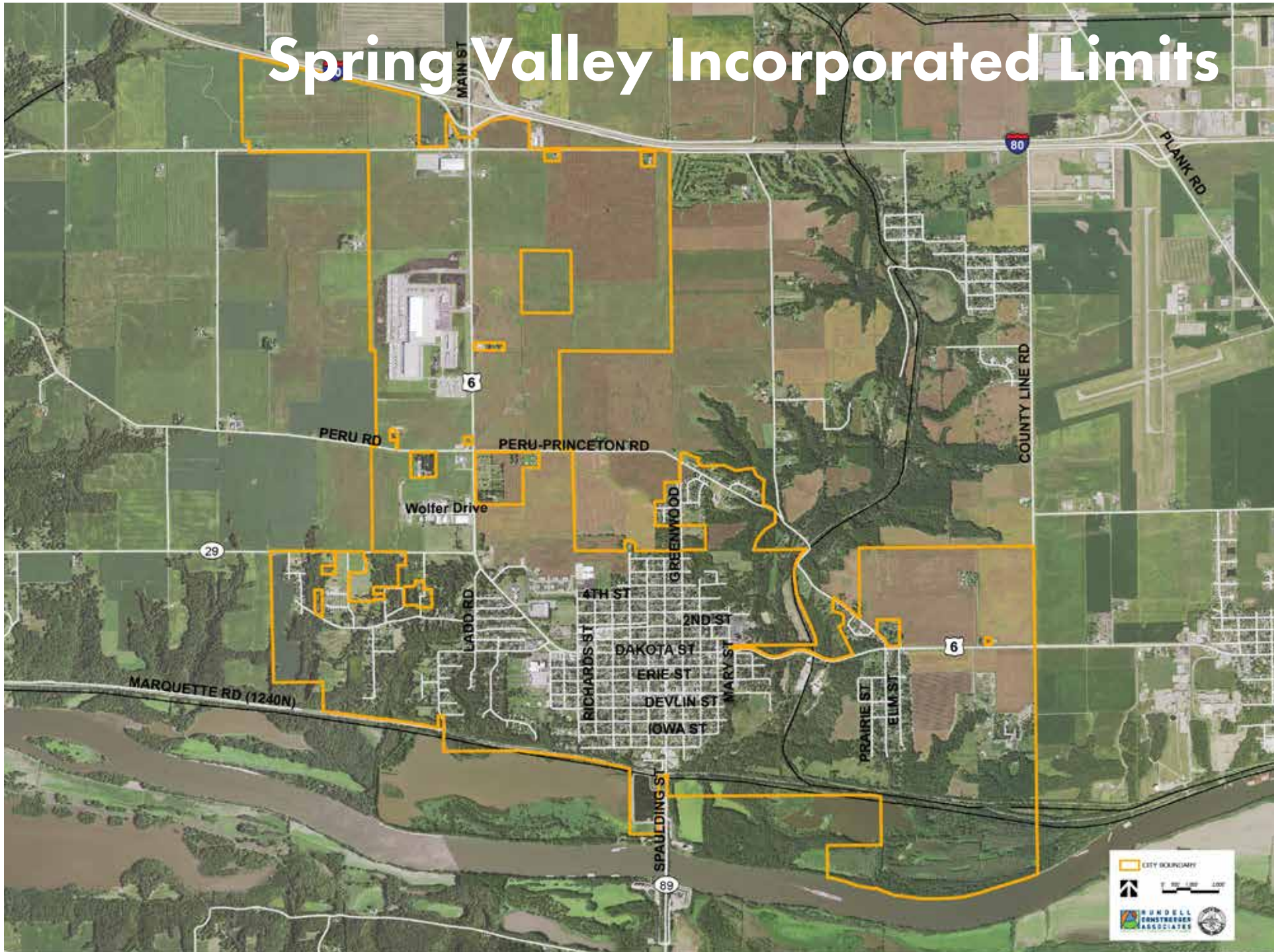
The Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5/11-12-5) requires that a city plan commission must prepare a comprehensive plan to serve as a guide for future development and redevelopment within the municipal limits. The Comprehensive Plan is a prerequisite to an ordinance that establishes subdivision controls and transportation or utility construction standards (65 ILCS 5/11-12-6). It also provides the legal basis for development regulations contained within the zoning ordinance.

## How is it Used

The Comprehensive Plan is used by City staff and officials when reviewing applications for land use changes (rezonings) and other development or redevelopment applications. The plan serves as a guide for future projects to ensure that development aligns with the goals of the community. It also helps guide the community to work towards these goals by prioritizing recommendations in terms of importance. The Comprehensive Plan should be used to inform decisions regarding capital improvements and broader City budgeting. It should be reviewed annually and updated as needed to ensure the goals and objectives remain applicable and reflect the changing needs of the community.



# Spring Valley Incorporated Limits



# Process

Planning is a continuous process that had been initiated prior to this plan and will continue after its adoption. The Grow Spring Valley Comprehensive Plan is the result of a detailed process that brought residents and stakeholders together to identify existing conditions throughout the City, recognize potential trends, and ultimately create recommendations for the future. The plan was developed over nine months with oversight from a project steering committee. In addition to the regularly held steering committee meetings, a series of focus group discussions was held, and two public open houses were used to solicit input from the broader community.

The first open house took place on June 20, 2019 at the Spring Valley City Hall. Participants were able to voice their opinions, interests, and concerns about the current conditions and future vision for the community. The second public open house was held on November 13, 2019. This meeting allowed attendees to review the draft recommendations and begin to prioritize plan objectives. Both open houses were followed with online surveys for those that were not able to attend in person.

In addition to on-going public engagement, the plan process was broken into four major components:

- Discovery
- Visioning
- Frameworks
- Implementation

The discovery phase looked both objectively and subjectively at the issues and challenges facing the City. Issues and opportunities were discussed with the project steering committee, at the first public workshop, and during the focus group discussions. An Existing Conditions Analysis was prepared, highlighting population, housing, and demographic trends. The existing conditions information is included as the last chapter of this plan.

The visioning phase included the creation of the vision statement and associated goals and objectives. The vision and goals served as the structure for the remainder of the plan process. Many of the objectives include ideas that were generated during public engagement while others incorporate best practices demonstrated in other communities.



The frameworks phase was comprised of translating the goals and objectives into more detailed recommendations, explaining the why and how of key plan components. The frameworks are organized around four topics:

- Land Use & Community Form
- Transportation & Utilities
- Downtown
- Quality of Life

Finally, the implementation phase involved identifying the relative priority of plan recommendations and both short and long-term action items. This information ensures that the plan can be used on a regular basis to guide decision making and ultimate community realization of the goals and objectives. After the second workshop, the plan was presented to the City Council and steering committee. The City Council adopted the plan [DATE].



# Vision & Goals

## Vision Statement

Spring Valley is a city full of pride. Residents of all ages and backgrounds are engaged in civic activities, and owners take satisfaction in maintaining attractive buildings and properties. More than simply a place to live or work, Spring Valley is a community made up of diverse neighborhoods, quality schools and parks, and an active downtown. It is a place residents are proud to call home, and where young adults want to return to raise a family if they left for school or a career. St. Paul Street is home to shops, restaurants, offices, and apartments; it is a destination for both Spring Valley residents and visitors alike with an array of community events and activities happening throughout the year. The Dakota Street, US 6, and IL-89 corridor is lined with both new and long-time businesses and industries that provide diverse employment opportunities to residents of Spring Valley and the many neighboring communities in the Illinois Valley. Ultimately, new growth and revitalization of established areas has resulted in increased property values for owners and revenue generation for the City, allowing for superior city services and a high quality of life without having to raise taxes.

## Goals

### Land Use & Community Form

1. Maintain and grow a balance of land uses that support businesses, residents, and visitors while ensuring City services and infrastructure can accommodate new development.
2. Create opportunities for the construction and rehabilitation of diverse housing options that serve the needs of all ages and income levels, and that are compatible with surrounding character and further ensure quality and connected neighborhoods.
3. Grow existing businesses and attract new ones to develop diverse employment opportunities and meet the service needs of both the community and the region.



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## Transportation & Utilities

1. Provide a safe and efficient transportation system in coordination with proactive land use planning, to connect neighborhoods, employment centers, and other community destinations.
2. Create a complete and connected pedestrian and bicycle system that allows users of all ages and abilities to safely travel for work, school, everyday needs, and recreation.
3. Maintain utility infrastructure to better serve existing residents and businesses and expand capacity to accommodate planned growth and development.



## Downtown

1. Revitalize the downtown into a vibrant, mixed use district that serves as a shopping and dining, housing, and civic destination within the community.
2. Ensure protection and rehabilitation of existing building stock and promote new construction on vacant lots that supports the established form and character of the downtown.
3. Improve streets and public spaces to further establish community character and promote private investment in the downtown.



## Quality of life

1. Enhance pride within the community and grow resident engagement in civic and cultural activities.
2. Continue to develop and grow a balanced parks and recreation system with investments in existing facilities that are connected to key destinations and the neighborhoods they serve.
3. Continue to support, grow, and create community institutions that contribute to overall quality of life in Spring Valley.
4. Grow city capacity to better serve residents and businesses, and explore opportunities for new ways to communicate and engage with residents and employers.

# Implementation

Implementation is the process by which the recommendations of the comprehensive plan get translated into meaningful change within the community. The key challenge often comes in translating a plan's vision, goals, and recommendations into the day-to-day operations and actions of City government, key stakeholders, business owners, and residents. While the plan goals and objectives have been organized under the categories of Land Use & Community Form, Transportation & Utilities, Downtown, and Quality of Life, they are all interconnected, and implementation relies on treating each component as a part of a whole. Care was taken to ensure the Plan provides policies, programs, and recommendations within the context of that basic reality. Not all the goals and objectives can be completed immediately, so the plan must be treated as a living document. This means that the plan should continue to evolve over time as physical, economic, and social conditions change, and as resources become available. The City must consider the necessary staff and budget resources and prioritize actions in order to successfully implement the comprehensive plan.

After taking into consideration the communicated needs of the City and the information and ideas discussed throughout the planning process, a list of ten primary initiatives has been identified to help prioritize City projects and create a working plan of next steps. These recommendations are described in more detail throughout the plan and specifically within the implementation chapter and should be used as the first set of work plan items to be prioritized and completed. During plan review periods, the City should reassess current conditions and adjust this list appropriately. The top ten initiatives, in no particular order, are:

- Form a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee.
- Create a three to five-year capital improvements plan.
- Update the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to better reflect the goals and recommendations of this plan.
- Develop a Code Enforcement Strategy to improve the visual appearance of the community.
- Create a neighborhood stabilization program to address housing maintenance, rehabilitation, and blight elimination.



- Create a Downtown streetscape plan and pursue funding for improvements.
- Prioritize missing pedestrian infrastructure and pursue funding for improvements.
- Update the Parks and Recreation plan with a focus on improvements to Coal Miners Park and increased community events programming.
- Develop a communications plan to better share good news about the community and also provide an official avenue for nuisance complaints or other issue identification.
- Grow the Spring Valley Business Revitalization Grant Program and help to identify building needs to proactively support downtown revitalization efforts.

Perhaps most important from this list is the need to develop a code enforcement strategy to enhance the image of the community and better protect historic buildings. Input received from residents, business owners, government and community leaders throughout the process emphasized the need for increased code enforcement. The vision for the community and the asset growth outlined will be a natural succession once efforts to follow existing codes and ordinances are employed, monitored,

and maintained consistently. Unfortunately, when properties are not adequately maintained, the City must get involved through code enforcement. This is typically a resource intensive process that involves City staff and legal counsel. As opposed to trying to pursue all code violations at all times, it may be more efficient and effective to target code enforcement efforts to specific issues for a set period of time. For example, inoperable vehicles may be one focus, and then move on to high grass/weeds, unsafe buildings, or illegal signage. One of the benefits to this targeted approach is that no individual can claim unfair treatment by the City because multiple similar notices will be sent at the same time. Similarly, when dealing with multiple similar violations, there will likely be efficiencies realized for staff and legal counsel resources. The end goal of such a program should be code compliance leading to a more attractive community, it will also show property owners that the City is serious about its appearance and hopefully elevate property maintenance city-wide. This targeted effort will have positive effects on all categories of community life in Spring Valley including transportation and utilities, land use and community form, downtown and the overall quality of life.



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## Introduction

# Purpose

## What is a Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan is a citizen driven plan to set long-term goals and objectives for the future of the community. It will guide policy changes and help create a pattern for where and how development or redevelopment should occur. The Comprehensive Plan works to prioritize the values and aspirations of the community by identifying potential locations for future development by type and intensity, as well as corresponding transportation, utility, and amenity improvements.

The Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS 5/11-12-5) requires that a city plan commission must prepare a comprehensive plan to serve as a guide for future development and redevelopment within the municipal limits. The Comprehensive Plan is a prerequisite to an ordinance that establishes subdivision controls and transportation or utility construction standards (65 ILCS 5/11-12-6). It also provides the legal basis for development regulations contained within the zoning ordinance.

## Why Have it

Comprehensive plans are documents that lay out the foundation for future development through a series of tools, goals, and objectives. They are the basis for which zoning and subdivision ordinances can be created, adopted, and changed for a community to best represent and achieve their needs for the future. Typically, these long-term plans will help City officials and staff identify existing needs of the community and prioritize projects while looking towards the future. The Comprehensive Plan cannot address every issue of the community in adequate detail, so it is also used to identify areas and issues that likely need more specific action or study.

Comprehensive plans should be updated as needed to ensure that the changing needs of the community are being represented. Typically this occurs every seven to ten years. The previous comprehensive plan for Spring Valley was created in 1970 and no longer accurately targets the needs of the community today. This process, which involved analysis of data and feedback from residents, officials, business owners and others across the community, has worked to accurately represent the needs of Spring Valley and help to prioritize projects to be implemented in the short and long-term.



## How is it Used

The Comprehensive Plan is used by City staff and officials when reviewing applications for land use changes (rezonings) and other development or redevelopment applications. The plan serves as a guide for future projects to ensure that development aligns with the goals of the community. It also helps guide the community to work towards these goals by prioritizing recommendations in terms of importance. The Comprehensive Plan should be used to inform decisions regarding capital improvements and broader City budgeting.



Members of the planning team met with Hall High School students on May 3, 2019.

# Background

## History of Spring Valley

Spring valley was founded in 1884 along the Illinois River by Henry J. Miller and his son-in-law, who were early settlers of the area. The land was a coal field which made it easy to establish a coal mining business. Together, they acquired mineral rights to 5,000 acres and purchased 500 acres of land to build the town. The town was incorporated on February 8, 1886. Since then, Spring Valley has grown to 7.37 square miles of land area (4,716.8 acres).

Spring Valley was settled and built with the idea that it would be a thriving, large city. Two coal mining companies were started, the Spring Valley Coal Company and the Spring Valley Townsite Company. Both of these companies spent money to help build the town. Space was set aside for schools, churches, and other public buildings and facilities and roads were designed to be wide. St. Paul Street became one of the widest streets in the state and was further widened in 1984. Within the first four years, by 1888, Spring Valley had seen such rapid growth that the population reached 3,000 people.

By 1888, two churches had been built, the Congregational and the Immaculate Conception; two schools were built, the Immaculate Conception parochial and the Lincoln Public School; a newspaper started, the Spring Valley Gazette; and a public library built. The library was established by the "Knights of Labor," the Coal Miner's Union in 1885 before the town was a year old and before any type of government was formed. Lincoln Public School offered a two-year high school course for people to enroll in. Another school, the Hall Township and Vocational School, was constructed in 1914 and trained people in shop, carpentry, printing, drafting, cooking, sewing, typing, shorthand, bookkeeping, and banking. Additional schools came and went since the start of the community in 1886. Now, three schools remain in the City: John F. Kennedy Elementary School, Hall High School, and Saint Bede Academy, which is a Catholic college preparatory high school on the east side of the City.



**Historic photo of Spring Valley featuring the original bridge built in 1934.  
Photo by Art Kistler, IDOT.**

More recent changes in the community include construction of the Walmart Distribution Center in 2001 and creation of the tax increment financing (TIF) district in 2006. John F. Kennedy School was significantly expanded in 2014 and an all new Hall High School opened in the fall of 2015. St. Bede Academy recently completed a STEM Science lab and Student Commons addition to their facility.

A new IL-89 bridge over the Illinois River opened in 2018, improving the connection between Spring Valley/Bureau County and Putnam County. The original bridge was built in 1934. Due to poor condition, the bridge was demolished in August 2018 but not before construction of the new bridge was completed. The bridges ran parallel to each other and the new bridge, completed with the help of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), opened on June 18, 2018. The bridge was dedicated as the "Illinois Valley Veterans Memorial Bridge." The new construction started in February 2016 and is wider than the previous bridge. Eight-foot shoulders allow for any vehicle to pull off and away from traffic, wider lanes improve access for emergency vehicles and first responders, and pedestrians and bicyclists can travel across the river.



**New Developments**  
Build out 20 million sq ft of new space  
Targeted investment in infrastructure  
Specific uses: residential, retail, government  
and community development

**Transportation**  
New railroads, which connect the railroad corridors with the rest of the region  
Improve transit and transit services  
Improve road and transit services

**Quality of Life**  
Improve community parks and recreation  
Improve public safety  
Improve property maintenance and code enforcement  
Improve health programming, health, and life  
Improve growth with expanding residential presence  
Improve services in the region

**Grow Spring Valley**

**Analysis Maps**

**Economic**

**125th ANNIVERSARY**



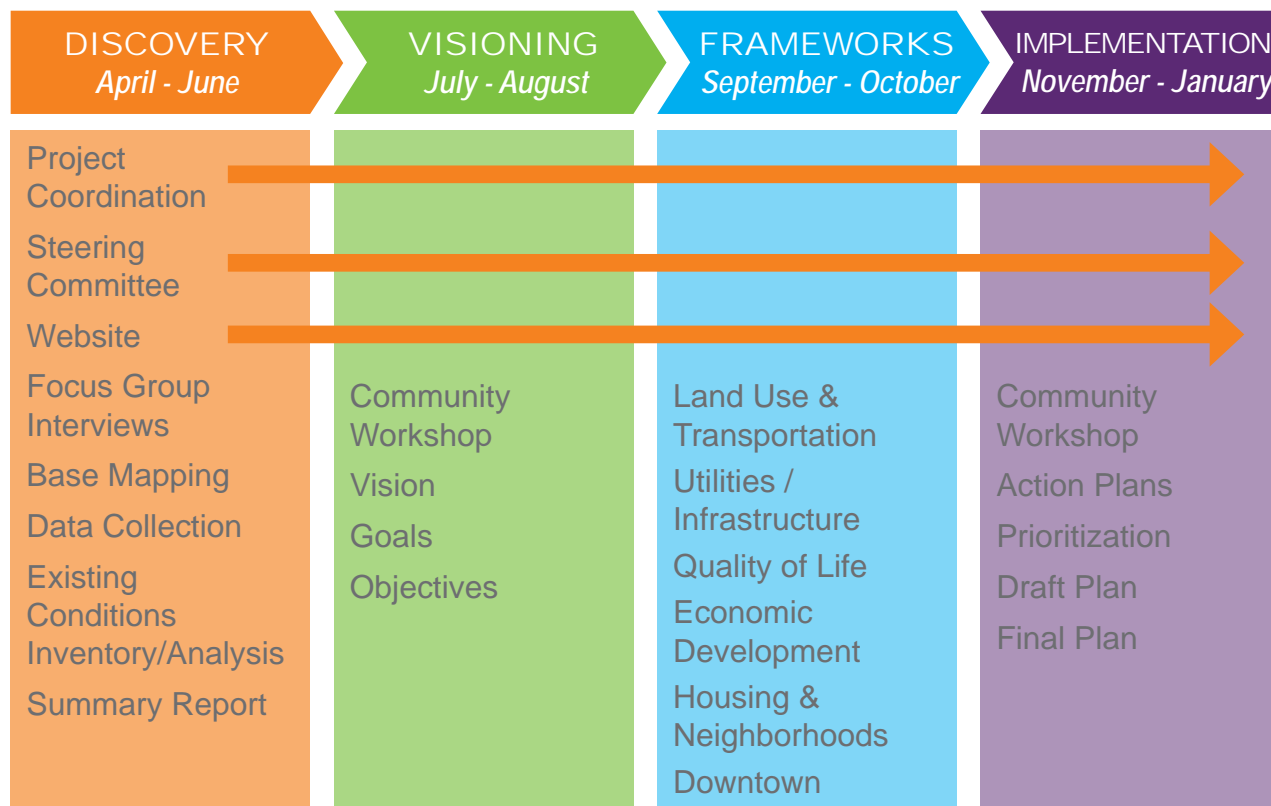
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# Process & Community Engagement

# Process

The City of Spring Valley hired Rundell Ernstberger Associates to facilitate the planning process and creation of the Grow Spring Valley Comprehensive Plan. The process began in April of 2019 and shortly thereafter, the first steering committee meeting was held in May. This group was comprised of City Staff and Officials, residents, and business owners who helped guide this process to completion. This group met periodically throughout the process, helps to identify issues and opportunities, and provided feedback on plan goals and objectives as they were developed.

Additionally, focus group meetings were held in June to allow for more diverse input across the community. Students, community leaders, and other property and business owners and city staff who were not a part of the steering committee were interviewed during this time. These interviews helped to gather more information about the existing concerns and future opportunities of Spring Valley.







Hall High School students participating in a mapping exercise.



Attendees and exercises at the first public open house, held on June 20, 2019.



A resident provides input at the Cinco de Mayo festival.

Public events and meetings were held throughout this process. The Cinco de Mayo festival was a chance for the community to get involved early on in the process of creating the plan by participating in a couple activities. Open house style public meetings were held in June and November which allowed for the public to comment on any of the work done up to that point and provide feedback.

For those who could not make it to the public meetings, a website was created at the beginning of the process and updated periodically. These updates consisted of posting meeting materials from the steering committee and public meetings, as well as online survey opportunities. These surveys helped to gather information based on existing concerns and opportunities, and guidance for the continuing development of the plan.





PROJECT INFORMATION

DOCUMENT CENTER

FREQUENTLY ASKED  
QUESTIONS

CONTACT



# GROW SPRING VALLEY

*The City of Spring Valley, IL Comprehensive Plan*



## COMMUNITY SURVEY

Community participation and input is critical to the success of the planning process. A community survey has been created to collect feedback from individuals who were not able to attend the community workshop on November 13, 2019. Please use the following link to complete the survey; it will take you to the Grow Spring Valley page on the SurveyMonkey site.

[SURVEYMONKEY.COM/R/GROWSPRINGVALLEY](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/growspringvalley)

## ABOUT THE PLAN

The City of Spring Valley, in partnership with Rundell Emetharger Associates, has begun a process to update the City's Comprehensive Plan. This planning process will outline a vision and strategic framework for future development, redevelopment, and community building projects within the City. It will also insure that Spring Valley maintains a high

**A project website was maintained throughout the process to advertise meetings, collect input, and post documents**

## Online Outreach

In addition to in-person community engagement opportunities, the planning process included a project website. The website was updated throughout the process so residents who were unable to attend any of the engagement opportunities would be able to view project materials and progress. The website included a comment section for visitors to offer their input to the planning team, and links to the online surveys were posted to increase outreach and gather more public opinions.

# Community Engagement

## Findings Summary

Community input and participation were critical to this planning process. Multiple opportunities and issues were brought up continually throughout the process by steering committee members, focus group participants, City officials, and residents through additional community outreach and engagement opportunities. What was discussed throughout this process was that there is a need for attracting both residents and businesses to the area and retaining them, and finding ways to attract visitors to the area through entertainment and recreation amenities. Development and reinvestment in the downtown along St. Paul Street was a primary focus, as well as connectivity and general maintenance of properties.

The following is a list of key findings reiterated throughout the engagement process:

### Land Use & Community Form

- Build out the IL-89 corridor with employment generating uses
- Develop the area around the I-80/IL-89 interchange with restaurant, hospitality, and retail businesses
- Need to create more residential neighborhoods that attract families
- Specific desired uses that were mentioned repeatedly: hardware store, hotel, supermarket
- Attract businesses that will create jobs, to in turn attract families
- Utilize recent school improvements as an economic development attraction tool
- Encourage continued business development along E. Dakota Street/US Hwy 6
- Attract a commercial anchor tenant to the vacant property at the corner of W. Dakota Street and N. Strong Street

### Transportation & Utilities

- Better maintenance of the existing roadway network
- There is not a need for many new roads/connections
- Must improve sidewalk network and pedestrian safety (areas continually mentioned include the north side of Dakota Street between Ponsetti Drive and Strong Street, between JFK Elementary and Hall High School, along N. Greenwood Street, and along E. Dakota Street/US Hwy 6 and specifically “the curves”)
- Recent accessibility improvements to curb ramps have been impactful
- Add a trail in Coal Miners Park
- Improve access to the riverfront area with a trail/complete the missing section of the I&M trail
- Improve public transportation systems to provide better access to employment and between Spring Valley and Peru/LaSalle

## Downtown

- Attract new businesses/reduce vacancy
- Many buildings need maintenance/repair/renovation
- Buildings are being neglected to the point that they are unsafe and must be torn down, leaving unattractive gaps along St. Paul Street
- Too many downtown buildings are vacant but not for sale, don't know what property owners are waiting for
- Better code enforcement is needed to ensure property and building upkeep
- Better utilize the mini park for events and programming
- The curb bump-outs on St. Paul Street were a good idea but they aren't being maintained
- Downtown seems to be trending towards more bars and gambling parlors, need to ensure there are destinations for all ages, especially families

## Quality of Life

- Need to grow community pride & involvement
- Too many negative attitudes about the community, especially from Spring Valley's own residents
- Better embrace and reflect current cultural diversity
- Improved property maintenance and code enforcement in Spring Valley neighborhoods
- Need to attract/promote entertainment and recreation amenities for families and young adults
- Must balance growth with maintaining the established character of the community



Cinco de Mayo public engagement opportunity that let residents map community assets and concerns.





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**Vision, Goals & Objectives**

# Vision, Goals & Objectives Hierarchy

## Vision

The vision is the overall future state of where the City aims to be in the coming years. The vision statement guides the development of the goals and objectives of the plan and should be realistically achievable for the community.

## Frameworks

Frameworks are the organizational topics outlined throughout this document. These frameworks help to identify specific goals and objectives within the component areas:

- Land Use & Community Form
- Transportation & Utilities
- Downtown
- Quality of Life

## Goals

Goal statements help to target specific issues and concerns within each framework. These are guides to help government officials evaluate future development and changes within the City by assessing if development will work towards achieving a goal and ultimately the vision.

## Objectives

Objectives support each goal statement. They should be specific and collectively serve as a path to how a goal will be accomplished. Objectives may describe recommended policies or initiatives, or relate to the physical construction of infrastructure or specific development types. Objectives should be sufficiently quantifiable to gauge the appropriateness of development applications and be understood by both the decision-makers and the general community.

## Why have a Vision Statement

The vision statement provides a sense of direction and is the overall endgame once the plan is achieved, which is why a vision is written as a future condition. The vision is developed relatively early in the planning process and helps to guide decision-making and shape the overall plan. If an idea, policy, or objective would help advance Spring Valley to the vision, it was included in the plan. The vision not only serves as part of a decision-making tool for the plan, but also for the decisions that are made in implementing the plan. While not the only consideration, policy and decision makers should remember the vision to help guide whether a decision is right for the community.



# Vision Statement



Spring Valley is a city full of pride. Residents of all ages and backgrounds are engaged in civic activities, and owners take satisfaction in maintaining attractive buildings and properties. More than simply a place to live or work, Spring Valley is a community made up of diverse neighborhoods, quality schools and parks, and an active downtown. It is a place residents are proud to call home, and where young adults want to return to raise a family if they left for school or a career. St. Paul Street is home to shops, restaurants, offices, and apartments; it is a destination for both Spring Valley residents and visitors alike with an array of community events and activities happening throughout the year. The Dakota Street, US 6, and IL-89 corridor is lined with both new and long-time businesses and industries that provide diverse employment opportunities to residents of Spring Valley and the many neighboring communities in the Illinois Valley. Ultimately, new growth and revitalization of established areas has resulted in increased property values for owners and revenue generation for the City, allowing for superior city services and a high quality of life without having to raise taxes.

# Land Use & Community Form

## **Maintain and grow a balance of land uses that support businesses, residents, and visitors while ensuring City services and infrastructure can accommodate new development.**

1. Promote redevelopment and new construction on vacant and underutilized properties already served by City utilities and services.
2. Review and amend the zoning ordinance and consider zoning map changes to support development in accordance with the future land use map and other recommendations of this plan.
3. Ensure new development that connects to City utilities or utilizes City services is annexed into the municipal limits.
4. Promote annexation of properties surrounded by Spring Valley incorporated area and already being served by City utilities and services.
5. Present a quality image of Spring Valley at gateway areas through both the visual character of the streetscape and the quality of adjacent development.
6. Ensure that industrial and high-intensity commercial uses are buffered from adjacent residential development.
7. Protect the floodway, floodplain, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas from development.





# Goals & Objectives

## **Create opportunities for the construction and rehabilitation of diverse housing options that serve the needs of all ages and income levels, and that are compatible with surrounding character and further ensure quality and connected neighborhoods.**

1. Target City investments in streets, sidewalks, utility infrastructure, and lighting to focused redevelopment areas to support market-driven reinvestment in housing stock.
2. Consider a residential rehabilitation program, like the commercial façade program, to promote home-owner improvements to residential structures in the City's core neighborhoods.
3. Explore incentives such as permit streamlining, fee waivers, or tax deferral for builders and organizations that provide rehabilitation or new construction on underutilized properties in a manner that compliments and enhances the surrounding neighborhood.
4. Increase code enforcement efforts to ensure safety and improve the appearance of City neighborhoods.

5. Encourage the development of housing products and support services to allow residents to remain in the community as they age and their housing needs change.
6. Ensure opportunities exist for the creation of housing options for first-time buyers, repeat or move-up buyers, and renters both with the future land use plan and unified development ordinance.
7. Encourage new housing developments to contribute to the overall character of the community through the inclusion of parks and open spaces, trails, and increased connectivity.
8. Encourage mixed-density neighborhoods that provide single-family detached homes, townhomes or other single-family attached homes, as well as multi-family apartments within the same neighborhood.
9. Encourage residential development around John F. Kennedy Elementary School.
10. Encourage continued residential development on the east and west sides of the City.
11. Continue to implement the rental registration program to ensure for-rent properties are maintained to a high standard.

## **Grow existing businesses and attract new ones to develop diverse employment opportunities and meet the service needs of both the community and the region.**

1. Continue to utilize the existing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district as an economic development tool in incentivizing growth and redevelopment.
2. Assist property owners with marketing and promotion of potential development sites in accordance with the future land use plan.
3. Encourage restaurant, retail, and hospitality development around the I-80/IL-89 interchange.
4. Encourage light industrial, manufacturing, distribution, and flex office/warehouse uses along the IL-89/US-6 corridor from IL-29 to the I-80 interchange.
5. Allow for residential to commercial conversions along the Dakota Street, while protecting adjacent residential properties and ensuring safe traffic movement.
6. Encourage commercial development along the US-6 frontage between Webster Park and County Highway 30, when utilizing access management best practices to promote safety and limit impacts to US-6.

# Transportation & Utilities

**Provide a safe and efficient transportation system in coordination with proactive land use planning, to connect neighborhoods, employment centers, and other community destinations.**

1. Use investments in transportation and utility infrastructure as a tool to direct desired development types to appropriate locations.
2. Utilize access management best practices along arterial and collector roadways to ensure safe and efficient traffic conditions.
3. Communicate with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) regarding City goals for improvement projects to state controlled routes through Spring Valley.
4. Coordinate with other Illinois Valley communities to improve overall transit services, with a specific focus on a fixed route service between Spring Valley and Peru/LaSalle.
5. Extend Ponsetti Drive to the east to connect with John F. Kennedy Elementary School W 7th Street to the east.
6. Connect Wolfer Industrial Park and IL-29 to improve access and circulation within the industrial park and open new sites to development.
7. Consider using TIF funds to construct new roadway and utility infrastructure in desired development areas.





# Goals & Objectives

## **Create a complete and connected pedestrian and bicycle system that allows users of all ages and abilities to safely travel for work, school, everyday needs, and recreation.**

1. Evaluate options to include new pedestrian and bicycle facilities when undergoing other public works projects.
2. Fill gaps in the sidewalk network, with emphasis on priority sections such as along IL-89/US-6/Dakota Street between Ponsetti Drive and Strong Avenue, and along N. Greenwood Street.
3. Improve connectivity between existing neighborhoods and destinations such as commercial areas, schools, parks, and the downtown with improved pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, multi-use paths, trails, and safe crossings at major intersections.

4. Explore options to create a bicycle and pedestrian connection to Peru along the Dakota Street/US-6 corridor.
5. Explore options to create a riverfront trail that connects Coal Miners Park, Barto Landing, Echo Bluff Park, and ultimately the Illinois & Michigan Canal Trail.
6. Maintain an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan and implement recommendations as resources are available.
7. Develop a complete streets policy to guide public and private infrastructure investment in a manner that creates a better sense of public space and equal access for multiple modes of transportation.

## **Maintain utility infrastructure to better serve existing residents and businesses and expand capacity to accommodate planned growth and development.**

1. Create and maintain a capital improvements plan to prioritize and budget for future infrastructure upgrades and extensions.
2. Coordinate utility, transportation, stormwater, and other infrastructure improvements to combine construction projects and reduce costs where possible.
3. Communicate growth and future development plans with other infrastructure and utility providers so they are aware and can plan to provide adequate facilities and services.
4. Continue assessment of the sanitary sewer system and make improvements to reduce infiltration and inflow, thereby reducing volumes and making available capacity at the wastewater treatment plan.
5. Review and amend Section 9-14: Stormwater Management Facilities of the Land Development Code to reflect current best practices, including green infrastructure.

# Downtown

## **Revitalize the downtown into a vibrant, mixed use district that serves as a shopping and dining, housing, and civic destination within the community.**

1. Attract new businesses to the downtown that serve families and those of all ages to create a more diverse mix of visitors.
2. Encourage entrepreneurship that focuses on uses and experiences that make the downtown a special destination, with the understanding that high traffic businesses and those serving convenience needs are more likely to be attracted to arterial corridors.
3. Ensure zoning permits a wide array of downtown businesses and activities to create a healthy mixture of shopping, dining, office, housing, and civic uses, all within a walkable, urban framework.
4. Develop a public art program and identify appropriate locations for wall murals and freestanding art in the downtown.
5. Create a stronger connection between St. Paul Street and the river to help draw recreation users into the downtown.
6. Consider a “focus block” strategy to target multiple improvements to one block of St. Paul Street at a time, leveraging limited resources in a concentrated area to achieve the greatest impact.
7. Establish a wayfinding and signage program to direct residents and visitors to businesses, parking, parks, City facilities, and other community assets in and around the downtown.





# Goals & Objectives

## **Ensure protection and rehabilitation of existing building stock and promote new construction on vacant lots that supports the established form and character of the downtown.**

1. Increase code enforcement of poorly maintained structures to stop deterioration and prevent demolition of historic buildings.
2. Build on the recommendations of the Downtown Strategic Plan to assist property owners with identifying repair needs and costs in an effort to realize building renovations and increase downtown occupancy.
3. Promote mixed use development on vacant downtown sites, including City-owned property at 200-202 E. St. Paul St. and 124-126 E. St. Paul St.

4. Encourage apartments and condominiums on the upper floors of buildings along E. St. Paul Street through incentives such as reduced permitting and infrastructure connection fees.
5. Maintain a list of actively marketed downtown properties, as well as those that may potentially be available for sale despite not being on the market, to assist prospective business owners in finding new properties.
6. Become an Illinois Main Street community to better promote downtown, facilitate revitalization, and take advantage of resources available through the program.

## **Improve streets and public spaces to further establish community character and promote private investment in the downtown.**

1. Create a streetscape plan to explore modifications to the St. Paul Street right-of-way to narrow the travel lanes while preserving angled parking, creating additional pedestrian amenity and outdoor dining space.
2. Reconstruct downtown sidewalks to meet ADA standards, either as part of a larger streetscape plan or as an individual project.
3. Develop a maintenance plan for all existing and proposed streetscape elements, including the existing curb extension/planter spaces.
4. Enhance gateway and corridor connections between the downtown core and adjacent neighborhoods.
5. Complete installation of pedestrian-scale street lighting along St. Paul Street.
6. Increase programming and usage of the Mini Park to attract more residents and visitors to the downtown.

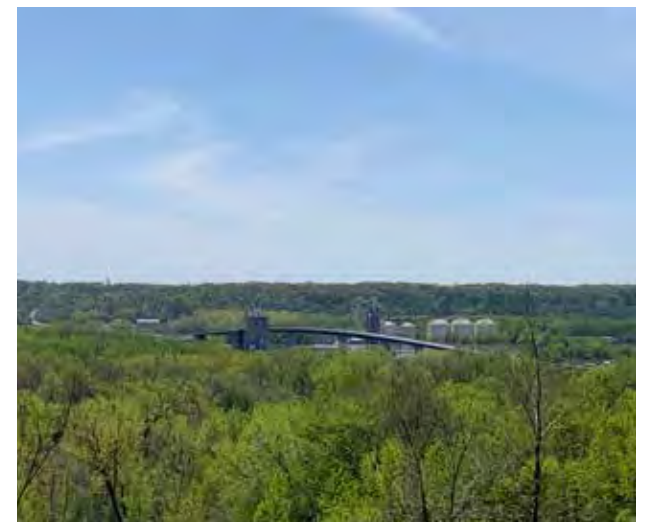
# Quality of Life

## **Enhance pride within the community and grow resident engagement in civic and cultural activities.**

1. Increase civic participation across all age groups and cultures to build a more vibrant Spring Valley and grow the next group of community leaders.
2. Expand programming of parks and public spaces to create more year-round festivals and events that celebrate the historical, cultural, and community identity of Spring Valley.
3. Improve the distribution of positive information about the community in order to spread good news and celebrate achievements, while combating negative attitudes and perceptions about Spring Valley.

## **Continue to develop and grow a balanced parks and recreation system with investments in existing facilities that are connected to key destinations and the neighborhoods they serve.**

1. Continue to utilize flood prone areas as recreation amenities since they should not be developed.
2. Create a master plan for Coal Miners Park that includes an improved parking area and trails connecting the parking area, pond, and hilltop lookout.
3. Continue to maintain and improve existing park facilities, especially the Spring Valley Coveny-Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool, to sustain high levels of service as the community grows and improvements become outdated.
4. Better capitalize on Barto Landing and the visitors it attracts as a way to support Spring Valley businesses.







# Goals & Objectives

## **Continue to support, grow, and create community institutions that contribute to overall quality of life in Spring Valley.**

1. Encourage St. Margaret's Health to remain in Spring Valley as they continue to develop an affiliation plan with Illinois Valley Community Hospital.
2. Promote the creation of a children's museum to act as a unique, year-round amenity and destination in the Illinois Valley.
3. Explore the creation of a Spring Valley community center to potentially house both adult and youth fitness facilities, childcare, before/after school care, meeting and event spaces, and education and recreation programming.
4. Partner with Hall High School, Illinois Valley Community College, North Central Illinois Economic Development Corporation, area employers, and other organizations focused on workforce development to coordinate efforts related to job-readiness training and continuing education.
5. Continue to promote and grow the Richard A. Mautino Memorial Library as an invaluable community asset.

## **Grow city capacity to better serve residents and businesses, and explore opportunities for new ways to communicate and engage with residents and employers.**

1. Develop a marketing campaign to promote Spring Valley, its amenities, and the value of living, working, and recreating in the city.
2. Update the City's website in conjunction with the marketing campaign.
3. Develop a formal communication protocol and platform by which residents can share concerns with the City, and the City can disseminate news and other information.
4. Add City staff such as a communications director and city planner as resources become available.





# 5

## Land Use & Community Form

# Future Land Use & Community Form

The purpose of the land use and community form section is to direct the location, type, quantity, and quality of growth and development over the next 20 years. The City wants to ensure that adjacent development is compatible, with a supportive transportation network that encourages multi-modal connections and access throughout the City. This section expands upon the needs of the community and directs the future growth pattern of Spring Valley.

The pinnacle of economic growth, transportation, housing, and community services come together in this section to meet the future conditions stated in the vision. Spring Valley has underutilized land and needs that are not being met. By focusing development that attract more residents, professionals, businesses, stakeholders, and investors to the area, this can begin to change and economically benefit the community. Critical components and questions to ask and answer within land use and community form are:

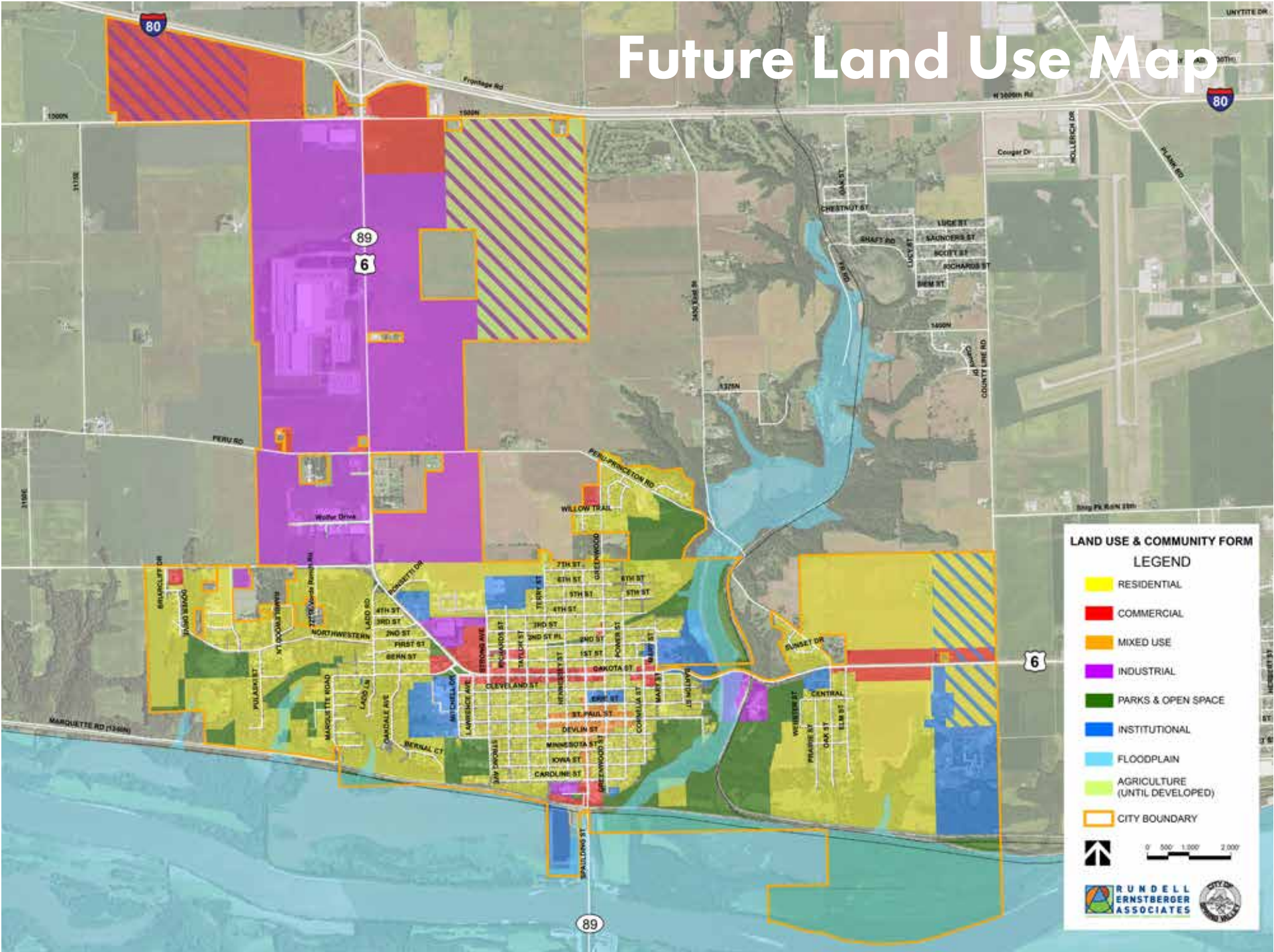
- Is there enough development to meet the demand needs?
- How do we ensure quality development occurs in the future?
- How do we ensure the right type of development occurs in the future?
- Is the new development in the right location?

The following recommendations focus on the future development patterns of the City while addressing design concerns within each specified land use. Additionally, job opportunities and housing options are addressed for people of all ages, income, and skill levels. Ultimately, the goal of this is to ensure quality development that aligns with the existing character and expectation of the quality of development. After all,, quality development acts as a catalyst for more diverse and quality development.

This section is a guide, to be used by elected and appointed officials and property owners, to determine if a project is consistent with the land use map and adds to the overall vision for the community. For key revitalization areas, such as in the downtown, public-private partnerships will likely play the largest role in funding. However, most development will be private investors which Spring Valley must attract to the area. In order to do that, Spring Valley must not only address the land use and community form but also work towards increasing quality of life (see Chapter 8).

Many of these recommendations incorporated into this section and within the plan are long-term, on-going recommendations. Specific development projects will be completed over the 20-year horizon and attracting businesses to locate in Spring Valley should always be the long-term sought-after goal. Smaller infill or rehabilitation projects, policy changes, and additional programming will likely happen in the short-term, however, updates to any documents, ordinances, and policies will be a continuous process that the City should keep up with as needs arise. It is possible to require quality development and still have efficient processes and promote a business-friendly climate.

# Future Land Use Map



**LAND USE & COMMUNITY FORM LEGEND**

- RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- MIXED USE
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARKS & OPEN SPACE
- INSTITUTIONAL
- FLOODPLAIN
- AGRICULTURE (UNTIL DEVELOPED)
- CITY BOUNDARY

0 500 1,000 2,000

# Future Land Use Classifications

## Residential

The Residential classification is designed primarily for single-family homes, but can accommodate other housing types as desired including townhomes and multifamily, that vary in lot and dwelling sizes. The character of new development may vary from neighborhood to neighborhood, but new developments should include primarily single-family housing within a neighborhood and transition from the existing development patterns in adjacent neighborhoods. New neighborhoods should have walkable and a well-connected street system to connect to surrounding amenities and destinations.



Multifamily residential development should be of high-quality architecture and small-scale development. Duplex housing and limited apartment communities may be included in the residential classification at appropriate locations. New development at these appropriate locations should transition from existing development patterns nearby, including similar design styles to adjacent properties. Parks, schools, religious institutions, and other community facilities may be included in the residential classification at appropriate locations as well.





## Commercial

The Commercial area designation is intended for activity centers including office, retail, restaurants, and professional service businesses. These areas have high potential to be employment and tax revenue generators for the community. Neighborhood scaled commercial centers contain a mix of active uses at key intersections that serve surrounding residential concentrations. These centers should be compatible with adjacent neighborhood development and contribute to the character and livability of the community. Commercial use buildings should be defined by building frontage and an activated street, not by parking lots. Parking should be located to the side or rear of buildings. Neighborhood commercial centers should be pedestrian friendly places with high-quality architecture, plazas, outdoor dining, sidewalks, and other pedestrian and bicycle amenities that create active, connected gathering spaces.

Regional commercial districts can include higher intensity retail and office developments that attract users from a wider area. These areas should be located near the I-80 interchange and along major thoroughfares that can handle the higher traffic volumes that may be generated. New developments should have integrated designs with coordinated accesses, amenities, and cohesive architecture that fits within the context of the larger corridor. Buildings should be designed so that they frame the street network. Internal drives should resemble streets rather than parking lot drive aisles. Large expanses of surface parking, particularly between the building front and street, should be avoided. Landscape plantings should be used to create more attractive developments and buffer adjacent residential areas. A coordinated pedestrian system should be provided throughout the commercial area, connecting uses on the site and between the site and adjacent properties.

# Future Land Use Classifications

## Mixed Use

Mixed Use areas are designed for the combination of high-activity uses within a connected and walkable block layout. These areas may be characterized by individual buildings that contain a mixture of uses or by single use buildings with contain different uses in close proximity to each other. Appropriate uses include restaurants, small-scale retail and professional services, offices, multifamily apartments or condominium, townhomes, and recreational amenities. Building height typically ranges from two to four stories, with active commercial uses on the first floor and office or residential on the upper floors.

Mixed use centers should have coordinated development patterns at a pedestrian scale, with high-quality architecture, plazas, sidewalks, and pedestrian and bicycle amenities to activate the street and connect with nearby residential neighborhoods. Building setback in a mixed use center should be minimal. All buildings should have entry oriented to the primary street. First floor non-residential uses should include large windows to allow views into and out of the space to better activate the adjacent streetscape.







## Industrial

The Industrial use classification provides locations for manufacturing, warehousing, office, and research and development uses, with some supporting local commercial businesses. Although these uses may produce some adverse impacts to the community in terms of traffic or aesthetics, they are incredibly important to the employment and economic base of the City. Industrial building types may include both large footprint users with multi-story buildings on large parcels or groups of smaller structures in a business park setting. Some of these uses involve extensive exterior storage or movement of goods and require measures to control adverse environmental and visual impacts. When conflicts occur, buffering and landscaping should be used to minimize these impacts.

Industrial areas may include limited commercial support uses, but these should be as a secondary element that follows the industrial or office development. These areas should be located along rail and roadway corridors with the capacity to handle the necessary volumes of truck traffic and be built out in a planned manner as to maximize investments in public infrastructure systems.

The industrial areas identified to the north near the interchange is envisioned to have a different character to the rest of the industrial areas bordering SR 89/Route 6. This will be further outlined within the goals and objectives section.

# Future Land Use Classifications

## Institutional

Institutional uses include schools, libraries, museums, religious institutions, and government facilities. These uses may vary in scale and impact to the transportation system. Larger facilities should be located along thoroughfares with capacity to handle and increase in traffic flow. Often times institutional uses will be located within a residential classification due to a central location to allow residents to access the facility more easily.

## Parks & Open Space

The Parks & Open Space classification is established to protect recreational areas, public parks, and general open space. Uses in this classification may include passive open spaces, ball fields, play equipment, golf courses, conservation areas, and environmentally sensitive land. Public parks and open space further increase the overall quality of life for residents. Recreation areas and parks should be used as a break from urban development and link to one another through bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



Hall High School



Park and open space within a community



Kirby Park in Spring Valley



## Floodplain

The floodplain (and floodway) are not specifically a recommended future land use, but have been identified on the Future Land Use map to help inform planning decisions regarding responsible development. The floodway includes the Illinois River to the south and Spring Creek to the east. The floodplain, which is shown on the map, is a flood hazard area which means that land is the most susceptible to flooding. There is a one percent chance of that area being equaled or exceeded in any given year, also known as the base flood or 100-year flood. Future development should not

be permitted within the floodway and floodplain; however, these areas may be protected and incorporated into open space on a development site. Existing structures within the floodway and floodplain present a danger to those property owners as well as those downstream. Any existing structure within flood hazard areas should be physically moved, raised, or demolished as funding becomes available.



Flooding at the Spring Valley Boat Club along the Illinois River



Trail next to a creek

# Recommendations

## Housing & Neighborhoods

The bulk of Spring Valley's land is devoted to housing, and specifically single family residential. Spring Valley has many different neighborhoods that have developed with specific types of residential character within the core over the many decades. The core of the residential areas could be defined as 7th Street to the north and Caroline Street to the south, Mitchell Drive to the west, and Barton Street to the east. These areas are traditional neighborhood lots which are set on a standard street grid system, and in most cases with long narrow lots. There typically is a standard front setback on blocks and a front yard with a sidewalk in most cases. The lots in the core of the community are older in nature, more obsolete with many only having two bedrooms and one bathroom. Outside this core, the residential pattern changes which is mostly due to the natural environment the location of heavy vegetation, floodplain, street or railroad tracks, or river and stream. These lots may be larger in size, may have a smaller grouping of lots together, and incorporate these natural features. These homes are typically newer and are more modern, meeting the needs of today's families.

## Infill Development & Rehabilitation

The housing in core is predominately stable condition. Houses are generally well maintained. In many areas, there is at least a sidewalk on one side of the street and vacancy is still relatively low throughout the core but there are certain streets that have higher vacancy. There are a few pockets that could use additional attention regarding home maintenance and sidewalk repair. The City should work with property owners and local neighborhood advocates to strengthen and beautify these existing neighborhoods. One way the City can do this is by promoting and incentivizing infill on vacant lots and rehabilitation of outdated or unkept housing stock. Infill activity presents an opportunity to improve existing neighborhoods while creating housing for new residents. It is important that infill development reflects the context and scale of the existing neighborhood. This does not mean replicating adjacent structures is required, but new development should be compatible with the scale, style, materials, etc. Residential infill development should not be considered the only solution. This is because it can be challenging at times because of the scattered nature and potentially low number of lots, outdated infrastructure, or increased construction costs. Additionally, on average, home



**Lot sizes are smaller and setbacks are reduced for much of the housing near downtown**



**Newer housing development in Spring Valley has larger lots and increase setbacks**

sizes have increased significantly, since many of these houses were first built. These older houses are not in line with current market preferences, and the smaller narrower lots may not fit a larger ranch configuration while also meeting all the development standards present in the zoning ordinance. This may require a change to some of the zoning standards to allow two story houses and reduced setbacks to fit a slightly larger scale house, that still represents the character of the surrounding houses.

Another challenge is that home buyers who may be willing to take on a significant rehabilitation project cannot navigate the more complex lending requirements for the necessary loans. This makes rehabilitation difficult in some areas and occasionally demolition and new construction of some properties maybe more cost-effective in the long run. This maybe an opportunity for a partnership with a foundation or a bank for low-interest loans for rehabilitation, lot assemblage, or demolition.

### **New Construction**

Any new construction of neighborhoods should be developed with the intention to create connectivity to other neighborhoods and community destinations and amenities. Sidewalks should be required on both sides of the street as well as allowing enough space for bicyclists and vehicles. Sidewalks and access to trails contributes to the quality of life (Chapter 8) that people desire when they move into a community. It allows a community to begin shifting from a primarily vehicular-centric community to a multi-modal community which encourages connectivity and healthy living. Multi-modal communities increase safety when walking or biking to any area of the community including the downtown, parks, and schools. Safety for pedestrians and bicyclists was one of the top issues identified during the public input of the comprehensive planning process.



**Infill development should be compatible with the surrounding context of the land; revisions to the existing ordinance might be necessary to allow specific development patterns to occur**

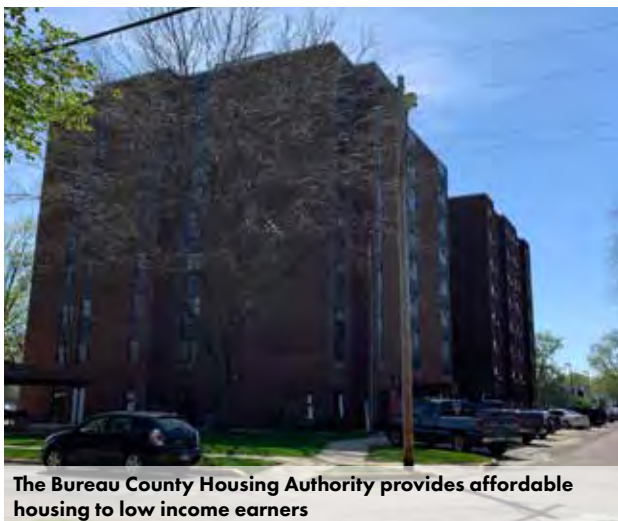
# Recommendations

## Affordable Housing

Development of affordable housing is an important factor to consider in any community. Housing prices across the country have continued to increase due to the increase in the cost of materials to build a house and the increase in the cost of land prices. While Spring Valley has an abundance of land, their taxes are higher than surrounding jurisdictions, which impacts the cost of living, including the cost of housing. Spring Valley has an abundance of single-family housing, and some multi-family housing in the form of apartments. Most people think of apartments when thinking of affordable housing.

However, there is a segment of housing that is missing from many communities, including Spring Valley. Additional housing options such as duplexes, townhomes, and small scaled apartments could diversify the housing options within Spring Valley, providing products that are not found in other nearby communities, which would make Spring Valley more attractive in this sense. With additional housing options, the goal is to attract a wider audience of prospective residents of all ages. In the land uses areas identified for residential, mixed-use development also allows for residential uses, which is further expanded on in Chapter 7, but provides

additional housing in an area where people might want to relocate and live. Additionally, any developments that provide a mix of housing with a mix of income are going to be far more successful than those subdivisions that are the traditional residential subdivision.





### **Landlords, Tenants & Rental Registration**

During this process, the renting of single-family dwelling units was identified as an issue. The perception was that rental properties were not as well maintained since the owner did not live in the house and therefore led to a destabilization effect along a street or in a neighborhood. Spring Valley's owner occupied (63.6%, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017) housing versus renter occupied (26.8%, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017) housing percentage is relatively consistent with Midwest. Most Midwestern communities have between 70

to 80% owner occupied housing and 20% to 30% renter occupied housing. Renting is generally a transition period for many people of all ages, whether someone is just starting to live on their own, or looking for a house to buy because they just moved into a community and are trying to find a permanent house, or an elderly person has decided they don't want to take care of a house and let it go anymore.

A solution to encourage maintenance and enforcement is a Renter's Registration Program. It would require that all landlords within Spring Valley register their property with the City, along with additional contact information, and proof of property inspection. They would also be required to submit the information of any tenant(s) who would be living in that property, along with their contact information as well. This program should cover all rental properties including single-family houses, multifamily houses, townhomes, apartment units, etc. Registration of that property should be completed every two years to ensure that the property is up to code and safe to live in. Enforcement of these properties should be easier for the City to maintain based on having landlord, tenant, and inspection information at all times. If not done properly, action should be taken by the City.



**Heather Apartments provides residents with the option to rent instead of invest and buy**



**Rental housing can be more than just traditional apartments; townhomes and duplexes are additional options**

# Recommendations

## IL-89 / US 6 corridor

The IL-89 corridor, between the interchange area and IL-29, will be a key employment district for the City. This is the only area in the City large enough and with the appropriate infrastructure to accommodate large scale, job-creating uses. This area is already home to the Walmart Distribution Center which employs nearly 800 people, Marmon Keystone, and Wolfer Industrial Park. There are still many available sites for development, but most will require subdivision of land and additional transportation or utility infrastructure. While this corridor is under the control of IDOT, the City should work with the State to ensure future driveway cuts are limited and access is managed along this corridor, to ensure traffic flow to the interstate. Additionally, land has also been identified to the east of IL-89 and South of 1500 North to be developed as future commercial and industrial use after the land along the interchange and IL-89 has completely built out.

The industrial land use will primarily be used for larger-scale development, with more intense uses. Light industrial manufacturing, warehouses and office space has the most potential to be located in this area. It is important that the City set standards for development, and work with IDOT to address access management to these future sites. Curb cuts should be limited so as to not impact the flow of traffic. With additional development in this area, more jobs will be created and truck traffic along IL-89 will also increase. Expanding the transportation network to create frontage roads, and cross-access between developments will be vital.

IL-89 is one of the gateways to Spring Valley; driving down an industrial lined road may not be the most visually appealing. Encouraging landscaping treatments along IL-89 to buffer the line of site from large expansive warehouses, loading docks, and parking lots is one way of increasing the overall aesthetic of the road. The City should also encourage design of these warehouses

and industrial buildings to locate their loading bays and parking lots away from the direct sightline from the road. Locating these bays in the back or side of the building or providing some type of screening, fence, or buffer can create a more attractive aesthetic. Additionally, if offices were necessary, they could be located in the front of a building and better architectural design could be used for the front which could include window treatments, door treatments, window transparency, wall undulation, various types of materials, etc. from the rest of the building.



Ronken Industries Inc. at Wolfer Industrial Park





**Marmon Keystone along IL-89 near the interchange**

## Interchange Area

The I-80 Interchange is the front door to Spring Valley. This will be the first area that many visitors to the community see before arriving in the downtown or other areas of the City. Currently, the interchange area is relatively undeveloped. The City has a unique advantage compared to other communities along the I-80 corridor to manage the interchange image and the types of land uses nearby. A Dollar General was recently built and opened on a small lot on the southeast corner of the interchange, but a vast amount of undeveloped land still exists. The City should focus on locating commercial uses adjacent



**Existing conditions at the interchange in Spring Valley**



**Highway commercial development often includes fast food restaurants and convenience retail businesses.**

to the interchange where visibility is the highest. Differing retail, restaurant, and hospitality uses should be targeted to avoid replication of other nearby interchanges, thereby reducing competition, and ensuring a longer duration of the business. Signage, lighting, and landscape plantings should be managed, and site design and access control considered when development occurs. This area should promote a higher quality image than other areas of the City. Additionally, signage and other gateway features are needed to direct visitors to Spring Valley's downtown and other attractions. The areas just east or west of the immediate interchange, still north of 1500 North, could be a combination of industrial or commercial uses, but should be oriented more towards job creation rather than retail or service businesses.

# Recommendations

## Dakota Street Corridor

Dakota Street continues as the main corridor taking visitors into the core of the City on a state managed roadway. This corridor is transitional in use, containing a variety of different businesses and homes as you travel from one end to the other. While the southwest side of the corridor between Ladd Road and West Dakota Street is predominately residential, the land on the northeast side of Dakota Street is in transition and provides a key opportunity for redevelopment. Since many residents must leave the community for shopping needs, the site on the northwest corner of Strong Avenue and Dakota Street, provides an opportunity for something like a larger grocery store or other retail anchor. Because of the varied use and character of the corridor, the City needs to be mindful of preserving the remaining residential character, filling in missing sidewalks, limiting the teardowns of housing for development of businesses, and focusing any new business conversions to key nodes at Strong Avenue, Spalding Street, Greenwood Street, Cornelia and Mary Street. No businesses should have driveway access directly onto Dakota Street, unless it already exists, and signage should be limited to protect residential values.



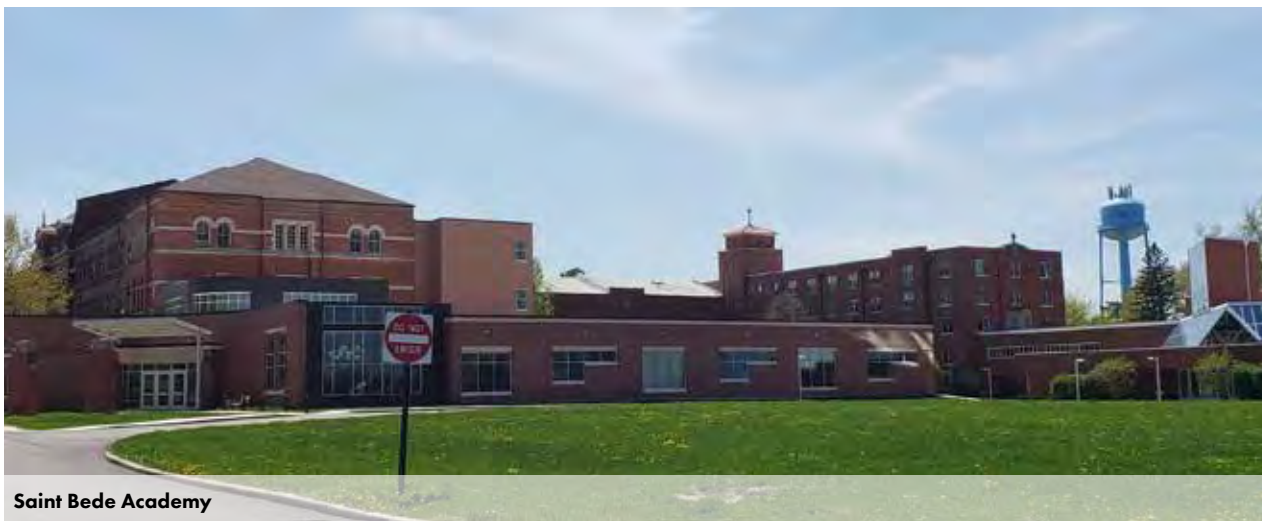
Dakota Street



Entrance to Spring Valley along SR6/Dakota Street



Existing businesses along Route 6



Saint Bede Academy

6/30 Saint Bede Academy Area  
Saint Bede Academy and the area surrounding it is primarily undeveloped. Future expansion recommendations encourage more residential, expansion of institutional, and commercial development along Route 6. The area around St. Bede Academy is anticipated to remain institution for the foreseeable future. The future land use map shows that the area directly north of Saint Bede Academy could be used for possible expansion of the academy or the potential relocation of St. Margaret's hospital. This area would offer the City a strong anchor on the east side of the City on SR 6 if the hospital relocates to this area. This area is a key gateway into the City, is a prime location between the City of Spring Valley and Peru, and some infrastructure is available to support this future development. Additionally, there is a significant amount of land surrounding the Academy and this potential hospital site where future residential development could be considered that would be compatible and consistent with the growth of Spring Valley. If the hospital locates here and as residential

# Recommendations

growth develops, a smaller commercial node to support the workers and visitors to the hospital as well as the residents would be appropriate. This could include a coffee shop, sandwich shop, small grocery or quick mart, gas station, etc.

Transportation facilities and utilities will need to be expanded to allow for more growth north of Saint Bede Academy and Route 6. Water and sewer capacity can accommodate for this growth after the recent expansion of the sewage treatment facility was finished in 2017. The water treatment facility also has ample room to accommodate for

additional development and water usage. Similar design principles should apply in along SR6 as the interchange and along IL-89. Access management should be addressed consciously as commercial development builds out. Neighborhood entrances should be at least 150 feet apart; and neighborhood entrances and any curb cuts to commercial development should not prohibit the flow of traffic and general rule of thumb is between 100 to 150 feet of distance between curb cuts and intersections. As commercial develops, the City should require businesses have shared parking to reduce curb cuts, the amount of access points,

and the amount of pavement. In general, many commercial developments have too much parking as it is, and as technology changes, the for flexibility in development standards will become greater. Signage should be kept at an appropriate scale for businesses. Since Route 6 is a direct entrance into Spring Valley, a welcome sign that is larger and made of higher quality should be incorporated in this area.



**A small commercial node along SR6 could include a coffee shop, sandwich shop, or quick mart**

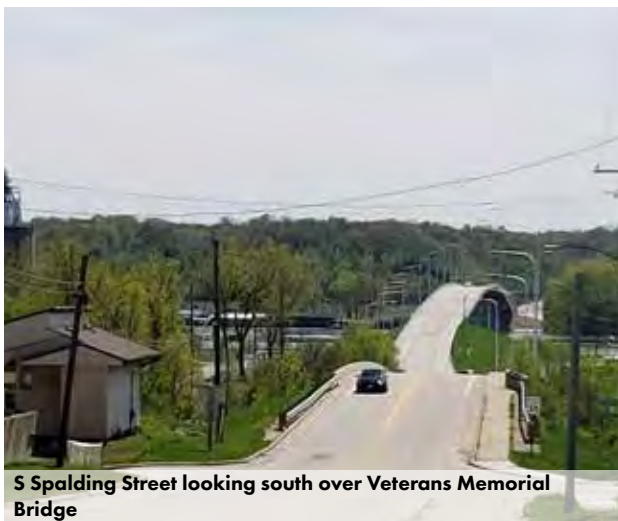
## S. Spalding Street & the Riverfront

South Spalding Street and along the riverfront of the Illinois River needs more attention. South Spalding Street is a major gateway for the community, so additional landscaping, signage, and maintenance should be addressed. A gateway monument, piece of art that represents the City, or welcome sign should be designed for this area since the bridge takes the user directly through the downtown. Additionally attention should be given to the permitted commercial uses at this intersection as this is one of the first impressions visitors will see. Development must be kept outside of the

floodway and only limited recreational uses should be within the floodway. Uses that work best in the floodway are things that require low maintenance and will not be damaged by continuous flooding; uses like parks and open space are ideal. If any development like housing, office, commercial, industrial, and institutional development is located in the floodplain, the City should work with the property owner to relocate the development where it will not be affected. Water damage to buildings is an expensive cost for property owners to maintain. Ensuring that development happens appropriately near the river front and is developed

in order to accommodate flooding hazards should be required.

The riverfront is planned to house a 15-mile trail extension from Peru to Bureau Junction. This would be the extension of the I & M Canal Extension and provide new opportunities for the City to attract more residents and people, as well as connect people from one community to the next through a larger greenway. This could be used as an amenity to promote a healthy, active lifestyle and provide an amenity that is not currently offered. This trail opportunity is very expensive and would be a long-term effort to implement and collect funding for. However, the City could begin to examine possible connection paths to the trail from the downtown, neighborhoods, and Coal Miner's Park. Additionally, this comprehensive plan would provide the support and basis for the City to acquire funding to help design and construction a portion of this regional trail connection.



**S Spalding Street looking south over Veterans Memorial Bridge**

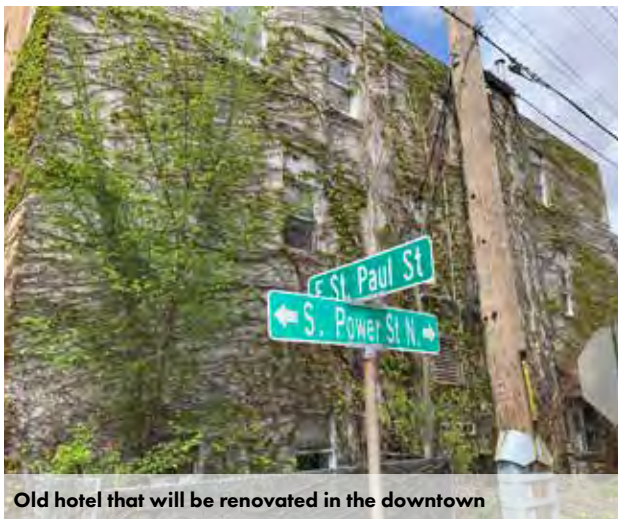


**Barto Boat Landing**

# Recommendations

## Downtown

Due to the importance of the downtown to Spring Valley, downtown recommendations are located in a separate chapter. Please see Chapter 7 for information regarding development types and strategies.



Old hotel that will be renovated in the downtown



Existing conditions in downtown Spring Valley



**Immaculate Conception Catholic Church across from the library and police station**



**John F. Kennedy Elementary School**

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## Institutional Anchors

Institutional anchors are a large defining factor for why people might move into a specific community. Spring Valley is a family-oriented community, and throughout the process many comments were made about people moving back to their hometown to start a family. For families who are not from the area and are looking to move, schools play a very large role in this decision. Having a good school system, and additional institutions such as Saint Margaret's Hospital, and St Bede Academy, increases the quality of life and allows Spring Valley to attract new families.

### **John F. Kennedy Elementary School**

John F. Kennedy Elementary School is a diverse school which strives to ensure underprivileged students receive a good education. Though the largest percentage of students attending this school are White (61%), the next leading demographic is Hispanic and make up 32% of the student body. About 66% of the families who send their children to this school are low-income, making education here of major importance for the community. The elementary school has classes for all students in pre-school through 8th grade. Students, starting in kindergarten, can participate in sports. Once

# Recommendations

students reach junior high (6th grade) the sports become more competitive. Extracurricular activities include basketball, volleyball, track, Scholastic Bowl, band, choir, and speech competition.

The elementary school has grown since a school was first established in Spring Valley back in 1886. Starting as Murray School, the building was located in the northeast corner of what is now Mount Olivet Cemetery and was a one-room schoolhouse taught by one teacher. It closed in 1886 and students moved to Lincoln School which finished construction in 1888. There were eight classrooms and it was located north of Coal Miner's Park, at Mary and East Erie Streets. The building was later demolished in 1935 and a new school, still called Lincoln School, was finished in 1936. An expansion that included a gymnasium and additional classrooms was completed in 1956. Eventually, John F. Kennedy School was built in 1966 and saw additions in 1968 and 1970. The school has 30 classrooms, a computer lab, gym, music room, and media center for students to use. The school added an additional expansion in 2014 which created 29 more classrooms, an art room, computer lab, library, choir room, a second gym, and a multi-purpose room. Extensive renovations to the original building began in 2019 and will last through 2021.

## Hall High School

Hall High School is a newly constructed building that was completed in late August 2015. The new school replaced the existing high school which was a 100-year-old facility that no longer served the needs of the community and students. The high school is three stories and includes a main academic building, athletic complex, and performing arts center. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematic (STEM) classrooms, a resource center, and administrative offices are located in the academic buildings. Two gymnasiums, a weight training and fitness room,

locker rooms, and a concession stand make up the athletic complex. The arts center has a stage with a sound and recording systems, art and food labs, kiln room, and a set design area. Construction was thought out to help allow students to get a well-rounded education and encourage creativity. Arts and athletics are important for schools to incorporate and allow students the freedom to express themselves, try new things, and get involved.



Hall High School



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### **Saint Bede Academy**

Saint Bede Academy is a Catholic high school that works to prepare students for college and life. As a college preparatory school, they aim to help students continue their education by preparing them for post-secondary education. St. Bede is a very small school with about 300 students. Nearly every student in the senior classes intends on continuing their education, and 98% of students participate in extracurricular activities. It was founded in 1890 by a group of Benedictine Monks and started as an all-boys school and offered boarding services to students. It became co-ed in 1973



**Saint Bede Academy**

but boarding was still only available to males; the boarding school closed in 1981. Boarding option are available for students today, males and females are kept in separate living quarters and are supervised at all times. Each house has eight student bedrooms with furnishings, Wi-Fi, a communal kitchen, living room, laundry, and bathroom facilities. Extracurricular activities are offered, and students are encouraged to participate. Students also are involved in the Spring Valley community and encourage to spend time volunteering.

### **Saint Margaret's Hospital**

Saint Margaret's Hospital is the second highest employer in the City behind the Wal-Mart distribution center. They employ roughly 650 people. The hospital was founded in 1903 by seven sisters from the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation from France. Due to Spring Valley's history of being a coal mining town, laws that protected miners were few and accidents and deaths were much higher, so it was determined that for the best interest of them, residents, and others in neighboring communities, that a hospital should be created. The original hospital was a two-story frame house that was donated by Reverend John Power, had five beds, and one private room. Over time, the facility grew and received a new building that has 69 beds and acts as the community care center.



**Saint Margaret's Hospital**

# Recommendations

## Parks

Parks create a sense of place within a community. They are vitally important to the mental and physical health of residents and allow an escape from everyday life. Parks are attractive for young families, especially if there are additional amenities provided such as picnic tables, trails, and benches. Spring Valley has a few parks including Coal Miner's Park and the Mini Park in the downtown. Additional expansion across the community such as trails (see Chapter 6 Transportation and Utilities for more recommendations on connectivity within Spring Valley) and within the parks and open space will attract more people to the area. Young families want direct or close and safe access to a park. As the City looks at housing incentive programs, identifying areas of investment adjacent or near trails, parks, and school would have a greater impact on attracting young families to the area. Parks play a large role in creating quality of life for residents. The importance of parks and open space is further outlined in the Quality of Life section, Chapter 8, with additional recommendations and development strategies.



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## Gateways

Gateways are the first points that a visitor or resident first enters into a City. Many communities do not have anything marking the entrance. Several communities have elaborate displays. The key is to find something that represents Spring Valley. This could be anything from a welcome sign, to a piece of art that represents the history of Spring Valley, to a building or development, to a landscaped area. Either way, Spring Valley needs something at each entryway into the community. Spring Valley has

four gateways including IL-89/Route 6 and IL-89/Spalding Street heading north/south and Route 6 and IL-29 heading east/west.

Several of these gateways could have some type of placemaking aesthetic such as a sign. The sign should be large, made of high-quality materials, lighted, and well-landscaped. This is one way of implementing placemaking strategies into the community, and these welcome signs signify pride in a community. Scale of these signs should be determined by location and surround context. Near the I-80 interchange, a larger sign would be more appropriate than along Spalding Street near the bridge. When creating signage, including wayfinding signage, scale needs to be appropriate and not overwhelming. Signage in this case should be somewhat consistent in design and color, not dimension. Wayfinding signage should be consistent in size across the community. The overall goal of signage is to help people navigate the community and know where they are. Since signage is a large part of placemaking, wayfinding signage should direct people to parks, schools, and other larger community amenities like government buildings and the downtown.



Spring Valley Gateway Sign





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# Transportation & Utilities

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# Transportation & Utilities

The goal of the transportation and utilities section of the plan is to address concerns brought up by the public in multiple public engagement opportunities while also identifying improvements needed to support desired growth and development. The City has a well-defined vehicular transportation network that adequately serves existing development. Few new routes or connections were identified during the engagement process and no major intersection modifications were specifically called out. Overall best practices, connectivity improvements, and maintenance of existing facilities will be addressed in this section.

In general, a community's transportation and utility networks play a central role in supporting and maintaining economic success and quality of life. As a part of the planning process, the transportation network has been viewed as a key component to the ongoing success of the City of Spring Valley. As such, the transportation system should be balanced to provide for all means of travel cooperatively and in a manner that serves the needs of all users. The transportation recommendations on the following pages seek to create a more balanced transportation system and effectively allocate the

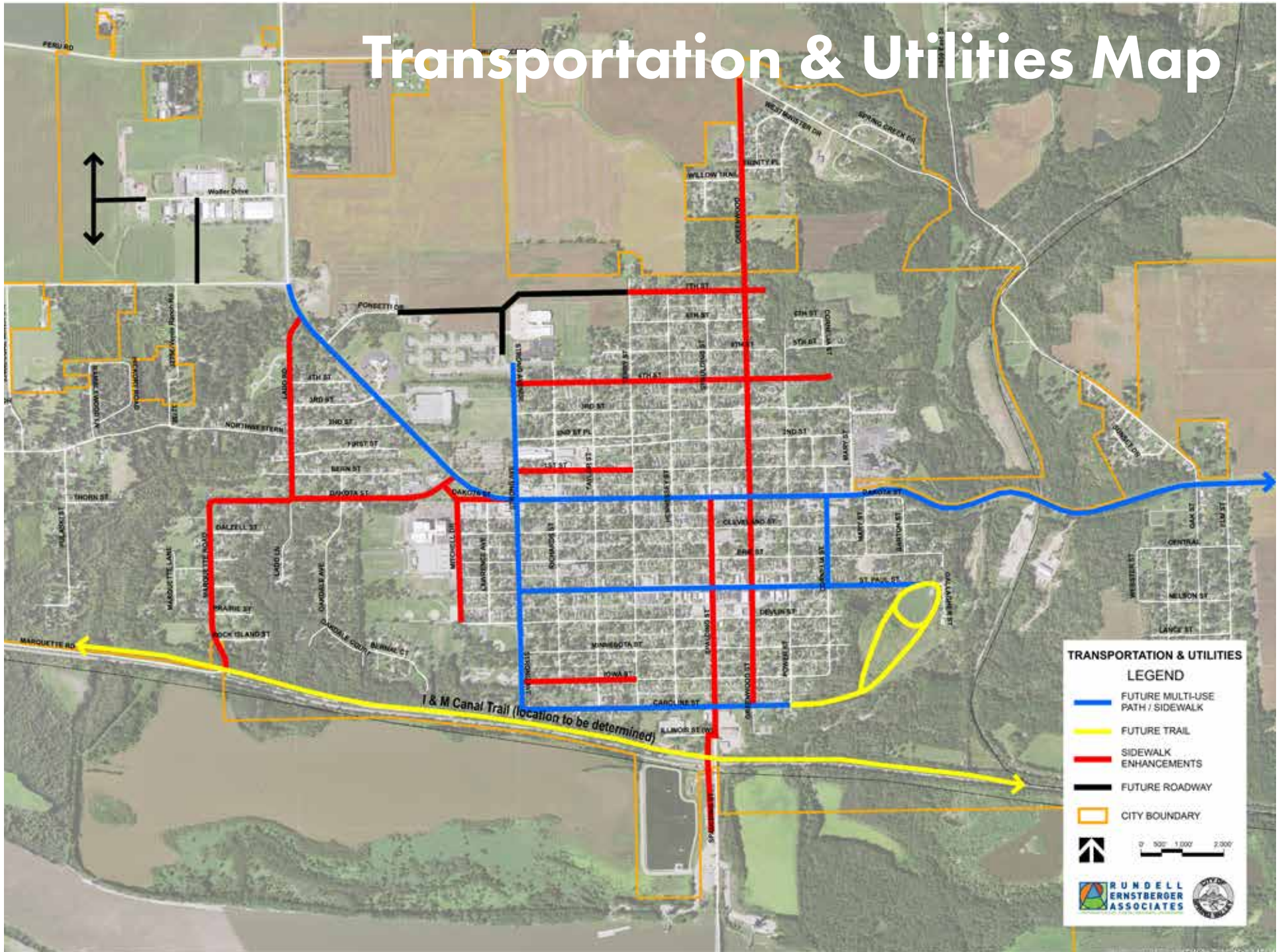
existing right-of-way to accommodate plan goals. Through effective planning and thoughtful design, new transportation improvements can contribute to the overall community aesthetic and play a part in reinforcing the Spring Valley's identity.

In addition to the recommendations presented later in this section, the following guiding principles should be used to direct future transportation planning and decision making. The principles are:

- Safety is the main priority for all travelers.
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be a consideration with every roadway project.
- The transportation system must be integrated with adjacent existing and planned land uses.
- Connectivity between neighborhoods, existing and proposed trails, parks, and other community destinations is essential.
- Congestion should be minimized to provide a safer and more efficient vehicular transportation system.
- Continued coordination with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will be vital in realizing the transportation goals of the City.

In addition to transportation improvements, utility systems are necessary to facilitate growth and development. These systems are costly to create, extend, and maintain. As such, additional utility planning will need to occur in coordination with development proposals.

# Transportation & Utilities Map



# Recommendations

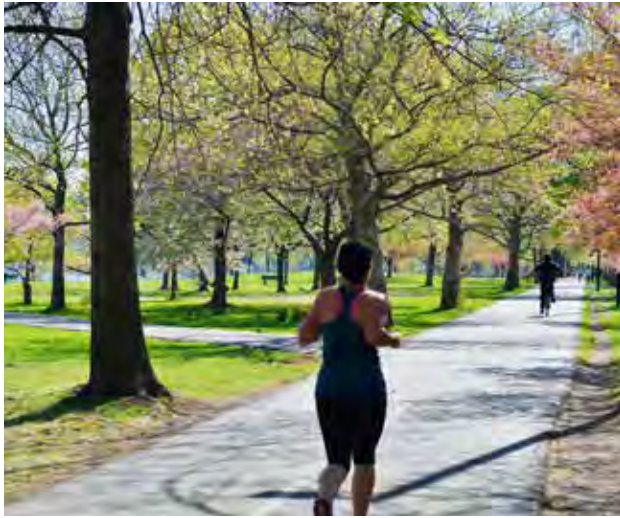
## Road maintenance

The condition of roadways was identified as a major concern throughout the public engagement process. To help better plan for roadway maintenance and repair, the City should create a 5-year capital improvements plan (CIP). The CIP aids in plan implementation by allocating the necessary funding for short-range infrastructure and capital improvement projects on a 5-year basis. The plan states the City Council's prioritization of the financial resources available for capital project spending by identifying which projects should be included, when they should be constructed, and how they will be financed. As projects are completed, they are removed from the CIP and new priorities are added.

Another program to identify roadway issues and facilitate repair would be creation of a Mayor's Action Center, where residents could report concerns, request services, or provide other input. The Action Center should include multiple methods for communication including email, phone, and through the City website. Whether it's reporting a pothole, heaved sidewalk, or general property maintenance concern, the Action Center provides a clear mechanism for input without having to call the City Clerk's office. While not all issues can be addressed immediately, it helps to identify a list of issues, prioritize improvements, and communicate back to residents when items are resolved.







## Trails & Multi-use Paths

Improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian system have been a frequent request by residents of Spring Valley. Multi-use paths and trail facilities can be designed in a multitude of ways. When planning for these facilities, it is important to consider the context within which the trail or path will be located and the design standards that are offered by organizations such as the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO). For instance, within parks or greenway corridors with limited vehicular traffic, a simple asphalt path may be appropriate. In more urban areas, where there



is a lot of activity and potential for conflict between trail users and vehicles, it may be more appropriate to consider a facility such as a raised cycle track or protected multi-use path.

Trails and multi-use paths should be used to connect parks, schools, downtown, and other community destinations. Most notably, Coal Miner's Park should have a set of trails to connect the parking area to the pond, up the hill, and ultimately to E. Caroline Street. Other loops could also be created within the park. The City should also work with IDOT and advocate for a multi-use path along Dakota Street/US-6 from Ponsetti Drive to the county line. Providing a safe path physically separated from traffic would be beneficial for all members of the community and encourage multi-modal use across the City.

# Recommendations

## Sidewalks

Ideally, sidewalks should be present on both sides of every street, and all new sidewalks and sidewalk reconstructions should contain ADA compliant curb ramps. Existing curb ramps that are not compliant should be replaced as resources become available. However, the City does not have the financial resources to install sidewalks everywhere they do not currently exist.

More sidewalks throughout the neighborhoods and commercial corridors are important for creating connectivity from place to place. This is a concern that residents have brought up consistently in public forums. A few areas have been determined as priorities, where efforts should be focused on

either new construction or upgrading existing sidewalks. Those areas are along St. Paul Street, Dakota Street, Greenwood Street, and Spalding Street. The City does offer a cost share program to property owners interested in installing or replacing the sidewalk along their property. Residents must fill out a short application, after which the City will evaluate the property and determine if the request is approved or denied. The City Council should continue to fund this program.

The City's subdivision standards should also be updated to require sidewalks with any new development. Promoting connectivity and providing sidewalks would begin to change the dynamic of the City and create a more walkable community.





## New Road Connections

Few new roadways are recommended on the future transportation map. Residents overwhelmingly valued better maintenance of existing roadways versus construction of new ones. Going forward, new road construction should be driven by development with most if not all of the financial cost born by the developer. However, there may be exceptions to this when the City seeks to improve safety or access to current development, or wants to proactively provide access to properties in hopes

of attracting development interest. Two new road connections are recommended to serve these goals.

A new road connecting Ponsetti Drive to 7th Street is recommended. This connection could open new agriculture parcels to potential residential development and provide a much needed connection between Heather Apartments and JFK Elementary School. A small north-south road connection would also accompany this new roadway to create a connection at Strong Avenue. The other suggestion for new roadway construction would be at the Wolfer Industrial Park. Currently the only access point is along US-6/IL-89, which means all vehicles have one entrance and exit. The new connection could utilize existing right-of-way, south of Wolfer Industrial Drive, or extend the existing drive to the west, and then south to IL-29 or north to 1360 N Road. Creating a secondary access point would increase transportation efficiency and create additional developable parcels.



# Recommendations

## Plan to Serve Targeted Development Areas

Transportation and utility infrastructure are vital components of any new development. By strategically locating infrastructure investments and service extensions, the City can direct development to desired locations. Developers will be more likely to pursue opportunities at sites already served by municipal utilities and a robust transportation network, as opposed to paying for extensions to other sites.

Spring Valley has land that is ready for development. There are currently multiple developable parcels within Spring Valley city limits, many already with utility service nearby. Proactive utility extension along the IL-89 corridor to the interchange area and east along US Hwy 6 have opened significant lands to potential development. Most recently, the City designed and bid a water and sewer extension east, under IL-89 just south of the interchange, for proposed development on that site. Despite utility service to these areas, it will be important for the City to ensure adequate capacity

and supply. For example, a distribution center such as Walmart has a much lower sewer and water demand as compared to a food processing industrial use. As development progresses, the City must maintain plans to serve these targeted areas.

Currently, Spring Valley has more than enough water storage to meet the consumer's daily demands and supply water for fire protection. Roughly, 500,000-780,000 gallons of water are produced per day. There are six water storage locations: three Elevated Towers, one Standpipe, and two Ground Level Clear Well Tanks located at the water treatment facility. A tower near the Walmart Distribution center holds 1 million gallons, the second tower behind City Hall holds 150,000 gallons, and the third on St. Bede Academy's property holds 100,000 gallons. The Standpipe holds 500,000 gallons of water and the two Clear Wells hold 164,000. This adds up to 1,914,000 gallons of water storage. There is a backup emergency generator in case of any power outages and the Walmart Distribution Center has a "Fire Protection Only" storage tank that holds 300,000 gallons.





Presently, the City's daily demand for water is 0.750 million gallons per day (MGD). The current maximum treatment capacity that the facility can hold is 2.16 MGD with a maximum pumping capacity of 3.88 MGD. The sewage treatment facility finished construction in 2017. It is designed to treat 0.8 MGD as a part of its daily flow and is designed to treat 2.2 million gallons at max flow. It can hold up to 34 million gallons of storage. Spring Valley has capacity to support new development in the near future without needing additional utility upgrades at either facility. However, expansions and upgrades will likely need to happen as continued growth occurs.



Utility upgrades and extensions are costly, and as such, the City must plan them carefully. A 5-year capital improvement program is useful in prioritizing projects and identifying funding for both utility and transportation improvements. The Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district can also be used to fund infrastructure investments. The existing TIF does not expire until 2029. TIF funds can be used for transportation and utility projects within the TIF area boundary, which covers the interchange area and frontage, IL-89 corridor, Dakota Street, St. Paul Street, and much of the east side of the City surrounding St. Bede Academy.

Proposals or requests to extend municipal utility service to areas outside of the City should:

- Be consistent with service extension plans.
- Of a demand within current capacity.
- Meet City design and construction standards.
- Enhance the contiguous development area of the City of Spring Valley and not represent leapfrog development.

# Recommendations

## Access Management

Access management involves coordinating and balancing property access needs with the larger transportation goals along a corridor. The goal of an access management strategy is to ensure and improve safety, preserve roadway function and mobility, and manage existing and future access in a regular and consistent manner. Successful access management strategies require careful planning and anticipation of future development needs and can contribute to established community character, advance economic development goals, and protect the City's investment in local roads.

A significant factor contributing to poor roadway function, appearance, and safety is the number of curb cuts along the road. It is recommended that primary access to new development sites be from existing collector roads or consolidated access points along arterials. Where sites can only be accessed from an arterial, driveway spacing should be maximized so motorists have time to address one set of potential conflicts before worrying about another. Driveways should also be properly set back from intersections so as not to impair intersection function.

Access management strategies will be easier to implement in yet to be developed areas, such as along IL-89 towards the interstate and US Hwy 6 towards Peru. As part of the development review process, access easements should be provided and dedicated so that future, adjacent developments can share access driveways. This may not be possible for larger industrial users, but should be required for retail, restaurant, or convenience businesses, especially closer to the interchange.

Along already developed corridors, such as Dakota Street through the City, retrofit of access management strategies will take longer. Because most of these properties were originally, or still are, single family dwellings, many have an individual driveway or curb cut. As properties transition from residential to commercial use and as commercial properties redevelop, opportunities will exist to implement access best management approaches. This should include promoting or requiring alley access wherever possible, requiring shared access and cross access easements so that multiple properties may share one curb cut, and removing unnecessary or redundant curb cuts to a site.



**Corner with many wide driveways (Credit: Michele Weisbart)**



**Reconstructed corner with fewer, narrower driveways (Credit: Michele Weisbart)**



## Coordinate Utility Improvements with Road Work

The City of Spring Valley is the primary public facility and service provider for water, sewer, stormwater, and transportation infrastructure within the municipal boundaries. Other providers include the Illinois Department of Transportation, Ameren Illinois, Frontier Communications, and others. When the City or another provider is undertaking a capital improvements project, such as a road reconstruction

or sewer line replacement that requires disturbance to the right-of-way, other potential improvements should be considered to create time efficiencies and cost savings. By working to allow for coordinated construction of multiple projects at the same time, public exposure to the working zones and traffic congestion will be reduced, the overall cost of the projects will be reduced, and increased collaboration will allow for future planning to remain cohesive.





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**Downtown**

# Downtown

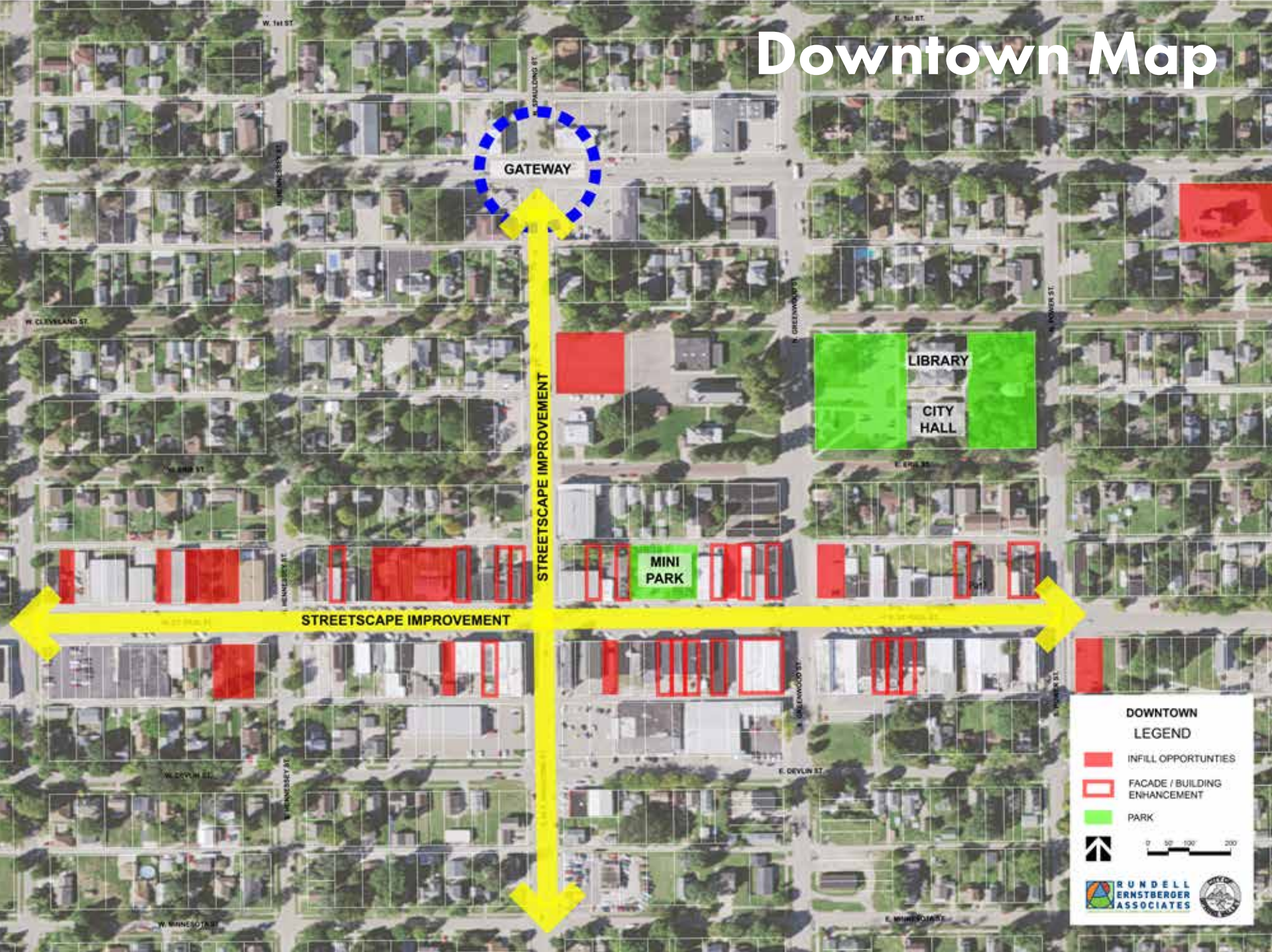
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In the simplest form, the goal of the downtown recommendations is to bring people downtown; bring them downtown for living, shopping, dining, entertainment, recreation, and working. While Spring Valley has a tremendous collection of cultural and historic resources, the downtown is lacking key amenities to attract families, young professionals, and other residents that will be the key to the future success of the city. Residents of all ages desiring a more urban living environment, entertainment and evening attractions, and activities for children seek a package of amenities that support active and healthy living, arts and culture attractions and events, walkable environments, and interactive gathering and play spaces.

The following recommendations focus on the amenities and design elements needed to attract new development and ultimately, more residents and visitors to the downtown area. Many of the recommendations in this section will be implemented by the city or local non-profit groups and will require significant public investment. Public investment in these projects helps to exhibit the city's commitment to the downtown and will then help to attract developers and stimulate private investment in the area.

Some of these recommendations are on-going or can begin immediately with small investments and programming of existing spaces in the downtown. Other more substantial infrastructure projects include construction of a revitalized St. Paul Street streetscape and a multi-use trail connecting downtown attractions, the riverfront, neighborhoods, and other community destinations. In addition, city participation in public/private partnerships can elevate the quality of the built environment and help alleviate potential concerns with parking, open space, and other amenities. Given the cost and long-term nature of these recommendations, it is unreasonable to think that the city can undertake them all at one time. For this reason, a series of short and long-term action items is detailed in the implementation section.

# Downtown Map



# Recommendations

## Desired Uses

Downtown Spring Valley and St. Paul Street specifically, contains a diverse mix of retail and service businesses, restaurants, and offices. There are also several residential dwellings in the form of lofts and apartments on the upper floors of buildings with ground level offices and retail. Historically, downtown has been the commercial center of the community. However, with improvements to the US Hwy 6/IL-89/Dakota Street corridor, business activity is moving away from St. Paul Street and downtown is no longer the commercial driver it once was. This has resulted in downtown businesses that serve a more niche market rather than everyday convenience needs.

The mixed use nature of downtown is encouraged to continue, with an understanding that restaurants, service businesses, and destination retail shops not dependent on high automobile traffic volumes, will be the most likely uses. Additionally, office uses should be encouraged on both the ground floor and upper floors. Downtown housing, discussed in more detail later in this section, is strongly encouraged, but only on upper floors. By developing a wide range of uses, downtown can become more vibrant with more activity happening

throughout the day. Diverse businesses, residential dwellings, and recreation amenities will all combine to create an environment that is interesting and activated for a majority of the day, 7 days a week.



Existing downtown buildings show office and restaurant uses with the potential for residential dwellings on the upper floors.



**Existing street conditions at St. Paul Street and S. Spalding Street.**



**Downtown streetscapes with landscaping and pedestrian-scale lighting create a more enjoyable environment**

## Streetscapes

The term streetscape refers to the collection of elements that make up a street's character. This includes not only the road itself, but sidewalks, building facades, landscape plantings, open spaces, multi-modal trail systems, and amenities like art, lighting, signage, and site furniture. A well thought-out and designed streetscape reinforces a sense of place and improves the economic vitality of an area by promoting visual continuity and making a more comfortable space for residents and visitors. Streetscapes that are designed to accommodate multiple modes of transportation including automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians create activity in front of stores and businesses which can lead to increased sales, higher property values, and improved safety and security.

St. Paul Street currently functions as a pedestrian oriented, mixed-use district with a relatively wide right-of-way, low traffic speeds, and on-street parking. As roadway maintenance and improvements become necessary, St. Paul Street should be redesigned to narrow the overly wide travel lanes thereby creating additional space that can be dedicated to pedestrians, bicyclists, outdoor dining, landscape plantings, and/or amenity

areas. The primary goal for all St. Paul Street improvements should be to create a complete street that is functional and attractive to business owners, residents, and visitors alike.

The graphic on the following page depicts an existing and proposed right-of-way configuration for St. Paul Street. Currently, the 100-foot wide right-of-way is mostly dedicated to automobiles with two angled parking aisles and two travel lanes comprising approximately 80 feet of the overall width. The remaining 20 feet is dedicated to pedestrians in the form of a 10-foot wide sidewalk on either side. The proposed St. Paul Street right-of-way widens the parking aisle but significantly reduces the width of the travel lanes, from 25 feet each to 12 feet each. This reduction creates space for a new separated bike path or multi-use trail, in addition to buffer space and a landscape plant bed of tree lawn. This design allows the existing sidewalk and curb line to be maintained on one side of the street. Sidewalk replacement and accessibility improvements are still recommended where the curb line does not move, but stormwater infrastructure would not need to be relocated. Given the cost of these potential improvements,

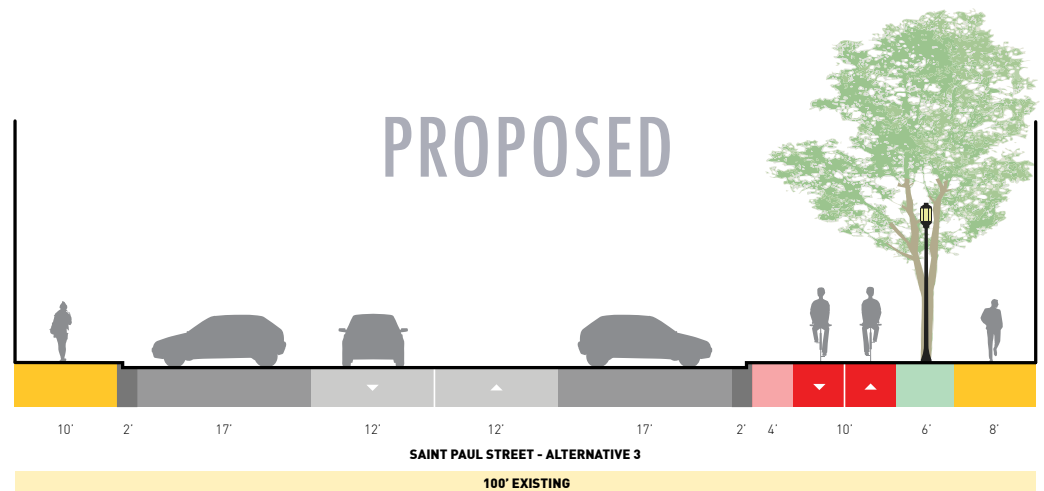
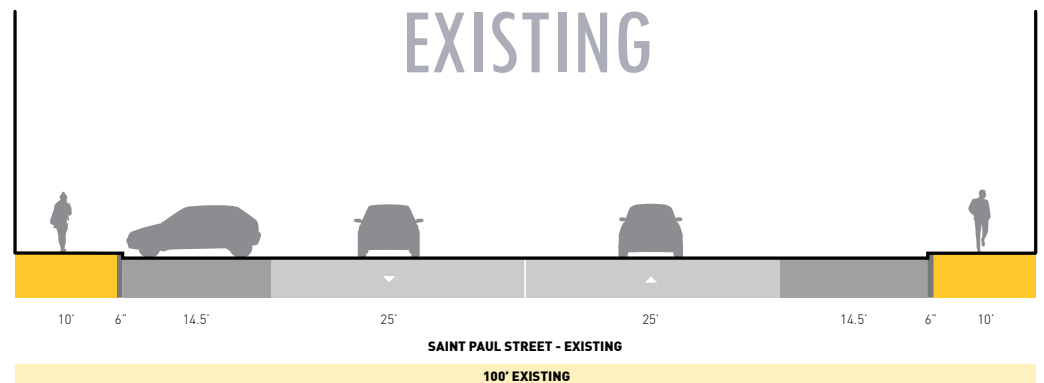
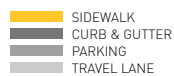
# Recommendations

implementation may need to happen one or two blocks at a time. St. Paul Street between N. Spaulding Street and N. Greenwood Street would likely be first for implementation.

In addition to St. Paul Street, right-of-way improvements along Spaulding Street will strengthen the connection to the riverfront and establish the framework for redevelopment of the larger downtown area. Improvements to streetscapes in the downtown area should include:

- Construct new curbs and correct accessibility issues.
- Install high visibility crosswalks to improve safety at crossing locations.
- Implement stormwater planters to capture and cleanse storm runoff.
- Add new street lighting, trees, benches, litter receptacles, and landscape planters.

Currently, landscape plantings along St. Paul Street are limited to the curb extension areas or bump-outs at each end of the two center blocks. Concerns were voiced during the public engagement process regarding maintenance and upkeep. In the short-term, the City is exploring modification of the bump-outs to result in lower maintenance requirements



Existing and proposed cross sections for the St. Paul Street right-of-way.



**The existing St. Paul Street bump-outs.**



**An example of a street adjacent stormwater planter with additional landscape plantings and a multi-use sidepath.**

and subsequently less plant material. However, street plantings are important in that besides providing color and interest, they serve functional purposes including:

- Creating shade to lower temperature and create a more pleasant pedestrian experience.
- Improved air quality by absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen.
- Slow and capture stormwater, increasing infiltration and evapotranspiration.
- Creating a buffer between pedestrian spaces and adjacent vehicular travel ways.

Plantings can be provided in a variety of ways that include above-grade planters, depressed stormwater planters, hanging baskets, and at curb bump-outs. Stormwater planters are basically depressed landscape boxes, typically located along a roadway, where runoff is channeled or directed into them with curbs. They then temporarily store the runoff, allowing for infiltration into the groundwater while also filtering out debris and pollutants. They also typically have an overflow into the storm sewer system so as not to back up and flood the roadway.

Long-term, these landscape elements should be incorporated with roadway design and stormwater management systems when proper maintenance can be ensured. The full life cycle costs, including maintenance, should be analyzed when considering landscape installations. Specific recommendations include:

- Select perennials and annuals that are relatively low maintenance.
- When using above-grade planters, select planters that complement other downtown site furnishings and that are movable in lieu of fixed constructions. Movable planters offer more flexibility in the design and use of the streetscape for festivals and other activities.
- When using trees, select trees that have an upright branching habit to minimize the need for pruning and to minimize conflict with pedestrians and vehicles. Select trees that do not bear nuts or fruit as they become a nuisance when maintaining downtown sidewalks and they also attract birds and other wildlife.

# Recommendations

## Downtown Housing

An important component to better activating the downtown is to increase the number of people living downtown in lofts and apartments. This will not only fill the underutilized upper-story floors of many buildings, it will also create around-the-clock customers for downtown restaurants, shops and services. Historically, mixed-use was commonplace in downtowns with shop owners or others living in residences on the upper floors of buildings. Unfortunately, as zoning codes were developed or amended in the second half of the 20th century, commercial districts prohibiting residential use were often applied to downtowns. While residential use is permitted on upper floors in the B-1 district, which covers most of St. Paul Street, other development standards such as minimum parking requirements, may make rehabilitation or redevelopment unfeasible.

Creating upper floor residences and increasing the downtown population results in more customers for downtown retailers and restaurants, more leased space for building owners, and more tax revenue for the local government. Additionally, there may not be a market for the first floor retail space but there could be a market for upper floor apartments

and the build out of apartments could be a way to save the building and achieve reinvestment on the property. At minimum, Spring Valley should remove barriers to upper floor residential redevelopment and conversion. In order to realize the full potential of downtown buildings, the City may even offer incentives for projects in targeted redevelopment areas. Common barriers to downtown housing include:

- Code compliance: the cost to retrofit older buildings with sprinkler systems, and compliance with other codes that do not differentiate between new construction and rehabilitation can be exorbitant without really providing an increase in safety. Under-trained or inconsistent inspectors may further exacerbate these issues with delays and confusion.
- Permit and impact fees: regulatory fees are necessary to help finance municipal services, however, building permit, inspection, traffic impact, park impact, and fire impact fees can disproportionately impact small business and property owners when trying to redevelop downtown buildings for new uses and tenants.
- Minimum parking requirements: on-site parking is often impossible without partial building demolition and securing off-site parking may





be difficult, cost prohibitive, or too far away to meet the code or be useful.

- Financing: local lending institutions often lack comparable projects with which to gauge the risk of investment and are therefore unlikely to provide loans. Additionally, long-term neglect and deferred maintenance can lead to underestimated rehabilitation costs.
- Public perceptions: perceptions may exist that downtown is unsafe.

To overcome these barriers, the City should consider the following potential incentives:

- Reduced parking requirements: reduction or waiver of parking requirements for projects that meet city-defined objectives, such as meeting a certain rental price point or making other investments in the building or site.
- Zoning amendments: city initiated zoning ordinance amendments to ensure density, lot size and/or width, floor area, building height, and landscaping requirements can be met for intended redevelopment uses without a long list of variances or other approvals that would complicate and delay the development review process.
- Reduced fees: reduction or waiver of permitting fees for projects that meet city-defined objectives.
- Loan programs: grants, low-interest loans, and revolving loan programs.
- Tax incentives: TIF funds for eligible activities as defined by the Illinois Tax Increment Allocation Redevelopment Act.
- Improved communication: a downtown liaison to keep building owners, tenants, and trade professionals informed about codes, ordinances, and other regulatory issues and help them through the development process.



Residential dwellings in the downtown can encourage activity and make it more lively.

# Recommendations

## Infill and Redevelopment

Infill development refers to the construction of new buildings on vacant or underutilized land in previously developed areas of the City. It is in contrast to greenfield development, where new construction occurs on the periphery of the City on lands that had been used for agriculture or open space. For communities that are fully built out with no room to expand, infill is the only opportunity to create new businesses and uses. For communities like Spring Valley that have room to grow, infill is still incredibly beneficial because it can utilize land, infrastructure, and municipal services more efficiently and without the need for service extensions. Additionally, it results in more active streets and neighborhoods by filling in spaces of inactivity.

There are challenges inherent to redevelopment and infill on vacant sites. Most of these sites are surrounded by existing development and as such, are inflexible in terms of size. The cost of development may also be higher because of the need for demolition, replacement of outdated infrastructure, or remediation of past environmental contamination. Furthermore, many development regulations are written to address greenfield

development where there are fewer constraints. For these reasons, it is important that the City proactively encourage infill and redevelopment.

Incentives may be used to make infill more feasible or attractive to developers. Potential incentives include reduced application or utility connection fees; flexible development standards for items such as lot size, setbacks, or parking requirements; City-led infrastructure upgrades; or tax abatement. Ultimately, incentives should be discussed on a case-by-case basis between City departments, elected and appointed officials, and the property owner or developer.

Specific opportunities for downtown infill and redevelopment include:

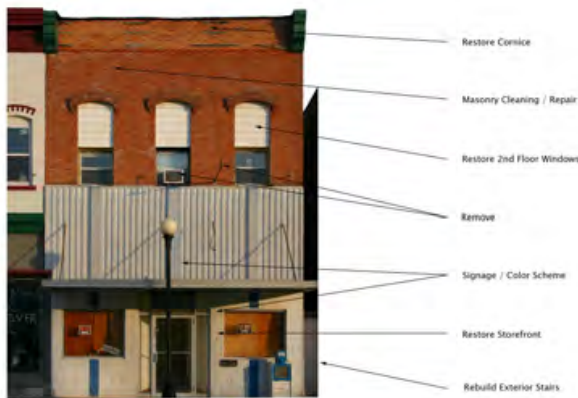
- 200-202 E. St. Paul Street
- 228-230 E. St. Paul Street
- 124-126 E. St. Paul Street
- 110-120 W St. Paul Street



**Existing infill opportunity at 124/126 E. St. Paul Street.**



**Infill development should reflect the scale of surrounding buildings to encourage cohesive massing along the street.**



- Restore Cornice
- Masonry Cleaning / Repair
- Restore 2nd Floor Windows
- Remove
- Signage / Color Scheme
- Restore Storefront
- Rebuild Exterior Stairs

122 E. ST. PAUL STREET  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



122 E. ST. PAUL STREET  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

Sample graphics from the 2012 Downtown Strategic Plan depict an existing facade and proposed improvements.

## Building Maintenance & Façade Recommendations

The four blocks of St. Paul Street between N. Power Street and N. Terry Street encompass a range of historical styles, reflecting the rich history of the City. Preserving these downtown buildings is critical to restoring the vibrancy of this district. The Downtown Strategic Plan for Spring Valley, completed in 2012, includes recommendations for downtown aesthetics, tourism enhancement, business attraction and retention, and an overall marketing campaign. Additionally, the plan details façade recommendations for twelve buildings on St. Paul Street. Analysis and renderings are included for:

- 101 E. St. Paul Street
- 120 E. St. Paul Street
- 122 E. St. Paul Street
- 123 E. St. Paul Street
- 124 E. St. Paul Street
- 219 E. St. Paul Street
- 100 W. St. Paul Street
- 101 W. St. Paul Street
- 102 W. St. Paul Street
- 107 W. St. Paul Street
- 123 W. St. Paul Street
- 126 W. St. Paul Street

Unfortunately, the building at 124 E. St. Paul Street has already been demolished. In order to prevent additional demolition of historic downtown structures and ensure better maintenance of existing buildings, the following best practices, summarized from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, should be adhered to. For more details, visit [www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm](http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm).

- Use a property for its historic purpose or place it into a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site.
- Retain and preserve the historic character of a property, with emphasis on the historic materials, features and spaces that characterize a property.
- Recognize each property as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Therefore, avoid changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding architectural elements from other buildings.
- Most properties change over time; retain and preserve those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right. Historic significance is generally considered to be 50 years old or older.

# Recommendations

- Preserve distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic building.
- Repair rather than replace deteriorated historic features. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, match the new feature to the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and where possible, materials.
- Do not perform chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials.
- Fabricate new additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction in a way to retain the historic materials that characterize the property. Differentiate the new work from the old and make it compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property.
- Address any structural damage, deterioration, or significant threats.
- Perform ongoing maintenance items such as repointing, painting, re-glazing windows, roof repairs and replacement if necessary, and other weatherization, required to mitigate deterioration.
- If a building is structurally sound, consider other improvements such as repair or replacement of architectural details which have been removed or are damaged; installation of appropriate signs, awnings, or light fixtures; and other improvements that will not compromise the historic integrity of the building.

When determining maintenance and renovation work to be performed, each building must be considered on a case-by-case basis. There is no single approach to façade improvement appropriate for every building. In order of priority, the following rules should apply:



**An example of downtown facades in need of renovation.**





**Existing programming of the downtown mini park includes the annual Cinco de Mayo festival.**



**Movie screenings are one example of potential recurring programming for the downtown.**

The City should consider taking the additional step of preparing an assessment and cost estimate for façade improvement and enhancement for focus buildings in the downtown. This may be the same buildings analyzed as part of the 2012 strategic plan or others. This will help existing property owners prioritize needed improvements to their buildings as well as provide some estimate of work needed to potential new owners when considering property purchases. In many instances, existing or potential property owners might not know where to start or may be overwhelmed by the needs of a structure. If the City can be proactive in helping to answer some of these questions, it should result in more investment in the downtown. The City should continue to fund the façade improvement program and consider raising the maximum funding amount, in addition to seeking State grants and other funding sources for downtown building enhancement. The resulting effects and energy generated from successful renovation and restoration projects will provide the impetus for further downtown improvements.

## Public Space Programming

While the importance of parks and gathering spaces can't be overstated, it is not enough to simply have those spaces. They must be programmed with activities that draw people to them. Programming refers to the activities and events facilitated at a space as a function of its design and amenities. This may be regularly occurring events, one-off events, or informal activities. Downtown Spring Valley needs to feel active and vibrant, and programming of the mini park and other spaces can get more people to come downtown, stay longer when they're there, and have a reason to come back again.

A robust programming schedule should include a wide array of activities that appeal to different groups and ages happening throughout the year. Obviously, it is easier to attract participants in warmer months, but a lack of year-round activities was cited as an issue during early public engagement efforts. Not all programming events and activities should be organized or led by the City. To truly be successful, partnerships with local businesses and organizations need to be developed. These organizations can provide programming to attract people to the downtown, while getting marketing exposure to further their business or non-profit mission.

# Recommendations

## Code Enforcement

One of the most effective means of stabilizing property values and creating a quality downtown is by ensuring the good maintenance of buildings and lots. Unfortunately, when properties are not adequately maintained, the City may have to get involved through code enforcement. This is typically a resource intensive process that involves City staff and legal counsel. Some communities employ full-time code enforcement personnel that actively look for violations. To help create a more successful and efficient code enforcement process, the City should create a code enforcement hotline and online portal where citizens can go to report code violations they have seen in the community. In all cases, City staff will first have to determine if a violation is present; the City should then seek cooperation from property owners to fix issues before proceeding with official enforcement. The end goal of the program should be compliance and a more attractive community, and code enforcement should not be looked at as a potential revenue stream for the City. More active code enforcement will show property owners that the City is serious about its appearance and hopefully elevate property maintenance city-wide.

As opposed to trying to pursue all code violations at all times, it may be more efficient and effective to target code enforcement efforts to specific issues for a set period of time. For example, inoperable vehicles may be one focus, and then move on to high grass/weeds, unsafe buildings, or illegal signage. The City should first conduct an outreach and education campaign informing residents and property owners of the code provisions and indicate that enforcement regarding that topic will begin on a specified date. On that date, enforcement notices should be sent out to those determined to be violating the code. The notices should state a



**An example of poor facade maintenance in the downtown.**

period of time in which the property has to come into compliance. After that time, monetary fines will be applied. Typically, each day a violation remains uncorrected, it is a distinct and separate code violation, subject to penalty. One of the benefits to this targeted approach is that no one can claim unfair treatment by the City because multiple similar notices will be sent at the same time. Similarly, when dealing with multiple similar violations, there will likely be efficiencies realized for staff and legal counsel resources.

Additionally, the City should consider hiring a full-time building inspector/code enforcement position, create a code enforcement board, and/or delegate such responsibility to the Plan Commission as part of the zoning ordinance and their official Rules of Procedure. This group could then review potential violations, determine if enforcement is warranted, grant time extensions to correct violations, and stay or waive fines. This may help to alleviate concerns that the Building Inspector is being unfair to a particular property owner while also not burdening the City Council with individual code violations. The Council should still have a role in directing overall enforcement initiatives, such as the targeted efforts described above, but they should not be involved on a case by case basis.



**Code enforcement should be conducted for not only for the building code, but also the zoning ordinance, health code, and nuisance regulations.**







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Quality of Life

# Quality of Life

Quality of life is a subjective concept that combines both tangible and intangible elements of a community including its social, cultural, economic, and physical attributes. The relationship between these elements creates a unique community fabric that influences the experiences of residents and visitors. Positive attributes are often associated with housing character, quality schools, access to recreation and entertainment, and a healthy environment. Just as important to overall quality of life is the interaction of residents with each other and their surroundings; this includes civic pride, history, community organizations, and cultural and faith-based institutions.

The quality of life section focuses on the health, comfort, and enjoyment of residents of Spring Valley, with the goal of improving livability and building community across the City. In order to work towards this goal, the City, residents, businesses, schools, and non-profit organizations all must work together. Quality of life is impacted by every development decision the community makes whether that be by City leaders and staff, developers, or individual property owners.

## Education

Education plays an outsized role in overall quality of life within a community. It's the foundation of many peoples' jobs and is a large factor for families when deciding where to buy or build a home. Schools are often the focus of a community, and community and school success are highly interrelated. Community decline can reduce educational performance, which in turn reduces the attractiveness and leads to further deterioration of the community, which in turn further impacts the schools in a negative feedback loop. Fortunately, Spring Valley is home to three outstanding schools: John F. Kennedy Elementary School, Hall High School, and St. Bede Academy. The new Hall High School finished construction in 2015, replacing a 100-year-old facility. St. Bede Academy recently completed an \$18 million STEM Science lab and Student Commons addition to their facility.

Going forward, it will be important for the City, school system, and area employers to develop partnerships aimed at strengthening neighborhoods, developing needed curriculums, and generally making Spring Valley a community attractive to families. Partnering with the schools on workforce development initiatives can be economically beneficial to the City itself. Currently, a common concern is the education or preparedness of individuals seeking jobs. The Walmart Distribution Center and St. Margaret's Hospital are the largest employers in Spring Valley but remain understaffed because applicants either don't qualify for the job or require additional training that might decrease the efficiency of the workplace. If the area schools are highly rated and creating a skilled workforce, it is likely to result in successful business attraction efforts and new housing development.

# Quality of Life Map



# Recommendations

## Parks & Open Space

The community has expressed great interest in the continued maintenance and development of the parks system. Kirby Park and specifically the Spring Valley Coveny-Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool were identified as critical community assets. Continued investment in the parks system will support other comprehensive plan goals such as attracting more families to the community and providing the quality of life amenities desired by businesses as they make decisions about growth and development.

Coal Miner's Park was identified as an undervalued asset in need of additional investment. A master plan should be created for Coal Miner's Park that includes improvements to the parking area, trails and paths, play equipment, and a hilltop lookout. Funding for both the master plan and actual construction, as well as other parks system improvements can come from a variety of sources, including transportation and non-transportation federal funds as well as local resources such as tax revenue and voter-approved bonds. Private sources of parks and recreation funds include non-profit organizations either directly or indirectly associated with parks and trails, as well as corporate and

business sponsors. Public sector efforts can then be leveraged with private sector funding sources from small businesses, corporations and grant foundations, civic organizations, and even private citizens as part of the local match.

Beyond physical improvements, activating Spring Valley's parks and public spaces with programmed events and activities is incredibly important. Many communities engage residents and attract tourists with performing arts, food trucks, fitness workouts, and dance parties. Often, local governments do not have the capacity or funding to dedicate staff to work on programming; therefore, partnerships between a downtown association, recreation leagues or organizations, neighborhood associations, or other not-for-profit organizations are critical to creating and managing parks programming.



**Photos of the existing parking and lawn areas in Coal Miners Park.**



**The Cinco de Mayo Festival is one of the community events held downtown.**

## Community Pride & Civic Engagement

A common theme at early steering committee and focus group meetings was a decline in community pride and civic engagement. From a reduction in volunteerism to a decline in involvement with local government, the community will be facing challenges in developing the next group of local leaders. Concerns of community pride also stem from a lack of investment and upkeep. Creating events like a community clean up or incentives for redevelopment of buildings in the downtown could also excite people for the future of Spring Valley. Making change visible is sometimes the way community pride is reinvigorated. Movie nights in the park, more year-round festivals, and volunteer opportunities could be a start to encouraging engagement and identifying the next group of leaders.

Sometimes it's the City's own residents that are perpetuating the negative attitudes and stereotypes. In order to better emphasize the good things happening within Spring Valley and call for more people to help improve the community, the City should initiate a positivity campaign. The initiative would be organized to highlight positive aspects of the City and call attention to good news, whether a major community event, jobs announcement, or something as simple as a neighborhood clean-up or "front yard of the month" program.

# Recommendations

## Branding, Wayfinding & Communication


Developing a brand identity has long been used by businesses and corporations to build a customer base, launch a new product, or maintain an image. Communities can use many of the same techniques to build confidence in existing residents, attract visitors, and grow the local economy. More than a logo and tagline, a brand is a set of tools used to create differentiation of the community and over time build an appearance, feeling, and imagery among residents and the surrounding region.

There are concerns with trying to develop a branding strategy or expand on existing efforts. Incorporating cliché statements and themes in a brand can be interpreted as artificial and contrived and therefore off-putting. Additionally, if the brand doesn't resonate with the local community, it will not be accepted and used as a selling point. The best brands are relevant to locals and done with creativity. While a community's history is important, branding should reflect what the community is today and what it is going to be tomorrow. Branding standards can then be incorporated into gateway treatments, wayfinding signage, the City website, and other marketing materials.

In the context of city planning, a gateway is a landmark, land use transition, or significant feature that is a point of visual interest when entering a community. Gateways into Spring Valley play a significant role as part the regional transportation network, moving people into and around the City. They also contribute to community character and the first impression realized by visitors. Gateways are typically a combination of elements that work together to create an experience as someone traverses the City. Various components of a gateway could include public art, landscape plantings, branding and welcoming signage, lighting, or other aesthetic enhancements.



Examples of gateway signage that celebrate local context and branding.



In conjunction with a branding update, the City should develop a communications and information sharing plan. This plan should identify messaging goals and target audiences for City communications. At a minimum, the target audience should be all Spring Valley residents, regardless of age, income, or ethnicity. Additional targets may be potential visitors, developers, or economic development professionals. With this plan, the City should focus on sharing good news, while also creating specific channels by which to receive complaints or issues identified by residents.

While Facebook is an effective way to share news at essentially no cost to the City, it may not reach or be accessible to all residents. City officials and staff are always approachable and willing to listen, but again, not all residents may be comfortable or know who to talk to. The communications plan may still include Facebook as one component, as well as a general City email address that could then be forwarded to the appropriate department, a dedicated voicemail box, better advertisement of the existing comment form on the website, or some combination thereof.

## Economic & Workforce Development

One of the key strategies for the City to market itself in term of economic development is its central location between Chicago, the Quad Cities, Rockford, and Bloomington. Spring Valley has transitioned from a mining economy to one more focused on light manufacturing and logistics. Additionally, the City supports the entrepreneurial spirit with smaller professional businesses and independent retailers located throughout the City and especially in the downtown. In order to better protect the City from future economic downturns, the City needs to continue to focus on and support economic development efforts that will diversify the job base and increase the average hourly wage in Spring Valley. There is no single strategy that will lead to a more diverse economy; communities use a combination of approached that often include:

- Developing regional collaboration.
- Promoting entrepreneurial development and providing technical assistance to small and start-up businesses.
- Leveraging existing assets to support local growth.

- Enhancing the skills and capacity of the area workforce.
- Encouraging reinvestment of local wealth back in to the economy.

Workforce development is a critical component of any successful economic development effort. Workforce development may include skill development for displaced workers, on-the-job training for existing employees, education reform to adjust local curriculum, and other assistance to remove barriers to employment such as childcare, transportation, and skills accreditation. Industry growth is dependent on the supply of skilled labor. Without the availability of an adequate workforce, local expansion and the attraction of new businesses will be limited.

Hall High School and the Illinois Valley Community College are tremendous community assets that should continue to work with regional employers to help ensure student success and long-term employability. Additional vocational training and two-year post-secondary programs in the community should be developed. A career ladders or pathways strategy supports worker transitions

# Recommendations

from work to training throughout the worker's career. The objective is to offer continued step training to advance skills over time to improve overall wages and employment opportunities. Often, these pathways are developed in conjunction with industry groups, trade unions, and training organizations such as colleges, universities, and secondary schools.

These programs will help transition the worker better into the workforce and help identify and connect workers with training necessary for career advancement. For example, a career pathways program in health care can help advance a worker from an entry level nursing assistant to an LPN, RN, and potentially an advanced nursing specialty. Instead of all of this training upfront, which may be too much of a burden for many workers, the training can be in step programs allowing for continued employment and work along each step of the ladder. Career ladder programs are often focused on critical industries and occupations with employment gaps. These programs should be appropriately focused to existing and emerging industries and occupations.

In addition to attraction and retention efforts for large companies and the workforce development programs to support them, Spring Valley should continue efforts to support small businesses and grow entrepreneurial talent. Often times, too much emphasis is placed on business attraction efforts and luring new businesses and the promise of job creation to the community. While new business development does have a positive economic impact on the community, it also requires a substantial amount of resources. The "Economic Gardening" approach is based upon studies that show that many of the new jobs created in a community come from existing businesses, yet oftentimes business retention and expansion efforts receive fewer resources than attraction and business recruitment efforts.

This economic gardening approach is based upon a "grow from within" strategy helping existing businesses grow larger both in terms of jobs, wages, and wealth. This strategy includes more focus on strategic growth challenges such as developing new markets, refining business models, and gaining access to competitive intelligence. An

entrepreneurship training program focuses directly on equipping potential entrepreneurs and new small business owners within a community with the knowledge and tools necessary to develop and sustain a successful business venture. The programs focus on a curriculum that includes the mechanics of running a business, strategic planning and marketing, understanding markets and customers, and financing. The programs typically also provide post-course counseling and coaching as the entrepreneur applies those skills to a new venture or startup.





## City Capacity & Staffing

Running a city is not easy. Despite a decline in Spring Valley's population, limited growth to property values, and the resulting implications on municipal tax revenue, the City still must provide quality services and amenities across the community. Staff and officials are increasingly spread thin in addressing all the needs and concerns of the community. Local leaders must balance residents' many diverse interests with the City's limited resources. Unfortunately, that can mean not everyone's needs can or will be met in a timely manner. City leaders must consider which services are most essential, which departments' budgets to cut or boost, and whether to raise taxes.

With involvement and volunteerism being low, City leaders and staff are now being asked to provide leadership on tasks and events that have historically been provided by other groups and service organizations. Additionally, because the current staffing situation is minimal, it is possible that people do not run for public office because of the amount of work and responsibilities they would be taking on. The Council, Mayor, and City staff should be providing leadership on various City initiatives and cannot be the only ones working to implement those initiatives. As resources may become available, the City should evaluate the potential to add staff, such as a communications and outreach director or city planner.





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**Implementation**

# Implementation

Implementation is the process by which the recommendations of the comprehensive plan get translated into meaningful change within the community. The City of Spring Valley has been thoughtful in its approach to this process in order to carefully craft the vision for the future. The implementation section lays out the next steps necessary in order to realize the goals, objectives, and recommendations related to this vision. It is important that key stakeholders, including the Mayor, City Council, Plan Commission, City Staff, business leaders and not-for-profit organizations play a key role implementing this comprehensive plan.

While the plan goals and objectives have been organized under the categories of Land Use & Community Form, Transportation & Utilities, Downtown, and Quality of Life, they are all interconnected and implementation relies on treating each component as a part of a whole. Care was taken to ensure the Plan provides policies, programs, and recommendations within the context

of that basic reality. Not all the goals and objectives can be completed immediately, so the plan must be treated as a living document. This means that the plan should continue to evolve over time as physical, economic, and social conditions change, and as resources become available. The City must consider the necessary staff and budget resources and prioritize the actions in order to successfully implement the comprehensive plan.

The key implementation challenge often comes in translating a plan's vision, goals, and recommendations into the day-to-day operations and actions of City government. As the City determines how to implement the plan's recommendations, it is important to continuously consider the integrity of the planning process, Spring Valley's values, its resources, and why the policy, recommendation, or project is important to the City's future. This plan represents the community's desired future. It is the collective will and roadmap for how to achieve that future. It is critical to find ways to give the plan life and maintain its integrity.

Extensive discussion was undertaken to ensure the comprehensive plan reflects the desired land use pattern for the community, and identifies improvements needed for undeveloped and targeted redevelopment areas over the next 20 years. This 20-year period allows adequate time to implement new development ordinances, adjust existing land use patterns where needed, and improve the transportation network. It also allows the City adequate time to formulate capital improvement strategies and funding sources to implement the recommendations and achieve ultimate success of this planning effort. While the planning horizon spans 20 years, the plan will need to be reviewed and updated before then. City leaders and staff must track progress in meeting the plan goals and objectives, determine when an update should be initiated, what changes should be incorporated, and how those changes will be incorporated. Any amendments should include an evaluation of the existing conditions, vision, goals, objectives, and key initiatives.



## Interpretation

The comprehensive plan should serve as Spring Valley's guide for land use and development policies to promote orderly growth and redevelopment within City limits. The long-range goals, objectives, and recommendations, along with the supporting maps, are intended to guide development decisions towards the community's collective vision of the future. City staff, the Plan Commission, and City Council should interpret the goals and objectives as a long-term and deliberately broad vision. The Commission and Council should keep in mind that this plan reflects the community's values. City officials cannot expect to control all circumstances. However, the spirit of this plan should be adhered to in order to ensure that the community's values are maintained. Members of the Plan Commission and City Council should interpret the plan recommendations by saying, "given our long-term goals and changing community conditions, these are the projects and programs that we want to complete in the short-term and long-term, and this is how we plan to accomplish them." Interpreting the plan in this way

will enable the members of both the Commission and Council to justify their approval, or denial, of any proposed development or redevelopment in Spring Valley.

When a new annexation, rezoning, subdivision, or site plan review request is filed with the City, staff and consultants should review and evaluate the application against the Spring Valley Comprehensive Plan and the City's other ordinances, and provide a staff report with a formal recommendation to the Plan Commission regarding its findings. The staff report should include an evaluation of the development and the degree to which the proposed project conforms to the plan's goals, objectives, recommendations, and future land use, transportation and quality of life maps. The Spring Valley Comprehensive Plan does not contain the actual decisions that should be made; however, it does serve as a reminder and provide guidance of the community's collective vision for the future growth and development of this area, and should be interpreted as such.

# Implementation

## Zoning and Development Review

Zoning protects the rights of individual property owners while promoting the general welfare of the community. The purpose of zoning is to locate specific land uses where they are most appropriate. In determining the most appropriate zoning designation, the City must consider such things as public utilities, road access, and the existing or established development pattern of the area in which development is proposed.

From a policy standpoint, the plan will provide guidance specifically for changes in land use through rezonings or future land use amendments. The City Council and Plan Commission should consider the relevant section of the plan when reviewing applications and desired changes. Specifically, this review should determine whether a rezone or land use amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, applicable recommendations in the plan, and the future land use and

transportation maps. If the application is supported by the relevant sections of the plan, then the rezoning/amendment should be approved. If the application is not supported by the relevant sections of the plan, then the Council and Commission should either deny the application or approve the application with conditions that would make it consistent with the intent of the comprehensive plan. A situation could occur where changes happen in Spring Valley that make the Comprehensive Plan inconsistent with the values and goals of the City. At that point, the Commission or Council should note this inconsistency and the comprehensive plan should be updated to be responsive to these changing conditions.

In general, the Plan Commission and City Council should consider that a rezone is only justifiable under the following circumstances:

- When the requested rezoning is consistent with long range land use plans adopted by the City Council.

- When there was an error or oversight in the original zoning of the property.
- When changes have occurred to conditions in the vicinity of the property which prevent the reasonable use of the property as currently zoned.
- When the requested rezoning benefits the community at large.

Rezoning should not be granted because of a single concern expressed by a property owner or group of property owners. The community's collective vision for the future is not negotiable. Should the Plan Commission recommend approval to the City Council for numerous rezonings that are substantially inconsistent with the future land use map included in this plan, the plan should be amended. This is an indication that the area's conditions, issues and/or priorities have changed.



## Monitoring and Updates

Planning does not have a defined beginning and end. It is an on-going process that responds to new information and circumstances and incorporates changing conditions into decisions. Circumstances that may change include physical conditions of buildings and infrastructure, economic climate, the natural environment, and social and community goals.

Once the plan is adopted it will need to be revised from time to time to ensure that it stays consistent and relevant to current conditions. An implementation committee designated by the City Council should be used to monitor and update this plan. A plan update should occur at intervals of approximately every five years. The purpose of the plan update is to re-evaluate the goals, policies, and strategies contained within this plan, noting those to change and those to remove. New

goals and recommendations should be added as needed, to make sure the Plan is effective and provides the needed direction.

A disciplined schedule for plan review is helpful in plan implementation. Noting areas of the plan's success helps to build support for future planning activities. The identification of less successful components of the plan may suggest a need for refinement and/or amendment. The Plan Commission should conduct an annual review of the plan, asking whether the conditions on which the plan was predicated still hold true. An annual "report card" should be prepared to review and document the activities of the Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and City Council as they relate to development in Spring Valley. This annual report should be presented to the Plan Commission and City Council.

# Implementation

## Fiscal Considerations

The implementation of the comprehensive plan will require the City's financial commitment and support. Although it is the City's intent to administer this plan with the current financial resources available, monies may need to be set aside in future budgets to carry out some of the recommended actions. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan does not authorize expenditures for its implementation. The City Council, in accordance with state statutes and the City's policies, may authorize the financial resources to implement the plan. Additional funding may be available from outside sources. When opportunities become available and make sense financially, the City should seek these funds through federal, state or local grants, loans and other resources. A summary of potential funding sources is included at the end of this chapter.

## Coordination and Partnerships

Planning elements are interconnected between many City initiatives, non-profit-based community projects, and private development. The City should assume a leadership role in promoting strong partnerships between City, regional, and state public agencies; community groups and non-profit organizations; the local business community; neighborhoods; and the private sector. The City should conduct outreach and continuing education on the Plan's vision and principles by encouraging developers, builders, and the business community to help implement the plan.





# Primary Initiatives

After taking into consideration the communicated needs of the City and the information and ideas discussed throughout the planning process, a list of ten primary initiatives has been identified to help prioritize City projects and help create a working plan of next steps. These recommendations and associated action steps should be used as the first set of work plan items to be prioritized and completed. During plan review periods, the City should reassess current conditions and adjust this list appropriately. The top ten initiatives, in no particular order, are:

## **Form a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee.**

For the plan to be a living document, it must be used to define the City's work plan and agenda for the physical, fiscal and policy implementation mechanisms. Therefore, the City Council should create an Implementation Committee to help guide City staff in preparing and prioritizing elements of the comprehensive plan. The Implementation Committee should develop an annual work plan by prioritizing the recommendations and actions steps for the fiscal year and develop a strategy for moving these items forward. This information should be shared and approved by the City

Council, since they control the budget for the City. It will be important that this is completed prior to City budgeting time in order to ensure adequate funding is in place for those policies or programs that require financial resources. It is best to try to develop a work plan in two-year increments so that the Plan Commission, City Council, and supporting department staff can allocate budgetary resources to help implement the appropriate recommendations prioritized for the upcoming year.

## Action Steps:

1. Create a committee comprised of City Council and Plan Commission representatives, City staff, business owners, and community volunteers.
2. Develop a regular meeting schedule, such as quarterly, to review plan progress, suggest project priorities to City leaders, identify completed projects, and needed updates.
3. Assist with the creation of the annual Comprehensive Plan Report Card to be presented to the Plan Commission and City Council.
4. Ensure an active and engaged membership on the committee, bringing new members on as needed.

# Primary Initiatives

## **Create a three to five-year capital improvements plan.**

The capital improvements plan (CIP) is a planning document that covers a timeframe of three to five years and is updated annually. It aids in plan implementation by providing the necessary funding for short-range infrastructure and capital improvement projects. The document provides guidance and planning for capital improvements throughout the City and allocates financial resources to various community needs and requests. The document states the City Council's prioritization of the financial resources available for capital project spending by identifying which projects should be included, when they should be constructed, and how they will be financed. This plan represents the City's tentative commitment to comply with the plan unless circumstances or priorities change in the future. The commitment is more certain in the first year of the CIP and becomes increasingly more tenuous in subsequent years. Nevertheless, the CIP should be used as

the City's present plan and priority over the next three to five years. Even though the CIP is a planning document, it should not be an automatic authorization of the construction of projects, given the procurement process and the allocation of resources.

### Action Steps:

1. Develop a list of needed capital projects, equipment purchases, and major studies needed for the City.
2. Determine cost estimates and timetables for each project, purchase, and study.
3. Prioritize needed improvements.
4. Identify funding options and develop a financing plan.
5. Prepare the initial capital improvements plan for a three to five-year timeframe.
6. Adopt the capital improvements plan by City Council resolution.
7. Update the plan on an annual basis, to remove completed projects and add new ones.



**Update the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to better reflect the goals and recommendations of this plan.**

The Spring Valley Comprehensive Plan is a statement of policy and it is not a regulatory document. The most common regulatory means for implementing the plan is through zoning and subdivision ordinances. The zoning ordinance regulates land use and development for land within the city. It controls the size, density, and character of development within a district through the use of developmental standards. Additionally, zoning classifications are broken into permitted land uses within each district as well as conditional and special exception land uses. In addition to restricting uses, zoning ordinances also dictate the bulk of development (typically through height requirements, floor-area ratios, maximum lot coverage, and/or minimum open space) and building placement on the site (typically through the use of building setbacks). The subdivision regulations control how parcels are subdivided

to create smaller lots. This includes for residential purposes as well as commercial or industrial development. In addition to standards for lot creation, the subdivision regulations also control construction of infrastructure and utilities that will be dedicated to the City when complete.

Action Steps:

1. Create a steering committee to review and lead a comprehensive process to update the zoning ordinance and subdivision standards.
2. Consult with a zoning and land use professional to facilitate an update to the zoning and subdivision control ordinances.
3. Draft amendments.
4. Conduct an outreach and education campaign in advance of a public hearing by the Plan Commission and adoption by the City Council.
5. Make documents easy to access and navigate by publishing them online in the form of an interactive PDF.

# Primary Initiatives

## **Develop a Code Enforcement Strategy to improve the visual appearance of the community.**

City codes such as the zoning ordinance, building code, nuisance regulations, and weeds ordinance are important to protect the health, safety, welfare, and aesthetic character of the community. However, they are only beneficial when they are respected by all residents and business owners. When property owners do not adequately maintain the structures and sites they own, City-led code enforcement will likely be required to realize abatement of violations. Code enforcement is a time and resource intensive process, but incredibly important in implementing the recommendations of this plan and realizing the big picture vision for the community. Code enforcement, or lack thereof, was identified as a major issue, if not “the” issue, throughout the comprehensive planning process.

### Action Steps:

1. Conduct an information campaign about City codes and widespread code enforcement violations such as abandoned buildings, poorly maintained buildings, trash, tall grass and weeds, graffiti, and inoperable vehicles.
2. Explore the use of a ticketing system instead of court orders for code enforcement violations.
3. Consult with peer communities about successful efforts and explore recommendations of the American Association of Code Enforcement.
4. Consider creation of a code enforcement board or delegate such responsibility to the Plan Commission as part of the zoning ordinance and their official Rules of Procedure
5. Develop a pilot program to target a specific issue within the City for a 6-month time frame to gauge how successful the program can be.
6. Seek approval from City Council on pilot program.
7. Implement pilot program and monitor results, including number of existing violations prior to start of program, number of owners/tenants/landlords contacted, number of violations remedied, and the number of citations issued.



**Create a neighborhood stabilization program to address housing maintenance, rehabilitation, and blight elimination.**

The City must continue efforts to strengthen and beautify existing neighborhoods. One way to accomplish this is through promoting and incentivizing infill on vacant lots and rehabilitation of outdated or unkept housing stock. Residential rehabilitation can be challenging because of the scattered nature of the issue, outdated infrastructure, or increased construction costs. City incentives and programs could be used to help offset some of these challenges, while increased code enforcement, as mentioned above, can target inadequate maintenance.

Action Steps:

1. Evaluate vacant housing stock and determine which structures need to be demolished and which can be rehabilitated.
2. Establish a program and pursue funding for blight elimination and demolition of unsafe structures.
3. Consider incentives for residential rehabilitation such as permit or utility fee waivers, tax abatement, or rehab grants and low interest loans.
4. Review and amend the zoning ordinance to ensure it allows desired infill types.
5. Support desired infill and redevelopment through public investments in infrastructure improvements and beautification efforts.
6. Continually enforce City codes to protect investment and property values in Spring Valley neighborhoods.

# Primary Initiatives

## **Create a Downtown streetscape plan and pursue funding for improvements.**

St. Paul Street currently functions as a pedestrian oriented, mixed-use district with a relatively wide right-of-way, low traffic speeds, and on-street parking, but it could be more. St. Paul Street should be redesigned to narrow the overly wide travel lanes thereby creating additional space that can be dedicated to pedestrians, bicyclists, outdoor dining, landscape plantings, and/or amenity areas. Focusing on aesthetic, pedestrian, and gateway enhancements to this corridor will protect existing downtown investment while encouraging new investment and strengthening the visual appeal of the community's heart and the small town, historic character that everyone values. Given the cost and importance of such a project, a streetscape plan should be the first step in implementing this project.

### Action Steps:

1. Form a local project committee of City officials and business owners to determine the appropriate project limits, phasing, and scope.
2. Refine the project goals and develop a project program that may include additional streetscape amenities (i.e. benches, bike racks, signage, planters, lighting, etc.), crosswalks, ADA curb ramps, gateways, etc.
3. Identify and procure funding including grants and available tax dollars.
4. Consult with a design professional for completion of design and construction documentation.
5. Bid and construct the project.

## **Prioritize missing pedestrian infrastructure and pursue funding for improvements.**

Sidewalks are a key component of creating an attractive, walkable community. They help to connect residents to recreational amenities and commercial areas. However, several streets in the City do not have any sidewalks or they are in disrepair and need complete replacement.

### Action Steps:

1. Form a local project committee to prioritize sidewalk and trail improvements.
2. Develop a program of preferred project elements (i.e. sidewalks, lighting, curb ramps, etc.)
3. Coordinate with IDOT on potential funding sources and plans for improvement along state routes.
4. Identify and procure funding including grants and available tax dollars.
5. For more complex projects, consult with a design professional for completion of design and construction documentation.
6. Bid and construct projects based on priority, as funds become available.



**Update the Parks and Recreation plan with a focus on improvements to Coal Miners Park and increased community events programming.**

In order to maintain a successful parks and recreation system that responds to resident’s needs and desires, additional parks and recreation planning should occur. Parks and recreation planning has numerous benefits that include establishing overall goals and objectives for the system, collecting public input, determining system shortfalls, and prioritizing projects. In addition to physical park improvements, the Parks and Recreation plan focuses on programming activities and events that happen within parks or other community spaces. An up to date parks and recreation plan can help in acquiring grant funding

through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources or from other organizations that fund community parks and recreation.

Action Steps:

1. Create a steering committee to lead the update to the Parks and Recreation Plan.
2. Update the plan through assistance of the Playground and Recreation Board, City Staff, and/or an outside consultant.
3. Hold public meetings and garner public support.
4. Draft amendments.
5. Use the new plan to pursue a Park and Recreational Facility Construction Program (PARC) grant through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

# Primary Initiatives

## **Develop a communications plan to better share good news about the community and also provide an official avenue for nuisance complaints or other issue identification.**

In order to better emphasize the good things happening within Spring Valley and call for more people to help improve the community, the City should develop a communications plan and identify opportunities to highlight positive aspects of the City and recent good news. Additionally, specific mechanisms by which to submit code complaints or identify City issues should be created, so that these discussions don't take over other meetings, events, or the day-to-day responsibilities of City staff.

### Action Steps:

1. Form a local project committee of City officials and residents to develop goals and objectives of the communications plan.
2. Determine the communication mechanisms needed to reach a broad audience of Spring Valley residents and business owners.
3. Implement needed communication mechanisms including updates to the City website and social media accounts.
4. Evaluate results and the reach of City communications.

## **Grow the Spring Valley Business Revitalization Grant Program and help to identify building needs to proactively support downtown revitalization efforts.**

The goal of the Spring Valley Revitalization Grant Program is to visibly enhance the city's business district, promote the historic restoration of its structures, encourage economic renewal, and create a safe, attractive, and well-maintained environment that promotes a thriving entrepreneurial climate. This goal is very much still applicable, but the maximum funding amount for each project needs to be increased. This will hopefully lead to increased revitalization efforts by property owners. As an additional step, the City should consider retaining the services of a preservation architect to identify needed repairs and potential costs for rehabilitation to key structures.

### Action Steps:

1. Determine additional funding sources to support the Spring Valley Business Revitalization Grant Program such as grants or TIF district revenue.
2. Consult with a historic preservation architect to evaluate and determine specific building needs for key structures in the downtown, including cost estimates for needed work.

3. Incorporate these evaluations and cost estimates into marketing materials for vacant and underutilized downtown structures.
4. Develop and host educational sessions about the existing program, design guidelines, historic preservation techniques, and funding sources outside of the Spring Valley Business Revitalization Grant Program.
5. Encourage immediate restoration through a "quick fix" approach for storefronts, that would include simple repairs to wood, touch up painting, removing abandoned signs, and creating community displays in empty windows.
6. Consider increasing the maximum grant funding available to each project, from the current level of \$5,000 to at least \$10,000.





# Potential Funding Sources

The following is a list and description of funding sources that may be used to help finance recommendations and projects described earlier in the plan. Because these programs change from time to time and funding may not always be available in a given budget year, Spring Valley should continue to search for and monitor grants and other funding programs to identify new opportunities as they are available.

## Economic Development

### **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)**

#### **Community Development Assistance Program – Economic Development**

The Economic Development component of the larger Community Development Assistance Program allows local governments to request a maximum of \$1,000,000.00 for gap financing to assist businesses locating or expanding in the community. Funds may be used for machinery and equipment, working capital, building construction and renovation, or improvements to public infrastructure that creates and/or retains jobs in the community. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. (<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/CommunityInfrastructure/Pages/default.aspx>)

# Potential Funding Sources

## **Advantage Illinois**

Advantage Illinois focuses on assisting small businesses with start up costs, working capital, business procurement, franchise fees, equipment, inventory, as well as the purchase, construction, renovation, or tenant improvements of an eligible place of business that is not for passive real estate investment purposes. Specific opportunities include:

- Standard Participation Loan Program (PLP) – designed to enable small businesses to obtain medium to long-term financing, in the form of term loans, to help grow and expand their businesses. Department participation is subordinated to the lender and has a “below market” interest rate.
- Minority/Women/Disabled/Veteran-Owned Businesses – similar to Standard PLP; however, the amount of financial support may range depending on loan term, MWDV majority control/ownership.
- Revolving Line of Credit (RLOC PLP) – similar to Standard PLP except in the form of a revolving line of credit. Maximum term is two years and further support requires reapplication.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/AdvantageIllinois/Pages/default.aspx>

## **Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)**

### **Railway Freight Program (RFP)**

The purpose of the Rail Freight Loan Program This program provides capital assistance to communities, railroads, and shippers to preserve and improve rail freight service in Illinois. In the past, grants were available, but the program is not only offering low interest loans. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. (<https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/funding-opportunities/rail-freight-loan-program>)

### **Economic Development Program (EDP)**

The purpose of the EDP grant is to provide state assistance for roadway improvements or new construction that are necessary for access to new or expanding industrial, manufacturing or distribution type companies. Funding will include preliminary engineering, construction, construction engineering and contingencies. The focus of the program is on the creation and retention of permanent full-time jobs. Projects which only improve opportunities for future development or are speculative in nature are not eligible. This is not a competitive program; however, the funding commitment is based on

how many jobs will be created and/or retained. The company must commit to creating new employment and/or retaining employment in Illinois. Funding amounts for each project are determined by the number of new and retained jobs.

The EDP program uses state only funds and is designed to provide 50% state funding for eligible locally owned roadways and 100% state funding for roadway improvements on state owned routes. The remaining 50% match will be provided by local government entities or private sources. Some examples of local agency matching fund sources are: MFT funds, other state grants, federal EDA grants, or money from the company donated to the local agency. This program allows the department to contribute up to a maximum of \$2 million to local economic development projects. Due to the program’s overall size, costs beyond the \$2 million project limit must be absorbed by the local community, company or developer. Preliminary Engineering (PE) cost estimates must be completed prior to applying for or being approved for EDP funds. The maximum combined reimbursement for PE and CE is 15% of the total project cost. (<https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/funding-opportunities/economic-development-program>)



### **Truck Access Route Program (TARP)**

The purpose of TARP is to help local governments upgrade roads to accommodate 80,000 pound truck loads. This program will provide \$45,000 per lane mile and \$22,000 per eligible intersection for selected projects. The state participation will not exceed 50 percent of the total construction costs or \$900,000, whichever is less. The application window is open every fall, typically from early October to early November. (<https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/funding-opportunities/truck-access-route-program>)

### **United States Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA)**

EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) programs provide economically distressed communities and regions with comprehensive and flexible resources to address a wide variety of economic needs. Projects funded by these programs will support work in Opportunity Zones and will support the mission of the

Department by, among other things, leading to the creation and retention of jobs and increased private investment, advancing innovation, enhancing the manufacturing capacities of regions, providing workforce development opportunities, and growing ecosystems that attract foreign direct investment.

Through the PWEAA NOFO, EDA solicits applications from applicants in order to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, planning, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works program and EAA programs (which includes Assistance to Coal Communities). Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities, including those negatively impacted by changes to the coal economy. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. (<https://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>)

### Infrastructure

#### **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)**

#### **Community Development Assistance Program – Public Infrastructure**

The Public Infrastructure component of the larger Community Development Assistance Program allows local governments that need to improve public infrastructure and eliminate conditions detrimental to public health, safety, and public welfare to request a maximum of \$500,000.00 to undertake projects designed to alleviate these conditions, with an emphasis on helping communities with substantial low to moderate-income populations. (<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/CommunityInfrastructure/Pages/default.aspx>)

# Potential Funding Sources

## **Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA)**

### **Wastewater & Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRF)**

The Wastewater and Drinking Water loan programs provide low-interest loans through the State Revolving Fund (SRF). The SRF includes two loan programs: the Water Pollution Control Loan Program (WPCLP) which funds both wastewater and storm water projects, and the Public Water Supply Loan Program (PWVSLP) for drinking water projects. These programs are annually the recipients of federal capitalization funding which is combined with state matching funds, interest earnings, repayment money, and the sale of bonds to form a source of financing for infrastructure projects. This program operates on an annual funding cycle based on the state budget. (<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/grants-loans/state-revolving-fund/Pages/default.aspx>)

## **Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)**

### **Safe Routes to School (SRTS)**

SRTS uses a multidisciplinary approach to improve conditions for students who walk or bike to school. SRTS funds infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements. Projects are funded at 80 percent with a 20 percent local match required. (<http://www.idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/safe-routes-to-school/index>)

### **Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)**

On December 4, 2015, the transportation bill, Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or "FAST Act" was signed into law. This was the first Federal law in over ten years to provide long-term funding certainty for surface transportation. The FAST Act eliminated the MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and replaced it with a set-aside of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program funding for transportation alternatives. This new STBG program set-aside provides funding for the ITEP. Applicants may apply for up to

\$2,000,000 maximum per project in federal ITEP funds.

A proposed project must meet the following criteria:

- The project must fit within one of the eligible categories and must comply with any additional IDOT policies as outlined in the guidelines.
- The project must relate to surface transportation.
- The project must have an eligible project sponsor.
- The project must be selected through a competitive process.

Federal funds will provide reimbursement up to 50% for right-of-way and easement acquisition costs, and up to 80% for Phase II engineering, utility relocations, construction engineering, and construction costs. The required 20% or 50% local match is the responsibility of the project sponsor. Street lighting can qualify for 50% funding if co-located with an alternate transportation facility and Pedestrian lighting can qualify for 80% funding if not co-located with a street. Lighting within a designated historic district is qualified for 80% funding. (<https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/local-transportation-partners/county-engineers-and-local-public-agencies/funding-opportunities/ITEP>)



### **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)**

The overall goals of the CMAQ Program are to improve air quality and reduce congestion, as established in the Federal authorizing legislation. To carry out these goals, four objectives have been identified:

- Localized Congestion Relief
- Operational Improvements
- Mode Shift
- Direct Emissions Reduction

Types of projects eligible for CMAQ funding include transit improvements, traffic flow improvements, bicycle facility projects, and direct emissions reduction projects. (<https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/mobility/strategic-investment/cmaq>)

### **Parks & Recreation Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)**

#### **Park and Recreational Facilities Construction Program (PARC)**

The Park and Recreational Facility Construction Act (PARC) provides grants to eligible local governments for park and recreation unit construction projects and land acquisition. Grant Amounts range from \$25,000 to \$2,500,000 and cover 75% of capital project cost for most applicants, 90% of capital project cost for disadvantaged communities. (<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/grants/Pages/PARC-Grant.aspx>)

### **Federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP)**

The federal “Recreational Trails Program” (RTP), was created through the National Recreational Trail Fund Act (NRTFA) as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and re-authorized by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This program provides funding assistance for acquisition, development, rehabilitation and maintenance of both motorized and non-motorized recreation trails. By law, 30% of each states’ RTP funding must be earmarked for motorized trail projects, 30% for non-motorized trail projects and the remaining 40% for multi-use (diversified) motorized and non-motorized trails or a combination of either.

The RTP program can provide up to 80% federal funding on approved projects and requires a minimum 20% non-federal funding match. Applications for grant assistance must be received by IDNR no later than March 1 of each calendar year. Awards are generally announced within 180 days following the application deadline date. (<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/AEG/Pages/FederalRecreationalTrailsProgram.aspx>)

# Potential Funding Sources

## **Bike Path Program**

The Illinois Bicycle Path Grant Program was created in 1990 to financially assist eligible units of government to acquire, construct, and rehabilitate public, non-motorized bicycle paths and directly related support facilities. Grants are available to any local government agency having statutory authority to acquire and develop land for public bicycle path purposes. Revenue for the program comes from a percentage of vehicle title fees collected pursuant to Section 3-821 (f) of the Illinois Vehicle Code. (<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/grants/Pages/BikePathProgram.aspx>)

## **Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development Program (OSLAD) and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

The OSLAD and LWCF programs provide funding assistance to local government agencies for acquisition and /or development of land for public parks and open space. Eligible Activities include:

- Acquisition of land for new park sites or park expansion, water frontage, nature study, and natural resource preservation.
- Development/Renovation of picnic and playground facilities; interpretive nature facilities; sport courts and fields; swimming pools; campgrounds; fishing piers; winter sports facilities; park roads, parking, utilities, and restrooms; and design services related to these projects.

Applications are due July 1st each year. (<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/grants/Pages/default.aspx>)

## **Boat Access Area Development Program**

The Boat Access program is a state-financed grant program that provides funding assistance to local government agencies for acquisition and/or development of land for public boat and canoe access areas in Illinois. This program can provide up to 100 percent reimbursement funding assistance on approved development project costs and 90 percent reimbursement on land acquisition costs. The local agency must demonstrate and possess the ability to finance the costs of an approved project prior to receipt of grant funds. This program is funded through a percentage of the state's marine motor fuel tax and canoe registration fees. (<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/grants/Pages/default.aspx>)



## Housing

### **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)**

#### **Community Development Assistance Program – Housing Rehabilitation Program**

Low-to-moderate income communities can apply for grants to improve housing and rehabilitate and retrofit properties. A maximum of \$500,000 in grant funds or \$50,000 per household is available to improve the homes of low-to-moderate income residents of owner-occupied single family housing units. Grants provide residents with safe and sanitary living conditions and help to stabilize neighborhoods and affordable housing in the community. (<https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/CommunityServices/CommunityInfrastructure/Pages/default.aspx>)

## Historic Preservation

### **Illinois Historic Preservation Agency**

Financial incentives for building rehabilitation fall into four major categories: tax incentives, local incentives, low-interest loans, and grants. Typically, tax incentives, local incentives, and loans are intended for private property owners, while the vast majority of grants are for non-profit and government entities. Tax incentives administered by the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) include:

- 20% federal rehabilitation income tax credit for rehabilitating historic, income-producing properties.
- Property Tax Assessment Freeze program for historic, owner-occupied residences.
- 25% state rehabilitation income tax credit for rehabilitating historic, income-producing properties. Eligible expenditures must be incurred between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2023.

(<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnrhistoric/Preserve/Pages/Funding.aspx>)







# 10 Existing Conditions

# Demographic Characteristics

## Population Change

Spring Valley, Peru, and Bureau County have all been experiencing population decline over the last 10 years. A five-year projection also indicates that the decline will continue. From 2010 to 2018, Spring Valley saw a population decline of 2.9 percent while the county saw only a decline of 1.3 percent.

This declining trend is not a random event for Spring Valley, and is likely happening to other similarly sized communities across the county. Multiple factors could be contributing to this trend, from job opportunities to quality of life.

## Population Pyramid

The population pyramid compares the 2010 population and age breakdown to data from 2017. The 35-44 year age group saw dramatic decrease. The male population amongst this group decreased 55% while females between 35-44 decreased by 40%. Women aged 20-24 nearly doubled in size between 2010 and 2017.

Change in Population

	2010	2018	2023	Change between 2010-2018
Spring Valley	5,558	<b>5,396</b>	5,260	-2.915%
Peru	10,723	<b>9,958</b>	9,702	-7.134%
Bureau County	34,957	<b>34,496</b>	33,831	-1.319%

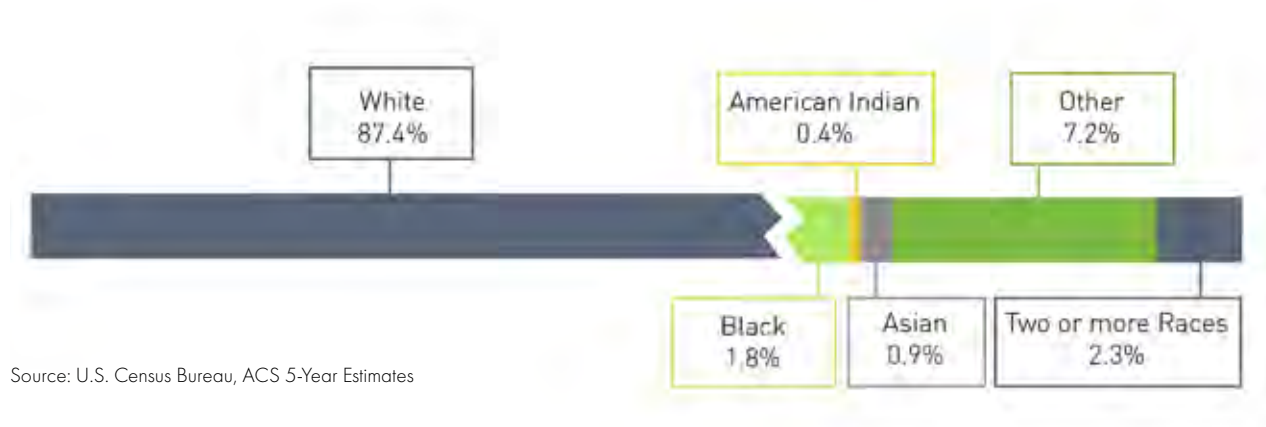
Source: ESRI Community Analyst

Population by Age and Sex, 2017 Estimates



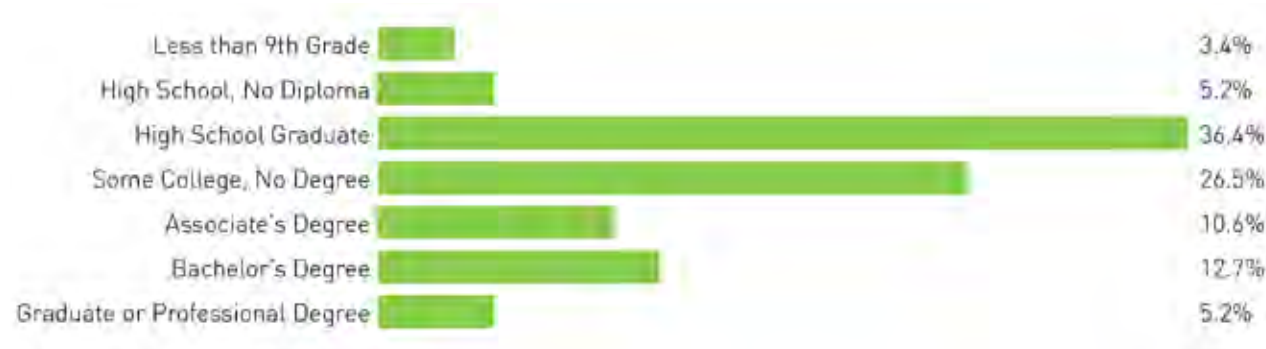
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates

## Population by Race and Ethnicity



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates

## Educational Attainment of People 25 years and older



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates

## Population by Race & Ethnicity

2018 statistics show that the City of Spring Valley is primarily White, with no other race representing more than 2 percent of the population. Less than two percent of the community is Black, and less than one percent is American Indian or Asian.

In total, 17.5 percent of residents in Spring Valley identify as being of Hispanic Origin.

## Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of Spring Valley residents outpaces the State average at the high school, some college, and associate's degree levels, but falls behind when considering those who have earned a bachelor's and graduate or professional degree. Only 12.7 percent of residents have a bachelor's degree and 5.2 percent have a graduate or professional degree. Across the State of Illinois, 20.5 percent of individuals 25 and over have a bachelor's degree and 13.0 percent have a graduate or professional degree.

# Housing Characteristics

## Median Household Income

In 2018, it was calculated that the median household income in Spring Valley was just under \$50,000. By the year 2023, ESRI data estimates that this value will continue to increase in the next five years. It will increase by about 14% and households will be bringing in just under \$57,000 a year.

Median Household Income, 2018-2023 estimates



Source: ESRI Community Analyst

## Renter/Owner Occupied Units

In 2010, There was a total of 2,369 households in Spring Valley. There were 2,305 occupied housing units and 64 vacancies. Of the units that were occupied, 1,645 units were owner occupied and 660 were renter occupied.

Renter vs. Owner Occupied Units, 2010



By 2017, the number of households increased by 124 units. The total occupied housing units decreased, and vacant units increased between 2010 and 2017. Both owner occupied and renter occupied units decreased because of the decrease in occupied units total, but it was a very small change: a 20 unit decrease in owner occupied units and a 25 unit decrease in renter occupied units. Despite overall growth in the units within Spring Valley, vacant units increased from 64 in 2010 to 233 in 2017, a 264% increase.

Renter vs. Owner Occupied Units, 2017



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates

## Occupied Household Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates

## Occupied Household Income

There are various changes from 2010 to 2017 when looking at the household income statistics. The largest percentage of growth is between the \$150,000-\$199,999 range where it was 1.6% in 2010 and grew to 4.5% in 2017. Even though there is a decrease in household earnings between the \$35,000-\$74,999 range, this could allude to higher paying jobs that residents are taking and seeking out across the community if occupied household income is increasing.

## Housing Stock by Type



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates

## Housing Stock by Type

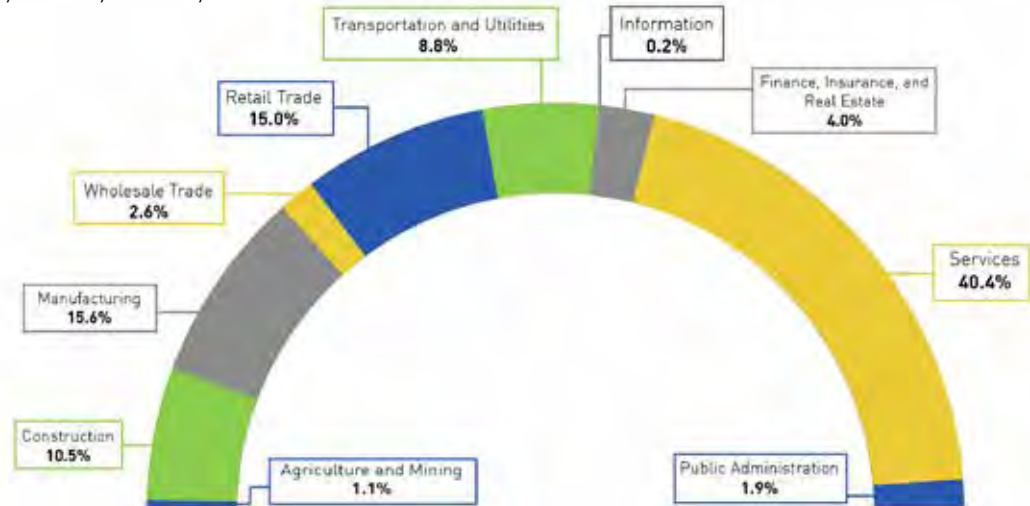
There have been minimal changes in the housing stock from 2010 to 2017. In 2010, Spring Valley had 2,369 housing units. 2017 has an estimated 2,493 housing units within Spring Valley, showing an increase in units by 124 (or 5.2%). When looking at the breakdown of housing units, the most dramatic change was the two-bedroom units decreasing from 886 to 702, which is a 20.7% decrease in seven years. All other housing types show an increase in development.

# Economic Characteristics

## Employment by Industry

A summary of Spring Valley's current employment by industry group is shown to the right. 2017 data gathered from ESRI Community Analyst shows that 40.4% of jobs are service, with the next largest category being manufacturing at 15.6%, and then at 15.0% in retail trade. This shows that the community is lacking in providing professional job opportunities and could be an indicator as to why residents might leave Spring Valley for work.

Employment by Industry

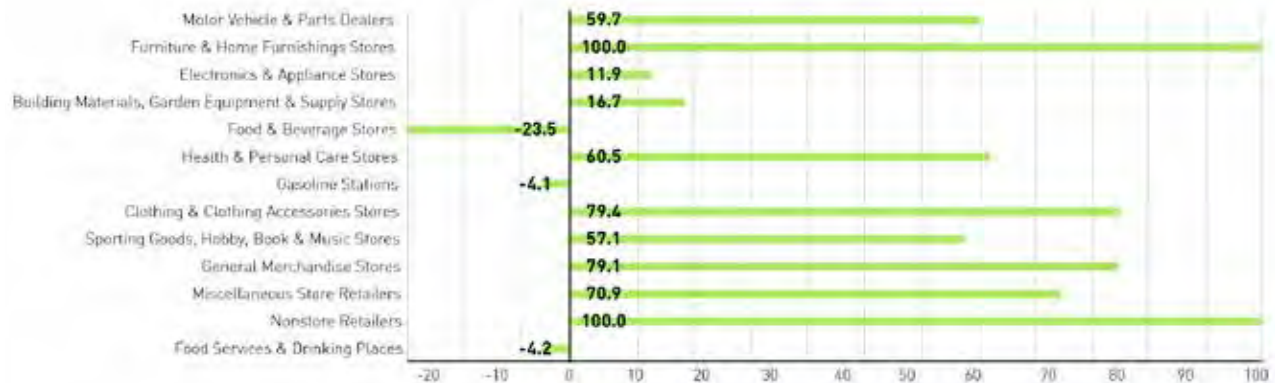


Source: ESRI Community Analyst

## Leakage & Surplus

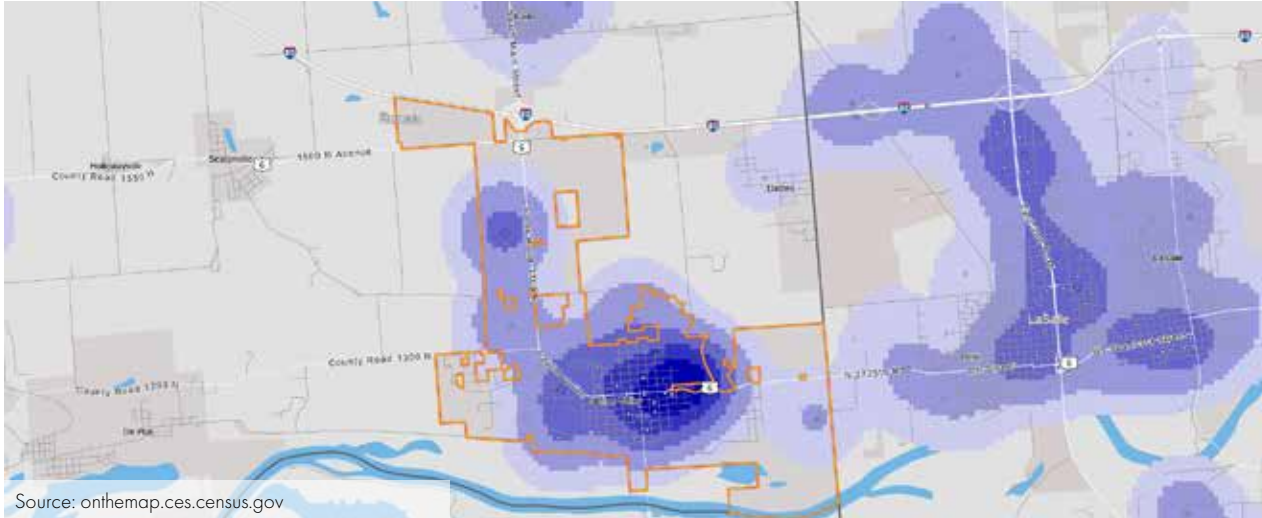
The leakage/surplus factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity for Spring Valley. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents leakage of retail opportunity outside the trade area, while a negative value represents an increase in retail sales where customers are drawn in to Spring Valley from outside the trade area. Spring Valley currently supports the market demands for food and beverage stores, food services and drinking places, and gas stations. This indicates that Spring Valley does not service other retail shopping needs for people, and therefore must travel outside for those additional needs.

2017 Surplus / Leakage Factor by Industry Subsector

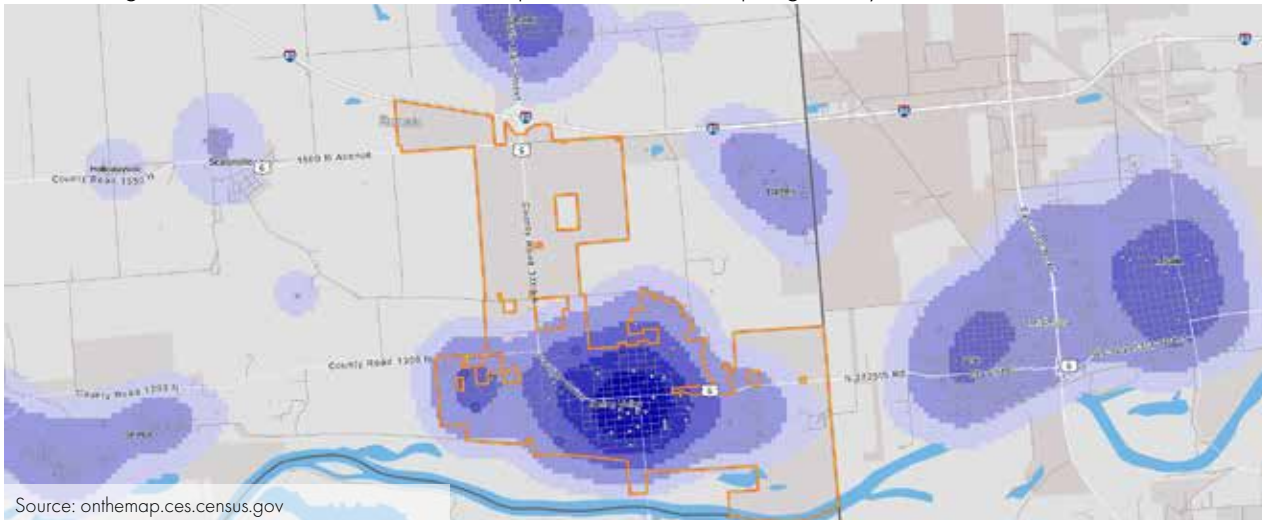


Source: ESRI Community Analyst

### Commuting Patterns: Job Location of Spring Valley Residents



### Commuting Patterns: Home Location of People who Work in Spring Valley



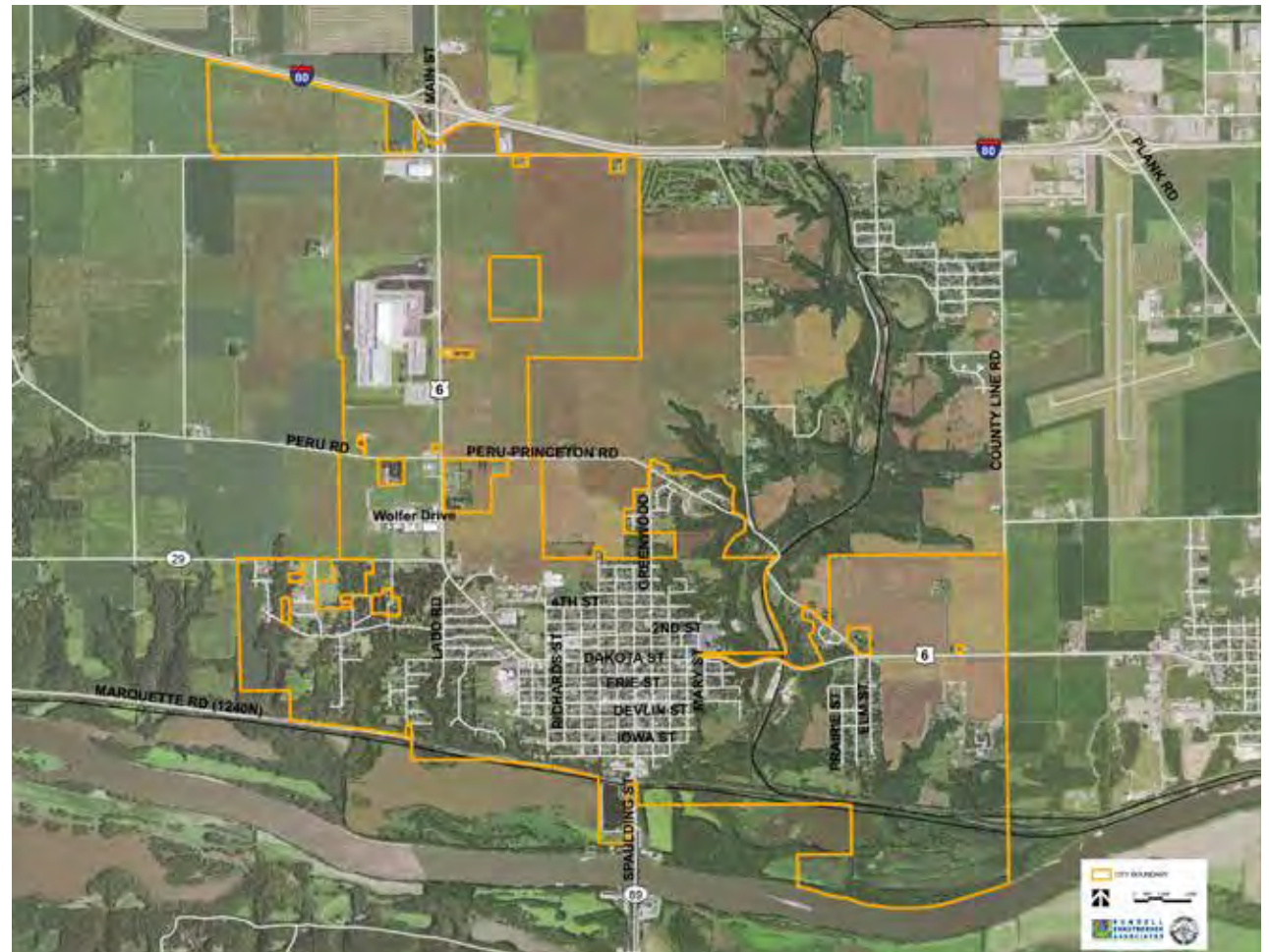
## Commuting Patterns

The first map (top) shows the job location of Spring Valley residents. This illustrates that residents within the boundaries are traveling to LaSalle and Ladd for work. The Walmart Distribution Center and Saint Margaret's Hospital are also large employers within Spring Valley. Other smaller, local businesses that are located along Dakota Street and Saint Paul Street employ residents as well.

The second map (bottom) shows the home location of people who work in Spring Valley. This shows that in comparison to the residents leaving Spring Valley for work, Spring Valley is attracting residents from LaSalle, Dalzell, Ladd, Seatonville, DePue, and other smaller communities to work here. This map indicates that there is a demand for work and that residents from neighboring communities will travel for work when there is an opportunity available.

# Spring Valley Incorporated Limits

Spring Valley is approximately 7.37 square miles or 4,716 acres. The orange line on the map to the right represents the incorporated limits of the city. Spring Valley is bounded by I-80 to the north, the Illinois River to the south, Peru to the east and unincorporated Bureau County to the west.

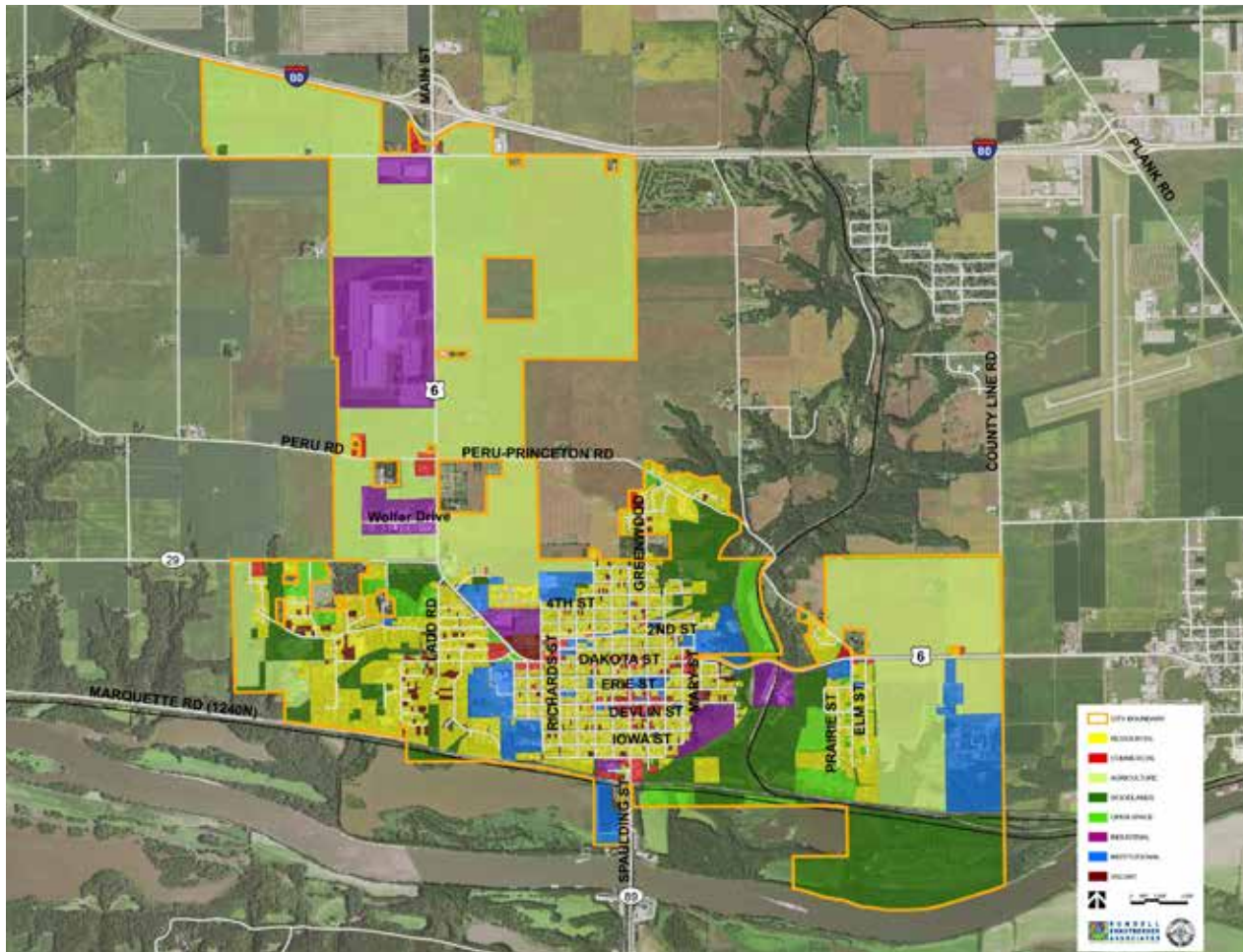




# Existing Land Use

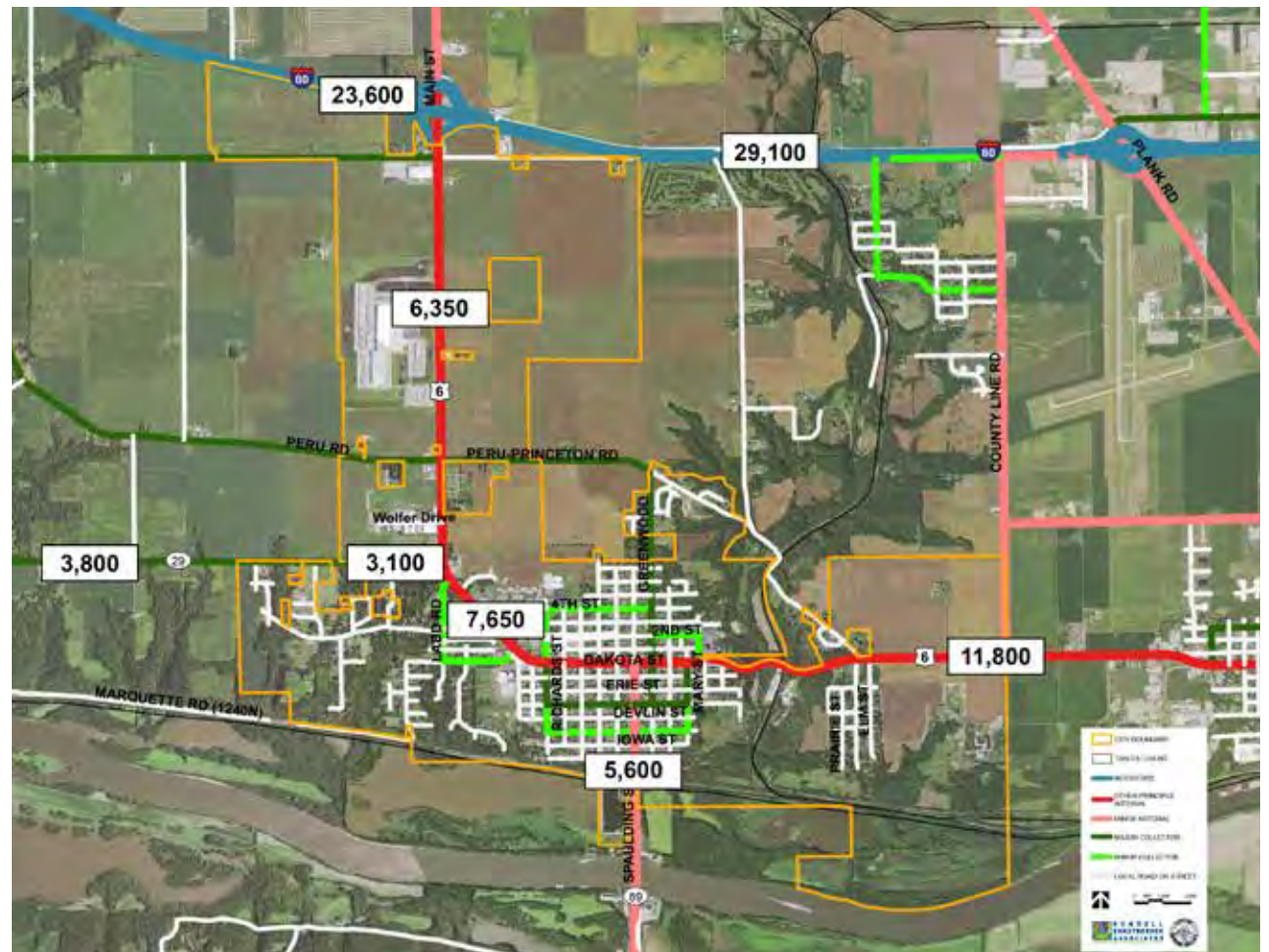
The existing land use map shows the current use of land within Spring Valley. A percentage breakdown of each land use is shown below:

- Agriculture – 43.9%
- Residential – 16.4%
- Commercial – 1.5%
- Industrial – 8.8%
- Institutional – 6.5%
- Open Space – 7.1%
- Woodlands – 14.5%
- Misc. – 0.1%
- Vacant – 1.2%



# Road Classifications & Traffic Counts

Spring Valley is well served by both state and national roadways. I-80 runs directly north of Spring Valley, and sees the most daily traffic. Route 6, which runs directly through the City as Dakota Street and continues north to the interstate, is the main arterial connector from Spring Valley to Peru and LaSalle. There are almost 12,000 daily trips along US Hwy 6 on the east side of the City. Traffic counts decrease as US Hwy 6 turns north, on the west side of the City. IL-89 and IL-29 are state owned roads and are the two other main entrances and exits into Spring Valley.



# Environment

The environment map depicts the floodway, floodplain, wetlands, and leaking underground storage tanks in the area. The purpose of this map is to show where development should not occur; if development were to occur in any of these areas, additional considerations will be required. The 100-year floodplain is any area that is susceptible to being inundated by water during a 100-year flood event. A 100-year flood is not one that will occur every 100 years but is instead a flood that has a one percent chance of happening in any given year.

The leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs) show where there could be potential pollutants in the ground. Within Spring Valley, there are nine known LUSTs. LUSTs may increase the cost of redevelopment on a site and can be a threat to public health if not addressed.

