Comprehesive Plan

LaSalle County’s Comprehensive Plan is vital because it provides guidance for the development of the County for the next five or more years. The Plan provides this guidance by outlining goals, policies, and strategies that are supported by data and technical analysis, and developed with a thorough public review process.

LaSalle County Comprehensive Plan

LaSalle County, Illinois

Originally Prepared by LEAMgroup, Inc. June 2008

Updated by LaSalle County June 2014

LaSalle County Comprehensive Plan

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Cover photos courtesy of Kathy Casstevens, LaSalle County ESLU, LaSalle County SWCD, and Invenergy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

FOREWORD

A comprehensive plan is a powerful tool that can spur economic development and create jobs, start initiatives for social services, or protect precious resources. Comprehensive planning at the County level is an exercise to spark discussion among people and governing bodies from municipalities, rural areas, and more regional levels, whose voices and actions are often fragmented. It also serves to educate about a place by gathering information and opinions in one place. The final product, the Comprehensive Plan, should be a reflection of community members' values and goals for the future, and lay out the actions that will help them achieve those goals.

Why plan?

•To coordinate community activities

Comprehensive planning brings together the work and viewpoints of regulating bodies, community groups, and citizens to create a holistic path to the future.

•To create a roadmap to the future

A comprehensive plan is a document that records the goals and values members have for their community and the steps needed to achieve their vision for the future.

•To understand and record the past and present

During the process of creating a comprehensive plan, useful information is gathered and recorded about the community that enlightens the story of a place.

•To maintain uniqueness

Coming together to identify the special character of a community helps instill pride in its members.

•To identify issues

A comprehensive plan can help a community identify its potential conflict points and provides an early opportunity to resolve issues.

•To save money

Bringing together community groups and regulating bodies to create a plan helps identify redundancy in function and promotes cooperation.

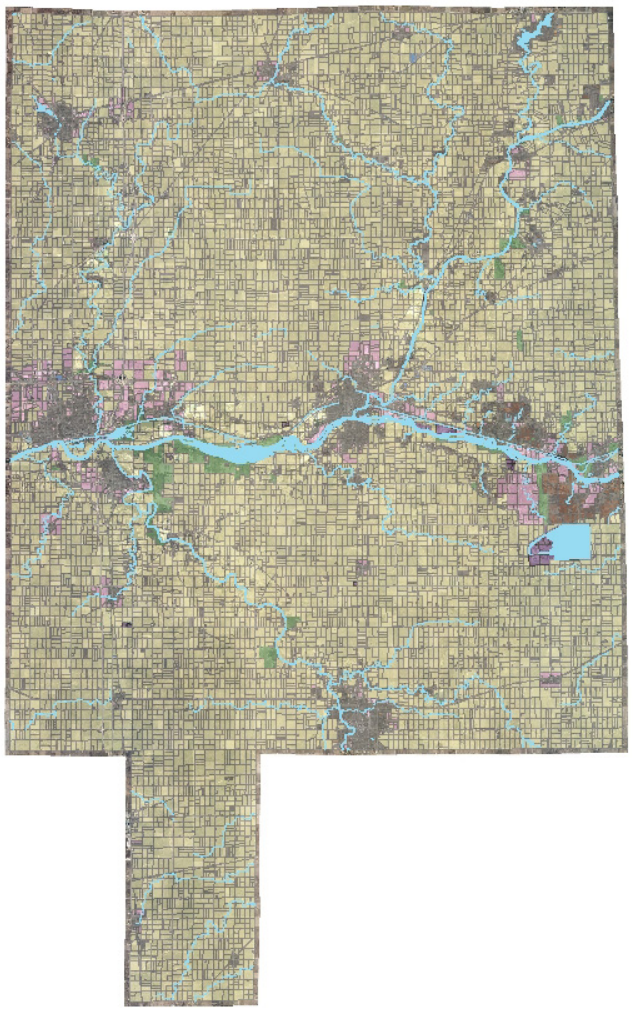
•To promote economic development

Planning helps communities take stock of existing businesses, work to protect them, and gain direction in attracting new businesses and development.

•To protect valuable resources

As with economic development, planning helps communities identify and protect their precious resources, from wetlands to prime farmland to downtown mainstreets.

This Comprehensive Plan is the result of a process of data gathering, public participation, computer simulation modeling of the future, and impact analysis. Cities, towns, and counties around the world often experience similar planning issues; however, each place is also unique. This Comprehensive Plan documents and reflects LaSalle County's unique character, local values, and special issues. If used often, in all types of policy decisions, it can serve as a guiding roadmap to the future.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Planning Process

LaSalle County's Comprehensive Plan is vital because it provides guidance for the development of the County for the next five or more years. The Plan provides this guidance by outlining goals, policies, and strategies that are supported by data and technical analysis, and developed with a thorough public review process. The overall purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to enable government officials and citizens to anticipate and constructively handle County-wide growth and change and to encourage the development of a safe, healthy, orderly, and distinctive living environment. This Comprehensive Plan addresses three questions that are integral to good planning:

- Where have we been?
- Where are we now?
- Where are we going – and how do we get there?

LaSalle County adopted their initial Comprehensive Plan in May 1999. At that time, the County recognized that without a Comprehensive Plan, it was at risk for unmanaged growth and scattered site development, leading to incompatible land uses and loss of prime farmland. The Comprehensive Plan addressed the needs of the County at that time.

Because of the many changes that have occurred since 1999, and with the adoption of County wide zoning in April of 2006, LaSalle County has chosen to update their Comprehensive Plan. In 2008, LEAMgroup, a planning consulting firm based in Champaign, Illinois, was invited to lead this effort. In this update, LEAM group leveraged the Land use Evolution and impact Assessment Model (LEAM) to simulate land use change over time based on variables that are important in a community. LEAM also allows local officials and the public to visualize and test the potential impacts of proposed policies and infrastructure investment choices on the community. In 2013, LaSalle County elected to update the existing comprehensive plan through the efforts of the LaSalle County Development Committee and a series of public open houses and monthly Development Committee meetings dedicated to the update of the plan.

LaSalle County Zoning

As stated in the introduction, LaSalle County enacted a County-wide zoning ordinance on April 1, 2006. The zoning ordinance is the legal document that regulates land use on private property. Illinois law does not require a Comprehensive Plan as the basis for the adoption of a zoning ordinance; however, State of Illinois courts recognize the Comprehensive Plan as an appropriate guide and legal basis for future zoning decisions. Typically, zoning decisions should be based on whether they are consistent with the County's expressed goals for future land use as stated in the Comprehensive Plan.

The zoning ordinance is one legal enforcement mechanism for achieving goals identified in the Comprehensive Plan (see a map of the County's current zoning code page 60). If the Zoning Board of Appeals and the County decide that the requested zoning change is not in harmony with the County's Comprehensive Plan, then that decision will have a sound legal basis because the decision is based on a thoroughly researched and carefully prepared place-based Comprehensive Plan.

CHAPTER 2 WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Understanding how LaSalle County evolved to its present state requires a deep understanding of its past. To understand how the County may change in the future requires recognizing past trends and looking at the present physical, social, and natural environments, and considering how local values as well as external forces may influence different future development scenarios. The intended and unintended consequences of public policy and investment choices are often the result of very complex interactions between a number of factors. Arriving at a thorough understanding of these interactions and their consequences is vital to good planning.

The physical environment in LaSalle County is undergoing constant change even if that change is slow and not obvious. The socioeconomic state of the County is also dynamic. Population, income, and employment, and particularly the spatial distribution of these attributes, all play a role in the development of the County.

Physical Setting

Starved Rock and the Illinois River.
Photo courtesy of Dave Anderson

Though most of LaSalle County is made up of agricultural land (about 85 percent of the total land is used to cultivate crops), other landscapes exist as a result of the Illinois River and its tributaries, like the Fox and Vermilion Rivers, that flow through the County. These river systems provide some of the richest habitat and recreational areas in the Midwest, and are home to thousands of migratory bird species, mussels, fish, and other plant and animal species, despite their degradation due to sedimentation and hydrological alteration.

Population Trends

Other than a decline between 1980 and 1990, the population of LaSalle County has steadily grown at an approximate rate of 2 percent per decade (Figure 1). In 2000, the U.S. Census Bureau counted 111,509 people in the County and 113,924 in 2010, an increase of 2.2%.

The population of LaSalle County is projected by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to increase from a historical two percent per decade to four percent per decade, reaching about 141,615 people by 2030.

Historical populations
LaSalle County, Illinois

Census	Pop.	%±
1900	87,776	8.60%
1910	90,132	2.70%
1920	92,925	3.10%
1930	97,695	5.10%
1940	97,801	0.10%
1950	100,610	2.90%
1960	110,800	10.10%
1970	111,409	0.50%
1980	112,003	0.50%
1990	106,913	-4.5%
2000	111,509	4.30%
2010	113,924	2.20%

Table 1. Historic LaSalle County Population

Land Demand

Land consumption trends in different parts of Illinois indicate that land for residential and commercial use does not grow in proportion to population and jobs. Rather, the increase in residential and commercial land is much larger than the increase in population and jobs. Just as in other Illinois counties, the net growth of population and households in LaSalle County masks more significant change. For instance, though the County grew by about 4,600 people between 1990 and 2000, and by about 2,500 people between 2000 and 2010, census tracts in which there was population growth continue to increase. This extra growth was offset by population loss in other census tracts. As a result, the amount of land consumed in the future is likely to be much larger than would be expected given population and job growth.

In 2008, based on the analysis of the effective population change and corresponding demand for new residential and commercial areas, LEAM was used to project land use change for the County. Table 2 shows total acreage for landcover in 2000 and projected landcover in 2035 based on the LEAM "business-as-usual" scenario, which assumes no changes to current development trends. Total developed area is expected to increase by nearly 8,000 acres with matching loss of forested, agricultural, and open space areas. While total developed area is projected to increase by 42 percent, in a County of nearly 750,000 acres, this represents only a one percent change over the next 30 years.

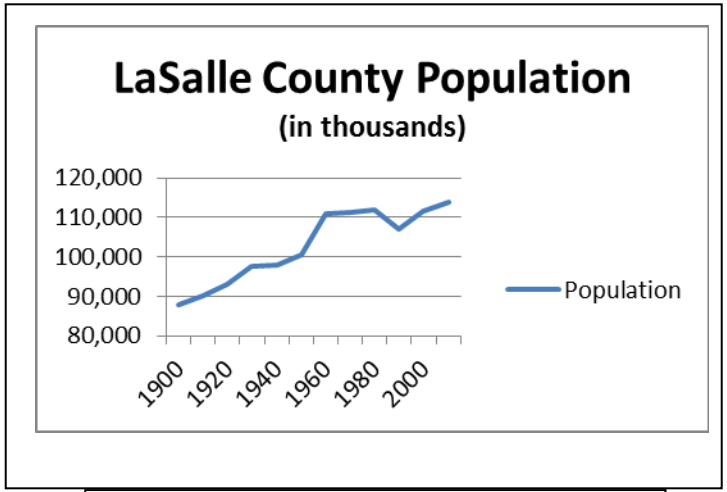


Figure 1. LaSalle County Population Trend

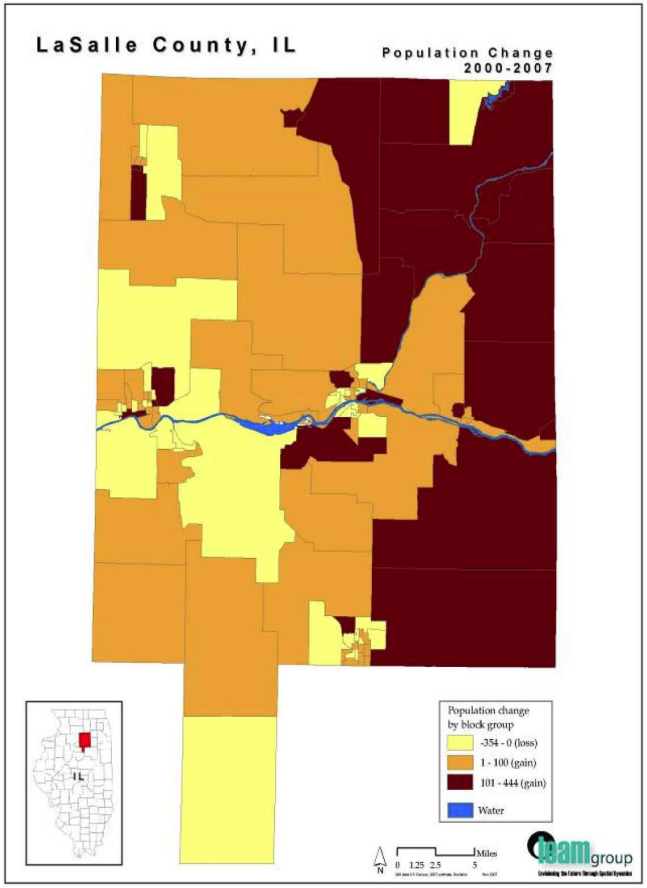


Figure 2. Estimated change by census block group in LaSalle County from 2000 to 2007 (U.S. Census Bureau & Geolytics).

Landcover (Acres)	Initial (2000)	Business as Usual (2035)	Net Change
Residential	16,869	23,582	6,713
Commercial	1,945	3,201	1,256
Forest	50,790	49,863	-927
Grassland	14,140	13,348	-792
Agriculture	626,171	623,302	-2,870
Urban Openspace	9,679	6,362	-3,317
Other	4,233	4,233	0

Table 2 . Projected change in acres by type of landcover from 2000 to 2035. Initial Landcover data obtained from the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium. USGS 2001.

The “business-as-usual” LEAM development simulation assumes that development will occur as it historically has: cities, roads, highway ramps, slope, water, and forests continue to affect development as they currently do. The Business as Usual scenario is simulated using projected population growth, the increase in households associated with that population growth, and the land demand associated with the increase in households. The results of this simulation show continued growth in and around the urbanized areas of the County by the year 2035 (Figure 3).

New Residential and Commercial Development

Though most residential growth and commercial growth has slowed since 2008, as might be expected, new residential development is largely projected to occur as infill or on the boundaries of existing development. In areas where new residential development is spreading farther beyond the municipal boundaries, it is generally following a major roadway, such as Highway 6 between LaSalle and Ottawa and Highway 251 west of Oglesby (Figure 4). Another attractor to new residential development may be the presence of natural resources. Forests and rivers seem to be attracting growth, for example, west of Streator and around Sheridan and the edge of Somonauk, though these northeastern towns may be experiencing slightly more attractiveness due to the pull of the greater Chicago region. Development infringing on floodplains and forested areas near the Illinois River, particularly around Ottawa, may warrant extra attention and mechanisms for protection.

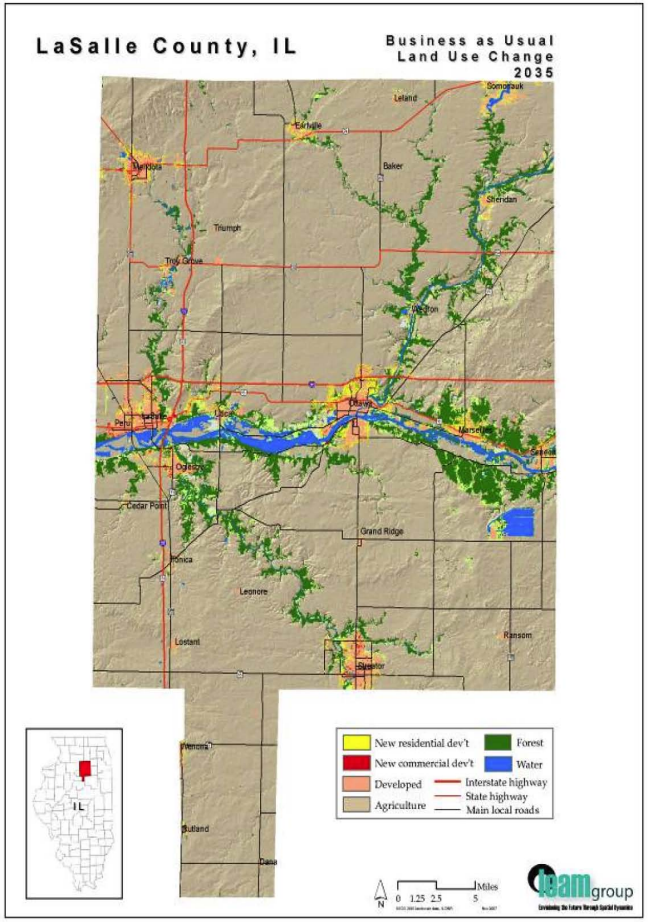


Figure 3. Projected residential and commercial land use change by 2035, assuming growth will continue to follow current trends (Business as Usual scenario).

Projected commercial development mainly occurs along major roadways and intersections of state and county highways, as can be seen near the larger County municipalities (Ottawa, LaSalle, Peru, Oglesby, Streator, and Mendota). Having commercial development clustered along roadways allows businesses to take advantage of convenient transportation routes and passing traffic. However, it may also make strategic sense for municipalities and the County to promote economic development in already-existing commercial centers rather than along new, outlying corridors.

Proposed Land Use

In LaSalle County's 1999 Comprehensive Plan, areas on the outskirts of municipalities with existing infrastructure were indicated for proposed land use change/development. Since that time, and following the most recent comprehensive plan update during 2006, the boundaries of these areas have been updated, with some municipal boundaries changing significantly since 1999. This significant change in some of the municipal boundaries can be attributed generally through expected/anticipated growth, but also through municipal annexations and annexation agreements executed since 1999. Generally, with most annexations, the type of land use change is imminent and identified; however, with annexation agreements the future plan and future use of these properties tend to be more convoluted, creating a unique and complex planning strategy for LaSalle County.

During the last update of the comprehensive plan in 2008, LEAM simulation results overlaid on the proposed land use map provide a more detailed picture of the probable spatial distribution of new development by 2035. If current population and employment trends continue, probable growth is shown as yellow cells for new residential and red cells for new commercial (Figure 5 below). As can be seen, most of the likely new growth occurs within the proposed land use boundaries. However, there are certain areas where growth is projected that are outside the proposed land use boundaries that may play an important role in the future of the County's development and should not be ignored. For example, new development is projected to occur along the Fox River. This may be due to the river ecosystem's attractiveness for second- or vacation-home development, or its closer proximity to the Chicago area than anywhere else in the County. Indeed, according to the Census, the number of households from 1990 to 2007 has continually increased in this quadrant of the County, where it has decreased in others (see Figure 2).While development has slowed in LaSalle County since 2008, the 2035 projection from LEAM's simulation is most likely still very accurate.

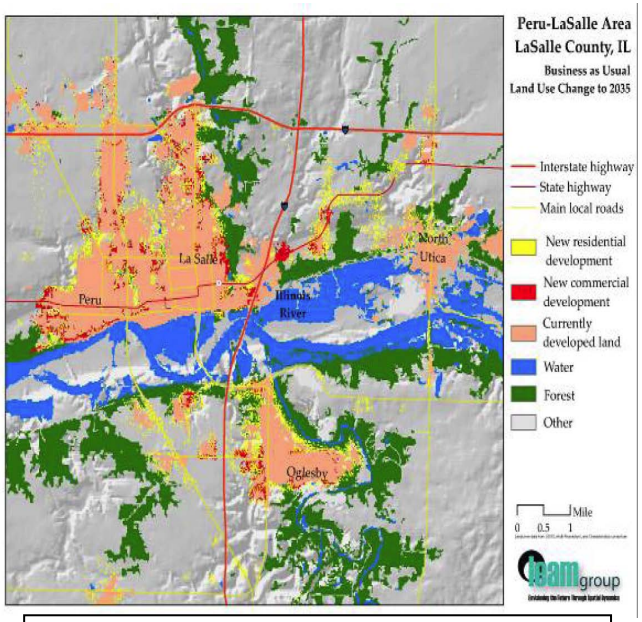


Figure 4. Projected residential and commercial land use. Area change by 2035 in the LaSalle-Peru-Oglesby area.

New growth also appears to be slowly converging between the Peru-LaSalle-Utica area and the Ottawa area along Highway 6 and Interstate 80. This corridor is also parallel to the Illinois River and railroad tracks and across the river from some of the area's most important preserved land. Depending on the County's goals and objectives, this may become a prime area to focus cooperative efforts for future development.

A third area that appears to be attractive, but is outside of proposed land use boundaries, is located south of Peru-LaSalle and west of Oglesby along Highway 251, which is also near the Illinois River, a country club, and the Illinois Valley Community College. This area may be also one to consider for coordinated efforts, but may simultaneously require additional protection along the river.

Commercial and industrial areas (in purple and red) that have been designated for proposed land use generally do not coincide with the LEAM results seen here. The model shows a much more integrated land use pattern between residential and commercial development, whereas the proposed land use boundaries block off large areas solely for commercial or industrial development. While it continues to be appropriate to separate industrial uses from other land uses, the trend in urban development is leaning towards more integration of commercial uses within or in close proximity to predominantly residential areas. In this way, communities are able to develop somewhat more compactly, becoming less car-oriented, more walkable and bikeable, and more user-friendly, particularly for children and the elderly.

Proposed Land Use Scenario

Because the proposed land use map will be integral to the planning process in the County, an additional LEAM scenario was created to demonstrate the effect of strictly enforcing the identified boundaries. In this scenario, nearly all development occurs on the boundaries of existing urban areas. Gone are the scattered households and small subdivisions that were leapfrogging existing development and fragmenting the existing landcover.

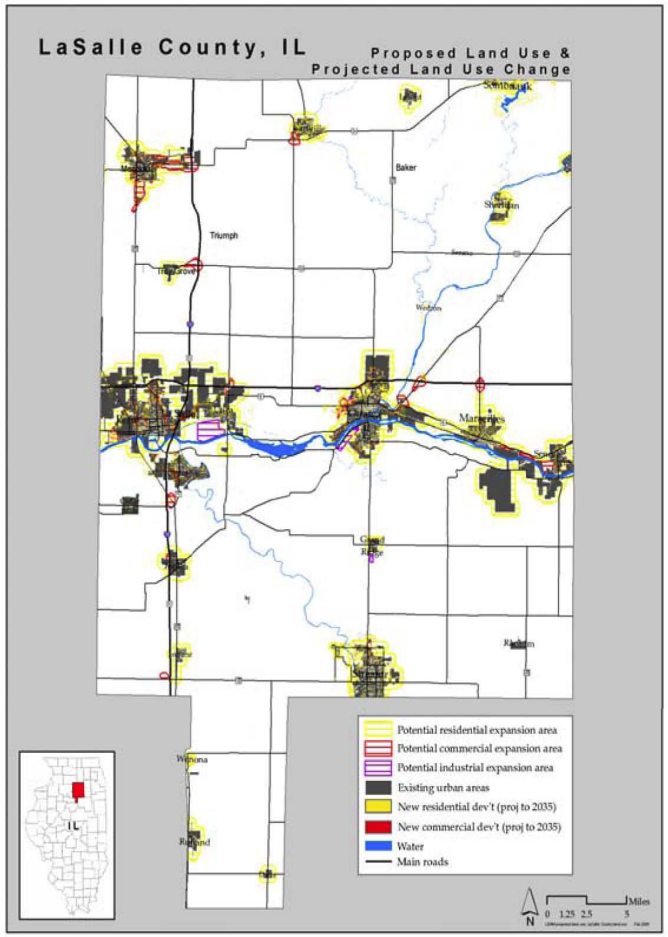


Figure 5. Projected residential and commercial land use change by 2035 overlaid on proposed land use as boundaries.

Table 3 shows that in the Business as Usual scenario, nearly 2,500 acres (nearly a third of new development) occurred outside the boundaries provided by the proposed land use map. In the Proposed Land Use scenario, all development occurs within the designated boundaries. Use of the Proposed Land Use Map is therefore an effective way of preventing sprawl and protecting both agricultural and natural areas, both of which were identified as important goals for the County. Since 2008, very little development has occurred in the unincorporated areas of LaSalle County. A number of factors have influenced this result. Obvious reasoning being the down turn in the economy, followed closely by the counties implementation of zoning, which has steered most development towards municipal infrastructure.

New Growth (Acres)	Business as Usual (2035)	Proposed Land Use
New Residential Outside Growth Boundaries	2,366	0
New Commercial Outside Growth Boundaries	149	0
New Residential Within Growth Boundaries	4,347	6,714
New Commercial Within Growth Boundaries	1,107	1,264

Table 3. Comparison of Projected change in acres relative to growth boundaries in Business-as-usual scenario versus the Proposed Land Use scenario by 2035 (differences in totals are due to the slight statistical variation that occurs during model runs.

CHAPTER 3 GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Deanna Glosser

The original future goals for LaSalle County were developed using multiple sources of information: the results of public meetings, the township officials' survey, meetings with the County economic development group, County Highway Department, and others, and a review of the 1999 Comprehensive Plan. For the current update, the LaSalle County Development Committee examined, reviewed, and revamped the original list of goals over a series of monthly meetings during 2013 and 2014. These updates were then delivered to the public in a series of public open houses held throughout the county. The following goals are the compilation of a collaborative effort of the public, the county board, and various department staff. Strategy recommendations for how to achieve the goals have also been identified and are listed in this chapter.

Farmland Preservation

With 85 percent of the County's land currently used for row crop agriculture, LaSalle County citizens and officials recognize the importance of prime farmland, and farmland preservation is a main focus in the County's planning for the future. LaSalle County possesses some of the finest farmland in the country, and ranks as one of the leading agricultural counties in the state. Although the number of farms is declining, the trend is toward fewer but larger farms. While this trend is likely to endure, the high quality of the soils and the importance that agriculture plays in the economy continues to lead a strong local interest in protecting the County's agricultural lands. The challenge that faces the County in the future is, therefore, one of keeping farm and urban land uses in proper proportion and protecting land that is particularly well-suited for crop production from encroachment of urban or other uses.

Recognizing that the transformation to non-agricultural uses of productive agricultural lands will be gradual over an extended term of years, the land best suited for farming should be protected from premature and scattered urban development.

The following are goals and objectives for protecting LaSalle County's agricultural lands.

Goal 1: Preserve the land best suited for farming and other agricultural pursuits while allowing for development and growth in and around existing municipalities.

Strategy 1: Utilize boundaries identified in the proposed land use map (see Figure 5) to encourage urban development in areas where public infrastructure and services exist, thus preventing "spot-zoning" or scattered development and the loss and fragmentation of agricultural lands. Residential growth in rural areas should be limited to farm buildings and farm homes.

Strategy 2: Continue to utilize the LESA scoring process for the identification of high-value agricultural lands (see Appendix II, LESA Scoring System).

Strategy 3: Encourage municipalities to involve County input on all annexations and annexation agreements in areas where highly productive cultivated property could be compromised.

No-Till Farming. Courtesy of the LaSalle County Soil and Water Conservation District

Goal 2: Support the designation of additional Agricultural Areas.

Strategy 1: Notify each landowner prior to their agreements expiring and encourage their renewal.

Strategy 2: Promote Agricultural Areas through the agricultural media.

Goal 3: Explore the use of a wide range of policies and programs to protect agricultural lands, such as Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs).

Strategy 1: Collaborate with Illinois counties with experience in protecting agricultural lands and addressing other growth issues to determine the approaches they used and the successes they achieved.

Strategy 2: Promote the use of best management practices (BMPs-such as grassed waterways, appropriate timing for fertilizer application, filter strips) on agricultural lands to help buffer streams, prevent erosion, and reduce water pollution.

Analysis: To assess the effectiveness of the proposed strategies, a "proposed land use" LEAM scenario was used to review the use of boundaries as proposed in the Proposed Land Use Map (see page 62). New development was limited to these boundaries with commercial growth encouraged but not limited to the commercial and industrial zones. Use of the boundaries limits scattered, sprawling development in largely agricultural areas.

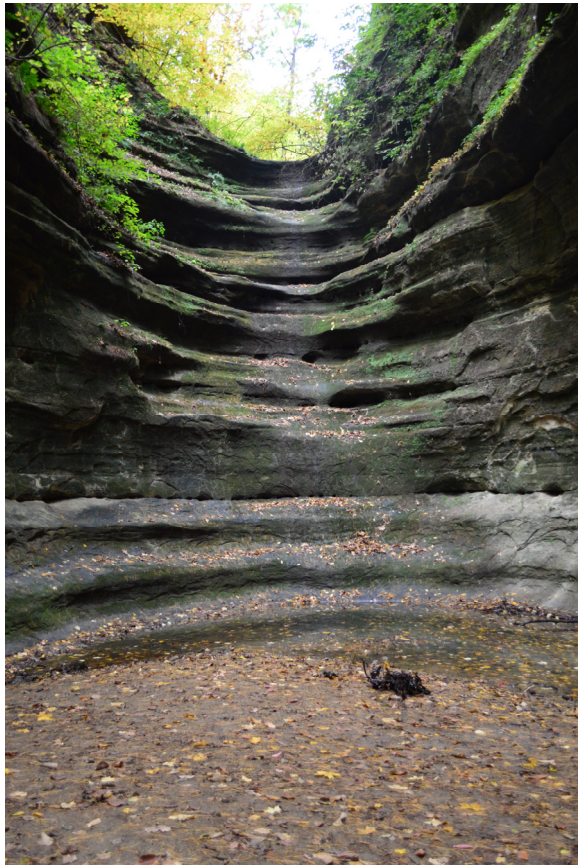
Interestingly, use of the Proposed Land Use map did not significantly alter the total amount of agricultural areas lost to the County (Table 4). In both scenarios, nearly 3,000 acres of farmland was developed. But emphasizing development within the proposed land use boundaries will limit fragmentation of the agricultural land.

Landcover (Acres)	Initial (2000)	Business as Usual (2035)	Net Change
Residential	16,869	23,582	6,713
Commercial	1,945	3,201	1,256
Forest	50,790	49,863	-927
Grassland	14,140	13,348	-792
Agriculture	626,171	623,302	-2,870
Urban Openspace	9,679	6,362	-3,317
Other	4,233	4,233	0

Table 4. Comparison of projected change by landcover in business-as-usual scenario versus future land use scenario by 2035. Initial indicates a starting year of 2000. (Differences in totals may be due to the slight statistical variation that occurs between model runs.)

Monarch Butterfly on Joe-Pye Weed. Photo courtesy of LaSalle County Soil and Water Conservation District

Given LaSalle County is currently over 85 percent agricultural land, the loss of some agricultural land is not necessarily unexpected or undesirable if the County continues to grow. However, farmland preservation was consistently ranked as an important objective during the public engagement process. Given the limited development relative to total agricultural area likely to occur over the next 30 years, the use of the Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, Proposed Land Use Map and LESA scoring system should be sufficient to meet the requirements of farmland preservation. A continual reevaluation of these ordinances and the use of special-use permits will ensure their compliance with the goals of farmland preservation and the protection agricultural lands.



French Canyon. Starved Rock State Park.
Photo courtesy of Kathy Casstevens

Natural Resources and Open Space Protection

Natural resources are an extremely important asset to LaSalle County (see landcover map, page 66). This includes the major river corridors, water quality and quantity, and green space. Natural resources such as the Illinois, Vermilion, and Fox Rivers, and those found at Starved Rock, Matthiesson, Buffalo Rock State Parks, and other protected green spaces are important to tourism and economic development. It is imperative to identify the highest quality natural resources important to tourism in order to develop protection mechanisms and to protect water quality and quantity.

Goal 1: Protect green space, particularly state and county parks, nature preserves and Illinois Natural Area Inventory sites as well as the Illinois River and its tributaries, including the Fox and Vermilion rivers, and their riverine corridors.

Strategy 1: Work with the Illinois Department of Public Health, the LaSalle County Health Department, and the LaSalle County Health Board to prohibit septic systems to be located in flood hazard areas and where soil conditions present the potential for groundwater contamination.

Strategy 2: Include current best management practices for erosion control in future water resources management programs in order to provide protection to these areas.

Strategy 3: Encourage funding for programs designed to protect green space, including the development of a greenway plan that identifies lands that warrant protection.

Strategy 4: Promote the use of conservation easements and programs (CRP, CREP, etc.) to protect stream and riverine corridors and high-quality natural communities.

Strategy 5: Encourage buffering areas of natural resources, green space, and waterways as a condition of permitting land use change at the County level.

Matthiessen State Park.
Photo courtesy of Kathy Casstevens

Goal 2: Encourage increased conservation of the County's natural resources; discourage development and operational practices that pollute the air, groundwater, streams, and rivers.

Strategy 1: Use flood buyout properties to protect floodplains.

Strategy 2: Incorporate provisions to protect water quality and quantity into any future water resources management plan.

Goal 3: Collaborate with appropriate state agencies and municipalities to address the problems associated with invasive species, e.g., the emerald ash borer, which causes serious natural resource and economic damages.

Strategy 1: Contact the Illinois Department of Agriculture, or other jurisdictional agencies to discuss the status of invasive species, like the emerald ash borer in LaSalle County, and the steps necessary to protect the County's resources from such species.

Water Resources Management

The State of Illinois' Stormwater Management Act of 2005 revised the Counties Code, "Section 5-1062.2. Stormwater Management" to "allow management and mitigation of the effects of urbanization on stormwater drainage in metropolitan counties in Madison, St. Clair, Monroe, Kankakee, Grundy, LaSalle, DeKalb, Kendall, Peoria, and Boone." According to this Act, a stormwater management planning committee may be established, and the "principal duties of the committee shall be to develop a stormwater management plan." A nonbinding county referendum in February 2008 approved the establishment of the LaSalle Water Resources Commission, which would develop a stormwater management plan and prepare plans to control flooding and the loss of water supplies.

Goal 1: Establish a water resources commission to develop and implement plans that address stormwater management.

Strategy 1: Appoint the members of the commission and develop the stormwater management plan.

Strategy 2: Once approved by the county and municipal governments, implement the plan with grants and fees, or seek a referendum to establish a stormwater levy.

Photo Courtesy of LaSalle County ESLU

Goal 2: The commission will develop a water conservation plan.

Strategy 1: Once approved by the county and municipal governments, implement with grants and fees, or seek a referendum to establish a stormwater levy.

Goal 3: The commission will develop plans to address watershed and groundwater protection and drought plans.

Strategy 1: Once approved by the county and municipal governments, implement with grants and fees, or seek a referendum to establish a stormwater levy.

Strategy 2: Adopt land use, zoning, and development priorities that are based on natural resource constraints and opportunities, particularly streams, lakes, wetlands, and their respective watersheds and recharge areas.

Strategy 3: Promote and encourage the use of design techniques, best management practices, and other methods to reduce imperviousness within developing watersheds.

Goal 4: The commission will develop plans to insure water quality.

Strategy 1: Once approved by county and municipal governments, implement with grants and fees, or seek a referendum to establish a stormwater levy.

Goal 5: Until a Stormwater Management Commission is established and a plan is approved, LaSalle County Should address watershed and groundwater protection with the following strategies.

Strategy 1: Encourage new, large groundwater users to perform an analysis of the effects of proposed water withdrawals and minimize adverse impacts on other users.

Strategy 2: Encourage new developers that will be large groundwater users to offer well protection agreements to surrounding landowners

Land Reclamation
An important aspect of conservation is reclaiming land considered unsuitable for development in its present condition and making it available for a more productive use. In this regard, LaSalle County has both a challenge and an opportunity to reclaim existing but retired strip mines and open pit mines, that detract from its present landscape. Since most of these areas are located along the County's rivers and streams, much of the land could be rehabilitated for recreational purposes. However, in other areas it is reasonable to expect that the land could be reclaimed for other uses, including residential and industrial uses. An example of reclaimed land is located on the east side of Ottawa along the Fox River, where a new hospital facility was built along with several office buildings. All present and future mining operations in the County shall be considered for possible reuse once the mines have been retired.

Goal 1: Evaluate existing retired strip mines and open pit mining sites for reclamation and make them available for other uses including reforestation.

Strategy 1: Identify post-mining land use opportunities and develop criteria for determining future reclamation.

Goal 2: Evaluate existing mining operations to anticipate their potential future land use once mines have been retired.

Strategy 1: Encourage conditions on new mining operations so that public benefits are maximized, while detrimental effects to the environment and public health are minimized, when mining operations cease.

Transportation
An efficient transportation system is necessary for all future development. A good system of transportation that links to larger systems is one of the important keys to local economic development. The County should continually strive to improve and strengthen its existing transportation system; to make transportation safe, efficient, and economical.

Goal 1: Encourage that transportation infrastructure and planning minimizes environmental consequences and preserves the integrity and character of LaSalle County.

Strategy 1: Consider creating a Greenways Map and Plan to assist in making decisions about transportation planning so as to minimize or eliminate impacts to natural resources.

Strategy 2: Encourage the advancement of rail transportation, especially for transport of industrial materials.

Highways

Maintenance of a coordinated County-wide road and highway system with adequate service requires adequate quality and capacity (see Appendix III, page 56 for current highway system). It should offer motorists safe, convenient, and reasonably rapid routes of travel. Relatively direct routes should connect the municipalities, with good access between smaller villages, communities, and rural residences. Major routes should be continuous across government jurisdictional boundaries.

Goal 1: Maintain a County highway and street system that has adequate quality and capacity and is safe and efficient.

Strategy 1: Collaborate with the Illinois Department of Transportation on the need to improve key state highways.

Strategy 2: Secure the funding necessary to maintain and upgrade County highways and structures as needed.

Strategy 3: Review, and amend where needed, subdivision regulations, building permits, and other plans to ensure they are compatible with the Future Transportation Plan.

Goal 2: Identify and address issues related to the future of the County's transportation system.

Strategy 1: Secure funding to continue developing the planning and analysis tools needed to develop and maintain a long-range transportation plan.

Strategy 2: Integrate transportation and land use planning to achieve the goals of this plan.

Strategy 3: Upgrade the County Highway system, where needed, including improvements to the weight-carrying capacity, width, and intersections due to the increase in global markets and the use of larger shipping containers.

Photo courtesy of LaSalle County ESLU

Goal 3: Continue to collaborate with township highway commissioners and provide technical assistance on transportation issues of mutual interest.

Strategy 1: Continue to offer assistance to township highway commissioners in the development of annual work plans.

Multi-modal Transportation

There are other forms of transportation that will be important to the future of LaSalle County (current railroad lines, page 59). Bike and pedestrian routes are important now to tourism and various forms of mass transit may be in demand as gasoline prices continue to increase, making mass transit more attractive and affordable. Specific goals include:

Goal 1: Explore opportunities to expand or create new multi-modal transportation opportunities, including rail, bus, bike, and pedestrian.

Strategy 1: Collaborate with appropriate municipalities and federal agencies to explore opportunities to extend the Metra mass transit line from Joliet into the County.

Strategy 2: Collaborate with appropriate municipalities and federal agencies to explore the opportunity to expand Amtrak passenger service to the County.

Strategy 3: Collaborate with the Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs and any other integral agencies to expand access to existing bus service to benefit disadvantaged citizens as well as citizens across the County.

Strategy 4: Develop a County-wide bike and pedestrian plan as components of the County transportation plan.

Economic Development
LaSalle County faces challenges regarding future economic development, including retaining young, educated workers and high-paying businesses. Opportunities need to be recognized and seized through the use of incentives. Any opportunities also need to be balanced with the need to protect valuable farmland, natural resources, and environmentally sensitive areas, and to site developments, such as warehousing or industrial uses, in proximity to existing infrastructure. One of the issues raised in the public meetings was the need to create jobs within the County, particularly as a means of providing opportunities for young people. The following goals and strategies will help the County address these issues:

Goal 1: Develop a collaborative county-municipal economic development plan to achieve common goals and objectives. Among these are:

Strategy 1: Encourage the revitalization and modernization of existing central business districts within municipalities to meet the challenges of accelerated growth and development in the County.

Strategy 2: Encourage business and commercial centers that are conveniently-located, attractive, stable, and safe in which to shop and work.

Strategy 3: Explore the feasibility of attracting diverse industrial and commercial opportunities that will provide additional jobs.

Strategy 4: Work with the private sector to expand access to high-speed Internet or cable service across the County.

Strategy 5: Expand opportunities for renewable energy sources.

Goal 2: Develop a balanced and efficient approval process for TIF districts that includes collaboration between the County and municipalities and considers the impacts to taxing bodies and the transportation system.

Strategy 1: Identify performance standards for TIF districts that meet common objectives.

Strategy 2: Encourage TIF districts in blighted areas and discourage residential TIF districts.

Goal 3: Promote methods of minimizing the adverse effects of commercial and industrial uses on adjacent residential developments.

Strategy 1: Incorporate protective buffers in zoning and building codes.

Goal 4: Promote methods of minimizing the adverse effects of commercial and industrial uses on natural resources.

Strategy 1: Avoid locating or expanding industrial uses in areas close to residential areas, or other incompatible development, and near sensitive environmental resources.

Residential Development

A major goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to guide residential developments into those areas that can most effectively and economically provide urban services and amenities, such as public sewerage and water systems, schools, and fire and police protection. Compact development in recognizable neighborhood units located principally around existing communities is one way to achieve this goal.

Photo Courtesy of LaSalle County ESLU

Goal 1: Prevent residential sprawl by containing and directing residential growth within areas that public utilities and services can economically serve.

Strategy 1: Use the boundaries presented in the Proposed Land Use Map to direct development to urban edges.

Strategy 2: Use LESA to evaluate the advisability of rezoning agricultural lands for any development and to encourage the protection of these lands.

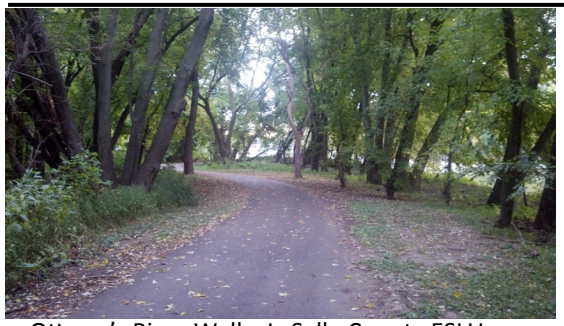

Ottawa's River Walk. LaSalle County ESLU


Photo Courtesy of LaSalle County ESLU

Goal 2: Encourage areas/districts for residential developments that can provide affordable living options for all county residents.

Strategy 1: Evaluate the County's housing needs and work to meet them.

Goal 3: Promote high standards of quality in construction and maintenance of housing in the County.

Strategy 1: Update and enforce building codes.

Goal 4: Address the need for increased fire protection, police protection, and infrastructure as new residential areas are established.

Strategy 1: Evaluate the need for increased fire and police protection and infrastructure improvements at the time a project is proposed for approval.

Recreation and Tourism

Recreation and tourism are important to economic development within the County now and can be expanded in the future. Both recreation and tourism are based, in part, on high quality natural resources and existing state and county parks. Strong connections exist between these and the natural resources goals and strategies described above.

Goal 1: Develop a balanced county-wide tourism strategy to expand tourism opportunities.

Strategy 1: Cooperate with existing tourism/recreational groups to develop strategies to enhance existing greenway and bike trail systems.

Goal 2: Encourage and assist the promotion and development of the County's historical, natural, and scenic points of interest as tourist attractions.

Strategy 1: Identify opportunities to create a biking, hiking, or auto trail system linking key historic, scenic, and natural points of interest throughout the County.

Strategy 2: Fund or actively search for funding to restore existing historic sites, e.g., the I&M Canal.

Strategy 3: Improve and promote the recreational opportunities for the Illinois, Vermilion, and Fox Rivers.

Goal 3: Recognize the importance of a healthy environment as vital to recreation and tourism and protect the integrity of open spaces including parks, nature preserves, Illinois Natural Area Inventory sites, waterways, and greenways.

General Planning Opportunities

Planning provides opportunities to address problems and advance solutions on a wide range of issues. At the public meetings held in preparation of this plan, many citizens expressed support for various planning efforts currently underway in the County. Specific planning-related goals and strategies include:

Goal 1: Support regional planning that is collaborative between the County, townships, and municipalities.

Strategy 1: Engage municipalities and townships in the review and update of the Comprehensive Plan and other planning efforts.

Goal 2: Review the LaSalle County Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis and revise as needed. The Comprehensive Plan should be thought of as a dynamic and valuable tool to guide the future of the County rather than as a static document.

Strategy 1: Make every effort to inform the public of the contents of the Comprehensive Plan and to engage them in its implementation.

Strategy 2: Establish the LaSalle County Development as the committee responsible for the review of the Comprehensive Plan to determine when an update is advisable.

Goal 3: Maintain and implement the LaSalle-Putnam County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan.

Strategy 1: Coordinate with the LaSalle County Emergency Management Department and the LaSalle County Development Committee to review this plan and report on the status of implementation on an annual or semi-annual basis.

Starved Rock Lodge.
Photo Courtesy of Kathy Casstevens

CHAPTER 4 LASALLE COUNTY CHARACTERISTICS

Figure 6. Location of LaSalle County in the State of Illinois.

Land Area and Location

LaSalle County is located in north central Illinois (Figure 6). The land area is 1,135 square miles and is divided into 37 political townships (U.S. Census Bureau). The population of the County in 2010 was 113,924. Ottawa, the County seat, is the largest municipality in the County. The 2010 population of the incorporated municipalities in LaSalle County are listed below (Table 5).

Municipality	2000 Population	2010 Population	Date of Incorporation*
Cedar Point	262	277	October 3, 1907
Dana	171	159	September 20, 1875
Earlville	1778	1701	February 6, 1877
Grand Ridge	546	560	January 14, 1891
Kangley	287	251	February 21, 1888
LaSalle	9769	9609	May 22, 1876
Leland	970	977	October 30, 1872
Leonore	110	130	April 20, 1891
Lostant	486	498	February 16, 1865
Marseilles	4655	5094	April 14, 1884
Mendota	7272	7372	March 5, 1883
North Utica	977	1352	March 25, 1869
Oglesby	3647	3791	December 23, 1902
Ottawa	18307	18768	May 13, 1882
Peru	9835	10295	December 5, 1889
Ransom	409	384	August 1, 1885
Rutland	354	318	March 28, 1876
Seneca	2053	2371	December 2, 1874
Sheridan	2411	2137	April 28, 1903
Streator	14190	13710	April 6, 1874
Tonica	685	768	August 16, 1873
Troy Grove	305	250	April 3, 1886
Wenona	1065	1056	March 17, 1875

*Dates when certificate of incorporation were issued by the Secretary of State.

County History

LaSalle County has a long history that dates back to the several Native American tribes that inhabited the area. Records indicate that a number of Native American tribes lived in the region at different times, including the Iroquois, Potawatomi, Sauk, Fox, Ottawa, and Illinois. There is still a great deal of evidence today along the Illinois and Fox Rivers of the activities of these tribes. Each year thousands of visitors are attracted to this area to enjoy the history, scenic beauty and wildlife that made this region a natural and desirable location for Native Americans.

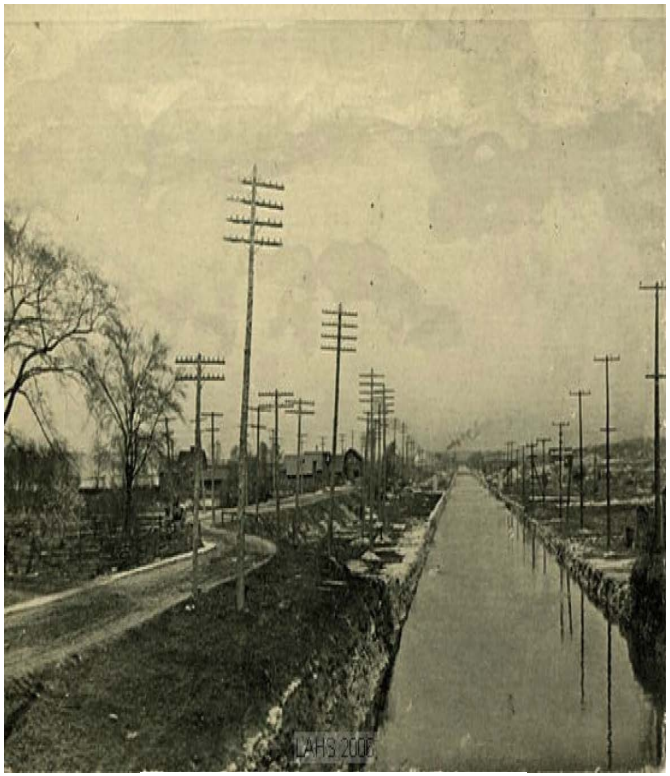
The first Europeans to enter the area were the French explorers Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette. These men explored most of the Illinois River on their way to Lake Michigan in 1673. In December of 1679, the French explorer Rene Robert Cavalier received permission from the Governor of Canada to make a trip down the Mississippi River to locate the mouth of the river and passed through the area.

geneologytrails.com

Many French and Native American relics have been uncovered in LaSalle County. The area shows a wide diversification of Native American cultures indicating its use by tribes whose activity centers were hundreds of miles away. The remains on Plum Island, located just below the Starved Rock Dam, are thought to be the oldest in Illinois and are estimated to have been part of a culture from several thousand years ago.

France controlled the Illinois River valley until 1763 when Great Britain took possession under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. Britain ceded control of the area after the American Revolutionary War in 1783 and in 1787 Congress passed an ordinance that created the Northwest Territories, which provided that no more than five states could be formed from the territory. In 1800, on an act of Congress, the territory was divided into two parts, the eastern part becoming the State of Ohio and the western part becoming the Indiana Territory. Illinois became a separate territory in 1809 and successfully petitioned to enter the Union and become the 21st State of the Union in 1818.

During the 1820s, the first white settlers arrived in LaSalle County, establishing the cities of LaSalle, Peru, Ottawa, and Utica along the Illinois River. These settlers were attracted to the area from the Chicago/Lake Michigan area by the availability of easy water transportation along the Illinois and the Des Plaines Rivers and the fertile black soil. LaSalle County was formed in 1831, named for the early French explorer, Robert de LaSalle.



I&M Canal; geneologytrails.com

Along with the Illinois-Michigan Canal, which was finished in 1848 and carried pioneers from Lake Michigan into the Illinois Valley, railroads were built with lines that connected most cities and even small towns throughout the County. The Rock Island Railway line, completed in 1853, ran through the County parallel to the Illinois-Michigan Canal, eventually replacing it in importance and extending the ability of the area to quickly move goods west to the Mississippi River. The railway further accelerated the residential and industrial growth of the County.

During the 1930s and 1940s, few new commercial firms established bases within LaSalle County and the resultant population growth was very modest. With the gradual closing of the area's coal mines, it became apparent during this period that economic diversification was necessary in order to spur additional growth in the County. From the late 1950s to the present, efforts by the municipalities and the County have resulted in increased economic development within the County.

Population

LaSalle County experienced a modest growth rate of 4.8 percent between 1990 and 2006, with the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau estimating the county population to be 113,924. The number of households has increased at a rate of 7 percent during this same period (Table 6). These two factors have driven the increased demand for housing and other services. However, projected 2013 populations have begun trending downward for LaSalle County (estimated population of 112,183).

The changes in population have not been uniformly distributed across the County, however (Figure 7). Areas north of I-80 and south of Ottawa have experienced population growth, while the southwestern portion of the County has seen population decline.

	1990	2000	2010
Population	106,913	111,509	113,924
# Households (total)	41,284	43,417	45,347
# per Household	2.53	2.49	2.45
Source: US Census Data			

Table 6. Recent LaSalle County Demographics: US Census Data

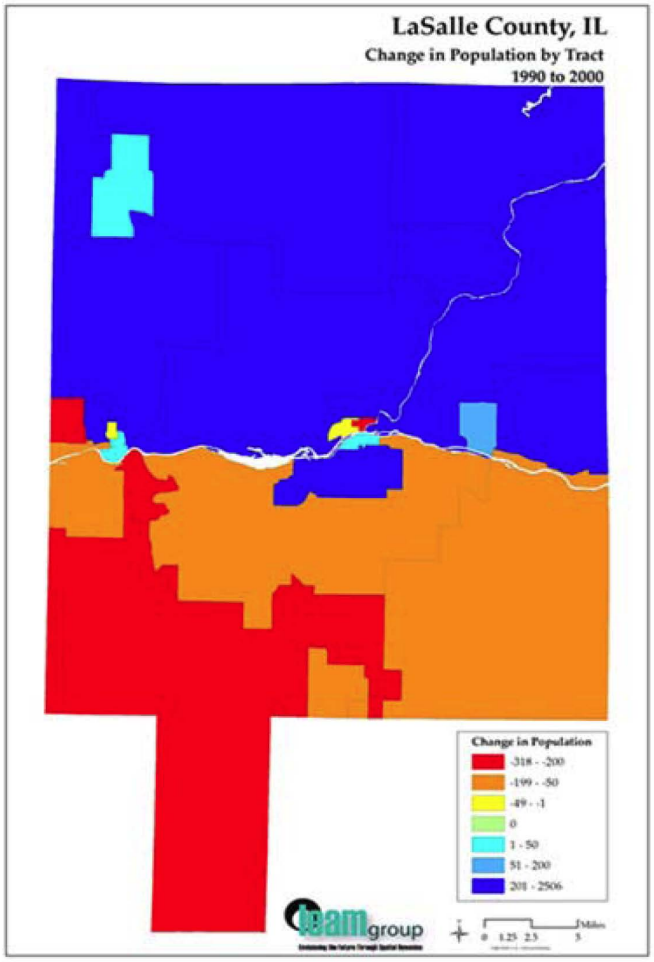


Figure 7. Change in population from 1990 to 2000 in LaSalle County by census tract (data from U.S. Census Bureau).

Socioeconomics

Median household income in LaSalle County has increased in the last decade by 33 percent, roughly keeping up with inflation (Table 7). Unemployment rates in LaSalle County have risen in recent years. Unemployment rates in the County were relatively low during the 90's and in the early to middle 2000's. However in the later 2000's and up to the present, unemployment rates have returned to levels similar to those in the 1980's. Table 8 demonstrates this trend.

Income	1990	2000	2010
Household w/ Income	41,449	43,346	45,061
Less than $25,000	45.3%	30.0%	22.2%
$25,000-$50,000	36.5%	30.4%	26.6%
$50,00-$100,000	15.3%	32.9%	40.2%
More than $100,000	2.9%	6.7%	10.8%
Median Household Income	$27,093	$40,308	$51,216

Table 7. LaSalle County Household Income Source: US Census Data

	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
June 2013	57,784	10.8%
January 2013	58,093	13.5%
July 2012	59,137	11.2%
January 2012	57,640	12.8%
July 2011	59,799	11.3%
January 2011	59,114	13.1%
July 2010	61,270	12.6%
January 2010	60,128	16.4%
July 2009	60,463	11.6%
January 2009	58,997	10.8%
July 2008	59,744	7.9%
January 2008	59,378	8.8%
2000 (Annual Avg.)	57,220	5.8%
1995 (Annual Avg.)	54,719	7.8%
1990 (Annual Avg.)	49,925	8.9%
1985 (Annual Avg.)	51,491	13.5%
1980 (Annual Avg.)	49,457	12.8%
Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics		

Table 8. LaSalle County unemployment rates

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, manufacturing employed the largest number of workers (9,785), followed by the educational, health and social services category (9,402), and the retail trades (6,847). Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining provide employment for 1,656 workers.

The 2010 census demonstrated a shift in the largest employment of workers in LaSalle County. The educational services, health care, and social assistance designation employed 10,730 (20.1%) workers in LaSalle County. Followed by the manufacturing sector employing 7,806 workers (14.6%) in the County (table 9 illustrates LaSalle County's workforce industry).

Industry	Persons Employed	Percent of Workers
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	10,730	20.10%
Manufacturing	7,806	14.60%
Retail trade	7,337	13.70%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4,733	8.80%
Construction	3,899	7.30%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3,671	6.90%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3,563	6.70%
Other services, except public administration	2,690	5.00%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	2,515	4.70%
Public administration	2,093	3.90%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1,837	3.40%
Wholesale trade	1,819	3.40%
Information	819	1.50%

Table 9. LaSalle County workforce. US Census Data

Agriculture

Corn Harvesting. Photo courtesy of
LaSalle County Soil and Water Conservation District

Over eighty-five percent of the County's acreage is in agricultural production; farming is central to the way of life in LaSalle County. In recent years, however, the number of individual farms has decreased while their total areas have increased. The average size of farms is 397 acres, and the average age of principal farm operators is 56. This indicates that there are fewer small family farms than ever before and fewer young people are pursuing farming as a livelihood. Also, the amount of overall farmland in the County has slightly decreased over recent years. Tables 10 and 11 below show the major crops and livestock currently in production. The most significant grain crop is corn, with soybeans a close second. According to the LaSalle County Farm Service Agency, in 2007, 10,625 acres of seed corn were in production.

Commodity Crop	Farms	Acres in Production	Bushels Produced
Corn (for grain)	1,123	396,552	74,694,872
Corn (for silage for green crop)	27	558	10,767
Wheat (winter and spring)	58	3,109	178,550
Soybeans (for beans)	940	190,400	8,911,495
Oats (for grain)	25	639	54,667
Forage	297	6,186	21,951
Vegetables (harvested for sale)	92	6,983	
Orchards	13	47	

Table 10. LaSalle County crop production Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture-County Data USDA, National Agriculture Statistics

Livestock and Poultry	Farms	Inventory Number
Cattle and calves	252	19,123
Hogs and Pigs	29	13,079
Sheep and Lambs	49	1,745
Broilers and other meat type chick-ens	5	266
Layers	54	1,041

Table 11. LaSalle County crop production Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture-County Data USDA, National Agriculture Statistics

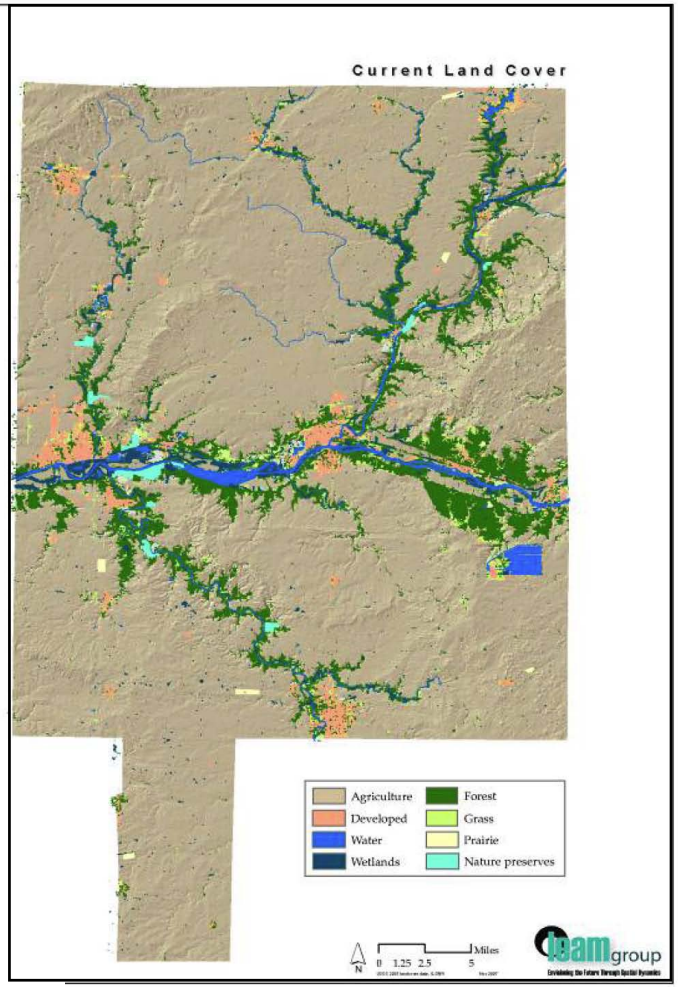


Figure 8. General Landcover. LEAM.

Landcover and Natural Resources

The County's land surface is mostly former prairie vegetation converted to agricultural use, gently rolling and generally well-drained. The streams have very little bottomland except along the Illinois River. The river valleys are deep and narrow wherever they have been cut into the underlying rocks below the glacial drift. Bluffs are prevalent, especially along the Illinois River in the western half of the County and along the Vermilion River. One of the most prominent rock formations is Starved Rock, near Utica, which is a major scenic attraction in Illinois. Buffalo Rock is another rock formation, as are the outcrops that can be seen along the Fox River.

Soils

The surface soil of the County is generally black or brown silt loam. Currently, 85 percent of the County's soil is designated as prime farmland and 9 percent is farmland of statewide importance (NRCS, 2006). This makes high-quality soil one of the County's most valuable natural and economic resources. Protection of the integrity of the soils should be promoted through crop rotation, diversity of crops, efficient use of inputs, and no-till farming. A map on page 67 demonstrates the general soil makeup of land in LaSalle County.

Groundwater Resources

LaSalle County currently has an adequate supply of ground water for industrial, municipal and domestic purposes, although concerns have been expressed whether this is sufficient to meet the needs of future growth. Supplies of water may be obtained from the St. Peter, New Richmond, Mt. Simon, Eau Claire, and Granville aquifer formations. Smaller amounts for domestic, shallow well purposes are obtained from the Pennsylvanian Aquifer.

Floodplains

Floodplains are those lands adjacent to rivers and streams that are subject to recurring flooding. Because of their continually changing nature, floodplains and other flood-prone areas need to be examined and managed in light of how they might affect or be affected by development. The floodplains of all major rivers and streams in the County, including the Illinois, Vermilion, and Fox rivers, pose risk of flooding (see p. 61 in Appendix III). Structures and development located in these designated floodplains are under jurisdictional requirements and ordinances of local, state, and federal agencies.

Rivers and River Basins

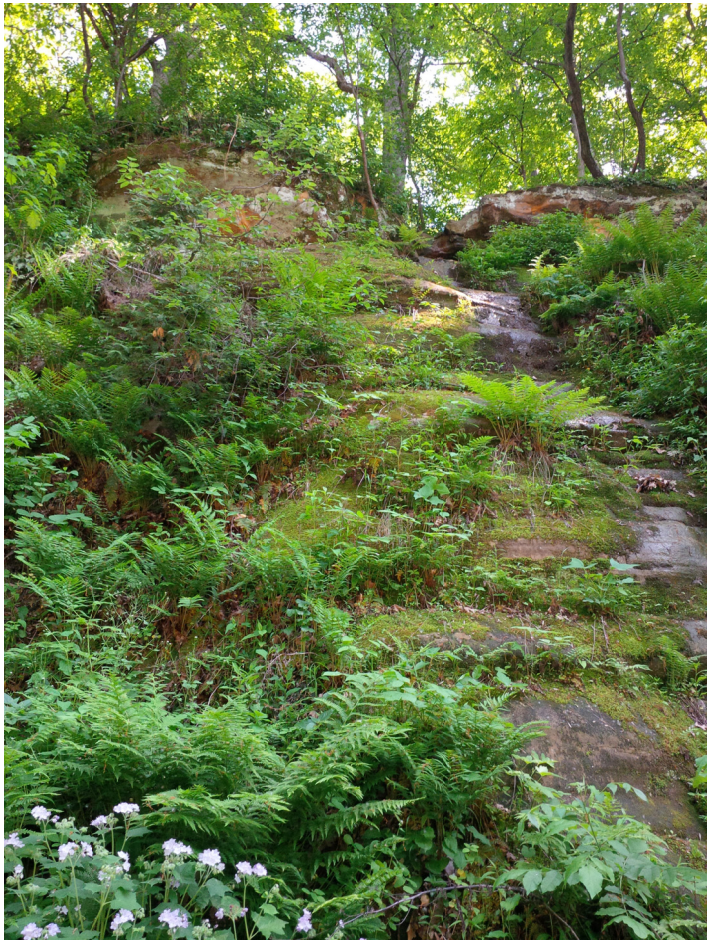
Illinois River
The Illinois River's principal tributaries in the County are the Fox River coming in from the northeastern part of the County, with the mouth of the river at Ottawa, the Little Vermilion River with headwaters in the northwestern part of the County, and the Vermilion River, which enters the County from the south. The smaller tributaries are Pecumsagan Creek, Covel Creek, and Clark's Run.

Fox River Basin
The Fox River comprises 1,720 square miles and includes portions of eleven counties, LaSalle County being one of the six main counties through which the Fox River and its tributaries flow. Below Aurora, the Fox River floodplain broadens and the river begins its descent to the low plain near the Marseilles moraine. The river follows the moraine until it discharges into the Illinois River (Critical Trends Assessment Program, 1997). The water quality of the Fox River is generally good, and significant natural resources are associated with it. In 2013, the Conservation Foundation purchased 253 acres of ecologically valuable land along the lower Fox River between Ottawa and Dayton. The property is planned to be leased to the City of Ottawa, who are to manage the property for protection and public use in perpetuity.

Illinois River, Ottawa. Photo Courtesy of
LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use.

Vermilion River Basin
The Vermilion River Basin encompasses 1,331square miles, primarily in LaSalle and Livingston counties. The watershed is very flat, although the relief becomes greater near the Illinois River. This increased relief near the confluence with the Illinois River has created whitewater features along the river that are unique to Illinois, drawing rafting and kayaking enthusiasts to the area.

Water quality in the Vermilion River is generally good, providing habitat for the rare greater redhorse and river redhorse fish species, as well as the slippershell, spike, and rainbow mussels. There are also significant natural communities and geological resources within the Vermilion River basin (CTAP, 1997). Matthiessen State Park is located within the Vermillion River Basin.



Buffalo Rock State Park.
Photo courtesy of Peggy Enquist

Forests

Approximately seven percent of the County is covered in forest or woodlands, totaling over 50,000 acres. Most of the forests are found along the rivers and streams. Predominant species of trees found in LaSalle County are oak, hard maple, sycamore, hickory, ash, black walnut, and black locust. Except for the production of Christmas trees, very little wood is produced for commercial purposes. There is little possibility that primary and secondary forest products will become a major factor in the County's economic growth. However, forests do contribute to the County's tourism, are of value for public recreational uses, and are of interest to subdivision developers.

Wetlands, Lakes, and Open Water

Wetlands can be defined as "land that has a predominance of hydric soils and that is inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions" (Interagency Wetlands Policy Act of 1989). Wetlands can be home to a number of unique habitats and species. And at one time, wetlands covered vast areas of LaSalle County and northern Illinois. Most of these wetlands have been drained for agricultural purposes, leaving the majority of remaining wetlands isolated along riparian areas. According to the most recent figures available from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, there are an estimated 8,045 acres of wetlands within LaSalle County, primarily bottomland hardwood forests. There are 14,437 acres of open water and 9,581 acres of lakes and rivers (IDNR, 1996).Wetlands are sensitive to disturbance and can offer unique habitats. Protection of any remaining wetlands in LaSalle County is crucial.

Mineral Resources

The geology of LaSalle County lends itself to a plethora of mineral deposits, most notably silica sand. LaSalle County is only one of a handful of locations in the world that can easily access the St. Peter Sandstone formation. The unique characteristics of this sand, lends itself nearly exclusively, to a number of industries and purposes. Some of those commercial uses include the glass making industry, filter and molding sand industry, abrasives industry, and more recently the fracturing industry. The consistency in grain size and shape, as well as it's resilience to heat and pressure makes the sand very valuable for such commercial uses. Gravel and limestone are also important industrial/commercial deposits accessible in LaSalle County. Historically, strip mines were also active in LaSalle County for coal mining purposes.

Grand Ridge Wind Farm and Exelon's LaSalle County Generating Station. Photo courtesy of Invenergy

Renewable Energy Generation

Within the last decade LaSalle County has put itself on the map for going green, at least in the Renewable energy generation category. Wind farms are a relatively new economic development opportunity for LaSalle County. In the past 10 years approximately 220 towers wind towers were erected in LaSalle County, adding the potential of approximately 300 megawatts of power to the grid. However, recently, future project proposals and turbine construction have stopped in LaSalle County. The majority of towers constructed in LaSalle County were located in the south-central section of the County (Grand Ridge Wind Farm and Top Crop Wind Farm), with one farm of 22 turbines located in the Northwestern portion of the County near Mendota (GSG). LaSalle County is also home to one of the largest solar power farms in the Midwest. Just northeast of Streator, Invenergy constructed a 160 acre, 20 megawatt solar farm that went in to operation in 2012.

Transportation

All forms of transportation serve LaSalle County; however, its principal transportation facilities are rail, waterway, and highway. Each plays a significant role in the growth and development of the County. The availability of diverse types of transportation, the proximity to major industrial centers and to a variety of man-power and natural resources make the Illinois Valley area within LaSalle County potentially one of the best industrial areas in the State. Controlling and directing this growth so that is does not conflict with existing uses, most notably with agricultural uses, is one overall objective of this plan.

Highways

According to the LaSalle County Highway Department, there are now 368.37 miles of highway in the County highway system; only McLean and Cook Counties have more. There are also 79 major structures associated with the County highway system. The County Highway Department also identifies that there are 1502.75 miles of Township Road District highways in the County total, and the number of major structures totaling 222.

LaSalle County has two interstate highways. Interstate 80, a major east-west highway, passes through LaSalle County approximately five miles north of the Illinois River. Interstate 39 runs north and south on the western side of the County.

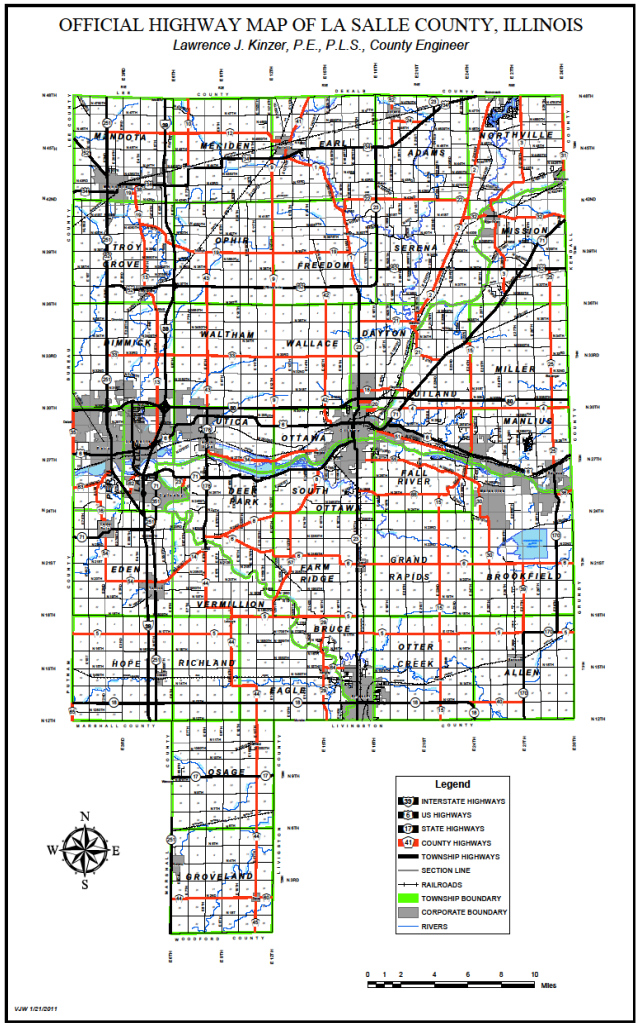


Figure 9. LaSalle County Official Highway Map

In addition to the interstate system, LaSalle County is served by a number of U.S. and State highways, which, in conjunction with the interstate routes, provide good access to all areas of the County. Among the important U.S. highways that pass through the County are routes 6 just north of the Illinois River, 34 to the far north, and 52 in the northern section of the County. All provide east-west travel. The numbered state highways in LaSalle County include 251, 17, 18, 23, 71, 170, 178, 179, and 351. All highways throughout the county are shown on the Official LaSalle County Highway Map and the Official LaSalle County Highway Access Classifications Map (see Figure 9 and pages 56-58 in Appendix III).

Retaining the integrity of the existing highway system is a priority of the County. There are numerous challenges in achieving this:

- Funds are available to address the most serious safety issues, but not to initiate major improvements.
- Growth in the northeastern corner has posed challenges in collecting traffic and safely getting it to state highways.
- The need for additional Class 3 routes, with the capacity to handle weights of 80,000 pounds versus the 73,280-pound limit that now exists (see Appendix III, page 58).

The need for improvements to increase weight limits on County roads is always increasing with the industrial demand locally and abroad. For example, the local grain elevators are becoming involved in the global grain market and overseas ship containers that handle 88,000 pound loads, transferring them to rail and truck is required. If overseas shipping becomes more common, these increased loads will continue to put pressure on the County road system. And with the acceleration in mining and other local industry, truck volumes on County Highways will continue to increase.

Associated with the move to global shipping of grain products, there is interest in establishing inter-modal transportation facilities that include trucking, rail, and river transportation.

In addition, there is a need to develop the capacity to build a database of accident locations for decision-making, and to evaluate and plan transportation needs beyond the current five-year plans. All of these issues pose challenges to the County.

Public Transportation

There are two public transportation-related initiatives currently under discussion in LaSalle County. One is the proposed Illinois Valley Commuter Rail System. This project would link western LaSalle County with the METRA station in Joliet, which links to Chicago. This rail system would provide stops in Seneca, Marseilles, Ottawa and Utica. It is believed that this rail system would provide economic opportunities in the county. The federal government has provided funds for Phase II planning of this project. The Phase II planning initiative will include other sources of transportation in the County, like bus service.

The second major public transportation initiative has recently become operational. The North Central Area Transit (NCAT) bussing service started July 1, 2013. The intent of this service is to link and expand the existing County/Municipal bus services. The service offers an affordable curbside transportation option to all county residents between these municipalities. The second phase of this project would expand service along the Illinois River Valley Corridor, and the third phase would develop links with other counties.

Waterways

The Illinois River, which flows through LaSalle County in an east-west direction, forms an integral part of the national waterway system. As such, it is one of the state's most important inland water routes. The Illinois Waterway extends 330 miles between Lake Michigan and Grafton, where the Illinois River converges with the Mississippi River. The waterway, along with its tributaries, drains over one-half of the state and is one of the most prominent topographic features in Illinois. This waterway is of significant importance to the national waterway system as it is the only direct, all-water connection between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River.

Historically, the Illinois River has been utilized as a commercial waterborne carrier of goods and traffic since the advent of steamboats upon the river in the 1830s. The opening of the Rock Island Railroad's mainline in 1853, which generally parallels the river, greatly decreased the river's usage. Traffic on the river never completely disappeared. River transport became the mode of transportation best-suited for bulk shipments of commodities that require economy in the cost of freight. Waterborne transportation is especially well-suited for the movement of non-perishable bulk of goods of great weight and volume such as grain, mineral products, bulk fuel, coal, and building materials. There are a number of terminals along the Illinois River within LaSalle County. Two port authority districts have been set up and are active within LaSalle County along the Illinois River. They are the Ottawa Port District and the Seneca Port District.

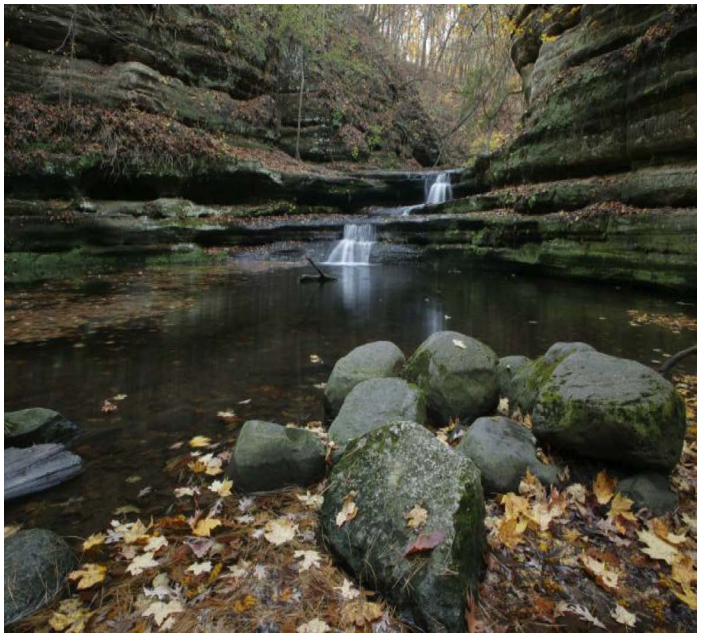
Railroads
Several major railroad companies serve the County, connecting it to virtually all parts of the United States (see Appendix III, page 59). Currently, these rail lines are used primarily for freight, though Amtrak uses the Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail line in the north. According to the Illinois Department of Transportation's Office of Planning and Programming, effective January 2006, the following rail lines were active in the County. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of rail lines in the County, and that ownership of rail lines changes frequently.

- Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) is located in the far northern portions of the County, running through Mendota, Earlville, Leland, and Somonauk. Union Pacific (UP) runs from Troy Grove to DeKalb.
- Illinois Railnet (IR) connects Streator, Ottawa, and Sheridan.
- CSX Transportation, Inc. (CSXT) runs east-west, connecting Seneca, Marseilles, Ottawa, LaSalle, Peru, and Spring Valley.
- Norfolk Southern (NS) is located in the far southern portion of the County, running through Lostant and Ransom.

The two closest Metra commuter lines connecting the area to Chicago are in Joliet and Aurora. Joliet is approximately 35 miles from the eastern boundary of LaSalle County and Aurora is approximately 20 miles from the northeast corner of LaSalle County. Amtrak stops are in the town of Mendota in the northwest corner of LaSalle County and also in the towns of Dwight and Plano outside of the County. Due to recent demands in local mining and industry, a number of railroad siding and spur projects have been installed along existing railroads in LaSalle County.

Air Service
The Illinois Valley Regional Airport in Peru now serves LaSalle County. Locally, eight private airports located either in or near Ottawa, Marseilles, Peru, Streator, Mendota, Earlville, Lostant, and Leland serve the County. The latter facilities are adequate for small aircraft only.

Recreational Resources



Matthiessen State Park.
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

LaSalle County has two exceptionally scenic river valleys along the Illinois and Fox Rivers, along with sections of the Vermilion River. Along these waterways are some of the most picturesque and historic land in the State. Four state parks are located along the valleys, all of which have greatly added to the preservation of these areas for enjoyment of the public. Starved Rock State Park is located just west of Ottawa and south of Utica. It encompasses an area of approximately 2,621 acres of land that is covered with trees and crossed with trails leading to canyons, caves, and other places of scenic beauty. South and west of Starved Rock State Park is Matthiessen State Park. This park is approximately 1,686 acres in size and provides a series of trails leading through deep canyons to several waterfalls. Buffalo Rock State Park is comprised of 570 acres located on the north side of the Illinois River, approximately four miles west of Ottawa. Historically, the area was an important meeting and trading point for the Native Americans that inhabited it. The Illini State Park, 570 acres, is located just south of Marseilles along the Illinois River and, like Starved Rock State Park, is a favorite spot for campers and nature lovers.

The Fox and Vermilion Rivers have several private recreational areas along them. The scenic and historic banks of the rivers are enjoyed by hundreds of canoers and kayakers each year. Each of these rivers has sections of bluffs and other areas of scenic beauty. Shabbona Park and Catlin Park are County-owned parks. Shabbona Park is located 16 miles north of Ottawa and was the location of the Indian Creek Massacre during the Blackhawk War. Catlin Park, located south of the Illinois River west of Ottawa, offers well-groomed trails for walking and horseback riding. In addition to the parks, LaSalle County offers excellent resources for boating, fishing, and hunting.

LaSalle County is also home to a number of public and private nature preserves and open spaces. Notably, the LaSalle County Soil and Water Conservation District's Rasmussen Natural Area, which is used extensively for outdoor education in the County. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources manage the Mitchell's Grove Nature Preserve along the Little Vermillion River and further north on the Little Vermillion River is Mendota's Snyder's Grove. With more than 20 municipalities in the County, the towns and villages also offer a wide variety of parks and recreational opportunities within LaSalle County.

I&M Canal

The Illinois & Michigan (I&M) Canal runs 96 miles east-west from Channahon in Grundy County to LaSalle County. There are numerous state parks, restored historical sites, and wildlife and distinctive landscapes ranging from bluffs to rolling hills, along its banks. Buffalo Rock State Park is located on the north bank of the Illinois River four miles west of Ottawa. Other significant features that can be found along the I&M Canal in LaSalle County are the:

- Fox River Aqueduct, the largest aqueduct on the Canal.
- Effigy Tumuli, the largest earth sculptures in the County, are located near Buffalo Rock State Park.
- M.J. Hogan Grain Elevator, formerly known as the Seneca Grain Elevator, located in Seneca. It has gone through extensive restoration and is the only remaining historic grain elevator along the Canal.

The I&M Canal State Trail begins at Rockdale along the old towpath and ends in the City of LaSalle and offers 61.5 miles of scenic views of the canal and the Des Plaines and Illinois rivers. This trail is an old canal towpath, providing easy walking and unparalleled scenery and views. It is currently LaSalle County's only bike path.

I&M Canal; Deanna Glosser

Public charrette at Mendota

Public charrette at Utica

APPENDIX I
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

2008 Plan Update
LEAMgroup works closely with staff when conducting public engagement meetings or charrettes. These charrettes actively engage the community in discussions of land use change and its implications early in the comprehensive plan development process. Charrettes provide material that can be used for multiple topic areas of the comprehensive plan. Participants identify issues of local concern, including land use drivers and investment or policy scenarios of local significance.

Charrettes begin with a description of the tools and methodologies used by the LEAM process to the entire participating group. Following the large group presentation of the LEAM outcomes, workshop participants are divided into small groups for more detailed and intimate discussions. Each group is lead by a facilitator (a planning professional familiar with the LEAM project) and asked to consider specific questions to initiate discussion. After the small group discussion on development drivers, a member from each group reports the results in a full group session. The non-prioritized, complete listing of all land use driving forces considered by the small groups is then available for review and reporting. A summary of prioritized drivers is established by giving each participant ten “votes” for what they consider to be the most important driving forces for land use change in the region. The brainstorming and prioritization process is then repeated for defining scenarios.

Planning charrettes for LaSalle County were held on June 27th, 28th, and August 1st, 2007, in the towns of Grand Ridge, Serena, Utica, and Mendota. There were over 100 participants at the charrettes, representing local residents, planners, economic development interests, and local government officials.

Charrette participants were asked to identify the drivers or causes of land use change that they felt were important in LaSalle County.

The top ranking driver involved a range of development issues. The types of issues identified included:

- Proximity to existing infrastructure
- Development occurring to the east
- Low price of land
- Water supply
- Annexation and zoning

The charrette also focused on possible actions local stakeholders might consider as potential future scenarios to be evaluated using LEAM simulations. Scenarios typically involve future public investment, public policy, or a change in demographic or economic trends.

Participants were asked to consider,

"What will happen?"
"What could happen?"
"What would you like to see happen?"

Many scenario ideas were generated by participants. The most popular scenarios were grouped into nine broad categories. In order of priority, they were:

- Development/planning issues
- Farmland preservation
- Highways
- TIF districts/policy
- Mass transit
- Green space protection
- Opportunities for young people
- Wind farms
- Tourism

The most important scenario identified by participants related to a wide range of development and planning issues. Participants expressed the following attitudes on policy issues:

- Disallow leapfrog development or development where there is no existing infrastructure
- Balance economic development and agricultural and open space protection
- Collaborative economic development between cities and counties
- More “green” development, e.g., LEED & renewable energies
- Gentrify downtown Ottawa, Mendota, and other small towns
- Create better stormwater management policies
- Promote regional planning and a county-wide collective vision
- Concerns over zoning changes of rural residential development
- Concerns over large corporations buying farms for future development
- Concerns over development impact fees

Both the Tourism and TIF Districts categories contained positive and negative concerns. A few participants wanted to see the approval process for TIF districts become more efficient, but a larger number of participants raised concerns with the large number of TIF districts and their impacts. Some participants raised concerns with the rate of growth of tourism and the resulting impacts, while almost as many wanted to see tourism expanded.

One of the more unique concerns raised was the lack of opportunities for young people. Ideas generated included the need for a four-year university in the county, creating more business opportunities for young people, and providing more vocational training opportunities.

LaSalle County Economic Connection

LEAMgroup also met with the LaSalle County Connection, the county-wide economic-development organization. Participants included representatives from the Illinois Valley Community College, Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, and North Central Illinois Council of Governments.

The top four current drivers, or factors affecting change in the County today, identified by this group were:

- •Growth of warehouses/distribution facilities
- •Transportation system – rail, river, and interstate
- •Abundance of land
- •TIFs/enterprise zones

Important drivers this groups saw for the future of the County include:

- •2nd bridge in Ottawa –would result in a better road leading to Streator, benefiting that part of the County as well as Ottawa.
- •Prairie Parkway – will affect the area along Route 71
- •Commuter rail –actively pursuing a Metra line from Joliet

In addition to these drivers, this group identified four key policy issues that will be important to the future of the County:

- •Development of a county-wide economic development strategy
- •Identify 2-3 mega-sites in the County (>1000 acres) that could be marketed for manufacturing. This would be an important element of the county-wide economic development plan.
- •Develop a county-wide tourism strategy.
- •Develop a greenways and bike trail plan as part of the tourism strategy or separately

Township Officials Survey

In addition to the public charrettes, a survey was sent to 240 township officials to solicit input for the update to the LaSalle County comprehensive plan being carried out by LEAMgroup. The survey contained two important questions:

1. What importance do the following factors have in causing your township to change?
2. How important to your township will the following issues be in the next 10 to 20 years?

Ten issues were identified for each question. Each respondent was asked to identify whether they believed each issue identified was Extremely Important, Very Important, Slightly Important, Not Very Important, or of No Importance to their township.

The top five issues that were identified as causing change within townships today are, in order of priority:

1. Farmland preservation
2. Transportation-highways
3. Low taxes
4. Quality schools
5. Proximity to northeastern Illinois

Respondents were also asked to rank the list of ten issues in terms of their importance over the next 10 to 20 years. With the exception of identifying farmland preservation as a priority, the responses were very different from the issues facing the County today. Seven issues were ranked as being Extremely Important or Very Important:

1. Farmland preservation
2. Balancing economic development with open space protection
3. Need for collaborative planning between cities and the County
4. Protecting open/green space
5. Encouraging development near existing infrastructure
6. Transportation: widening key two-lane highways
7. Providing opportunities for young people

The information gathered at the public charrettes and other meetings will be analyzed for inclusion in the comprehensive plan, along with material from the original 1999 Comprehensive Plan.

2014 Plan Update

In December 2012, the LaSalle County Development committee began discussing their approach to updating the 2008 comprehensive plan. By April of 2013, the Development Committee decided to update the plan through their committee and public input and in turn dedicated one meeting per month exclusively to such update, meeting typically on the 4th Wednesday of each month until May 2014.

LaSalle County Development Committee Meeting

LaSalle County ESLU

In the fall of 2013, Development Committee Members and staff from the LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use Department hosted 6 public open houses to discuss the comprehensive plan update and gather the public's input and ideas for the update. These meeting were held at the following township buildings:

- Brookfield Township September 19, 2013
- Osage Township September 24, 2013
- Peru Township September 26, 2013
- Northville Township October 1, 2013
- Otter Creek Township October 7, 2013
- Ottawa Township October 16, 2013

A number of common discussions and topics surfaced from the open houses held. Most commonly, it was indicated that the County plan should be written to continue to help preserve and protect the agricultural nature of the county. Other common topics discussed were: job creation, economics, mining, and environmental/natural resource issues. The Development committee took all suggestions from the open houses, as well as other information forums, under review and did their best to fit suggestions into the new draft where appropriate. The LaSalle County Environmental Services Department invited all Townships, Municipalities, and other County Departments to review the existing comprehensive plan and offer their thoughts and suggestions for the plan update throughout the process.

APPENDIX II
THE LAND EVALUATION AND SITE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

One of the primary goals of the LaSalle County Comprehensive Plan is to protect farmland from development. The Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) process is designed to help local decision-makers make decisions when farmland is being considered for another use.

For development to occur in what is currently farmland, a method is needed to prioritize the farmland in order to determine whether it is advisable to approve the development. Using this method, some farmland would be considered a low priority for protection, and a good place for non-agricultural use. The LESA system recognizes that some land is better suited for farming than others. This may be based on soil productivity or on its location and surrounding land uses.

LESA is recognized nationally as an impartial system that helps determine the value of land for agriculture. Local LESA systems are currently in place for many counties in Illinois, including all of the counties surrounding LaSalle County. It is prepared within the County by local people, using an approved format for the system. Prior to the system's approval for use, it must be reviewed and approved by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the LaSalle County Board.

How LESA Works
LESA will be used whenever a zoning change is requested for a parcel of land currently zoned as "agricultural." Prior to the zoning hearing, LESA will be used to determine the agricultural value of the land. The score sheets will be completed by the LaSalle County Planning and Zoning Department staff and by the County Soil and Water Conservation District staff. Each staff should coordinate prior to the zoning board's meeting to concur with the scoring and discuss any inconsistencies. This value is scored on a scale of 0 to 300, with land scoring 200 points and greater being considered extremely valuable for agriculture, and from 0 to 100 points having little value for agriculture. This score will be reported to the zoning board, which will use it in making a decision on the request for a zoning change.

LESA has two parts. The first is Land Evaluation (LE), which considers the productivity of the soils on the land; any limitations that it may have for crop production, and whether the soils on the land are considered to be “prime” or “important” farmlands by the USDA. This information is in the LaSalle County Soil Survey. The LE score can range from 0 to a maximum of 100.

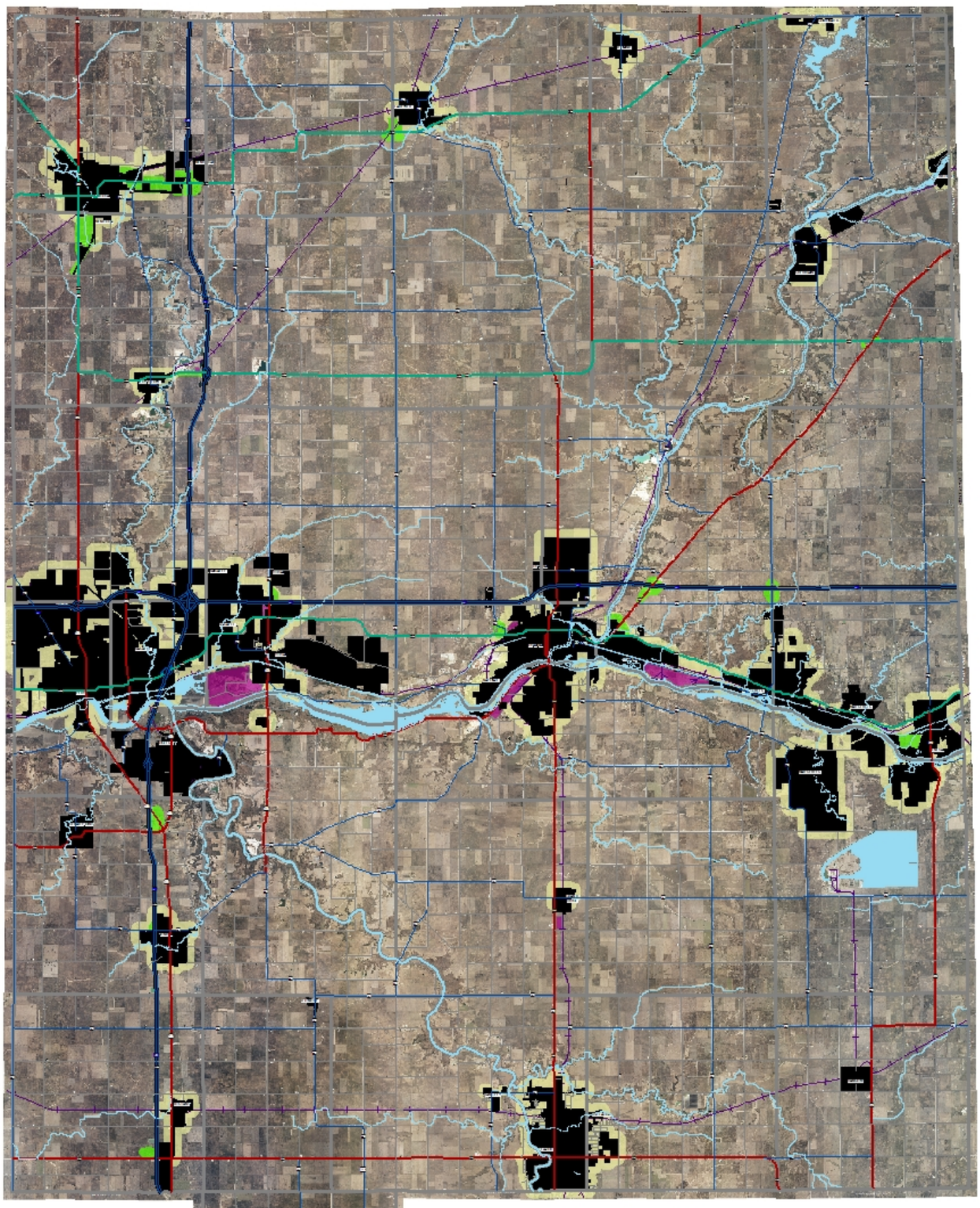
Site Assessment (SA) is the second part of LESA. It considers such factors as the land’s distance to towns and cities; the quality of roads adjacent to the site; the availability of sewer and water; and surrounding land use. It also considers whether a proposed use is compatible with agricultural operations, if substantial investments have been made to develop infrastructure, and whether the proposed use is compatible with existing land use plans. Each factor contributes to a score that ranges from 0 to a maximum of 200.

LESA’s scoring will show the following:

- Land that is highly productive and located in rural areas will score high on both the land evaluation and site assessment components. It probably should be kept in agricultural use.
- Land that is highly productive but close to cities and towns will score high on the land evaluation part and low on the site assessment parts. A land use change should be carefully considered.
- Land that has low productivity in rural areas will score low on land evaluation and high on site assessment; however, the loss of this land for crop production may be acceptable. The impact of the change in land use, roads, school districts, and compatibility with existing farming operations need to be considered.
- Finally, land that has low productivity and is close to a city or town will score low on the land evaluation part and low on the site assessment part. This land would probably be suitable for a land use change.

LESA is designed to evaluate and highlight the value farmland in order to guide decision-making regarding land use changes. It helps to identify the land that is best suited for agriculture so that it can be maintained in agricultural use. The full text of the LESA system can be found at http://www.lasalleswcd.org/services.html#LESA

Proposed Land Use



0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

Proposed Land Use

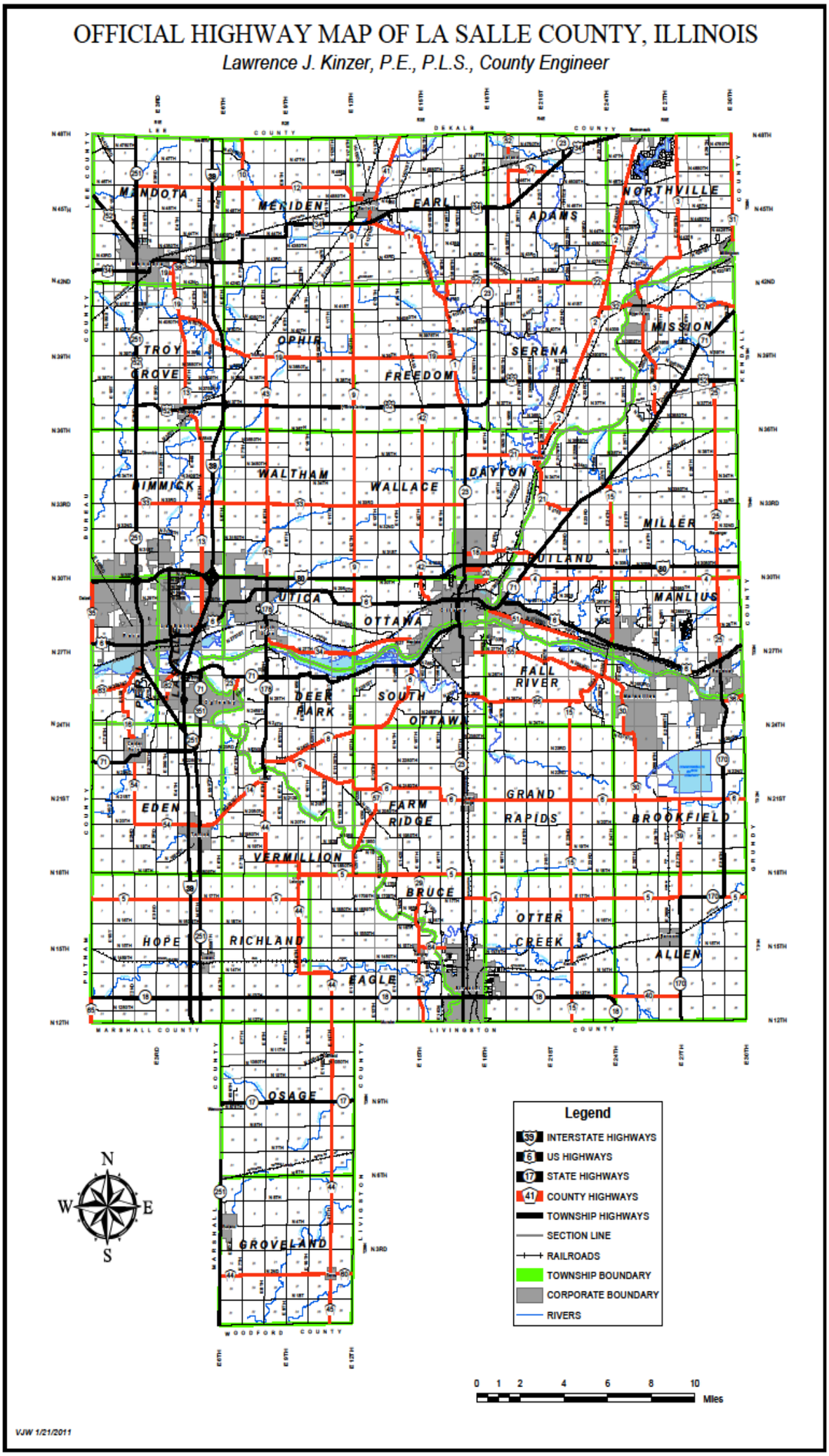
- Incorporated Area

Land Use Type

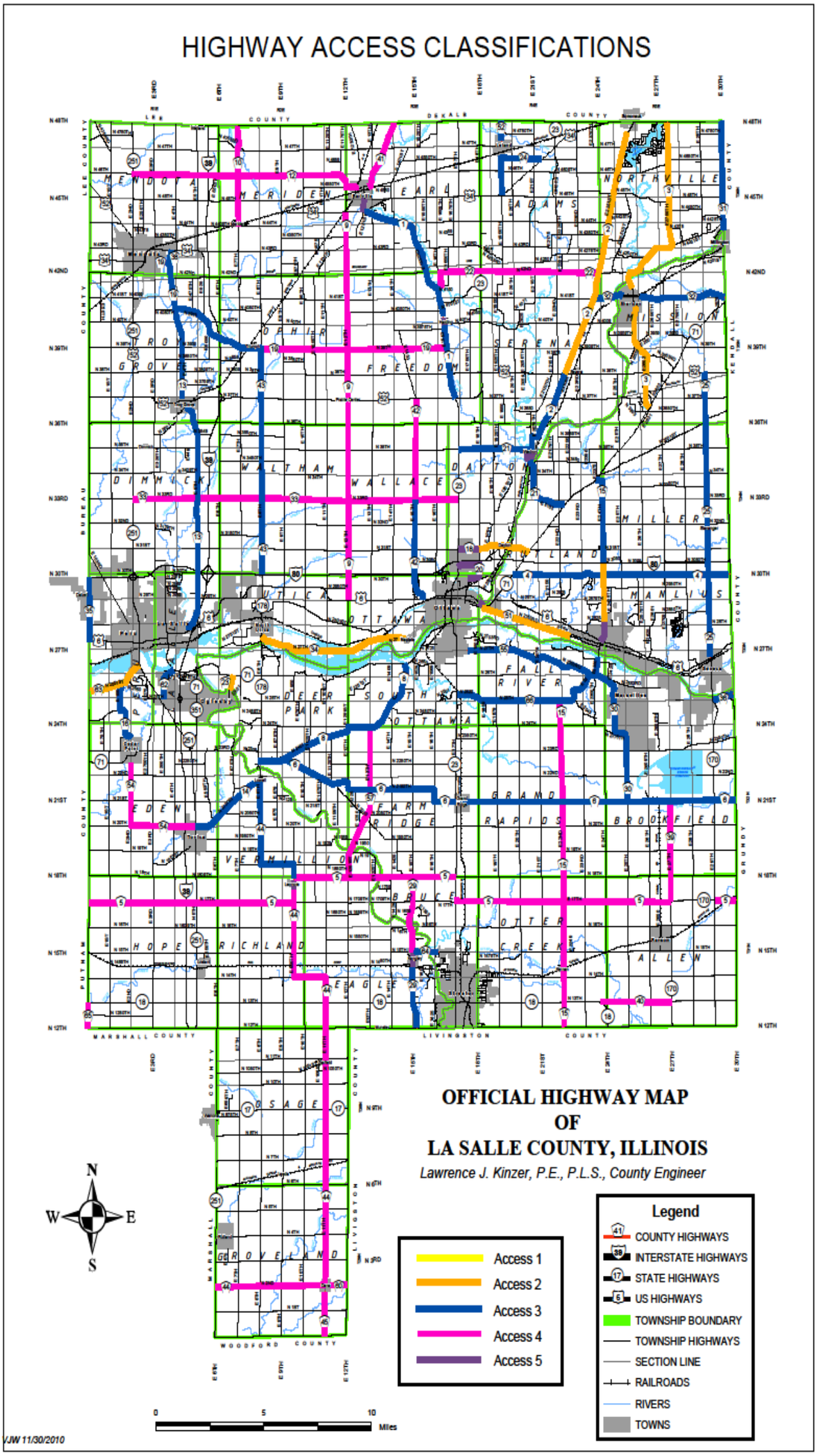
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Residential

N

May 2014
LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use
Developed by LaSalle County Development Commnittee

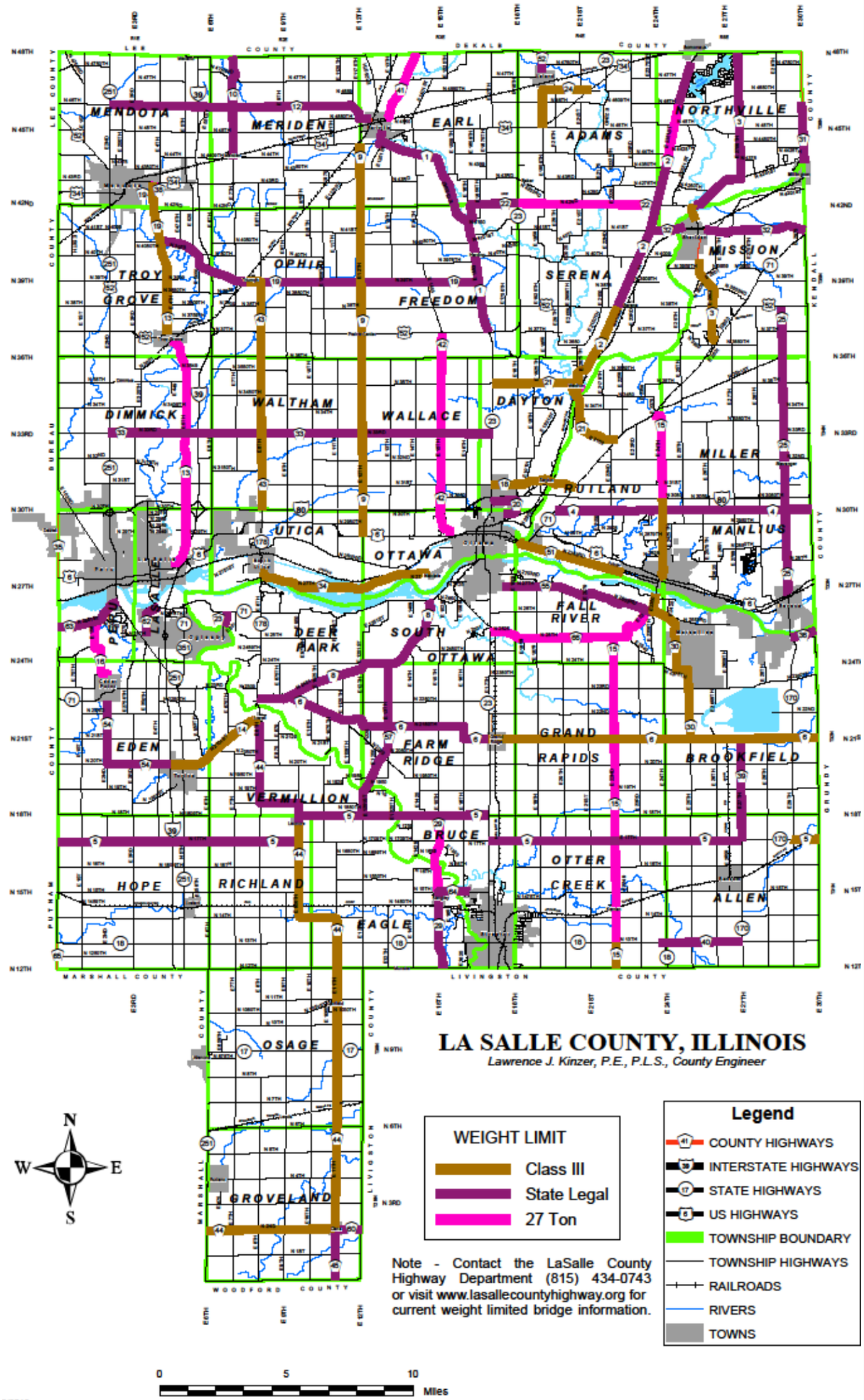

OFFICIAL HIGHWAY MAP OF LA SALLE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
Lawrence J. Kinzer, P.E., P.L.S., County Engineer
MANDOTA
MEDEN
EARL
ADAMS
NORTHVILLE
TROY GROVE
OPHIR
FREEDOM
SERENA
MISSION
WALTHAM
WALLACE
DAYTON
BIMMICK
MILLER
BUILAND
UTICA
OTTAWA
MANLIUS
DEER PARK
SOUTH OTTAWA
FALL RIVER
EDEN
FARM RIDGE
GRAND RAPIDS
BROOKFIELD
VERMILLION
BRUCE
OTTER CREEK
HOPE
RICHLAND
EAGLE
ALLEN
OSAGE
GROVELAND
Legend
INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS
US HIGHWAYS
STATE HIGHWAYS
COUNTY HIGHWAYS
TOWNSHIP HIGHWAYS
SECTION LINE
RAILROADS
TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY
CORPORATE BOUNDARY
RIVERS
0 1 2 4 6 8 10
Miles
N
W
E
S
VJW 1/21/2011

HIGHWAY ACCESS CLASSIFICATIONS

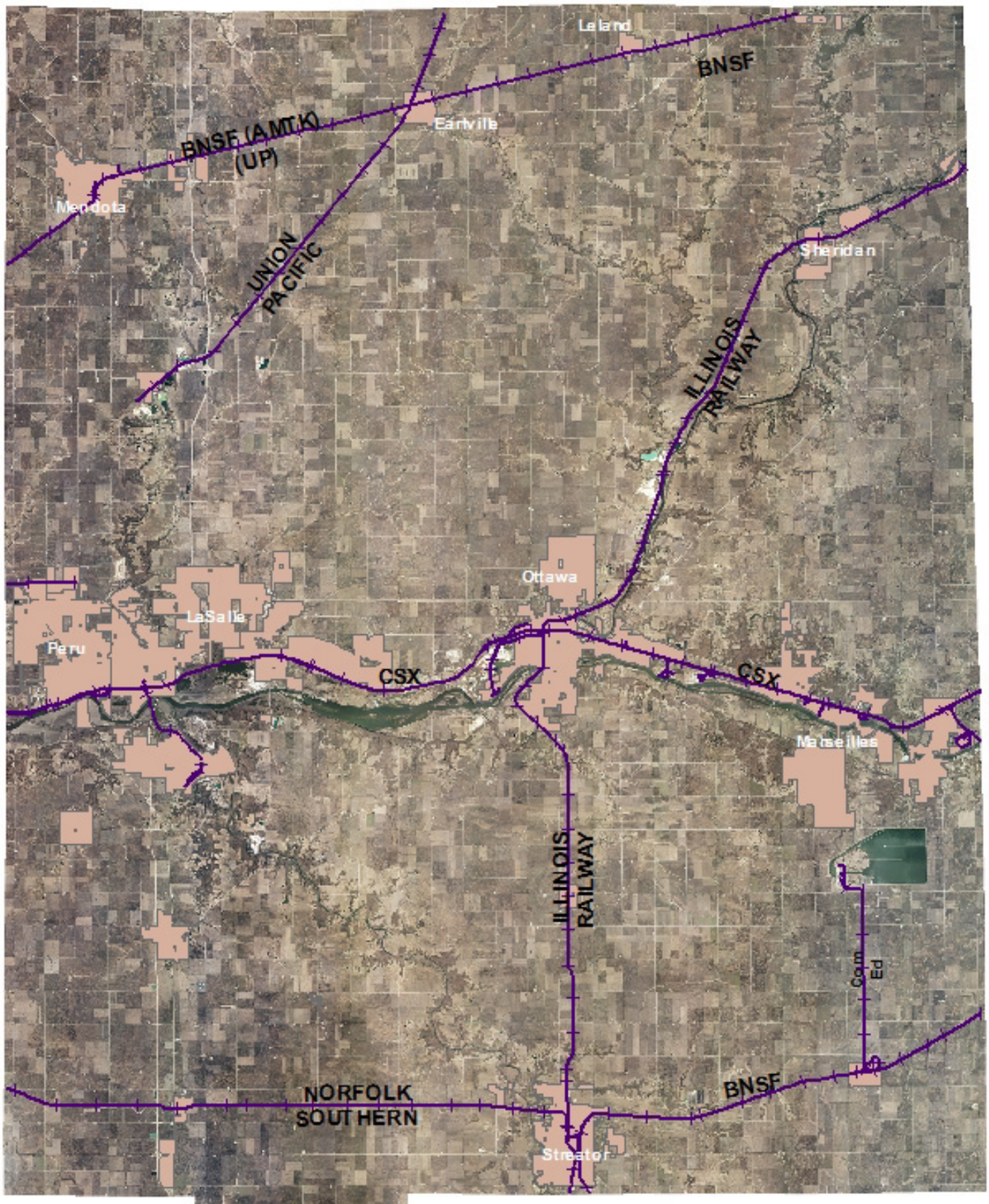


For information regarding access classifications and permitting, please visit www.lasallecountyhighway.org/permits.html

County Highway Weight Limits



Railroads-LaSalle County, Illinois



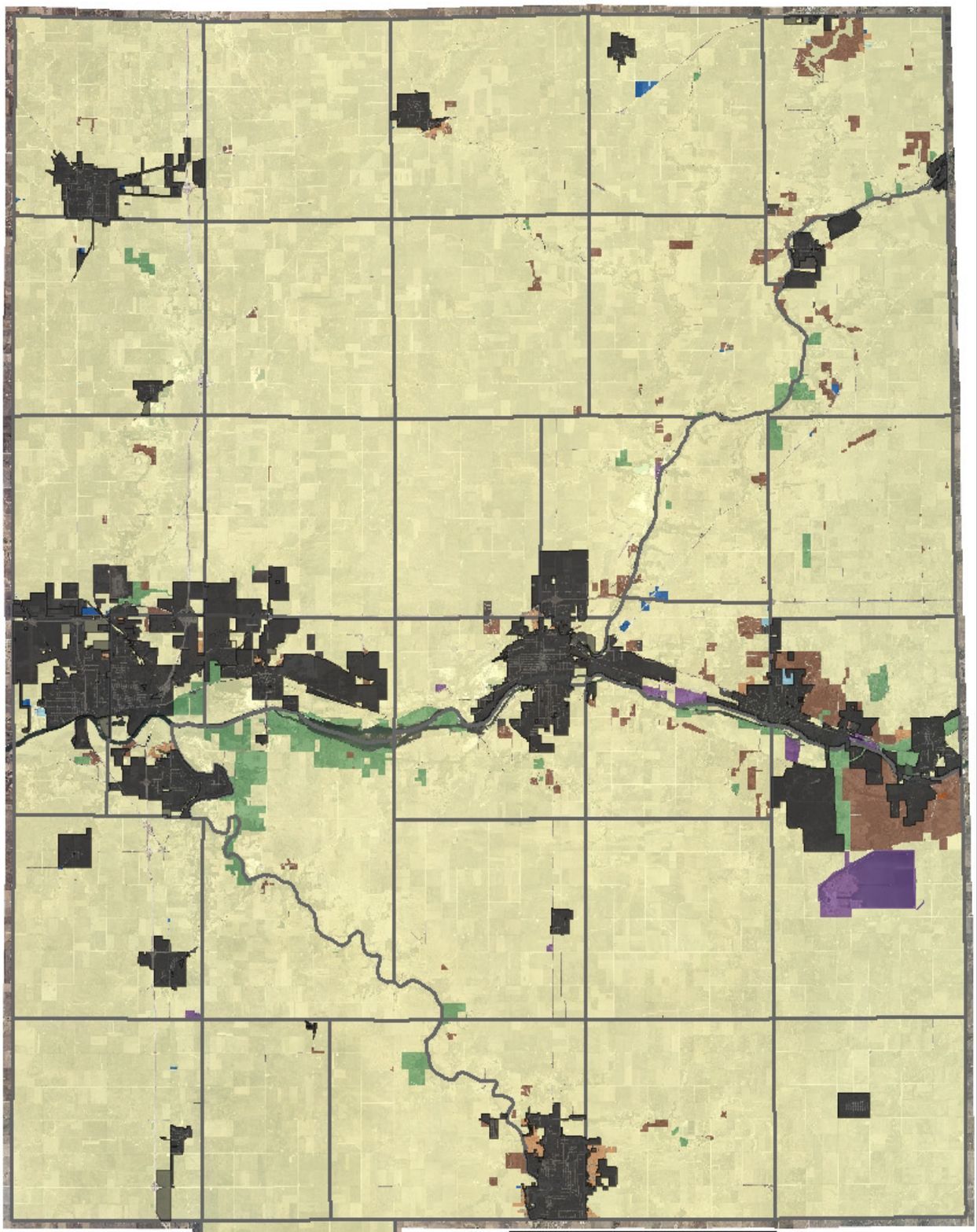
0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

N

May 2014
LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use

Data derived from the LaSalle County Highway Department and the Illinois Department of Transporation

Zoning-Unincorporated LaSalle County, Illinois



LaSalle County

Zoning Classification

District

- Agriculture (A-1)
- Agriculture Conservation (A-C)
- Local Business (B-1)
- General Business (B-2)
- Industrial (I-1)
- Single Family Residence (R-2)
- General Residence (R-3)
- Rural Residence (R-R)
- Incorporated Area

N

0 1 2 3 4 5

Miles

May 2014. LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use

General Flood Hazard Areas
LaSalle County, Illinois

0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

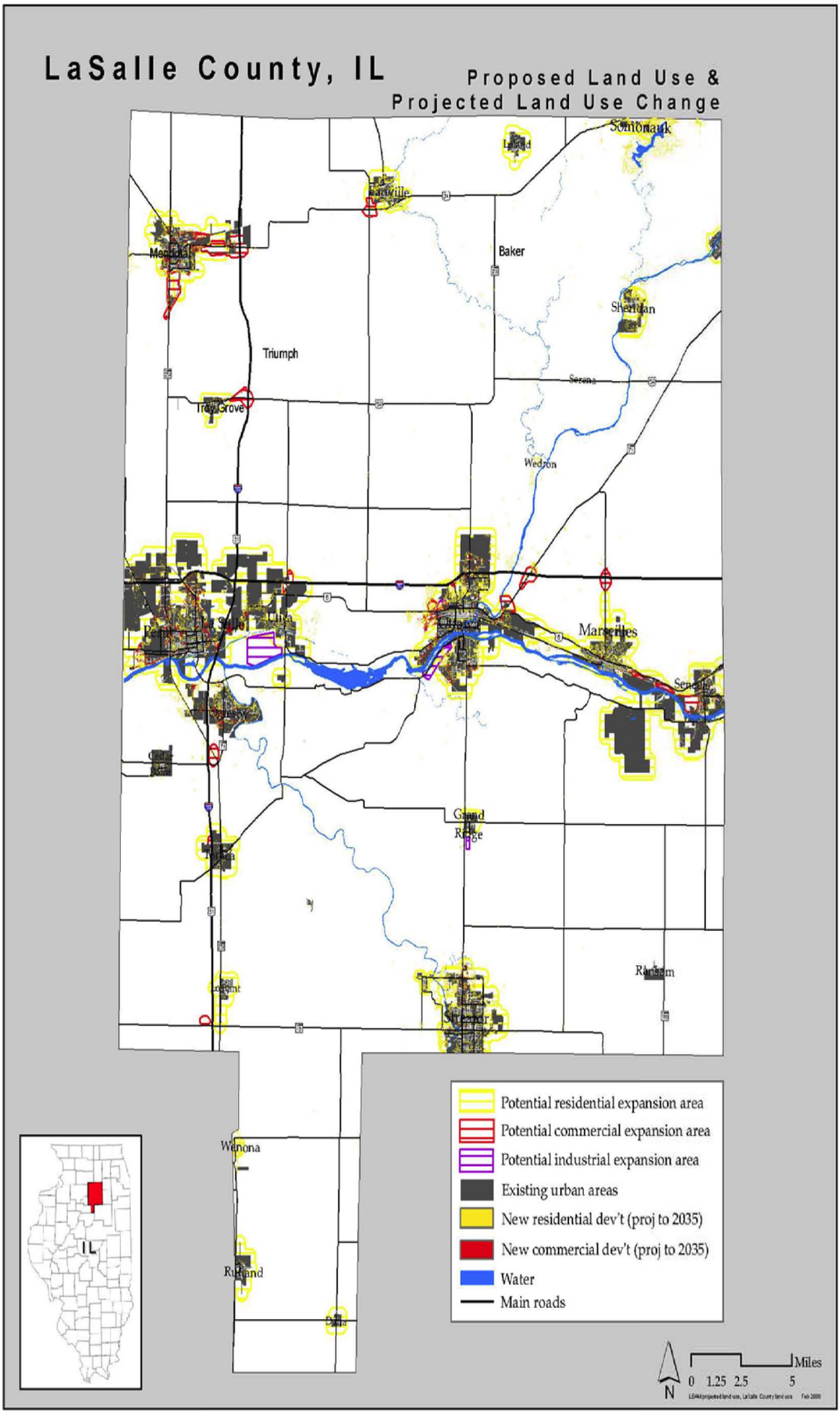
LaSalle County
General Flood Hazard Areas

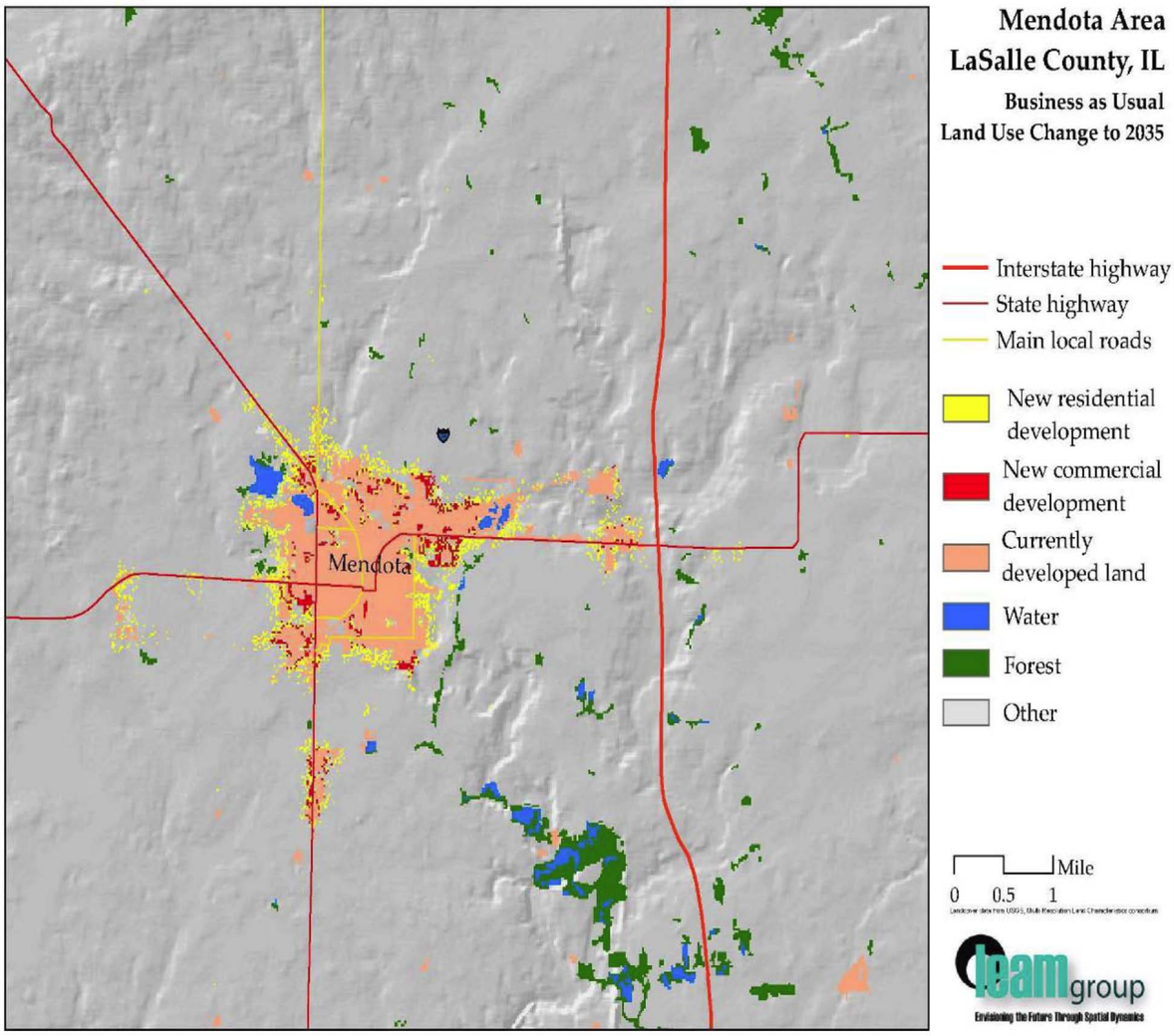
FLOOD_ZONE

- A Zone - SFHA No BFE Determined
- AE Zone-SFHA BFE Determined
- 0.2 % ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD
- X Zone-Outside of 0.2% annual flood chance

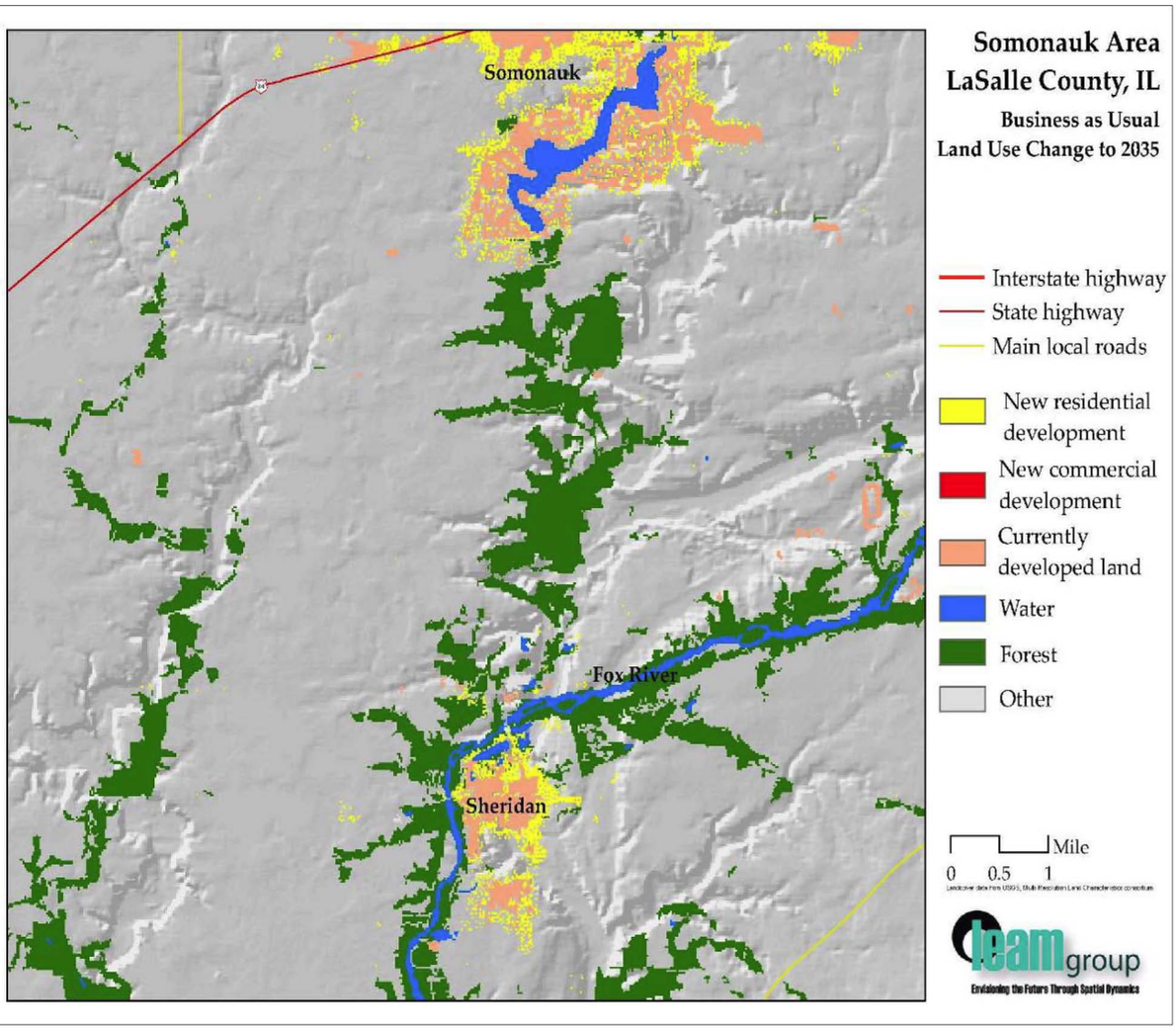
N

May 2014. LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use
Map derived from FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program's
Flood Insurance Rate Maps for LaSalle County, Illinois, May 19, 2014

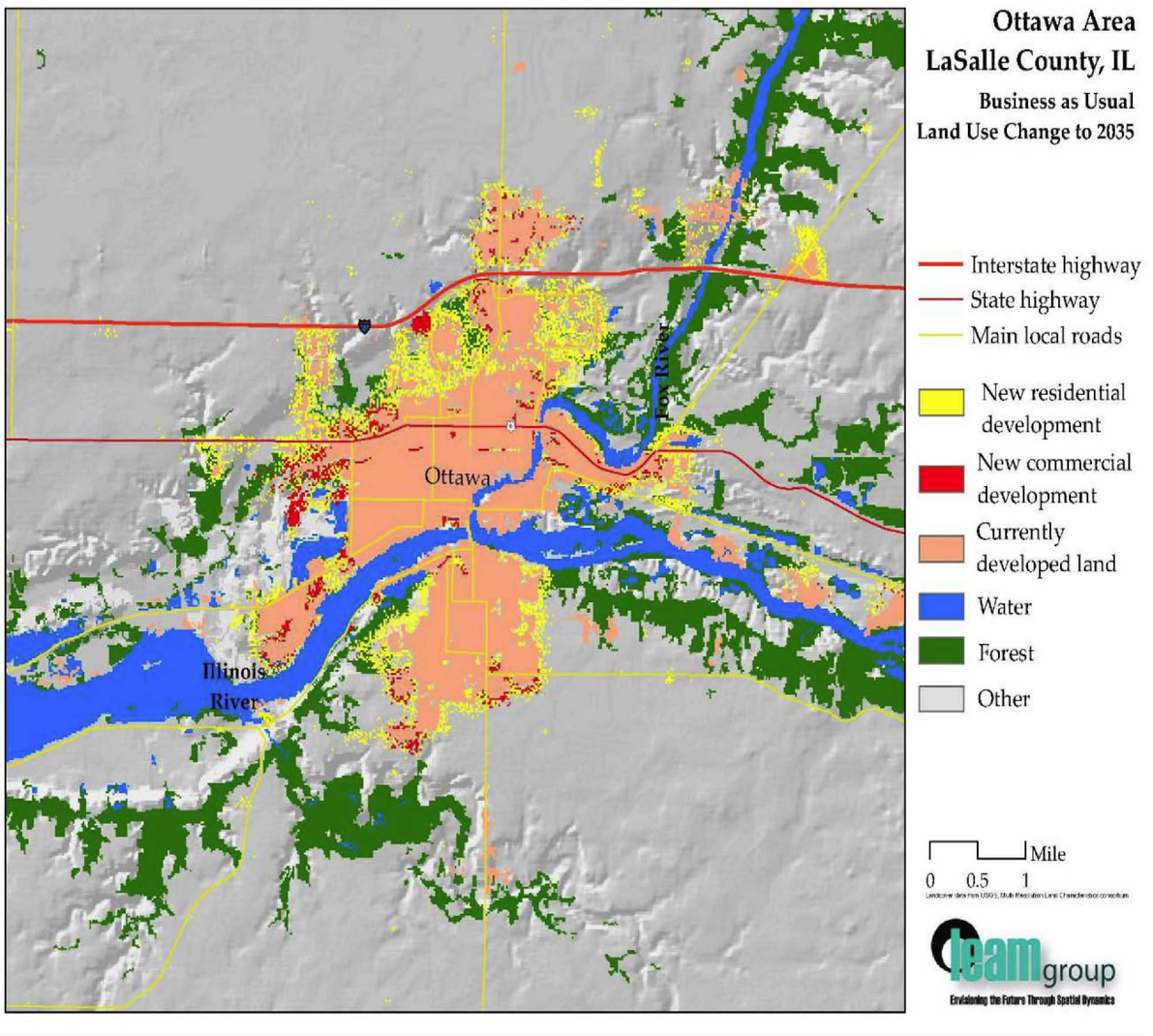

LaSalle County, IL
Proposed Land Use &
Projected Land Use Change
Somonauk
Leland
Sandwich
Baker
Meriden
Sheridan
Triumph
Serena
Troy Grove
Wedron
Utica
Marseilles
Grand Ridge
Ransom
Potential residential expansion area
Potential commercial expansion area
Potential industrial expansion area
Existing urban areas
New residential dev't (proj to 2035)
New commercial dev't (proj to 2035)
Water
Main roads
IL
Miles
0 1.25 2.5 5
N



LEAM projected land use results (Business as Usual scenario) in and around Mendota, IL (LEAMgroup; USGS).



LEAM projected land use results (Business as Usual scenario) in and around Somonauk, IL (LEAMgroup; USGS).



LEAM projected land use results (Business as Usual scenario) in and around Ottawa, IL (LEAMgroup; USGS).

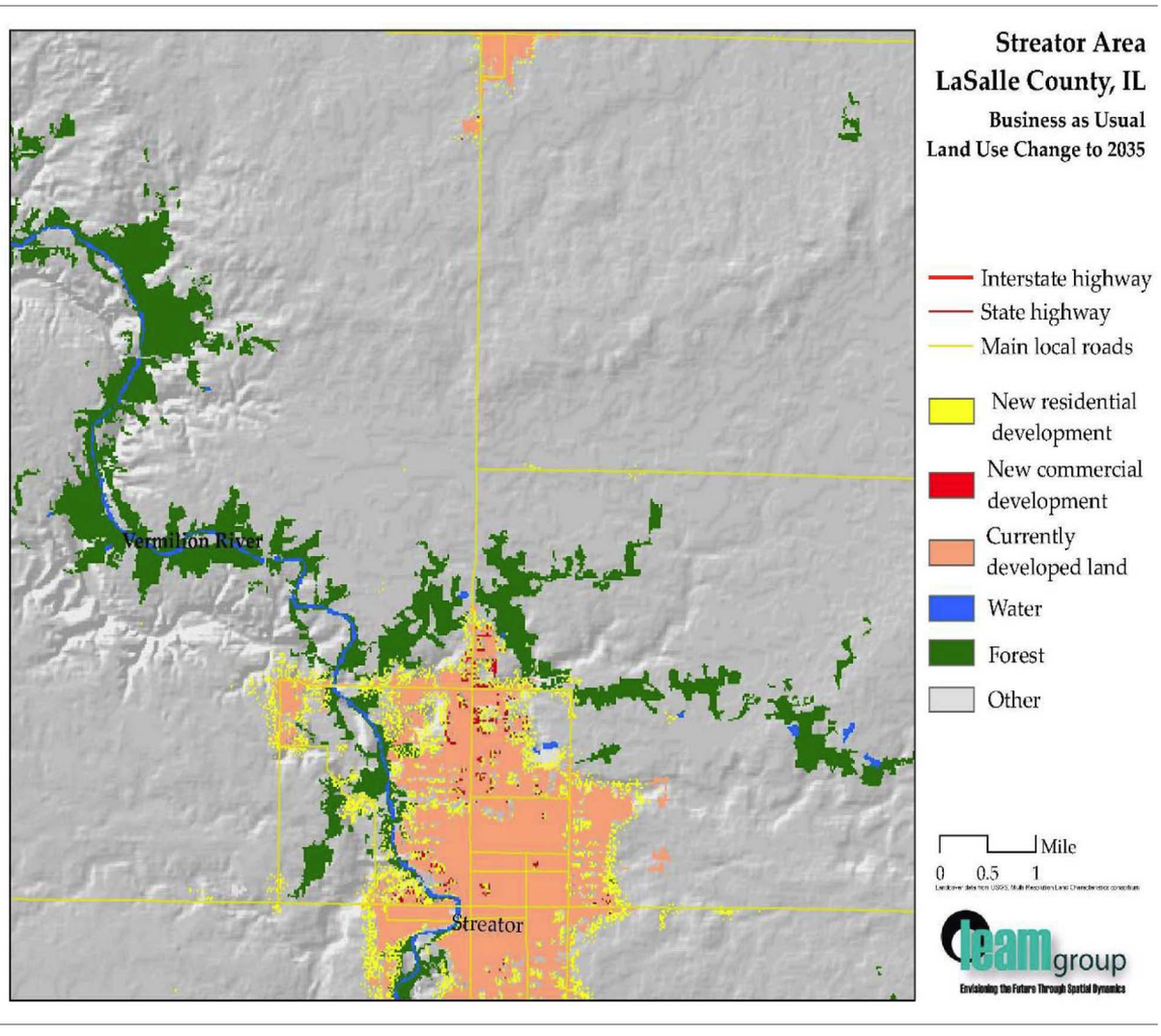
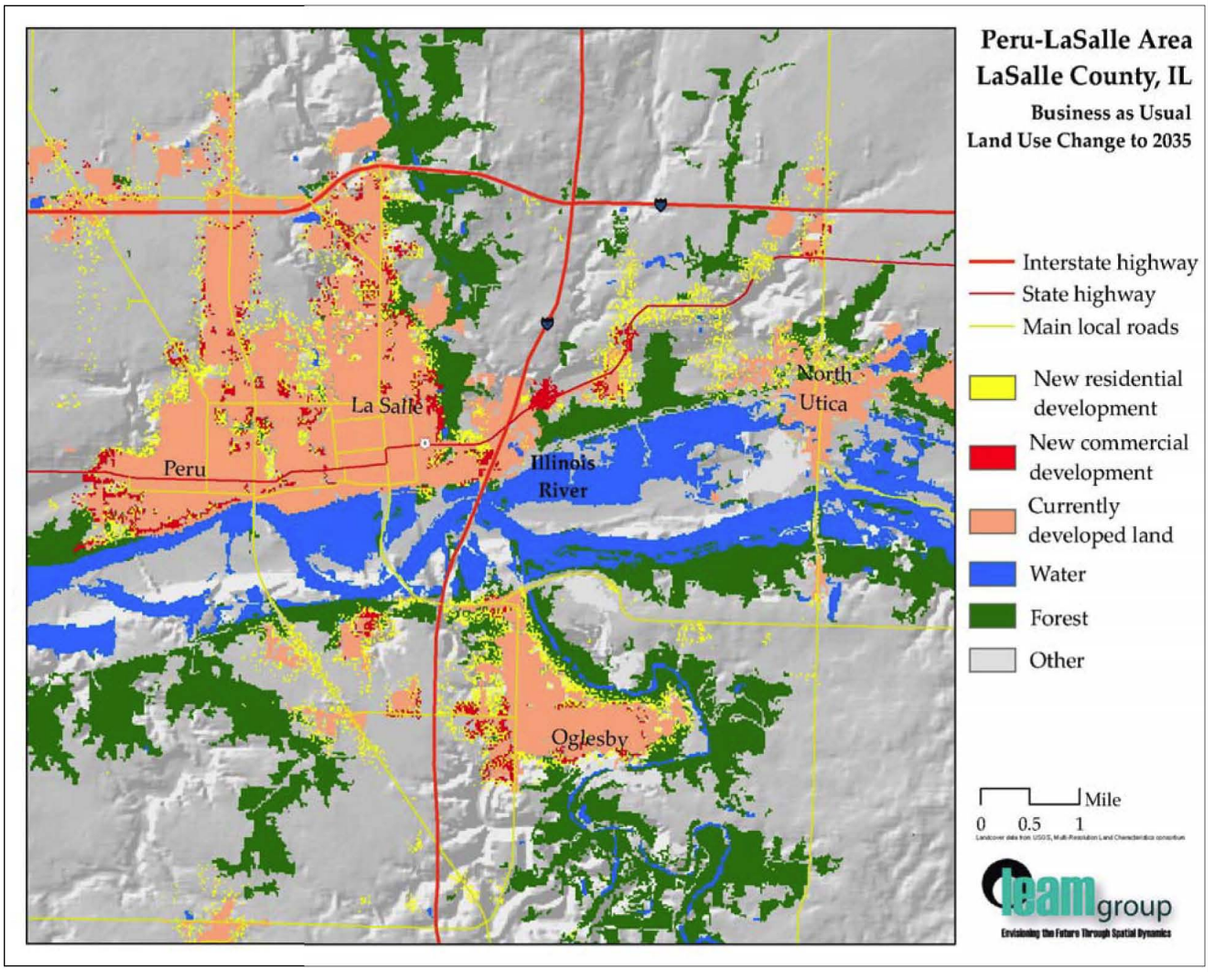
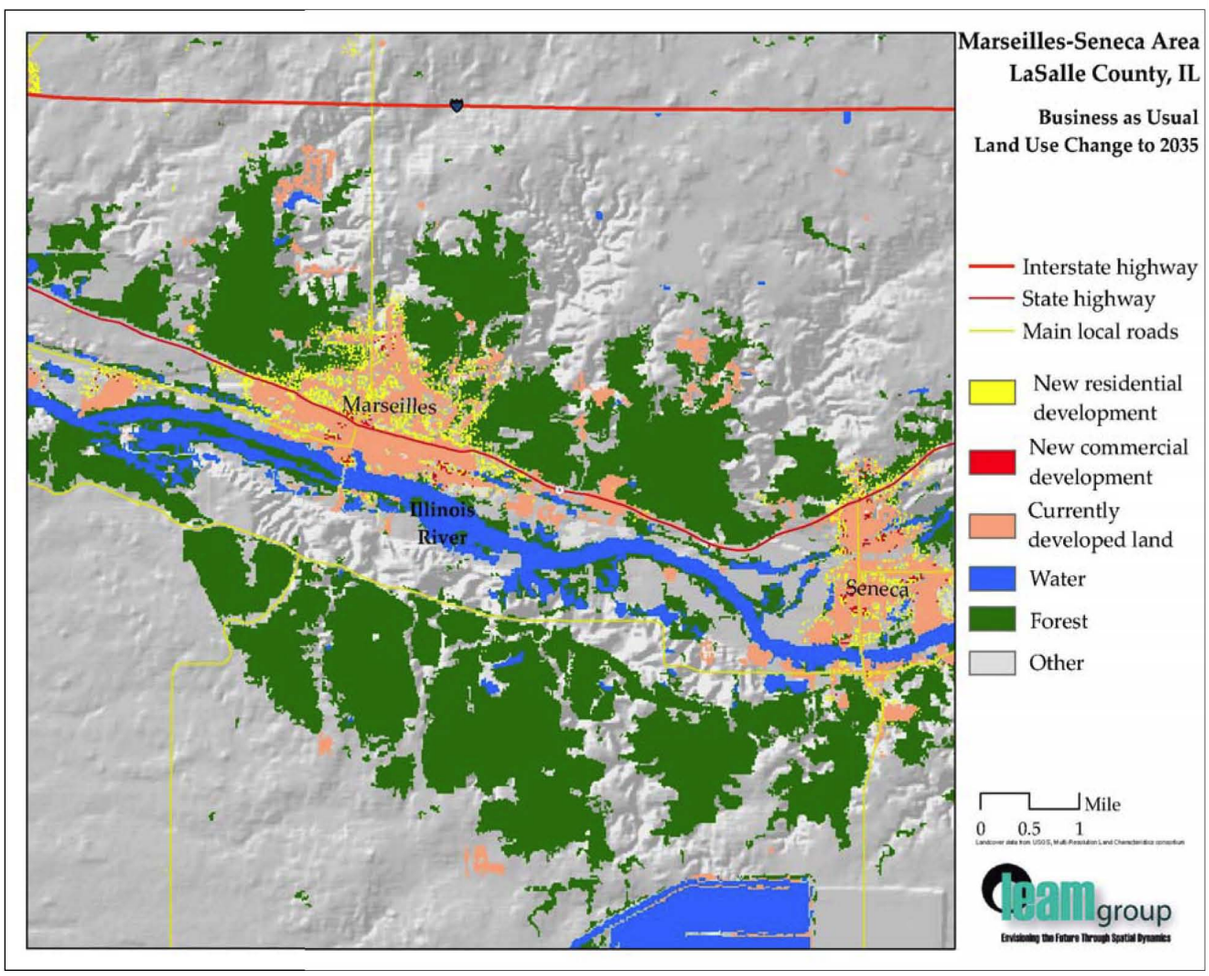


Figure A.16: LEAM projected land use results (Business as Usual scenario) in and around Streator, IL (LEAMgroup; USGS).

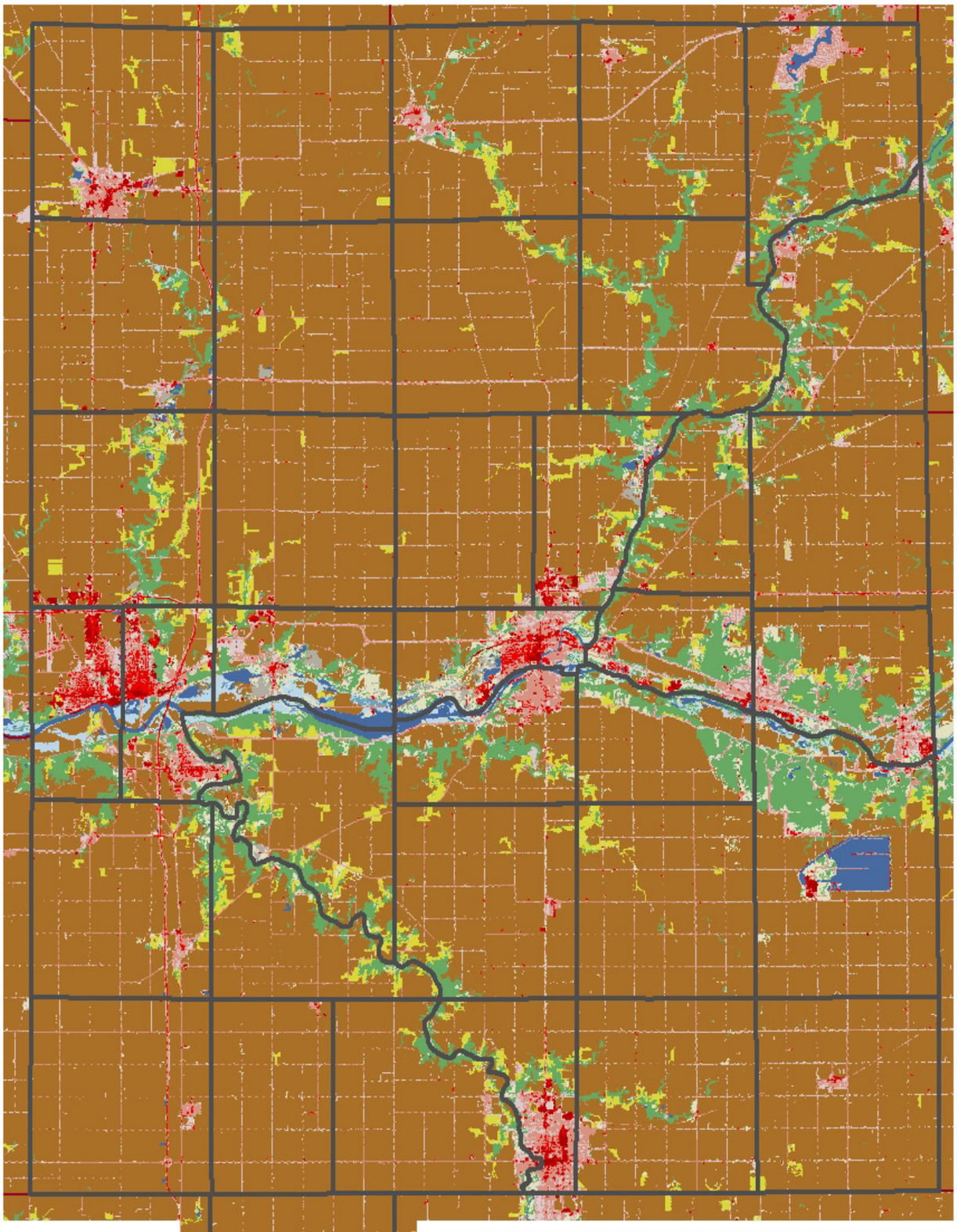


LEAM projected land use results (Business as Usual scenario) in and around Peru-LaSalle, IL (LEAMgroup; USGS).



LEAM projected land use results (Business as Usual scenario) in and around Marseilles-Seneca, IL (LEAMgroup; USGS).

Land Cover



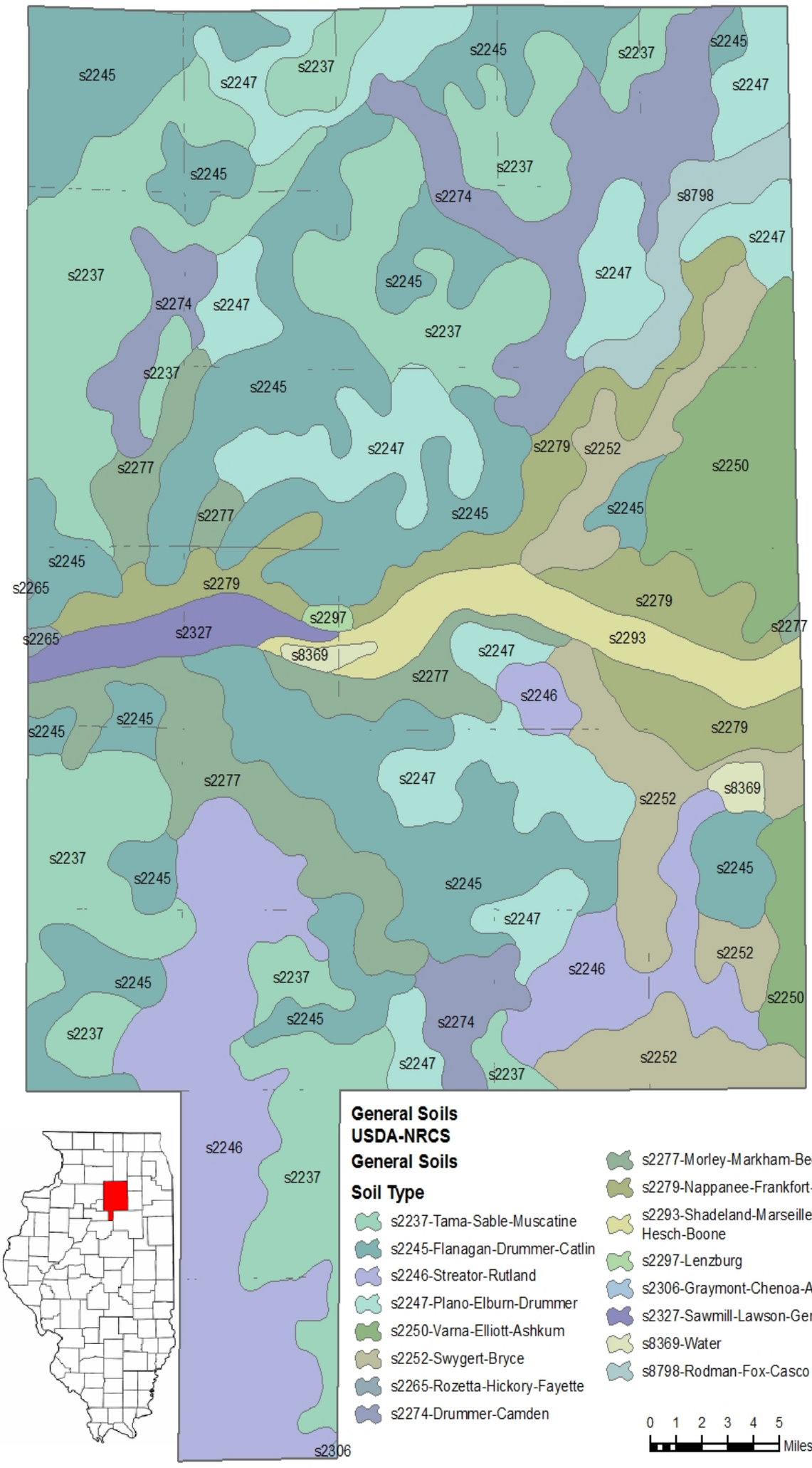
National Land Cover Data 2011

Land_Cover

- Barren Land
- Cultivated Crops
- Deciduous Forest
- Developed, High Intensity
- Developed, Low Intensity
- Developed, Medium Intensity
- Developed, Open Space
- Emergent Herbaceuous Wetlands
- Evergreen Forest
- Hay/Pasture
- Herbaceuous
- Mixed Forest
- Open Water
- Perennial Snow/Ice
- Shrub/Scrub
- Unclassified
- Woody Wetlands

May 2014-LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use. Map derived from the National Land Cover Database 2011 (NLCD) Multi-Resolution Land Characteristices Cosortium (MRLC) U.S. Department of Interior / U.S. Geological Survey

General Soil Association



General Soils
USDA-NRCS
General Soils

Soil Type

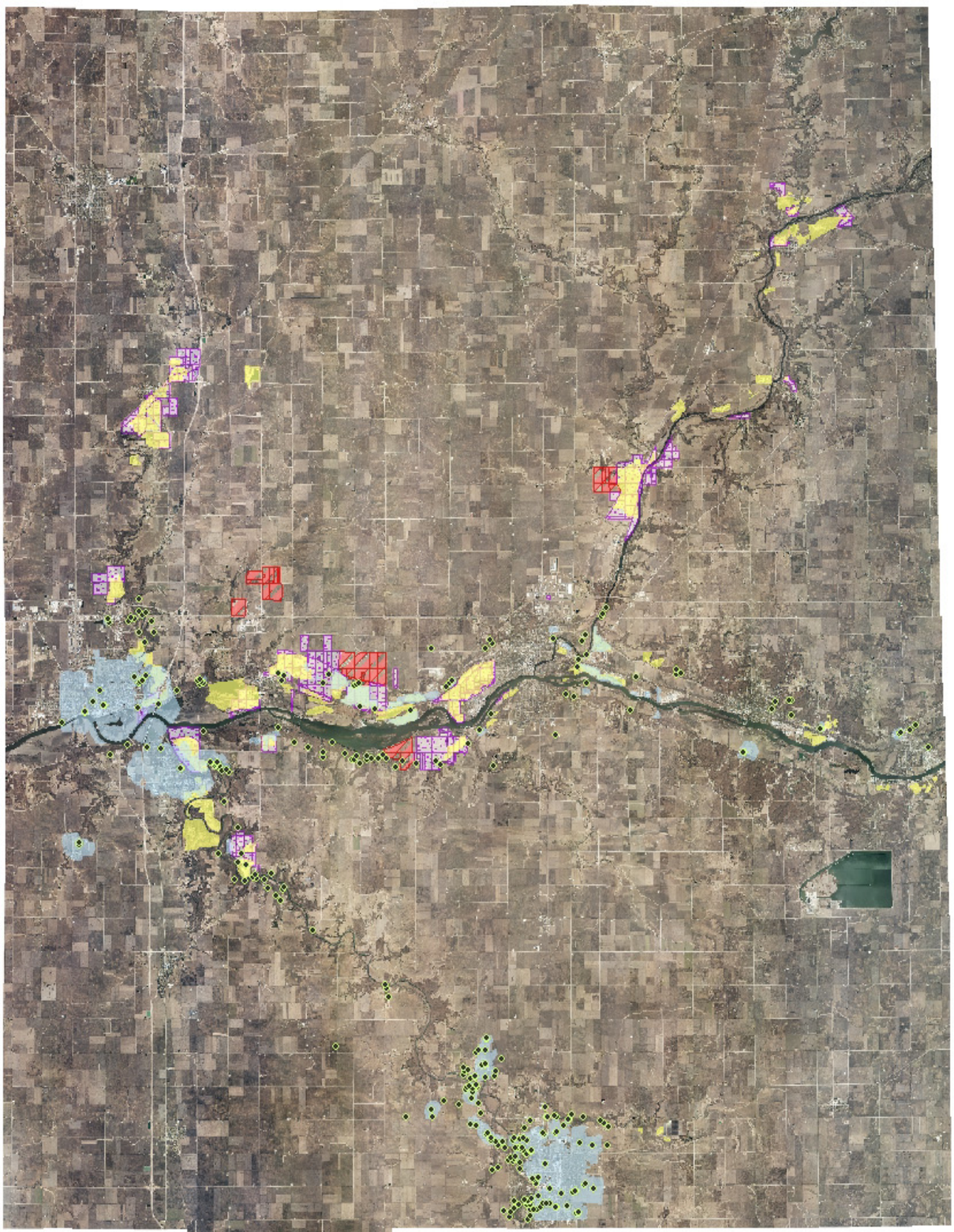
- s2237-Tama-Sable-Muscatine
- s2245-Flanagan-Drummer-Catlin
- s2246-Streator-Rutland
- s2247-Plano-Elburn-Drummer
- s2250-Varna-Elliott-Ashkum
- s2252-Swygert-Bryce
- s2265-Rozetta-Hickory-Fayette
- s2274-Drummer-Camden
- s2277-Morley-Markham-Beecher-Ashkum
- s2279-Nappanee-Frankfort-Bryce
- s2293-Shadeland-Marseilles- High Gap-Hesch-Boone
- s2297-Lenzburg
- s2306-Graymont-Chenoa-Ashkum
- s2327-Sawmill-Lawson-Genesee
- s8369-Water
- s8798-Rodman-Fox-Casco

N

0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

May 2014. LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use. General Soils Map. LaSalle County Soil Survey 2006. USDA-NRCS.

General Mining
(Sand, Gravel, Coal)



0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

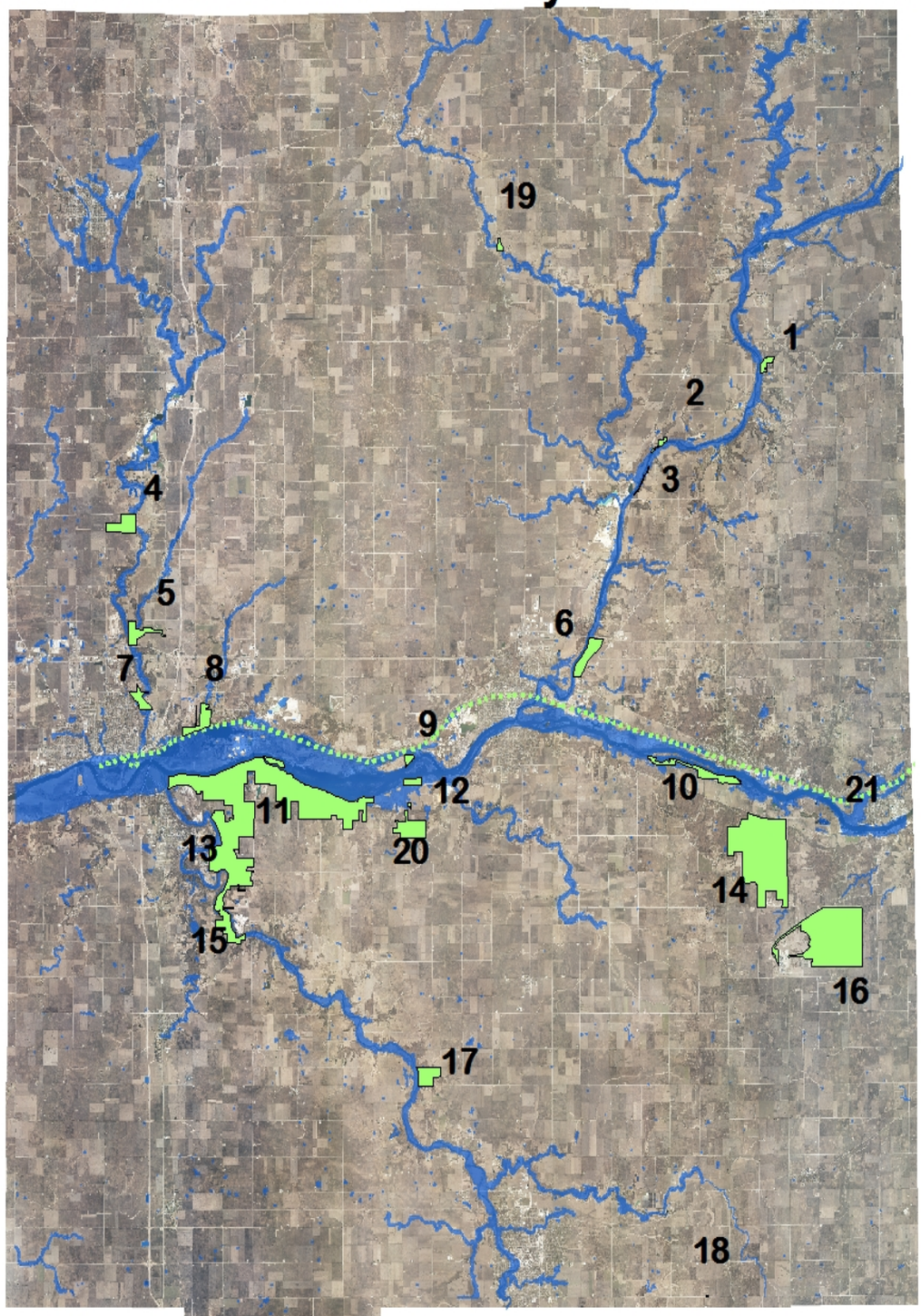
N

LaSalle County
General Mining Areas

- LaSalle County Historic Coal Shafts
- LaSalle County Historic Coal Mining Areas
- Surface Mined or Active Surface Mine
- Surface Mining Inventoried Pre 2006
- Surface Mining Approved Expansion-Post 2006

May 2014. LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use
Map derived from local County/City records and the
Illinois State Geological Survey

Protected Lands & Priority Natural Features



0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

Protected Lands and Priority Natural Features

- Protected Lands and Priority Natural Areas
- I&M_trail_section
- Priority Protection Features*

* Includes floodplain areas, wetlands, and Illinois Natural Area Inventory Sites

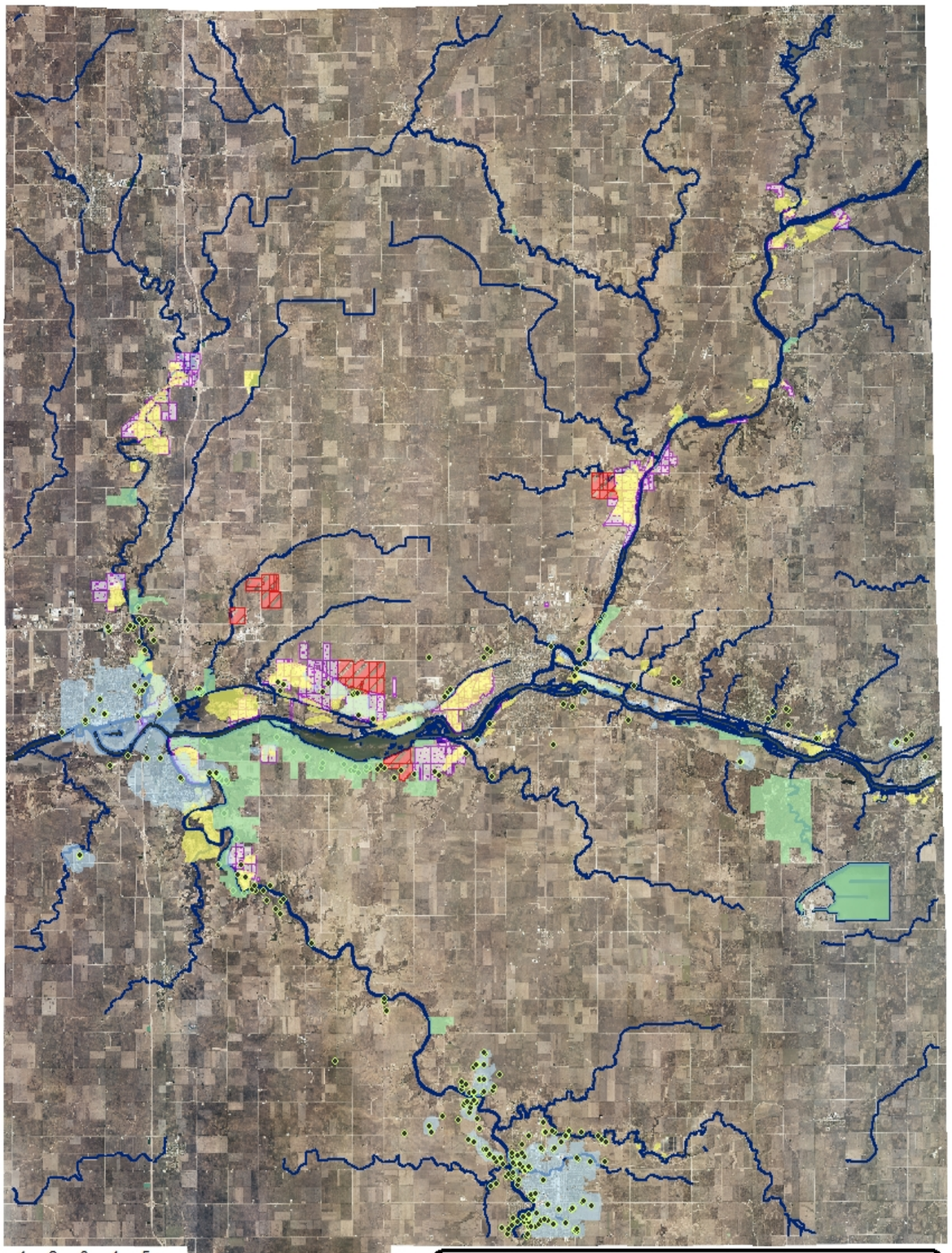
Existing Protected Lands and Priority Natural Features

1. Camp River Trails Land and Water Reserve
2. Lower Fox River-Blake's Landing Nature Preserve
3. Wedron Palisades Nature Preserve
4. Maze Woods Land and Water Reserve
5. Mitchell's Grove Nature Preserve
6. Dayton Bluffs Preserve
7. LaSalle Prairie Preserve
8. Pecumsaugen Creek-Blackball Mine Nature Preserve
9. Buffalo Rock State Park
10. Illini State Park
11. Starved Rock State Park
12. Catlin Salt Marsh Natural Heritage Landmark
13. Matthiessen State Park
14. Marseilles Fish and Wildlife Area
15. Margery C. Carlson Nature Preserve
16. LaSalle Lake Fish and Wildlife Area
17. Sandy Ford Land & Water Reserve
18. Voight Pauper Cemetery Prairie Land Water Reserve
19. Shabbona Park (County)
20. Catlin Park (County)
21. I & M Canal

N

May 2014. LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use. Map derived from IDNR Data and Maps, the USFWS-NWI, FEMA-FIRM Maps

General Mining and Priority/Protected Natural Land and Features



0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

N

General Mining Areas and Priority/Protected Land and Features

- Protected Land and Priority Natural Features
- LaSalle County Historic Coal Shafts
- LaSalle County Historic Coal Mining Areas
- Surface Mined or Active Surface Mine
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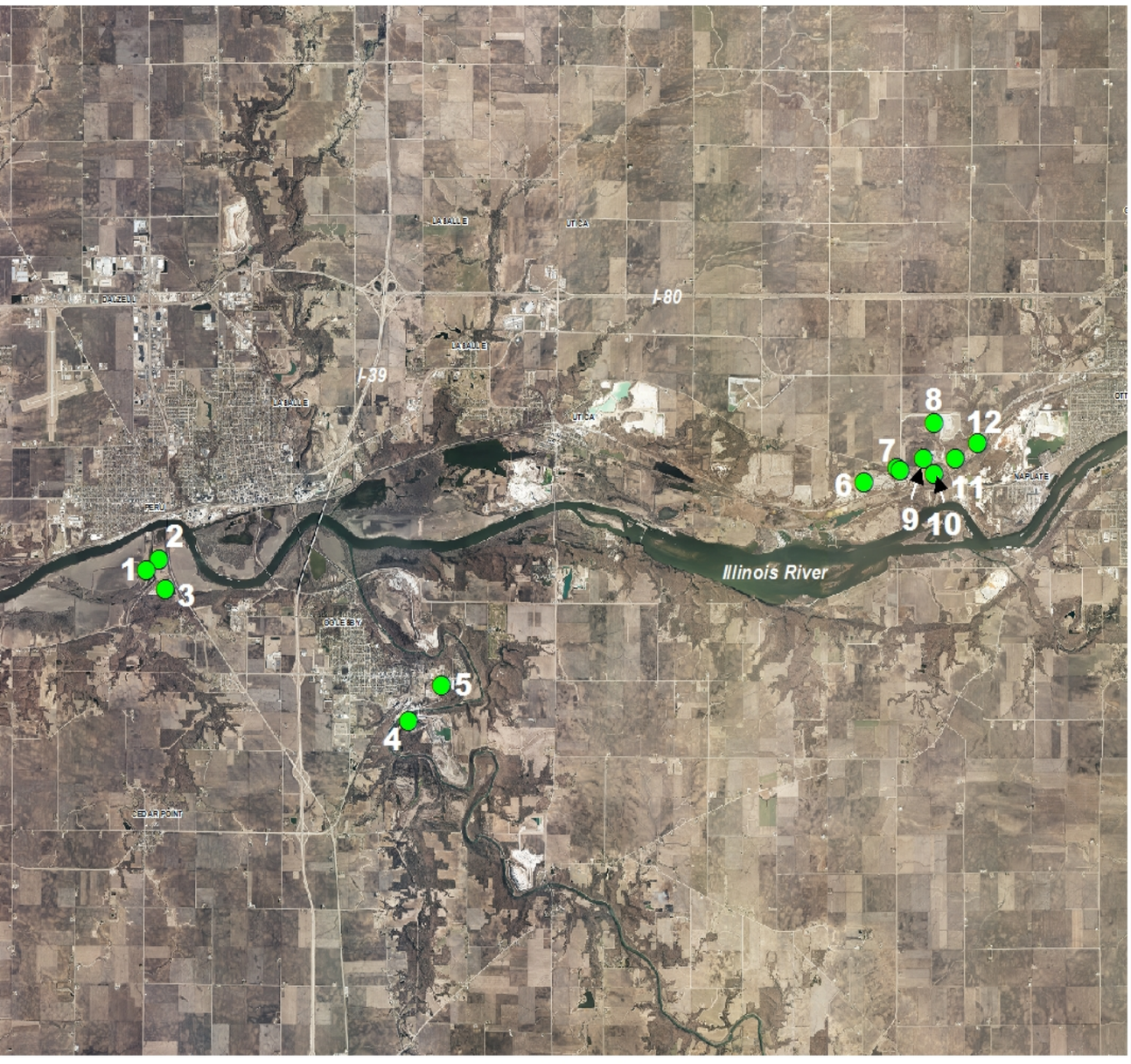
May 2014. LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use
Map derived from local County/City records and
the Illinois State Geological Survey

Identified Active and Closed Landfills



0 1 2 3 Miles

1. Peru Municipal Landfill 1 *CLOSED*	7. Brockman Landfill 2 and Carus Mono Fill 1 *CLOSED*
2. Peru Municipal Landfill 2 *CLOSED*	8. Landcomp Landfill *ACTIVE*
3. Peru Municipal Landfill 3 *CLOSED*	9. Carus Mono Fill 3 *ACTIVE*
4. Lonestar/Buzzi Unicem Mono Fill *ACTIVE*	10. State's Land Improvement Co. 1 *CLOSED*
5. Oglesby Municipal Landfill *CLOSED*	11. Carus Mono Fill 2 *ACTIVE*
6. Brockman Landfill 1 *CLOSED*	12. State's Land Improvement Co. 2 *CLOSED*

N

June 2014. LaSalle County Environmental Services and Land Use
Map derived from local County records and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Records. Map is intended to provide general information only.