

CITY OF ALTON

Comprehensive Plan



Prepared by

Richard Shearer & Associates

April 2003

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND
FUTURE LAND USE MAP OF THE CITY OF ALTON, ILLINOIS,
DATED APRIL, 2003

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF ALTON, ILLINOIS:

SECTION ONE

The City of Alton is a Home Rule Unit of Government and as such may exercise any powers or perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs.

SECTION TWO

That the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Alton, Illinois, dated April, 2003, prepared by Richard Shearer & Associates, together with the Future Land Use Map of the City of Alton, Illinois, both of which are attached hereto and made a part hereof be and are hereby approved and adopted as the official Comprehensive Plan of the City of Alton.

SECTION THREE

All ordinances or parts of other ordinances in conflict herewith shall be and hereby are repealed to the extent of any such conflict, provided that nothing herein shall in any way excuse or prevent prosecution of any previous or existing violation of any ordinance or part of any ordinance repealed or superseded hereby. Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed to affect any suit or proceeding now pending in any court, any rights acquired, any liability incurred, any cause of action acquired or existing by reason of this Ordinance or any part thereof repealed by this Ordinance. No accrued legal right or remedy of any kind or character shall be lost, impaired or effected by this Ordinance.

SECTION FOUR

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect on and after its passage, approval, and publication in pamphlet form in accordance with State Statutes.

Passed by the City Council of the City of Alton, this 18th day
of May, 2003.

Approved by the Mayor of the city of Alton, this 29th day of
May, 2003.

Arnold E. Lundberg
Mayor, City of Alton, Illinois

ATTEST:

Mary T. Baulds
City Clerk, City of Alton, Illinois

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Introduction

Location

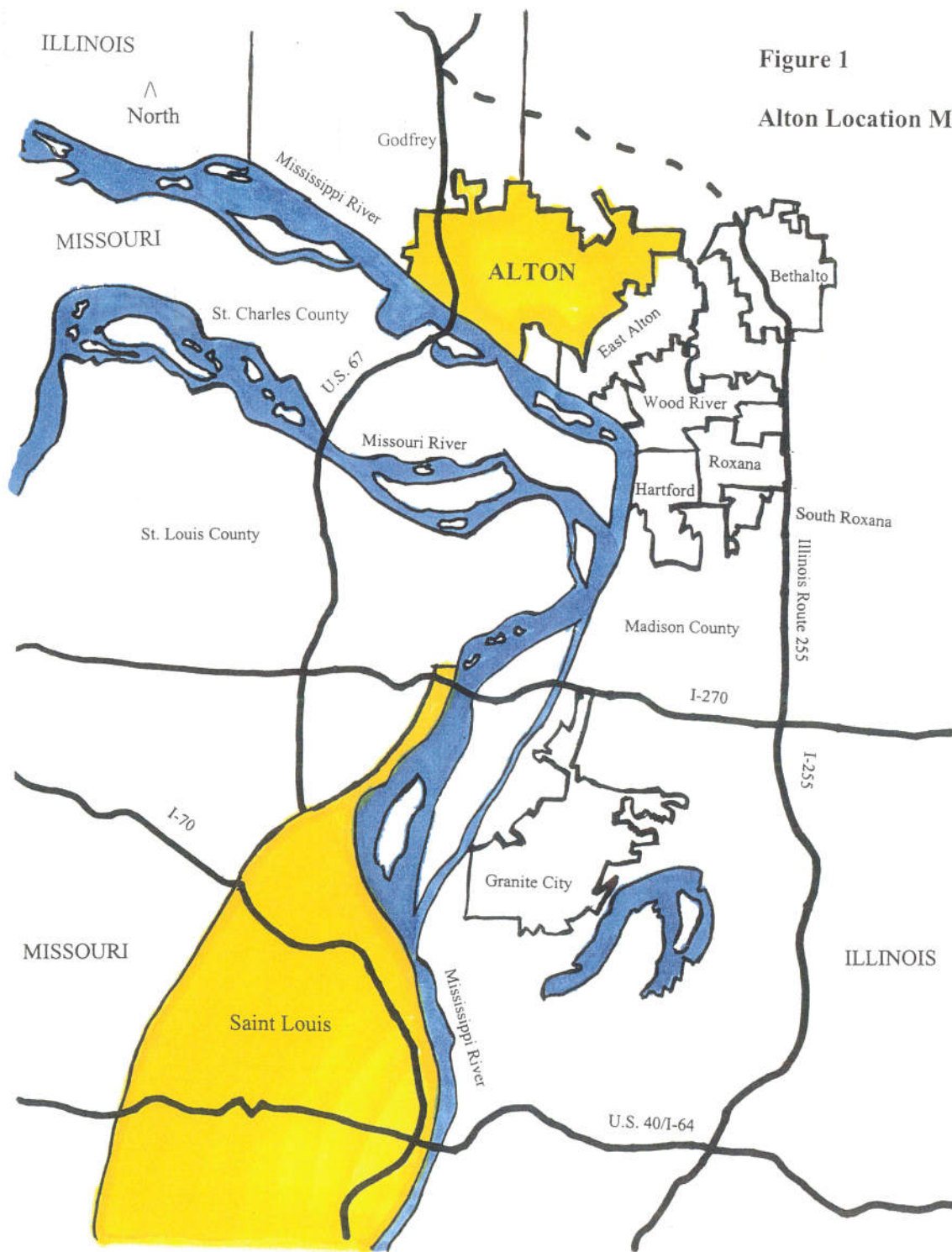
Alton is located on the north bank of the Mississippi River along a section of the river that runs from west to east. The city is between the confluence of the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers (approximately 12 miles to the west) and the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers (approximately 4 miles to the south). Alton is in Madison County in Southwest Illinois. Downtown St. Louis, Missouri, lies approximately 20 miles south of Alton. Other municipalities near Alton include East Alton and Bethalto to the east, West Alton to the southwest (across the Mississippi River), Wood River to the South and Godfrey to the north. Further south are the cities of Roxana, South Roxana, and Hartford. A regional location map is included in Figure 1.

Alton is within a National Scenic Byway, the Meeting of the Great Rivers Scenic Route. This route begins at the Melvin Price Visitors Center at Lock and Dam #26 and proceeds west along the Mississippi River on Highway 100, then runs north along the Illinois River to Kampsville. The route was designated as a National Scenic Byway by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) National Scenic Byways Program on June 9, 1998, and designated as an Illinois State Scenic Byway by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) on June 8, 1998. The 25-mile long Vandalabene (Great River Road) Bicycle Trail runs parallel to the Meeting of the Great Rivers Scenic Route from Alton to north of Pere Marquette State Park.

Natural Environment

Physiography

Alton is in the Interior Plains physiographic province that covers most of the mid-west and north-central portions of the United States. The Interior Plains province is characterized by flat to gently rolling topography. Alton is situated on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. The downtown area and adjacent industrial area are along the riverbank. Major geographic features in and around Alton include the alluvial valley of the Mississippi River (known as the American Bottoms) which extends from the downtown area southeasterly along the river, and the upland till plains and bluffs located on the north and east sides of the American Bottoms which contains many of Alton's residential areas. Much of Alton is characterized by bluffs, hills and steep ravines. Northern portions of Alton, and the area around it, consists of rolling upland and flat prairie.



Geology

The lithology of the surface underlying Alton consists of slightly to moderately tilted, older sedimentary rocks. These sedimentary rocks include shale, sandstone and limestone. Bedrock formations exposed in the area represent two separate geologic systems, the Mississippian and Pennsylvanian, each of which were formed at different periods during earth's history. Underneath these sedimentary rocks is granite (an igneous rock formed by cooling lava). Most of the surface underlying Alton consists of Mississippian rocks while the area east of Alton consists of Pennsylvanian rocks. Mississippian rocks including cherty limestone, shale and extensive solution limestone. Pennsylvanian rocks (more than 300 million years old) consist of cyclic strata of shales, sandstone and limestone with some seams of coal. These cyclic deposits are most common in the Alton area except the floodplains that contain alluvial sediments and soil material left by floods.

Soils

Soils in and around Alton include Fayette-Rozetta association, Tice-Nameoki-Landes association, Wakeland-Birds-Orion association, and Marine-Rozetta-Stronghurst association. These soils, their characteristics and general locations are described below.

Fayette-Rozetta association. These soils are gently sloping to steep, well drained and moderately well drained with moderately permeable subsoil. This soil group was formed in loess (wind-deposited material) on uplands. These soils cover most of Alton from Broadway north to north of Highway 111.

Tice-Nameoki-Landes association. Nearly level and gently sloping, somewhat poorly drained and well drained soils that are moderately permeable throughout, very slowly permeable in the upper part and moderately permeable in the lower part, or moderately rapidly permeable in the upper part and rapidly permeable in the lower part. This soil group was formed in silty, clayey, loamy, and sandy alluvial sediment on flood plains, natural levees, and low terraces. These soils are located between Broadway and the Mississippi River.

Wakeland-Birds-Orion association. These soils are nearly level, somewhat poorly drained and are moderately permeable or moderately slowly permeable. They were formed in silty alluvial (water-deposited) sediment on floodplains. This soil group is found immediately adjacent to the Wood River in areas east of the city.

Marine-Rozetta-Stronghurst Association. Nearly level and gently sloping, somewhat poorly drained and moderately well drained soils that have a slowly permeable or moderately permeable subsoil. They were formed in loess on uplands. These soils are located north of the city along U.S. Highway 67.

Vegetation

The Alton area is covered primarily by broad-leaf deciduous and needleleaf deciduous trees. Historically, the naturally occurring hardwood trees in upland areas have been oak and hickory varieties. In bottom areas, ash, box elder, cottonwood, silver maple, sycamore and willow trees predominate. Other native vegetation includes tall grasses associated with prairies. Trees native to the area include the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Green Ash (<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>) | Overcup Oak (<i>Quercus lyrata</i>) |
| White Ash (<i>Fraxinus americana</i>) | Pin Oak (<i>Quercus palustris</i>) |
| River Birch (<i>Betula nigra</i>) | Post Oak (<i>Quercus stellata</i>) |
| Ohio Buckeye (<i>Aesculus glabra</i>) | Northern Red Oak (<i>Quercus rubra</i>) |
| Butternut (<i>Juglans cinerea</i>) | Shumard Oak (<i>Quercus shumardii</i>) |
| Black Cherry (<i>Prunus serotina</i>) | Shingle Oak (<i>Quercus imbricaria</i>) |
| Kentucky Coffeetree (<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i>) | Swamp White Oak (<i>Quercus bicolor</i>) |
| Eastern Cottonwood (<i>Populus deltoides</i>) | White Oak (<i>Quercus alba</i>) |
| Roughleaf Dogwood (<i>Cornus drummondii</i>) | Willow Oak (<i>Quercus phellos</i>) |
| American Elm (<i>Ulmus americana</i>) | Common Persimmon (<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>) |
| Slippery Elm (<i>Ulmus rubra</i>) | Eastern Redbud (<i>Cercis canadensis</i>) |
| Winged Elm (<i>Ulmus alata</i>) | Eastern Redcedar (<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>) |
| Hackberry (<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>) | Downy Serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>) |
| Sugarberry (<i>Celtis laevigata</i>) | Sycamore (<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>) |
| Bitternut Hickory (<i>Carya cordiformis</i>) | Black Walnut (<i>Juglans nigra</i>) |
| Mockernut Hickory (<i>Carya tomentosa</i>) | Black Willow (<i>Salix Nigra</i>) |
| Pecan (<i>Carya illinoensis</i>) | |
| Pignut Hickory (<i>Carya glabra</i>) | |
| Shagbark Hickory (<i>Carya ovata</i>) | |
| Shellbark Hickory (<i>Carya laciniosa</i>) | |
| Honeylocust (<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>) | |
| Eastern Hophornbeam (<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>) | |
| American Hornbeam (<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>) | |
| American Basswood (Linden) (<i>Tilia americana</i>) | |
| Boxelder (<i>Acer negundo</i>) | |
| Red Maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>) | |
| Silver Maple (<i>Acer saccharinum</i>) | |
| Sugar Maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>) | |
| Red Mulberry (<i>Morus rubra</i>) | |
| Black Oak (<i>Quercus velutina</i>) | |
| Blackjack Oak (<i>Quercus marilandica</i>) | |
| Bur Oak (<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>) | |
| Chinkapin Oak (<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>) | |

Climate

Alton has a humid continental climate characterized by warm summers. The city's location in the middle latitudes allows warm moist air from the Gulf of Mexico and cold air masses from Canada to reach the area. These alternate invasions of air masses provide a wide variety of weather conditions and allows the city to enjoy a true four-season climate.

Most of the city's annual precipitation occurs in the warmer months. The city is, however, subject to wide variations in temperature and precipitation from season to season. The total average annual precipitation is approximately 36 inches, with an average annual snowfall of approximately 16 inches. Highest monthly precipitation (approximately 3.7 inches) is in June and the lowest amount of precipitation occurs in January. Precipitation in the winter months is primarily as snow that may occur from November through early April. The highest average snowfall (approximately 5.4 inches) is in January. While snow is generally the heaviest in January, ten inches of snow equals only one inch of precipitation.

Average temperatures vary considerably throughout the year. January, the coolest month, has an average high temperature of 38.5° F., and an average low temperature of 21.5° F. July, the warmest month, has an average high temperature of 89.0° F., and an average low temperature of 69.5° F. Temperatures of 100° F. occur at least one day during 80 percent of the summers. It is unusual, however, for temperature extremes to last for more than two or three days. The growing season (the period from the last killing frost in the Spring to the first killing frost in the Fall) is approximately 182 days per year. The prevailing wind direction is from the northwest and winds average 11 miles per hour.

History

Prehistory

During the late Archaic Period (7000 - 1000 B.C.E.) the first human inhabitants of the area lived in rock shelters along the Mississippi River bluffs. By the early Woodland Period (1000 B.C.E. - 900 C.E.), inhabitants of the area hunted and used special purpose tools made from stone (the Mississippian culture). During this period, the population increased, agricultural practices improved, social and religious practices evolved, and trade relations developed. This culture's high point occurred between 900 and 1500 C.E. when Cahokia Mounds, the largest North American prehistoric site, functioned as an urban center in the region. The Mississippian culture disappeared by the end of the 16th century. The Kaskaskia, Peoria, Tamoroa, Moroa, Mitchigamea and Kahokia Native Americans of the Illiniwek Confederation migrated to the area during the later part of the 17th century.

Early History

In 1541, Spanish explorers were the first Europeans to visit the area. This area was claimed for Spain by Hernando de Soto and later claimed for France by Rene-Robert Cavalier

LaSalle. King Louis XIV of France directed that a large area of the United States be explored in 1658, and French explorers from Quebec began searching for potential locations for trading posts in the Mississippi River Valley.

Louis Joliet and Father Jacques Marquette, a Jesuit priest, explored the area in 1673. Just below the mouth of the Illinois river on the face of the high bluffs above the Mississippi River they saw a figure of "The Piasa" bird. This figure was painted and cut into solid rock by a Native American tribe of the Upper Mississippi. In 1675, Father Marquette established a mission at the Native American Village of Kaskaskia. Another mission was established in Cahokia. Settlers of European descent (initially French) joined the Native American settlements of Kaskaskia and Cahokia around 1700.

By 1760, French traders, trappers, and missionaries had penetrated the Mississippi Valley and established settlements as far south as the Missouri River in St. Charles County, Missouri. The French had a profitable trade with the Native Americans. The first European settler in the area was Jean Baptiste Cardinal, a Frenchman who ran a fur trading post during the late eighteenth century where Alton exists.

After British General Wolfe defeated the French at Quebec, the Treaty of Paris of 1763 required that France give up all territory east of the Mississippi River to Britain. British troops occupied the territory beginning in 1765. After the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, Virginia claimed Illinois as part of its domain. The Virginia Governor and Assembly sent George Rogers Clark to the region in 1778 to secure the allegiance of the local residents. As the Revolutionary War ended, military operations ceased except for periodic Native American raids instigated by the British. A coalition of Native American tribes fought with early settlers in Illinois from 1783 until 1795. Most of the settlers banded close together south of Cahokia.

Development of Alton

A territorial government formed in 1812. Madison County, named for James Madison the fourth President of the United States, organized in 1812 and encompassed most of what would become the State of Illinois. The county's borders were the current southern boundary of the county, the Mississippi River on the west, the Wabash River on the east and the northern border reached to Canada. Illinois became a state in 1818. Madison County was reduced in size due to the creation of other counties. In 1847 the County's boundaries were fixed after the transfer of part of the northeast corner of the county to Bond County.

Colonel Rufus Easton, a land speculator and the postmaster general of St. Louis, viewed the north bank of the Mississippi River as the perfect location for a steamboat landing. He platted a new city which he named after his son, Alton. He began ferry line service between the new town and Missouri in 1818. The 1820 census reported 13,550 citizens in Madison County (which included present day Sangamon and Macoupin Counties).

In the early part of the 19th century, the temporary state capital in Vandalia was

proposed to be moved to Alton and the State House Square area was set aside for the new capital building. However, the capital was moved instead to Springfield with the promise from state leaders that Alton would become the railroad capital of Illinois (Chicago became the nation's rail center with the St. Louis area becoming the second leading rail center).

Alton grew quickly during the 1830's due to growing steamboat trade with New Orleans. The public school system was established in 1843. In 1832 Alton Seminary was founded; The name was changed in 1835 to Shurtleff College. The property currently serves as the Southern Illinois University Dental School. Loomis Hall, the original structure still stands. Alton incorporated as a city in 1837. Also in 1837, abolitionist minister and editor of the Alton *Observer* Elijah Lovejoy was murdered by a mob of pro-slavery sympathizers. This was followed by the demise of the steamboat era which slowed the city's growth.

However, the city recovered and in the 1850s, the first railroad station was constructed which revived downtown. Alton served as an important transportation center. Railroads came to Alton, where many travelers chose to continue their journey westward via the ferry to St. Louis.

Illinois was a free state while Missouri was a slave state. Because of its proximity to Missouri, Alton served as an important stop on the underground railroad. Lyman Trumbull, a local resident, was the senator who authored the thirteenth amendment which gave slaves their freedom.

The last of the senatorial debates between Abraham Lincoln and Steven Douglas occurred in Alton in 1858. This site has life size statues of the scene today. The first Illinois State Penitentiary was located in Alton in 1833. During the Civil War, it was reopened and served as a prison for captured confederate soldiers. A small box epidemic broke out in 1863 and more than 1,300 prisoners died.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the city's proximity to the Mississippi River and excellent railroad facilities attracted heavy industries. These companies became the area's largest employers and helped form Alton's social classes and neighborhoods. Wealthy families built large homes on the hills around downtown while working-class families settled on the lower lands. By 1895, Illinois Glass Company (Owens-Illinois, Inc.), employed 2,400 people. The manufacturing district along the river front contained 102 industries.

Alton began to change in the 1950's. Many industries closed due to obsolete facilities which were too expensive to renovate. The city's population peaked in 1960. As with many other downtown areas throughout the country, Alton's retail district suffered during the 1970s, particularly after the opening of the Alton Square Mall in 1978. Many historic buildings, including the 1860's-era Union Station, were razed. Owens-Illinois, Inc., closed its major shop in 1983.

The city again recovered. Many natives of and newcomers to the St. Louis area began

discovering the Victorian-era houses, tree-lined streets and lovely parks in the city. Residents organized to preserve their architectural heritage and history by establishing three historic districts and placing 11 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. The first gaming casino in Illinois (the Alton Belle) opened in September 1991 with 840 employees. The new Clark Bridge opened in 1994 providing better access between Alton and the St. Louis area.

Many people come to Alton today to view the river from the scenic bluffs. They also come for the restaurants, antique stores, and historic lodging. Outdoor activities are also an option with bike trails, beautiful new and historic parks and numerous golf courses. A municipal marina along the Mississippi River serves as a great stopping place for boaters.

Comprehensive Planning

In its broadest sense, planning is a process of guiding and maintaining the orderly growth and development of an area. Its goal is the promotion of the public welfare through the application of sound planning principles, which reflect the basic social, cultural and economic values of the community. City planning is closely associated with helping decision-makers in thinking systematically and in understanding public issues. Planning is a process for deciding the appropriate future action through a sequence of choices.

The city has realized the need to maintain a comprehensive plan to guide future development. The city has previously prepared comprehensive plans in 1928, 1960 and 1970. This current planning effort is designed to update these previous plans and provide clear guidance to the community in realizing its long-range goals.

Socioeconomic Conditions

A critical component of city planning is not just a city's total population, but also the characteristics of that population. Therefore, a review of socioeconomic data for Alton was performed by examining trends over the preceding decades. Data from the 2000 U.S. census, 1990 census and some previous years were used to compare social and economic characteristics of Alton's population over several decades as well as to compare Alton to Madison County and the State of Illinois.

Population Characteristics

Population Growth

Alton was incorporated in 1837. The city grew rapidly as its location on the Mississippi River and its excellent railroad facilities attracted new industries. Alton's growth continued through 1960 when its population peaked at 43,047. Since that time, the city's population has declined. In 2000, Alton had a population of 30,496 representing a decrease of 29.2 percent from its 1960 population. Historical population data is summarized in Table 1.

| Year | Population | Percent Change |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1900 | 14,210 | -- |
| 1910 | 17,528 | 23.3% |
| 1920 | 24,682 | 40.8% |
| 1930 | 30,151 | 22.2% |
| 1940 | 31,255 | 3.7% |
| 1950 | 32,550 | 4.1% |
| 1960 | 43,047 | 32.2% |
| 1970 | 39,700 | -7.8% |
| 1980 | 34,171 | -13.9% |
| 1990 | 33,064 | -3.2% |
| 2000 | 30,496 | -7.8% |

Source: US Census

Socioeconomic Conditions

While Alton lost population between 1960 and 2000, it has not been alone in this loss. Many communities in the St. Louis area, including southern Illinois and St. Louis County, have experienced similar or more rapid population losses. In fact, more than 42 municipalities in St. Louis County alone had significant population losses between 1960 and 2000. A comparison of Alton to several other cities is included in Table 2.

While Alton experienced a loss in total population between 1960 and 2000, many traditionally affluent suburbs in the St. Louis area also experienced significant population losses during this time, even cities with substantial redevelopment. Brentwood, Richmond Heights, University City and Webster Groves all had significant population losses, while maintaining their status as desirable places to live and experiencing extensive redevelopment.

Another factor to be considered is that many St. Louis suburbs, particularly cities in North St. Louis County, had their peak population in 1970, and have declined significantly since then. Cities such as Ferguson, Bellefontaine Neighbors, Berkeley, Jennings and Florissant had their peak populations in 1970 and have subsequently had extensive population losses.

| City | 1960 Population | 2000 Population | Population Loss | Percent Loss |
|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Alton | 43,047 | 30,496 | 12,551 | 29.2% |
| Berkeley, MO | 18,676 | 10,063 | 8,613 | 46.1% |
| Brentwood, MO | 12,250 | 7,693 | 4,557 | 37.2% |
| Charlack, MO | 1,493 | 12 | 1,481 | 99.2% |
| East St. Louis, IL | 81,712 | 31,542 | 50,170 | 61.4% |
| Granite City, IL | 40,073 | 31,301 | 8,772 | 21.9% |
| Kinloch, MO | 6,501 | 449 | 6,052 | 93.1% |
| Richmond Heights, MO | 15,622 | 9,602 | 6,020 | 38.5% |
| St. Louis, MO | 750,026 | 348,189 | 401,837 | 53.6% |
| University City, MO | 51,249 | 37,428 | 13,082 | 27.0% |
| Webster Groves, MO | 28,990 | 23,230 | 5,760 | 19.9% |
| Wellston, MO | 7,979 | 2,460 | 5,519 | 69.2% |

Source: US Census

Age

The median age of Alton's residents in 2000 was 35.4 years, which was younger than the median age of Madison County (36.9 years) but slightly older than the median age of the State of Illinois (34.7 years). Due to the large number of young adults living in the Chicago area, it is not surprising that the state's median age is younger than those of Alton and Madison County.

The age distribution of Alton's population (commonly referred to as cohort groups) is consistent with other cities of its size. In 2000, there were a large number of young families living in Alton as indicated by the percentages of the population in the 25-to-44 cohort group (29.0 percent) and the 0-to-14 cohort group (21.7 percent). There was also a relatively large percentage within the 45-to-54 cohort group. Part of the reason for the large concentration of people between the ages of 35 and 55 is the fact that the period when these people were born corresponds to the period when the United States experienced the largest number of births (the period between 1946 and 1964 referred to as the baby boom).

There was a slight drop in the percentage of the city's population in the 15-to-24 cohort group because individuals within this age range tend to leave town to attend college, join the military or for employment reasons. There was also a decrease in the percentage of the population in cohort groups over the age of 55. Yet the percentage of Alton's residents age 65 or older (16.0 percent) was greater than those of Madison County and the State of Illinois (14.3 percent and 12.1 percent, respectively). Alton's percentage of elderly residents is not unusual for a mature community. In fact, it suggests that the younger cohort groups that moved to Alton prior to 1960 have remained in the city. Population information by cohort group for Alton is included in Table 3.

Since 1960, the percentage of Alton's population within the 0-to-14 cohort group has decreased while the percentage of residents in the 25-to-54 and 65-and-over cohort groups has increased. The percentage of children and youth in Alton decreased from 29.7 percent in 1960 to 21.7 percent in 2000; the percentage of adults between the ages of 25 and 54 increased from 37.4 percent in 1960 to 41.0 percent in 2000; and the percentage of adults age 65 and over increased from 9.9 percent in 1960 to 16.0 percent in 2000. These changes reflect national trends of an increase in the proportion of the population in their child-rearing years (otherwise known as the "baby boom" generation) and in the number of elderly people (resulting from increased life expectancies). As a result of the large increase in the number of middle-aged and elderly residents, the city's median age increased from 31.2 years in 1960 to 35.4 years in 2000.

Over the past decade, Alton has experienced a decrease in the percentage of its population within the 0-to-14, 25-to-34 and 65-and-over cohort groups. Between 1990 and 2000, these cohort groups decreased from 22.4 percent to 21.7 percent; from 17.3 percent to 14.5 percent; and from 17.2 percent to 16.0 percent, respectively. In contrast, the percentage of the city's population within the 35-to-54 cohort group increased from 21.5 percent in 1990 to 26.5 percent in 2000. The city's median age increased from 33.5 years in 1990 to 35.4 years in 2000.

Again, these changes closely resemble national trends as the “baby boom” generation continues to age.

| Table 3 Population by Age, 2000 | | |
|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Cohort Group | Total | Percentage |
| Under 5 years | 2,197 | 7.2% |
| 5-to-9 years | 2,182 | 7.2% |
| 10-to-14 years | 2,212 | 7.3% |
| 15-to-19 years | 2,021 | 6.6% |
| 20-to-24 years | 2,029 | 6.7% |
| 25-to-34 years | 4,436 | 14.5% |
| 35-to-44 years | 4,434 | 14.5% |
| 45-to-54 years | 3,666 | 12.0% |
| 55-to-59 years | 1,308 | 4.3% |
| 60-to-64 years | 1,124 | 3.7% |
| 65-to-74 years | 2,221 | 7.3% |
| 75-to-84 years | 1,833 | 6.0% |
| Over 84 years | 833 | 2.7% |
| TOTAL | 30,496 | 100.0% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

Household Composition and Size

The total number of households in Alton in 2000 was 12,518. Consistent with the age distribution of the population, 61.1 percent of the city’s households were occupied by families. Several types of families are identified within the broad title of family households, including male- or female-headed households without a spouse, yet the traditional family (married couple with children) accounted for the largest percentage of family households in Alton. The city’s percentage of family households was less than those of Madison County and the State of Illinois (68.7 percent and 67.7 percent, respectively). Non-family households, including single-person households, occupied 38.9 percent of the Alton’s households. This percentage was greater than those of Madison County and the State of Illinois (31.3 percent and 32.4 percent, respectively).

Socioeconomic Conditions

This is largely due to the number of people age 65 or older living in Alton since many of these people live alone. Alton's 2000 average household size was 2.36, reflecting the number of single-person households in the city. For that reason, average household size in the city was less than those in Madison County (2.48) or the State of Illinois (2.63). Household composition for Alton is included in Table 4.

Alton experienced a decline in its number of households (from 12,969 to 12,518) as well as in its population over the past decade. Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of family households in the city decreased from 65.3% to 61.1% of all households. During this time period, the number of households with traditional families also decreased (from 46.5% to 39.3%) while male- and female-headed families increased (from 3.4% to 4.4% and from 15.4% to 17.4%, respectively). These changes follow a national trend of an increase in the number of single-parent households. Non-family households in Alton increased from 34.7% in 1990 to 38.9% in 2000. Likewise, single-person households increased from 30.5% to 33.3%. Average household size decreased from 2.47 in 1990 to 2.36 in 2000. The number of persons per household in Alton has continuously decreased since 1960, when average household size was 3.14, reflecting smaller families, older couples whose children have grown and left home, and more people living alone.

| Table 4 Household Composition, 2000 | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Category | Number of Households | Percentage |
| Total Households | 12,518 | 100.0% |
| Family Households | 7,650 | 61.1% |
| Married Couples | 4,924 | 39.3% |
| Male Householder | 552 | 4.4% |
| Female Householder | 2,174 | 17.4% |
| Non-Family Households | 4,868 | 38.9% |
| Single Households | 4,166 | 33.3% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

Income

Income figures for Alton for 1989 and 1999 are shown in Table 5 and household and family incomes for Alton, Madison County and Illinois are shown in Table 6. Based partly on increased incomes due to inflation, the number of households and families in the lower income levels decreased while the numbers in the upper income levels increased. The number of households in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 income level was consistent from 1989 to 1999.

| Table 5 Income | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| | 1999 | | 1989 | |
| Income Level | Household | Family | Household | Family |
| Less than \$10,000 | 2,001 | 753 | 2,915 | 1,336 |
| \$10,000 - \$14,999 | 1,223 | 583 | 1,537 | 699 |
| \$15,000 - \$24,999 | 1,895 | 1,043 | 2,522 | 1,642 |
| \$25,000 - \$34,999 | 1,681 | 1,056 | 2,155 | 1,659 |
| \$35,000 - \$49,999 | 2,393 | 1,614 | 2,368 | 1,886 |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 2,101 | 1,557 | 1,071 | 966 |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 672 | 572 | 271 | 254 |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 424 | 357 | 92 | 92 |
| \$150,000 or more | 130 | 111 | 32 | 32 |
| TOTAL | 12,520 | 7,646 | 12,963 | 8,566 |

Source: 2000 and 1990 US Census

Median incomes for households and families in Alton were lower than the levels for households and families in Madison County and Illinois in both 1989 and 1999. In addition, the percentage of increases in median income was lower for Alton than for Madison County and Illinois during this same period.

**Table 6
Median Income Comparison**

| | Illinois | | | Madison County | | | Alton | | |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | 1989 | 1999 | % Change | 1989 | 1999 | % Change | 1989 | 1999 | % Change |
| Hshld | \$32,252 | \$46,590 | 44% | \$29,861 | \$41,541 | 39% | \$22,948 | \$31,213 | 36% |
| Family | \$38,664 | \$55,545 | 44% | \$35,688 | \$50,862 | 43% | \$28,333 | \$37,910 | 34% |

Source: 2000 and 1990 US Census

A poverty status comparison among Alton, Madison County and Illinois for 1999 is summarized in Table 7. This table indicates that Alton had a higher percentage of individuals and families below the poverty line than did Madison County and Illinois.

**Table 7
Poverty Status Comparison**

| | Illinois | | Madison County | | Alton | |
|-------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-------|------------|
| | 1999 | % of total | 1999 | % of total | 1999 | % of total |
| Individuals | 1,291,958 | 10.7% | 24,774 | 9.8% | 5,553 | 18.7% |
| Families | 244,303 | 7.8% | 5,088 | 7.2% | 1,124 | 14.7% |

Source: 2000 US Census

Table 8 documents numbers and percentages of Alton households that had income from other sources (other than wages and salaries) in 1999. This table indicates that 31 percent of the city's households had social security income and 19.4 percent had retirement income. Supplemental security income was reported for 7.2 percent of households, with only 5.6 percent of households receiving public assistance income.

| Table 8 Alton Households with Other Income Sources (1999) | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| w/ Social Security Income | 3,882 | 31% |
| w/ Supplemental Security Income | 906 | 7.2% |
| w/ public assistance income | 696 | 5.6% |
| w/ retirement income | 2,425 | 19.4% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

Table 9 document the number of households with 0, 1, 2 or 3 or more vehicles available. This data is typically a measure of affluence and identified the number of transit-dependent households. In 2000, 12.1 percent of the households had no vehicle available and so are termed transit-dependent. This means they are dependent on transit, walking, or some other means of transportation.

| Table 9 Vehicles Available (2000) | | |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|
| | No. of Households | % of Households |
| 0 | 1,517 | 12.1% |
| 1 | 5,275 | 42.2% |
| 2 | 4,124 | 33% |
| 3 or more | 1,597 | 12.8% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

Education

Table 10 shows educational attainment levels for Alton residents 25 years of age and older in 2000. Of these individuals, 81.2 percent had at least a high school education. While 16.1 percent had at least a bachelors degree, a significant number (48 percent) had attended college. The percentage of these individuals with a graduate or professional degree (master’s degree, law degree, medical degree, etc.) was 5.2 percent.

| Table 10 Educational Attainment | | |
|---|--------|-------|
| Population 25 years and over | 19,957 | 100% |
| Less than 9 th grade | 1,297 | 6.5% |
| 9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma | 2,556 | 12.3% |
| High School graduate (includes equivalency) | 6,630 | 33.2% |
| Some college, no degree | 4,910 | 24.6% |
| Associate degree | 1,459 | 7.3% |
| Bachelor's degree | 2,182 | 10.9% |
| Graduate or professional degree | 1,033 | 5.2% |
| Percent high school graduate or higher | | 81.2% |
| Percent bachelor's degree or higher | | 16.1% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

Employment

Employment information is summarized in Tables 11 and 12. Employment status is summarized in Table 11. While the percentage of unemployed persons age 16 and over was only 4.4 of the total population 16 and over, the unemployment rate is figured based on the number of persons in the labor force (14,107 individuals) not the total number of persons age 16 and over (23,383). This results in an unemployment rate of approximately 7.4 percent of the labor force, which was much higher than the national average in 2000.

| Table 11 Employment Status | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|-------|
| Population 16 years and over | 23,383 | 100% |
| In labor force | 14,107 | 60.3% |
| Employed | 13,044 | 55.8% |
| Unemployed | 1,039 | 4.4% |
| Not in labor force | 9,276 | 39.7% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

Industry

Table 12 classifies workers by the industry they were employed in. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes have been included. Indicative of Alton's history, 15.1 percent of the workers were engaged in manufacturing. A significant number of workers (25.6 percent) were involved in educational, health and social services. This is due, in part, to the large number of hospitals in the city, educational facilities in the area, and the fact that a large percentage of the national work force is engaged in service activities. The 10.3 percent of workers employed in arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services is largely due to the presence of the Alton Belle Casino.

| Table 12 Industry | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Industry | NAICS Code | Employees | % of Workers |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining | 11, 21 | 55 | 0.4% |
| Construction | 23 | 564 | 4.3% |
| Manufacturing | 31-33 | 1,964 | 15.1% |
| Wholesale Trade | 42 | 338 | 2.6% |
| Retail Trade | 44-45 | 1,569 | 12.0% |
| Transportation and warehousing, and utilities | 48-49, 22 | 688 | 5.3% |
| Information | 51 | 289 | 2.2 |
| Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing | 52-53 | 721 | 5.5% |
| Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services | 54-56 | 1,122 | 8.6 |
| Educational, health and social services | 61-62 | 3,336 | 25.6 |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services | 71-72 | 1,341 | 10.3% |
| Other services (except public administration) | 81 | 666 | 5.1% |
| Public Administration | 92 | 391 | 3.0% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | | |

Community Facilities

The City of Alton owns many parcels of land and several public buildings necessary to provide services to residents. Some of this land and all of the public buildings are used for general government, police protection, fire protection, public works, and parks and recreation. Community facilities to house municipal activities include city hall, the public works facility, the Law Enforcement Center, the Haskell House (described in the parks and recreation section of this plan) and two fire stations. In addition to the city-owned facilities, a number of public, semi-public and private agencies operate various institutional uses including schools, colleges and hospitals. Locations of various community facilities are depicted in Figure 2.

City Hall

City hall was constructed in 1927. It contains approximately 35,000 square feet of floor space and houses municipal administrative offices, the council chamber and city courtroom. While the building was well constructed and appears sound, the floor space is not efficiently laid-out. Planned renovation of the interior or construction of a new facility is necessary to house city administrative staff and provide for efficient city operations.

Public Works Department

Alton's Public Works Department is housed in a 36,000 square foot building constructed in 1993. This building was built by the State of Illinois as a part of the construction of the new Clark Bridge which required land occupied by the old public works facilities. The department has responsibilities for the sanitary and storm sewer system, street maintenance, curb and sidewalk replacement, maintenance of all city vehicles except parks department vehicles, garbage collection/yard waste collection, animal control and numerous special projects. Garbage collection and yard waste collection is privately contracted.

Streets

Public works maintains approximately 250 miles of city-owned streets. The city has an active paving overlay program. A significant and noteworthy effort is the city's maintenance of brick streets. A number of streets in the city were originally constructed of brick and the city has an active program to maintain those streets. Bricks are stored at the public works facility for maintenance of brick streets and sidewalks. A city ordinance requires contractors that disrupt brick streets to patch the streets with brick and certain streets are protected by ordinance and cannot be paved over. City residents can pick-up free bricks at the public works facility to repair brick sidewalks in the public right-of-way in front of their houses. Brick streets are distributed throughout the city and exist in each of the city's seven wards. The significance of the city's efforts in maintaining brick streets are clear when comparing replacement costs. Hand-laying bricks can cost \$365 per square yard. Paving over bricks with asphalt is much cheaper in the short term. However, in the long-term, brick streets hold up better than asphalt streets, thus requiring less frequent maintenance.

The city earmarks approximately \$1.2 million per year from gaming tax revenue for street and sidewalk upgrades. Sidewalk replacement costs are split between the city and property owners so that benefitting property owners pay 25 percent of the cost and the city pays 75 percent of the cost. The use of a community development block grant provides funds to add sidewalks in low and moderate income areas. In addition, the public works department handles striping and signing of city streets and street sweeping. All city streets are swept on a monthly basis with business streets swept on a weekly basis.

Law Enforcement Center

In 2002, construction was completed on the city's Law Enforcement Center. This 40,000 square foot facility houses the police department and city court facilities. The city's 70 police officers are housed in this modern facility.

Fire Department

Alton enjoys exceptional fire protection. Commercial Risk Services, Inc., a property insurance rating organization assigns fire insurance class ratings to fire departments based on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the highest rating and 10 being the lowest rating. Alton has an Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating of 3. Very few fire departments have a rating better than 3. In fact, only seven fire departments in the St. Louis metropolitan area have a rating of 3 or better. Approximately 75 percent of the fire protection providers in St. Louis County, Missouri, have an ISO rating of 4.

Facilities

During the 1990's, construction was completed on two new fire stations. These two stations replaced five old stations that were built in 1896, 1908, 1910, 1930 and 1946. Most of the older stations were small, extremely old, functionally obsolete, and not properly located to support a modern fire department. The three oldest stations were designed to accommodate horse-drawn fire apparatus. New station one is located at 333 East 20th Street. New station two is located on east College Avenue. Each station has tall overhead doors and plenty of space to accommodate modern fire apparatus. Station one has five bays for fire apparatus while station two has four bays. Station two also has three additional bays on the east side of the building to accommodate storage of a hazardous material vehicle and reserve apparatus.

Apparatus

The city's Fire Department operates four engine (pumper) companies, a truck (ladder) company, and two paramedic rescue squads. In addition, two pumpers and a ladder truck are maintained as reserve equipment in case of major fires.

Personnel

The fire department has 68 uniformed personnel including a chief, five assistant chiefs, 24 captains, 24 engineers (drivers), and 14 firefighters. A minimum of 19 personnel, including an assistant chief, are on duty at all times.

Library

The Hayner Public Library was privately-owned and operated until 1952 when it was acquired by the city. Originally erected by John Hayner in 1891, a major addition was added in 1907. The current Hayner Public Library District serves Alton, Godfrey and Fosterburg from three facilities in Alton: Main Library at 326 Belle Street, Youth Library at 401 State Street, and Alton Square Branch at 201 Alton Square.

The library is part of the larger Lewis and Clark Library System that includes libraries in several surrounding communities. Within this system, material is shared which enables individuals to have access to material in other libraries without the need for each library to maintain copies of material that is hard to acquire or seldom used.

Alton Museum of History and Art

The Alton Museum of History and Art was founded in 1971 as a not for profit organization to preserve the history of the community. It presents the development and achievement of the community (history) and illustrates the interests and accomplishments of its citizens. The Museum does not receive any public tax revenues and depends on membership dues, gifts, bequests and foundation grants. The museum is primarily housed in Loomis Hall on the SIU dental school campus. Loomis Hall was the first building of Shurtleff College. The museum also maintains The Koenig House which houses the Alton Area Historical Society Research Library on the second floor.

Education

Alton Community Unit School District No. 11

Alton Community Unit School District No. 11 serves approximately 7,200 students Pre-K through grade 12 within 15 schools. The district includes the city of Alton, and unincorporated and incorporated areas north of the city. Facilities include four elementary schools (serving grades Kindergarten through 2nd grade), four elementary schools (serving grades 3 through 5), 2 middle schools (serving grades 6 through 8), one comprehensive high school, a career vocational center, an alternative school for middle and high school students, an early childhood center, and a center for behavioral disordered students. A list of schools is included in Table 13.

| Table 13 Alton Community Unit School District No. 11 Schools | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| School | Students Served | Address |
| Eunice Smith | Elementary | 2400 Henry Street |
| Horace Mann | Elementary | 2708 Edwards Street |
| J.B. Johnson | Elementary | 4200 Humbert Road |
| Lovejoy | Third Grade through Fifth Grade | 1043 Tremont |
| Mark Twain | Kindergarten through Second Grade | 907 Milton Road |
| West Elementary | Elementary | 1513 State Street |
| Gilson Brown | Third Grade through Fifth Grade | 1613 West Delmar |
| Lewis & Clark | Elementary | 6800 Humbert Road |
| East Middle School | Middle School | 1035 Washington Avenue |
| North Middle School | Middle School | 5600 Godfrey Road |
| Alton High School | Senior High | 2200 College Avenue |
| J.B. Johnson Career Development Center | Senior High Students | 4200 Humbert Road |
| Alternative School | Middle and Senior High Students | 1850 East Broadway |
| Alton Early Childhood Center | Pre-Kindergarten | 6008 Godfrey Road |
| James Education Center | Special Education | 2512 Amelia |
| Motivational Achievement Center | Behavioral Disordered | 2512 Amelia |

Parochial Schools

Marquette High School. Marquette Catholic High School is a co-educational secondary school located downtown. It is one of seven high schools in central Illinois owned by the Diocese of Springfield. The school offers programs in general studies, college prep honors and advanced placement programs. Marquette is accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and is fully recognized by Illinois State Board of Education.

Community Facilities

Approximately 365 students attend Marquette High School.

Saints Peter and Paul School. Saints Peter and Paul School is a Catholic school founded in 1908 and is located in the Christian Hill area. It is part of the educational mission of Saints Peter and Paul Church and serves 200 students in kindergarten through 8th grade.

St. Mary's School. St. Mary's Catholic School has an enrollment of more than 300 students, in kindergarten through 8th grade.

St. Matthew School. St. Matthew Catholic School has an enrollment of 150 students, in kindergarten through 8th grade.

Mississippi Valley. Mississippi Valley Christian School has 204 students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

Alpha Christian Academy. Alpha Christian Academy serves 36 students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

SIU School of Dental Medicine

Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville operates a School of Dental Medicine with facilities in Alton, Edwardsville and East St. Louis. The school was established in 1969 with the pre-doctoral program housed in Alton. The Alton campus consists of 16 buildings on a 26-acre campus on College Street. The goal of this school is to train students to become competent general practitioners of dentistry. Enrollment is approximately 200 students.

Hospitals

Three hospitals are located in Alton and 12 additional major hospitals are located in the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County. Hospitals in the city include Alton Memorial Hospital, Saint Anthony's Hospital, and Saint Clare's Hospital.

Alton Memorial Hospital

Alton Memorial is a 222-bed, full-service acute care hospital. It has a medical staff that includes more than 200 physicians and surgeons. Its facilities include a 24-hour emergency room, an outpatient care center, a sleep disorders center, and a new birth center with a Level II nursery. Services include cancer treatment, family practice, plastic surgery, gastroenterology, cardiac services, internal medicine, neurology, podiatry, and immunology and infectious diseases. It is part of the BJC Healthcare Network.

Saint Anthony's Hospital

Saint Anthony's offers a 24-hour emergency room, obstetrics, surgery, cardiology,

Community Facilities

diabetes treatment, and general medical services. Specific services include occupational health services, cancer treatment, adult day care, behavioral health services, chemical dependency treatment, therapy and rehabilitation services, and sub acute care.

Saint Clare's Hospital

Saint Clare's operates jointly with Saint Anthony's Hospital. Together the two facilities have 292 beds and operate as acute care facilities. The two hospitals have more than 100 physicians on staff representing 32 medical specialties and sub-specialties including family practice, cardiology, allergies, ophthalmology, obstetrics/gynecology, pediatrics, oncology, surgery, and oral surgery.

Goal and Objectives

Goal: **Community facilities necessary to provide services to the residents of Alton shall be provided at strategic locations.**

Objective: The current level of service provided by the police and fire departments shall be maintained.

Objective: As the city annexes more land, the fire department should consider the need for an additional fire station and the possible realignment of fire companies.

Community Facilities Plan

The city has done an excellent job of providing up-to-date facilities for municipal departments. Since 1992, this has included a new public works facility, two new fire stations and the new Law Enforcement Center. With the plans to renovate city hall or build a new facility, the city should have adequate public buildings to cover the existing area within the city limits through the life of this plan and beyond. However, if the city annexes additional land, which is recommended by this plan, there may be a need for an additional fire station in the northeast portion of the city.

Urban Design

Visual Quality

The appearance of a city makes a strong statement about the community, its residents, its institutions and its businesses. If the city appears dirty, unkempt or untidy, that perception can be transferred to its residents and businesses. While a clean, orderly and well kept city is desirable, it is quite difficult to ensure that all portions of a city are maintained in such a manner. In 1959, Kevin Lynch, a prominent architect and urban designer, observed:

A beautiful and delightful city environment is an oddity, some would say an impossibility. Not one American city larger than a village is of consistently fine quality, although a few towns have some pleasant fragments. It is hardly surprising, then, that most Americans have little idea of what it can mean to live in such an environment. They are clear enough about the ugliness of the world they live in, and they are quite vocal about the dirt, the smoke, the heat, and the congestion, the chaos and yet the monotony of it. But they are hardly aware of the potential value of harmonious surroundings, a world which they may have briefly glimpsed only as tourists or as escaped vacationers. They can have little sense of what a setting can mean in terms of daily delight, or as a continuous anchor for their lives, or as an extension of the meaningfulness and richness of the world.

Lynch described five key components of city image: Paths, Edges, Nodes, Districts and Landmarks. These components are described below with their application to Alton.

Urban Design Elements

Paths

Paths are the channels along which people move. They include streets and highways, transit lines, walkways and railroads. In Alton, U.S. Highway 67, Illinois Route 3, Illinois Route 140 and Homer Adams Parkway are the major paths. For most people, paths are the predominant city elements, particularly for people who know the city well.

Edges

Edges are linear elements which include boundaries and linear breaks in continuity such as shorelines, railroad lines, and edges of development. In Alton, the Mississippi River and the cliffs along the river are edges. For some observers, Homer Adams Parkway is more of an edge than a path because it divides the far north part of the city from the major portion of Alton.

Nodes

Nodes are points or strategic spots in the city which an observer may enter and which

are the focus of travel. They may be junctions, places or a break in transportation or the nodes may simply be concentrations which gain their importance from being the condensation of some use or physical character. A node could be a particular intersection and the prominent land uses at the intersection.

Districts

Districts are relatively large sections of a city which are conceived of having two-dimensional extent. Individuals can enter a district mentally and describe common identifying characteristics of the district. Districts are identifiable from the inside and used for exterior reference if visible from the outside. A neighborhood could be considered a district.

Landmarks

Landmarks are a type of point reference. They are usually a rather simply defined object such as a building, large sign, or a hill. In many cities, landmarks are prominent churches, high schools, a particularly large and memorable sign or billboard, or a significant hill. Landmarks gain importance from a distance. For example, a church steeple may be seen from many blocks away.

Urban Design Elements in Alton

Some of the significant urban design elements in Alton were identified by residents at a planning workshop and are listed below. While many of the paths, edges, nodes, districts and landmarks were easily identified by participants, highways in the downtown area were not identified as edges. Fortunately, residents do not see these as barriers between downtown and the river. Some elements (such as Homer Adams Parkway) were classified twice (Homer Adams Parkway is classified as a path and an edge). The Alton Square Mall was seen as a node and a landmark.

Paths:

9th Street
20th Street
Alby
Belle
Broadway
Brown
Central
College
Elm
Henry
Homer Adams Parkway
Humbert

Paths (continued):

Landmarks
Main
Martin Luther King
Milton
Ridge
River Road
Seminary
State
Washington

Edges:

Homer Adams Parkway
Levy
Mississippi River
Bluffs
Railroad near River
Wood River Creek

Nodes:

3rd and Piasa
4th and Broadway
Alton Belle Casino
Alton High School
Alton Memorial Hospital
Alton Square Mall
Alton Marina
Golf Courses
Gordon Moore Park
Industrial Park
Lincoln Douglas Square
North Alton Commercial Area
Piasa Park
St. Anthony's Hospital
St. Clare's Hospital
St. Mary's Church and School
Salu Park
State House Square
S.I.U. Dental School
Upper Alton Commercial Area

Districts:

Belt Line
Christian Hill
College
Dogtown
Downtown
East End (East on Broadway)
Fosterburg Road Corridor
Hopp Hollow
Hunterstown
Lincoln Garden
Mexico
Middletown
Milton
North Alton
North Rodgers Neighborhood (College to Harris)
Upper Alton (Pietown)

Landmarks:

Alton Square Mall
Casino
City Hall
Clark Bridge
Con-Agra
Confederate Monument
Fast Eddie's
Law Enforcement Center
Lincoln-Douglas Square
Love Joy Monument
Miller's Mutual Sign
Mississippi River
Piasa Bird
River Road
Saints Peter and Paul Church
St. Mary's Church
Wadlow Statue

District Descriptions

While most of the paths, edges, nodes and landmarks are easy to find in the city, the boundaries of some of the districts are more difficult to define. Some of the more prominent districts, their histories and their importance are briefly summarized below.

Belt Line

This area encompasses the Homer Adams Parkway (Illinois Route 3) corridor. This Corridor, and the land north and east of it, is characterized by a broad mix of land uses including retail businesses of a regional nature, single-family dwellings, agricultural land, industrial uses, Gordon Moore Park, Alton State Hospital, two city golf courses, three private golf courses, and mobile home parks. A major impact on this area will be the extension of Illinois Route 255 from its present terminus in Wood River through the north part of this planning area to its ultimate terminus at U.S. Highway 67. This area is the only area near the city with significant unincorporated land. While consisting of rolling hills, this area does not have significant steep slope limitations as much of the city does. Much of this unincorporated land cannot easily be serviced by any other nearby municipalities and should logically become part of Alton.

Christian Hill

Christian Hill is located on the bluffs of the Mississippi River west of downtown. The area's name originated when the new Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church was built on State Street in the 1850's. The church's new location became known as "Christian Hill." During the 1970's, residents of the area were the first Alton citizens to fight for the preservation of the city's historic homes. The Christian Hill historic district was created with the boundaries being Broadway, Belle, Seventh, Cliff, Bluff and State Streets. This district features homes dating back to the 1830's. The remains of the old state penitentiary, the first state penitentiary in Illinois, are within the boundaries of the district. One of the significant homes in this district is the P. Pfeifferberger House named after an important architect who was a four-term mayor of Alton.

Downtown

Downtown has served as the traditional commercial area for Alton. While a number of commercial concentrations exist in the city, including concentrations in North Alton, Upper Alton, East Broadway and the Homer Adams Parkway (Belt Line) Corridor, downtown should be maintained as a major commercial area in the future. One problem with redevelopment of downtown is the separation between major land use concentrations created by Illinois Route 100 and U.S. Highway 67. The area west of Piasa (U.S. 67) and north of Illinois Route 100 is a solid commercial area that is pedestrian-friendly.

Piasa (U.S. 67) bisects the downtown area from north to south and creates a barrier to pedestrian traffic. While a number of retail establishments and restaurants are flourishing on the west side of Piasa, there are a number of vacant and under-utilized properties on the east side of the street. This "no-man's land" separates the downtown area west of Piasa from the east Broadway commercial corridor.

Illinois Route 100 divides downtown and the east Broadway commercial corridor from the riverfront. It is difficult for pedestrians to safely move between the two areas. With the parks, marina and casino on the south side, there are attractions for pedestrians, but no easy way

to get there. Pedestrian circulation in the downtown area needs to be improved.

Hunterstown

Hunterstown was platted by Major Charles W. Hunter about the same time that Colonel Easton was platting Alton (1817-1818). Hunterstown is basically inland and upland from the original Alton. Generally, Hunterstown is south of 7th Street, east of Ridge Street, north of Broadway, with an eastern border that follows Vine Street south from 7th Street, east along 5th Street to Pearl and south to Broadway. Alton became the dominant community and eventually absorbed Hunterstown.

While Hunterstown historically consisted primarily of single-family dwellings, there are neighborhood commercial uses along Ridge Street, commercial uses serving a regional area along Broadway, and Saint Clare's Hospital and Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Church exist as significant institutional uses. Much of the housing stock dates to the late 19th century, although some newer housing also exists. While Hunterstown was developed as a "working-class" neighborhood, in recent years home ownership has declined, single-family dwellings have been converted to duplexes and multi-family dwellings, and the number of renters and absentee-landowners have increased. Based on the age of most of the housing stock, the decline in home ownership, and the increase in absentee-landowners, blighting and increased crime has occurred. Existing land uses in Hunterstown are shown in Figure 4.

Saint Patrick's Church, begun in 1873, primarily served immigrants and Americans of Irish and Italian heritage. The church's elementary school closed in 1987 and is now an independent daycare facility. The building's presence in the neighborhood is very positive and this presence should be preserved and promoted.

Saint Clare's Hospital has origins dating to the Civil War. The U.S. government requested that the Daughters of Charity (a Catholic religious order) assist in caring for Confederate prisoners housed in Alton. After the war, members of the order stayed in Alton and founded Saint Joseph's Hospital in the old Hunter's Tavern on Broadway. The hospital was later relocated to its present site and managed by a succession of Catholic orders. Saint Anthony's Health Center assumed ownership of the facility in 1989 and changed its name to Saint Clare's Hospital. Saint Clare's Hospital is the largest employer in the Hunterstown area and one of the largest employers in the city. Its presence in the neighborhood is a stabilizing force that should be preserved and promoted. Humboldt School has recently been converted to elderly housing with 45 units.

Middletown

Middletown is centered on Henry Street and extends North to Twentieth Street, West of the Belle-Alby corridor and east to Central Street. Middletown has many homes built in the 1830's, and merchants and industrialist mansions built in the late 1800's. This district also includes smaller houses built by German immigrants in the 1840's and 1850's. Haskell Park

located in this area includes the Haskell Play House which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Middletown is the largest of Alton's historic districts. Middletown is primarily single-family in nature although there are several churches and institutional uses in the area as well as several commercial establishments along Central Street.

Milton

Milton is located in the east central part of the city. It developed primarily as a single-family area with scattered commercial and institutional uses to serve the community. A volunteer fire department was formed and moved into a fire house in 1946 to provide protection to the area. Milton was an unincorporated area until annexed by Alton in 1959.

North Alton

There were several attempts to form a town in the area that would become North Alton. In 1837, James Strong built the Buck Inn at the intersection of State and Delmar. The settlement that grew up around it was referred to as Buck Inn. In 1839, a town christened "Altonia" was platted, but lots did not sell well. Several years later, James Tibbit planned the town of Greenwood in the area, but it also failed to get started. In 1868, a post office was located in the area and named Buck Inn. By 1875, the area was known as North Alton. In 1910, the area was part of Alton.

Upper Alton

Upper Alton is two miles northeast of downtown. Joseph Meacham founded Upper Alton in 1816. Upper Alton had advantages over Alton because it was located on high ground and was on the major road that went from Vandalia through Edwardsville to North Alton. In 1818, a post office was established on Salu Street on the route between Carlyle, Illinois, and St. Charles, Missouri. Upper Alton was incorporated as a village in 1821. It was known as "Pie Town" during the last half of the nineteenth century because the women baked pies for the soldiers encamped north of the city during the Mexican War and the Civil War.

During much of the nineteenth century Upper Alton was synonymous with Shurtleff College and the area had the flavor of a college town. The area was annexed by Alton in 1911. When Shurtleff College closed in 1957, it was purchased by Southern Illinois University (SIU) and is now occupied by the university's dental school. Upper Alton also includes the smallest of Alton's historic districts. Upper Alton Historic District boundaries are along Seminary Street, College, Leverett and Annex Avenue.

Neotraditional Planning

In the early 1980's, a new community was developed around old or neotraditional planning concepts. The community contains streets that are only 18 feet wide, is designed with a pedestrian-orientation, will accommodate 750 low-rise dwelling units (mostly single-family

detached dwellings) on only 80 acres, and has significant space devoted to the public including a town hall, an open air market and community open space. This community was planned in an area filled with high-rise condominiums, motels, fast food restaurants and strip shopping centers. The new community is Seaside, Florida, the first example of neotraditional planning. Based on the early success and interest in Seaside, a number of similar communities have been developed. During the 1990's, this new development pattern evolved into the "new urbanism." It was seen as an alternative to the auto-dominated suburban development patterns that had been rampant since the late 1940's.

New Urbanism Concepts

New urbanism has developed around several key concepts: narrow streets, alleys, front porches on residences, mixed-use developments, pedestrian-orientation, small (usually narrow) lots. Some of these concepts are briefly described below.

Narrow Streets. In order to place an emphasis on pedestrians, diminish emphasis on the automobile, and slow traffic, streets that are narrower than the traditional width of the last half of the 20th century are typically used. These streets often are only 18-to-20 feet in width compared to many subdivision streets that are 28-to-30 feet in width. Narrower streets have a tendency to slow traffic. One problem is that narrower streets are not conducive to parking automobiles. Another problem is that many modern vehicles (buses, trash trucks, etc.) are not designed for narrow streets. In fact, typical fire trucks are 94 inches wide, not counting mirrors. Layout of streets in new urbanism developments must address these concerns.

Alleys. One of the most controversial concepts of new urbanism is the use of alleys. Once used for coal delivery, trash pick-up, utilities and other service uses, alleys were considered havens for crime and filth. The new urbanism uses alleys as a way to provide access to garages so that cars are parked behind dwellings rather than in front (on the narrow streets) or in garages that take up much of the front facade of the building. In addition, with trash collection and cars in alleys, the front of the dwelling will be more conducive to pedestrian traffic.

Front Porches. A component of new urbanism is the use of front porches on houses. These porches are used to provide space for residents to sit, to talk to their neighbors, and to provide an inviting entrance to houses. Such porches also place residents closer to sidewalks which facilitates communication with neighbors who are walking by.

Mixed-Use Development. Another concept is the mixing of different housing types, income groups and land uses. While inconsistent with the traditional zoning concept of the 20th century, mixed-use development allows neighborhood commercial uses in neighborhoods, promotes residential uses over retail and offices, and promotes pedestrian travel.

Pedestrian-Orientation. Everything in the new urbanism promotes pedestrian travel. Streets are narrow to slow traffic and discourage parking and driving. Sidewalks are installed

on both sides of streets. Neighborhood commercial uses may be located within walking distance of residences.

Small Lots. Another typical example of new urbanism is relatively small lots. Rather than 100-foot wide, quarter-acre lots typical of the development patterns of the last half of the 20th century, new urbanism lots are typically narrow, sometimes 40 feet or less in width, and no deeper than typical modern lots. Setbacks are also reduced which puts houses closer to streets, reduces side yards and provides space in the back for detached garages. Smaller lots reduce infrastructure (shorter streets, shorter water mains per house), and theoretically can reduce development costs.

New Urbanism Applications to Alton

Based on the historic development pattern in much of Alton, certain aspects of the new urbanism have direct application.

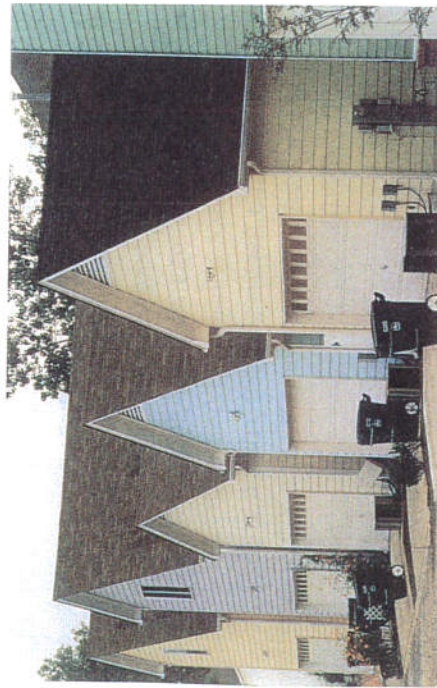
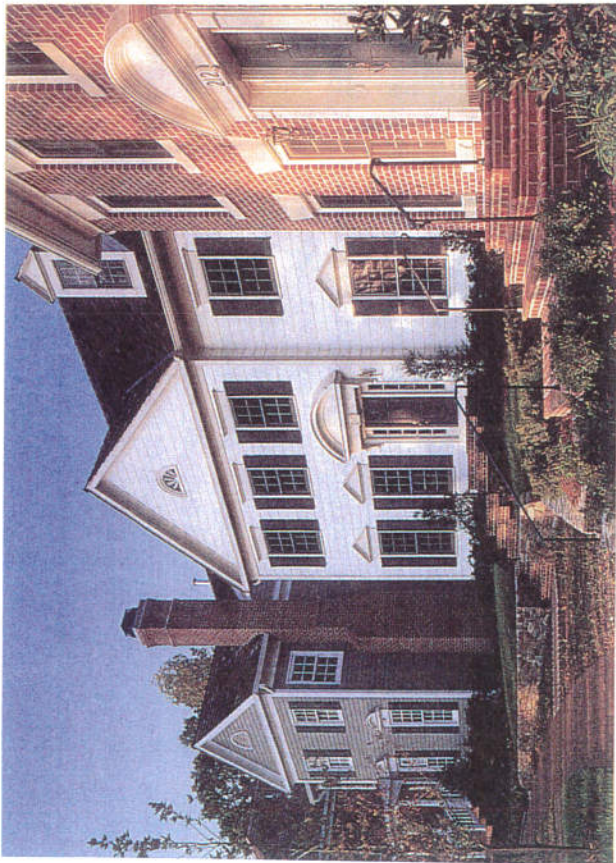
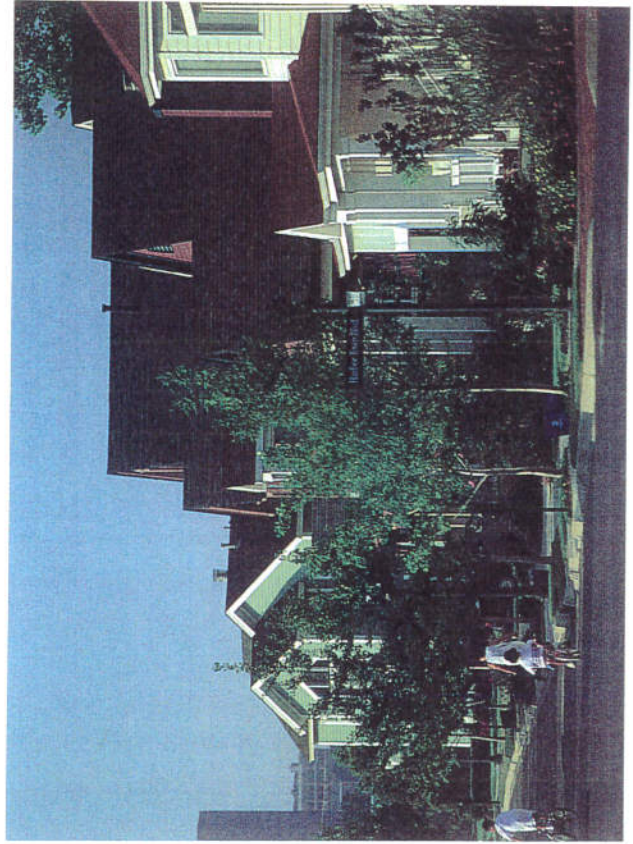
Alleys. Older parts of Alton have alleys. These alleys can be an important asset. They can provide primary or secondary access to lots, they can be used for utility easements, and they can be used for trash collection. The city should encourage the use of these alleys and consider allowing alleys in new developments when the alleys are designed for one or more of these purposes.

Pedestrian-Orientation. Much of Alton was developed prior to the availability of the automobile. In much of the city, sidewalks are at least five-feet wide and lots are relatively narrow. This arrangement, combined with the mixture of land uses promotes pedestrian traffic.

Small Lots. Many of the lots in the city are small by modern platting standards. For example, some existing residential lots in the city are less than 4,000 square feet. Over the past 50 years, few lots in the U.S. have been platted that are less than 5,000 square feet, with most at least 6,000 square feet in area. While the city may not want to encourage the platting of lots of less than 5,000 square feet, use of existing lots based on the new urbanism has positive benefits, including eliminating the need for replatting.

One of the most appropriate applications of the new urbanism concept to Alton is the design of single family dwellings. An example of single-family homes on a new urbanism street is included in Figure 3.

Figure 3
New Urbanism Streetscape



Garages Along Alley

Issues, Goals and Objectives

Issue: *New Urbanism*

Goal: **The general theme for the further development and redevelopment of the city shall follow new urbanism principles.**

Objective: The strengthening and expansion of a pedestrian-scale community, shall be continued.

Objective: Areas of the city that exhibit new urbanism principles shall be maintained.

Objective: Areas of the city that do not exhibit new urbanism principles may be maintained although any new construction should conform to new urbanism principles to the extent feasible.

Issue: *Image of the City*

Goal: **An “Alton Image” shall be promoted and future development and redevelopment shall follow past building patterns.**

Objective: The city shall encourage the preservation of those elements that reflect the varied historical and architectural significance of Alton.

Objective: New building construction should resemble the solid to void ratios and construction materials of nineteenth century and early twentieth century buildings in Alton that give the city its image.

Objective: Building height limits should be considered in areas where tall buildings could unreasonably block the view of the river.

Objective: The renovation and reuse of historic structures and the development of properties next to historically-significant structures shall be consistent with the scale and style of the original historic structures.

Objective: Encourage an identity and “sense of community” through monuments or signs at the access points to districts of the city.

Issue: Landscaping and Appearance

Goal: The existing landscape should be preserved and enhanced to the greatest extent possible.

Objective: All utility lines should be underground.

Objective: The city should maintain its status as a Tree City USA including the annual budgeting of money for new trees and removal of dead trees.

Objective: Green space should be added along city streets.

Objective: The city should ensure uniformity of street trees on each street similar to the uniformity on Washington.

Objective: New street trees should be planned so as not to interfere with existing utility lines.

Issue: Consistent Building Scale

Goal: Older buildings need to be preserved and new buildings need to be consistent with the existing building scale.

Objective: Historic areas should be maintained and historic districts marked.

Objective: Older buildings are some of the best part of Alton and should be preserved.

Objective: Historic buildings shall be maintained and not torn down, except for dilapidated buildings.

Objective: Historic buildings shall not be allowed to become dilapidated due to neglect.

Objective: Buildings constructed on vacant lots need to be designed and constructed to avoid the appearance of a patchwork of building designs.

Objective: New building construction, particularly construction on small and/or narrow lots, must be consistent with the scale and mass of existing buildings.

Issue: *Safe and Clean City*

Goal: **The city shall take actions to be known as a clean, safe city with pride.**

Objective: The neighborhood watch program should be continued and extended to all parts of the city.

Objective: The city shall continue to provide its exceptional level of police protection.

Objective: Entranceways to the city shall be enhanced and maintained to present a good first impression of the city.

Issue: *Business Appearance*

Goal: **Enhance the visual impact of commercial and industrial uses by requiring appropriate landscaping, buffering and aesthetic building design criteria.**

Objective: As commercial and industrial areas redevelop, the appearance of existing facilities shall be improved.

Objective: Outdoor storage areas shall be limited to side and rear yards and be surrounded by appropriate screening material.

Objective: Commercial and industrial facilities shall provide parking areas with concrete or asphalt parking areas, except for areas designated for storage of heavy construction equipment.

Objective: The view of commercial and industrial buildings from entrances to the city should be enhanced.

Urban Design Plan

Alton contains a number of visually pleasing areas and many lovely buildings. The maintenance of these buildings and areas and the expansion of certain qualities of these areas into other parts of the city is highly desirable. Further development and redevelopment of the city should follow new urbanism concepts, which reflect the historical development pattern of much of the city. Maintenance and enhancement of the city's visual image can be achieved by various positive actions including landscaping and buffering to minimize visual impact, tree protection, appropriate control of signage, and establishing design guidelines for certain areas of the city.

New Urbanism Theme

It is recommended that future development and redevelopment of Alton follow New Urbanism concepts. Part of this recommendation is because of Alton's historical development pattern. Many lots in the older part of Alton are small and are very conducive to redevelopment based on new urbanism principles. This will save considerable effort to not have to replat some of these areas. New areas can be developed based on new urbanism concepts to reduce infrastructure needs, and possibly reduce development costs. One of the biggest challenges to using the new urbanism concept is the mixture of land uses which is contrary to historical zoning practices to isolate uses by district. New provisions will need to be included in the city's zoning ordinance to accomplish this.

Visual Impact of New Commercial and Industrial Uses

Attractive residential areas can be maintained by ensuring that adjacent city, public, commercial and industrial areas provide landscaping and buffering between their property and that of the residential areas. New developments should also provide landscaping to enhance the appearance of their buildings.

Tree Conservation

The City Council annually budgets money for new trees and the removal of dead trees. Planting of new street trees throughout the city needs to be continued. The city should continue being a Tree City USA. New development should provide appropriate landscaping to provide shade, reduce glare, and maintain the attractive appearance of the city. A tree conservation ordinance should be considered to prohibit the unnecessary removal of trees when development occurs and to ensure that appropriate landscaping is provided.

Street Trees. In the past, the city has planted a number of species of trees along streets. While most of these trees have been deciduous hardwoods, some have not been particularly suitable for street locations because they are not urban trees or have other limitations. The city should maintain a list of appropriate street trees and require all new development to install trees from the approved list. Such trees should be deciduous hardwood trees that have a clear trunk height of six feet, and which are salt-tolerant, and reasonably disease resistant. These street trees should be a minimum of two and one-half inch caliper size when installed and selected from the following species:

- Seedless Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica* 'Marshall Seedless')
- White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*)
- Eastern Hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*)
- Little Leaf Linden (*Tilia cordata*)
- Silver Linden (*Tilia tomentosum*)
- Thornless Honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos* 'inermis')
- Columnar Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides erectum* (columnare))

- Hedge Maple (*Acer campestre*)
- Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*)
- Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*), Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*)
- Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana* 'Cleveland Select')

Shade and Ornamental Trees. In addition, it would be advantageous to require ornamental and shade trees for portions of sites not adjacent to roadways or parking lots. These trees which are native to the Alton area include the following:

- Roughleaf Dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*)
- Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
- Downy Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*)
- Sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*)
- Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)
- Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
- Black Oak (*Quercus velutina*)
- Pin Oak (*Quercus*)
- Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*)
- White Oak (*Quercus alba*)

Screening. For buffering and screening, the following coniferous trees are appropriate:

- Eastern Redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
- Austrian Pine (*Pinus nigra*)
- Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)
- Scotch Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*)
- Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*)
- Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*)

Landscaping requirements also need to address foundation plantings and the placement of shrubbery on sites.

Signs

Signs are a critical element in the urban environment. They are necessary for traffic control, the identification of buildings of business, commerce and institutional use, and the dissemination of political and real estate messages. They can, however, be so numerous or so large as to cause visual blight. The city should continue its reasonable regulation of signs. The city does, however, need to revise its sign regulations to stress content neutral regulations and ensure that political and temporary election sign regulations meet federal court guidelines. Content neutral sign regulations are designed to regulate the time, place and manner of signs and do not regulate the message.

Urban Design Guidelines

Certain aspects of urban design guidelines have been established for certain areas of the city. The city needs to review these guidelines and consider establishing such guidelines city-wide. Of particular interest is preparing lists of appropriate building materials for various land uses and for use in certain portions of the city. Design guidelines may include standards for new buildings, rehabilitation of existing buildings, and for streetscape improvements.

New Buildings. A large percentage of the older buildings in the city are two-story. While city residents are reluctant to limit future buildings to two stories in height, there are design guidelines that can assist in ensuring that new buildings are consistent with these older buildings. New buildings that are taller than the average height of existing buildings on a block should have break line at the highest average level of existing buildings. For example, a four-story building built on a block with two-story buildings should have a belt course, or other type of horizontal feature that corresponds with the average height of existing buildings. Constructing new buildings of material that is similar or complimentary to the existing buildings is also advisable.

Rehabilitation of Existing Commercial Buildings. A key component of rehabilitation of commercial buildings is to be consistent with the original openings (doors and windows) on the front facade of the building. Windows should not be covered with siding and improvements should allow for the largest possible window area in keeping with the original opening. Several types of building material should be avoided including unpainted aluminum, imitation masonry, plastic shutters and other incompatible materials.

Streetscape. Streetscape, or hardscape materials, are important in maintaining a design theme for a city or area of the city. For example, the city may want to establish a design guideline that all sidewalks in certain areas of the city be brick. The city should also encourage the preservation of granite curbs where they exist. The addition of planting areas along sidewalks should be encouraged and a standards for the entire city could be provided.

Significant Architectural Features

Churches, institutions of higher education, and significant buildings housing commerce should be allowed buildings with substantial architectural features. Such architectural features include steeples, spires, domes, cupolas and towers. These features assist in making these buildings stand out as landmarks and promote interest in the architectural landscape. A city comprised of flat roofs and short buildings with low pitched roofs is monotonous and would make the city look like a suburb.

Entranceways

While not specifically identified by Kevin Lynch as urban design features, many urban designers and architects feel that entranceways are a key element to a city or an area of the city.

Entranceway improvements at the north end of the Clark Bridge are proposed to improve the visual impression as individuals enter the city.

Safe and Clean City

The city should continue to coordinate trash clean-up days throughout the year. Continuing the Weed and Seed Program and similar efforts, neighborhoods and entranceways to the city can be cleaned-up to remove trash and debris.

Land Use

An important aspect in preparing a land use plan for Alton is an analysis of how land is used, and what trends in land use characteristics occurred during the preceding decade. The accompanying text discusses existing land use, land use trends and significant development constraints. This analysis is followed by a presentation of goals and objectives for guiding future land use development in the city and a plan for achieving those goals and objectives.

Existing Land Use

The land use around Alton has been influenced considerably by topography and geology. The city is located on the bluffs above the Mississippi River and encompasses an area of 16 square miles. Existing land uses are diverse including single-family neighborhoods, multiple-family areas, commercial, institutional and industrial areas. The city's land uses include three significant hospitals and a campus of Southern Illinois University. The existing land use is depicted in Figure 4.

Factors Affecting Development

The consideration of development constraints is essential prior to the preparation of a future land use plan. An inventory of development constraints provides a framework to develop the most efficient and prudent assignment of future land uses to support future development. Two types of factors constrain the use of land: natural features and human-made features. Terrain is an example of a natural feature that may influence development. Mined areas and the availability of infrastructure are human-made factors that may constrain the use of land.

Physical aspects of the city's natural and human-made environment significantly affect large portions of Alton. Physical factors including natural features and human-made features are discussed in this analysis. Each factor in its own way constrains urban-type development and/or provides a unique opportunity for benefitting the community.

Natural Features

The natural resources of an area can have significant impacts on future development. For example, natural features often cause significant limitations in the construction of buildings, roadways, utility systems, and other structures. The basic geology in the Alton area from the surface downward is loess, glacial till and then bedrock. The loess ranges from 30 to 90 feet in thickness and is underlain by glacial till that is approximately 25 to 40 feet thick. Beneath the till is an irregular surface of Pennsylvanian bedrock. The irregular surface was created by glacial variance. Coal was found in this bedrock generally between 100 and 250 feet below the surface. This discovery of coal impacted the early development of the city. The primary natural features that constrain development in the Alton area are steep slopes and floodplains.

Steep Slopes. The city should be concerned with areas where the slope exceeds 15 percent. These areas are shown on the factors affecting development map. Because of the significant number of ravines, bluffs and other steep slopes in Alton, areas where the slope exceeds 30 percent are also indicated on the factors affecting development map.

Floodplains. The vast majority of the area within the city's corporate limits is outside of the Mississippi River floodplain. There are, however, areas within the City along the West Fork of the Wood River which are subject to flood hazards. These areas are identified on the development constraints map. Finding effective measures to address floodplain management was underscored following the Midwest Flood of 1993 when the Mississippi River and many of its tributaries flooded. Within the St. Louis region, more than 1,200 homes and 500 businesses were either temporarily or permanently displaced as the Mississippi River and its tributaries overflowed their banks.

Floodways Within floodplains, there are areas designated as floodways. These areas include the channel of a river or watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the 100-year flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot at any point. Construction within floodways is prohibited. Therefore, they represent a significant constraint to development. No areas in or near Alton have been designated as floodway. However, due to the age of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps for Alton and the surrounding area, it is likely that when these maps are updated floodways will be designated.

Human-Made Features

Human-made features that may constrain future development include historic and archaeological sites, cemeteries, major easements and rights-of-way, and developed areas.

Historic Sites. Alton has a rich history that is reflected in a number of historic buildings, sites and districts. Historic districts are described below.

Upper Alton Historic District. While this is the smallest of Alton's historic districts, the area which is two miles northeast of the central business district was once a separate town from "Lower Alton." It was also known as "Pie Town" during the nineteenth century because the women baked pies for the soldiers encamped north of the city during the Mexican War and the Civil War. The district boundaries are along the Seminary Street, College, Leverett and Annex Avenue.

Christian Hill Historic District. On the bluffs of the Mississippi River west of the central business district the boundaries are Broadway, Belle, Seventh, Cliff, Bluff and State Streets. This district features homes built in the 1830's. The remains of the old state penitentiary, the first state penitentiary in Illinois are within the boundaries of the district. One of the significant homes in this district is the Pfeifferberger House named after an important architect and who was also a four-term mayor of Alton.

Middletown Historic District. This is the largest of Alton’s historic districts. It is centered on Henry Street and extends North to Twentieth Street, West of the Belle-Alby corridor and east to Central Street. Many homes built in the 1830’s, and merchants and industrialist mansions built in the late 1800’s are part of the district. This district also includes smaller houses built by German immigrants in the 1840’s and 1850’s. Haskell Park located in this area includes the Haskell Doll House which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places independently along with the Samuel Wade House and the Lyman Trumbull House.

Historic Homes and Structures. Alton’s long history and significance through a number of different eras is evident in the varied architectural styles of residences. Many homes are important because of the historical value of its residents or the residents’ role in the community. Several homes and structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Some are in one of the three historic districts listed on the National Register. A list of these historic structures is found in Table 14.

Additional Historic sites include:

Loomis Hall: 2800 College Avenue. (Alton Museum)
Once a part of the Shurtleff College. It is the oldest college building in the State of Illinois.

Enos Apartment: 325 East Third Street.
This building was used as a major stop on the underground railroad from the 1830’s through the Civil War.

| Table 14 Structures on the National Register of Historic Places | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Home/ Structure | Address |
| Alton Chapter House | 509 Beacon Street |
| Guertler House | 101 Blain Street |
| Haskell Playhouse | Henry St. in Haskell Park |
| Post House | 1516 State Street |
| Lyman Trumbull House | 1105 Henry Street |
| Yakel House and Union Brewery | 1421-1431 Pearl Street |
| Hotel Stratford | 329 Market Street |
| Mount Lookout | 2018 Alby Street |
| Alton Military Prison Site | Williams Street. Near Broadway |

Historic Sites: Listed by the Alton Landmarks Association are included in Table 15.

| Table 15 Historic Sites | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Historic Site | Address |
| Elijah P. Lovejoy Press | 111 East Broadway |
| Hart House | 522-524 Belle Street |
| Confederate Cemetery and Monument | Rozier Street |
| Robert P. Wadlow Statue | College House |

Cemeteries

Alton has at least five cemeteries. Significant cemeteries are briefly described below and all known cemeteries are depicted on the Factors Affecting Development map in Figure 5.

Confederate Cemetery. This cemetery in North Alton, owned by the state of Illinois, was used to inter Confederate prisoners of war who died at the Alton Confederate Prison during the civil war. A smallpox epidemic in 1863 was a leading cause of death among the prisoners. A monument at the cemetery lists 1,354 names of Confederate soldiers that are known to have died in the Confederate Prison.

Alton City Cemetery. This cemetery at Fifth and Monument Streets contains the 90-foot tall monument in memory of Elijah P. Lovejoy. The cemetery had its first recorded burial in 1812. Land for the cemetery was donated by Major Hunter to the community. Most of Alton’s early prominent citizens are buried there. During the 1940’s, part of the cemetery was ceded to the Federal government for use as a national cemetery. Many Union soldiers were reinterred here. For many years, the cemetery has functioned as a quasi-independent arm of the city government.

St. Joseph Cemetery. St. Joseph Cemetery is located near the center of the city adjacent to St. Anthony’s Hospital.

Milton Cemetery. Milton Cemetery is located in Milton in the southeast part of the city just north of Broadway.

Upper Alton Cemetery. This cemetery is located in Upper Alton in the northeast part of the city.

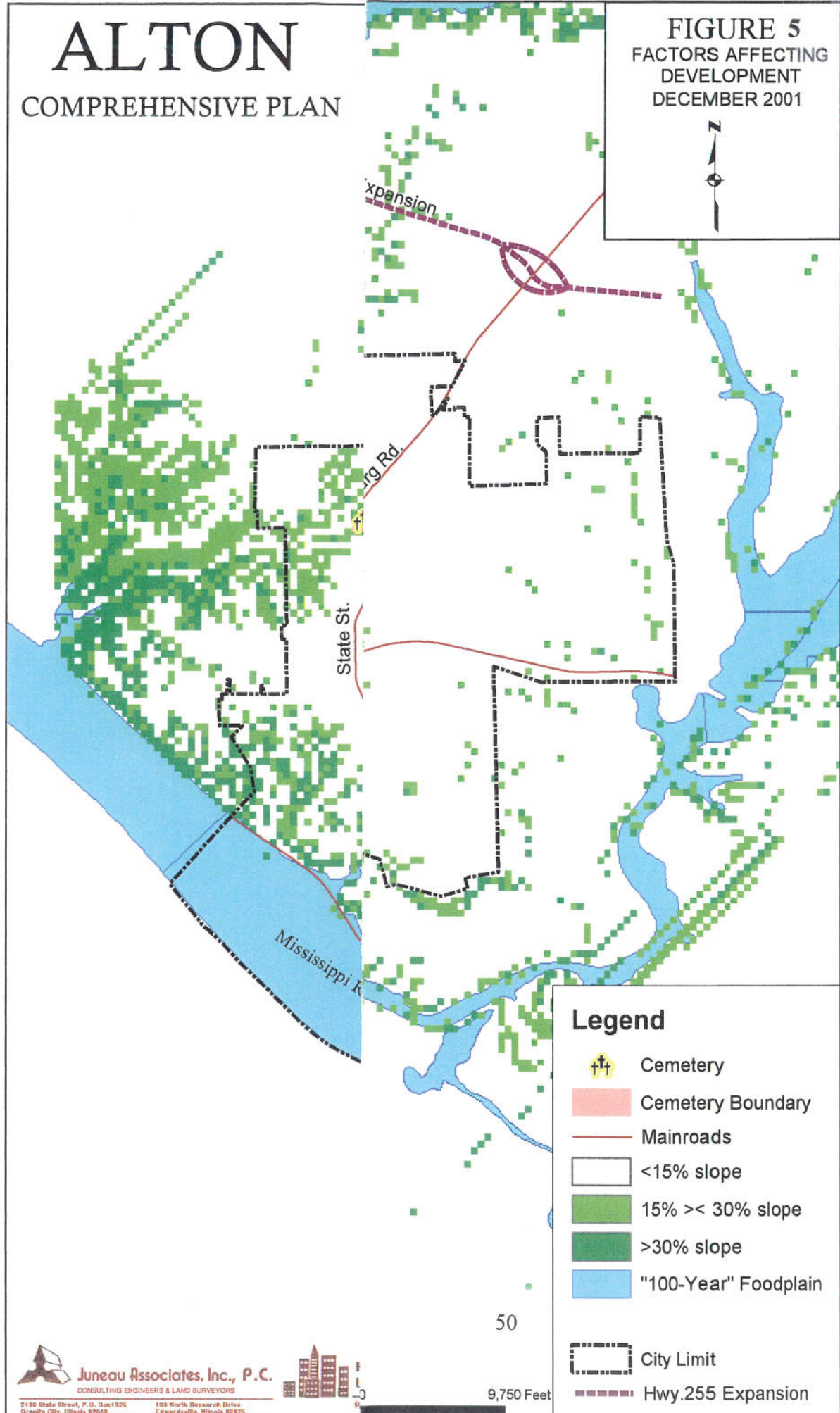
Significant Factors Affecting Development

The significant factors affecting development in the Alton area are steep slopes, cemeteries, and floodplains. The locations of these factors, are graphically depicted in Figure 5.










ALTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIGURE 5
FACTORS AFFECTING
DEVELOPMENT
DECEMBER 2001



Legend

-  Cemetery
-  Cemetery Boundary
-  Mainroads
-  <15% slope
-  15% >< 30% slope
-  >30% slope
-  "100-Year" Foodplain
-  City Limit
-  Hwy. 255 Expansion

50

9,750 Feet

Goals and Objectives

- Goal:** Higher density residential development must recognize contemporary lifestyles.
- Objective:** Adequate off-street parking must be provided to support higher density residential developments.
- Objective:** Private recreation space must be provided in areas of higher density residential developments.
- Objective:** The city should plan for annexation of areas next to the city that logically should be included within the city's boundaries.
- Objective:** No business should interfere with the quality of life in neighborhoods.
- Objective:** Residents in low and moderate-income housing should not be displaced unnecessarily by the recommendations of this plan.
- Goal:** Residential areas of the city should be reviewed to ensure that appropriate zoning classifications are applied based on predominant land use patterns.
- Objective:** Some predominantly single-family areas in the R-4 zoning district should be rezoned to a single-family zoning district.
- Objective:** Older buildings along East 4th Street should be preserved and new townhouses should be added.

District Planning Recommendations

Recommendations for some of the districts identified in the Urban Design element of this plan follow.

Belt Line District Planning Recommendations

- One of the major recommendations for the Belt Line is the annexation of land in the West Fork of the Wood River Corridor. Land east of Godfrey, north of the Alton City Limits, west of Stanley Road and extending north to include the Illinois Route 255 Corridor and interchanges should be added to Alton.
- Extensive commercial development is shown on the future land use map in the Homer Adams Parkway corridor to reflect existing land uses, to encourage conversion of light industrial uses to commercial use, and to provide additional

large commercial sites in areas with good visibility and access to traffic arteries.

- Three of the four significant industrial areas on the future land use map are contained in the Belt Line. In the northwest are some light industrial uses and an old landfill that are proposed for industrial use. A second industrial area is located northwest of Fosterburg Road in the flat portion of the West Fork of the Wood River corridor. The third industrial area is the land around the Mississippi Lime Company on the south side of Illinois Route 140 and east of Homer Adams Parkway.
- Two new commercial areas are proposed north of the Belt Line to encompass land around the two Highway 255 extension interchanges.

Christian Hill Planning Recommendations

- Preservation of the existing single-family housing stock is recommended. Single-family dwellings in the Christian Hill historic district and other quality single-family housing north of Christian Hill in the State Street corridor should be retained for single-family use.
- Conversion of marginal industrial uses along Illinois Route 100 below Christian Hill to parks and open space is recommended. This will provide an attractive entranceway to Alton and be consistent with the Piasa park development. It will also provide open space between Illinois Route 100 and the Mississippi River to promote bicycling.

Downtown Planning Recommendations

- Downtown Alton is proposed to continue as a major commercial area in the community.
- To facilitate pedestrian circulation in the downtown area, a pedestrian bridge over Illinois Route 100 and the railroad tracks to connect the East Broadway area to the riverfront is recommended (see the infrastructure section of the plan for more information and the drawings in Figure 8).
- A pedestrian crosswalk with signals is recommended on Piasa between Broadway and Third Street to aid pedestrian circulation downtown.
- The quarry on the south side of 20th Street is proposed for redevelopment as a construction debris landfill. Construction debris landfills produce far less methane and other gases than sanitary landfills. Once filled, the area could be redeveloped for an appropriate land use.

Hunterstown Planning Recommendations

- The residential portions of Hunterstown (as depicted in Figure 6) should be zoned for two-family use (to allow single-family and duplex uses). An emphasis on single-family housing should be placed on this area with the allowance for properly maintained duplexes.
- Commercial areas along Ridge Street in Hunterstown and at the intersection of 7th Street and Central should be rezoned to a new neighborhood commercial zoning district to promote appropriate convenience retail and service uses to serve the population of Hunterstown.
- The commercial uses along Broadway should be retained and rezoned to an appropriate commercial zoning district that reflects the development pattern (no front yards, limited side yards, etc.).
- Facade loan grants should continue to be made available to assist commercial property owners in rehabilitating structures in Hunterstown.
- To preserve and promote the further development of Alton Memorial Hospital, Saint Anthony's Hospital and Saint Clare's Hospital, the hospital sites and adjacent areas are designated as Health Services on the future land use map and should be rezoned to a new medical zoning district designed specifically for hospitals and compatible commercial, residential and institutional uses.

Middletown Planning Recommendations

- Preservation of the existing single-family housing stock in the Middletown Historic District is recommended. These single-family houses in the Henry Street corridor should be retained for single-family use and zoned accordingly.

Milton Planning Recommendations

A concern expressed about part of Milton is the unattractive mix of commercial and light industrial uses on East Broadway which is a major entranceway to the city. While the types of land uses are not necessarily unattractive, the broad mix of uses and unkempt condition of many of the businesses with outdoor storage is unattractive. A narrower mix of uses with restrictions on outdoor storage would be advantageous.

- The East Broadway Corridor should be redeveloped for a consistent set of heavy commercial uses such as contractor trades buildings, self-service storage facilities and selected automotive-related uses. A new heavy commercial zoning district should be developed to ensure that undesirable industrial uses do not encroach into this area and that outdoor storage areas are screened from

view.

- An area along Milton Road is proposed for commercial use. This area is predominantly commercial today and is intended to serve neighborhood commercial uses of the Milton residential areas.
- Preservation of much of the existing single-family housing stock in Milton is recommended. Single-family dwellings in the East Milton area should be retained for single-family use.

Upper Alton Recommendations

- A significant commercial area is designated to cover existing businesses in the Upper Alton commercial area. It is anticipated that these businesses will continue to serve a large residential area in this part of the city, including the SIU campus.
- SIU's campus is designated as College on the future land use map. This designation is intended to recognize the special factors inherent in a college campus. It is recommended that a new higher education district be created in the city's zoning ordinance to reflect the dynamics of providing specialized educational facilities, housing and associated university activities in a relatively small area.
- The cemetery in Upper Alton is proposed for retention using the public/semi-public land use classification.

Industrial Corridor Planning Recommendations

Historically, Alton has been considered an "industrial" town. A large number of light and heavy industries are located in the industrial corridor including Illinois Glass Company (Owens-Illinois, Inc.), Laclede Steel, Jefferson-Smurfit, and Mississippi Lime Company.

Concerns have been expressed about the unattractive mix of commercial and industrial uses on the south side of East Broadway which is a major entranceway to the city. The broad mix of uses and unkempt condition of many of the businesses with outdoor storage is unattractive. A narrower mix of uses with restrictions on outdoor storage would be advantageous.

- Green space is designated for a large area adjacent to the ramps to the Clark Bridge. It is recommended that this area include attractive landscaping since this is a major entranceway to the city.
- The East Broadway Corridor should be redeveloped for a consistent set of heavy

commercial uses such as contractor trades buildings, self-service storage facilities and selected automotive-related uses. A new heavy commercial zoning district should be developed to ensure that undesirable industrial uses do not encroach on this area and that outdoor storage areas are screened from view.

- A large area northeast of Illinois Route 143 and south of Broadway is proposed for redevelopment as a business park. Some redevelopment has already occurred and it is recommended that additional heavy commercial and light industrial uses be recruited for this area. When developed as a business park, the site would provide an attractive land use along Route 143.
- Much of the land in the industrial corridor has traditionally been used for heavy industry. Once land is used for heavy industry, it is difficult to convert it to residential use. It is recommended that much of this land be designated for industrial use. Redevelopment is recommended and there are a number of incentives and techniques to encourage this redevelopment identified in the Business Development section of this plan. A key component to redeveloping this area will be road access. Plans to improve Cut Street should be a high priority. Modern industry needs good truck access.

Land Use Plan

The land use plan was prepared based on a consideration of the existing land use pattern, factors affecting development, goals and objectives contained in the land use section of this plan, and the specific recommendations of the five small areas. The land use plan is described in this element and graphically depicted in Figure 6. The major emphasis of the land use plan is to maintain Alton as a community distinct from other nearby cities while providing sufficient land for future residential, commercial, institutional and industrial development. Major land use categories are indicated below. The distribution of these land use designations is described in the plans for the five small areas and shown in Figure 6.

The map in Figure 6 is not a proposed zoning map, but merely a guide to assist the city in determining the appropriate intensity of development. City decisions on rezoning applications and other development applications may be based in part on this map but must consider the surrounding development pattern and changes in conditions over time. Provisions of the text of this plan indicating a maximum development density should not be considered a policy or guarantee that the maximum development density will be approved through a rezoning or other land development application. In case of a conflict between the provisions of the text of this land use plan and the map in Figure 6, the provisions of the text shall prevail. The land use designations described below also apply to unincorporated areas adjacent to the city.

Parks and Open Space

Significant existing parks and recreation areas are designated on the future land use map.

This designation includes major city parks. Additional parks and open spaces will be created in residentially-designated areas as development occurs.

Single-Family Residential

The Single-Family Residential category is designed to preserve and protect areas of the city that were originally designed and have historically been used for single-family detached housing. This classification is specifically designed to preserve single-family areas in historic districts from encroachment by multiple-family and intensive nonresidential uses such as general commercial and industrial activity. In addition to single-family detached dwellings, public uses, educational uses, parks and open space, and religious land uses will be allowed within the single-family residential classification, although some may be conditional uses within the city's zoning regulations. Residential densities are not anticipated to exceed five dwelling units per acre.

Urban Low-Density Residential

The Urban Low-Density Residential designation is designed to preserve and protect areas that historically or currently are primarily used for single-family detached dwellings. These areas will primarily consist of single-family detached dwellings. Selected areas designated Urban Low-Density residential may be considered by the city for rezoning for single-family attached and duplex developments, particularly in areas that are primarily developed for single family attached or duplex developments or where the city determines that redevelopment would be advantageous. In addition, public uses, educational uses, parks and open space, and religious land uses will be allowed within the Urban Low-Density Residential classification, although some may be conditional uses within the city's zoning regulations. Within the Urban Low-Density residential areas, residential development will generally not exceed densities of five dwelling units per acre. In selected areas, the city may allow densities of up to eight dwelling units per acre if it is consistent with the existing residential development density or the city determines it is particularly advantageous in meeting one or more of the city's housing objectives.

General Residential

This land use category is designed to accommodate a mix of housing types including single-family detached dwellings, single-family attached (or townhouse) dwellings and duplexes. This land use classification includes areas with an existing development pattern that would be consistent with these uses as well as other appropriate lands. Selected areas designated General Residential may be considered by the city for rezoning for manufactured homes, multi-family developments, and group housing including nursing homes, dormitories, and similar institutional/residential uses particularly in areas that are primarily developed for such uses or where the city determines that redevelopment for such uses would be advantageous. In addition to the allowed residential uses, public and semi-public uses, parks, and religious uses will also be allowed. The exact land uses and residential densities will be controlled by the city's zoning

regulations. Because of the special factors necessary for consideration in the siting of mobile homes, these dwellings should be limited to mobile home parks in the future and should be regulated through the creation of a special zoning district.

Neighborhood Commercial Development. In addition to the commercial areas depicted on the land use plan map, neighborhood commercial areas may be established in areas designated as general residential. This is intended to encourage the new urbanism concept of mixed use developments. Such areas shall be established based on the following criteria:

- The area to be established as neighborhood commercial may not exceed four acres in size;
- The site shall be limited primarily to offices and convenience commercial uses which provide goods and services required by the public on a weekly basis; and
- The site will generally be at least one-half mile from any land designated as commercial on the land use plan so as to discourage strip commercial development.

College

The College land use designation is designed primarily to accommodate and protect higher education facilities including two-year community colleges and four-year universities. In addition to these higher education facilities, residential development including apartments, dormitories, other types of group housing and other uses closely associated with higher education facilities shall also be allowed. Moreover, public and semi-public uses such as museums, cultural facilities, and other similar types of institutional uses will also be considered consistent with this land use designation.

Health Services

The Health Services land use designation is designed to accommodate and protect major medical facilities including public and private hospitals. In addition to these major facilities, nursing homes, multi-family developments, accessory apartments, group quarters, offices for physicians, and selected retail and service uses normally found in association with major medical facilities will also be allowed. Appropriate retail outlets will include book stores, card shops, florists, pharmacies, and similar facilities.

Commercial

The commercial land use category is intended primarily for retail and office uses. This category will allow a broad range of retail uses and will include many uses allowed in the city's commercial zoning districts. Office uses will primarily consist of business and professional offices. Specific commercial land uses will be regulated by the city's zoning regulations.

Downtown

This land use category is designed to accommodate an extensive range of retail and service commercial uses (including hotels), selected light industrial uses that are typically found in downtown environments, residential development with densities up to or exceeding 12 dwelling units per acre with the maximum as controlled by the city's zoning regulations. The mix of housing will include single-family attached (or townhouse) dwellings, duplexes, accessory apartments, and multi-family developments. This land use classification includes areas with an existing development pattern that would be consistent with these uses as well as other appropriate lands. In addition to the allowed residential uses, public and semi-public uses, parks, and religious uses will also be allowed. The exact land uses allowed in this category will be regulated by the city's zoning regulations.

Business Park

This classification is intended to allow a broad range of commercial and light industrial uses including research and development facilities, office-warehouse uses, light industrial and light manufacturing uses. The specific uses allowed in this category would be based on the underlying zoning classification. This land use classification is located on the south side of Broadway. It is intended to present a good image of the city to passing observers. In addition to business uses, this land use classification may include government buildings, parks and similar institutional and recreational uses that are commonly found in business areas.

Industrial

The industrial classification is designed to allow warehousing, storage, wholesaling and light manufacturing uses. This classification includes much of the existing heavy industrially-zoned areas of the city. This classification is also designed for some of the vacant lands in the northeast part of the city. In addition, in selected areas, this classification will allow for general industrial uses including areas that have traditionally been used for industrial and manufacturing operations that could have some off-site impacts including noise, vibration, or glare. This classification is also designed to provide areas for selected heavier industrial uses that already exist in the city.

Public and Semi-Public

Major concentrations of public and semi-public lands are identified on the existing land use map. These uses include schools, churches, cemeteries, government buildings and several other similar uses identified in the existing land use survey. Some existing public and semi-public lands are not depicted on the land use plan map because of their relatively small size.

Funding Sources

There are a number of funding sources available to assist in the implementation of the land use plan. These sources are described in the Business Development, Parks and Recreation, and Infrastructure elements of this plan. In addition, the Sierra Club has identified The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System as a program that could potentially be used to protect green space in the city. This program promotes participation in comprehensive environmental management, enhancement and protection of existing wildlife habitats, and recognition for those engaged in environmentally-responsible projects.

Housing

Housing Characteristics

Alton's housing stock included 13,894 units in 2000. Of these housing units, 12,518 (or 90.1 percent) were occupied including 8,184 owner-occupied units and 4,334 renter-occupied units. Alton had a lower level owner-occupancy than Madison County and the State of Illinois. In contrast, the city had a higher level renter-occupancy than the county and state. The city's vacancy rate (9.9 percent) was also higher than the county and state's vacancy rates 6.4 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively). Housing data for the city, county and state is summarized in Table 16.

| | Alton | Madison County | Illinois |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Housing Units | | | |
| Owner-Occupied | 58.9% | 69.1% | 63.2% |
| Renter-Occupied | 31.2% | 24.5% | 30.8% |
| Vacant | 9.9% | 6.4% | 6.0% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | | |

There were few changes to Alton's housing stock between 1990 and 2000. Over the decade, the city lost 318 housing units. The percentage of occupied units decreased from 91.3 percent in 1990 to 90.1 percent in 2000. Likewise, the percentage of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units decreased (from 59.2 percent to 58.9 percent and from 32.1 percent to 31.2 percent, respectively). During this time period, the city's vacancy rate increased from 8.7 percent to 9.9 percent.

Residence stability is documented in Table 17. While historically individuals have moved an average of once every five or six years, Table 17 reflects a much more stable situation for Alton with 55 percent of the population residing in the same house since 1995.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------|------|
| Population 5 years and over | 28,332 | 100% |
| Same house in 1995 | 15,569 | 55% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

Table 18 provides information on the number of dwelling units per building. While there were 10,113 single-family detached dwellings representing 72.8 percent of the residential buildings with only one unit, there were a significant number of duplexes in the city (569 duplexes containing 1,138 dwelling units). Surprisingly, 509 households reported living in buildings with 20 or more dwelling units.

| | | |
|------------------------|--------|-------|
| 1 unit, detached | 10,113 | 72.8% |
| 1 unit, attached | 311 | 2.2% |
| 2 units | 1,138 | 8.2% |
| 3 or 4 units | 872 | 6.3% |
| 5-9 units | 359 | 2.6% |
| 10-19 units | 51 | 0.4% |
| 20 or more units | 509 | 3.7% |
| Mobile home | 535 | 3.9% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

The age of housing is reported in Table 19. While a large percentage of the city's housing units (73.2 percent) were constructed prior to 1960 (and are thus more than 40 years old), the number of dwelling units constructed during the 1990s was considerably higher than the number constructed in the 1980s. This is an encouraging sign that individuals are willing to build and invest in the city.

Home value information for owner-occupied dwellings is summarized in Table 20. The census reports that 90.8 percent of the owner-occupied dwellings in the city had a value of less than \$100,000 in 2000. Median value was calculated as \$56,500. Table 21 contains information on gross rent for renter-occupied dwellings. Median rent was calculated as \$430 per month.

| Table 19 Housing Age | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Built 1990 - March 2000 | 797 | 5.7% |
| 1980-1989 | 471 | 3.4% |
| 1970-1979 | 1,182 | 8.5% |
| 1960-1969 | 1,271 | 9.2% |
| 1940 - 1959 | 5,543 | 39.9% |
| 1939 or earlier | 4,624 | 33.3% |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

| Table 20 Home Values for Specified Owner-Occupied Units | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| Less than \$50,000 | 2,929 | 40.1% |
| \$50,000 to \$99,999 | 3,700 | 50.7% |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999 | 452 | 6.2% |
| \$150,000 to \$199,999 | 129 | 1.8% |
| \$200,000 to \$299,999 | 41 | 0.6% |
| \$300,000 to \$499,999 | 28 | 0.4% |
| \$500,000 to \$999,999 | 19 | 0.3% |
| Total | 7,298 | 100% |
| Median Value (dollars) | \$56,500 | |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

| | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------|
| Less than \$200 | 420 | 9.7% |
| \$200 - \$299 | 479 | 11.1% |
| \$300 - \$499 | 1,753 | 40.5% |
| \$500 - \$749 | 1,240 | 28.6% |
| \$750 - \$999 | 133 | 3.1% |
| \$1,000 - \$1,499 | 24 | 0.6% |
| \$1,500 or more | 8 | 0.2% |
| No cash rent | 275 | 6.3% |
| Total | 4332 | 100% |
| Median (dollars) | \$430 | |
| Source: 2000 US Census | | |

Housing Concerns

Alton residents have indicated that new housing needs to reflect household makeup and the changing nature of families. For example, smaller families may require fewer bedrooms. New housing needs to be designed for typical household characteristics in Alton. There is also concern that in-fill housing be consistent in architectural design with existing housing.

Goals and Objectives

Goal: A diversity of housing types and styles to fit the needs of all residents of the city shall be provided.

Objective: The development of in-fill housing in existing residential neighborhoods shall be consistent with the architectural styles of the existing neighborhood.

Objective: Housing types should be sensitive to shifting demographic trends.

Objective: The city shall strictly enforce housing codes to ensure that residential units meet all appropriate building and life safety codes.

Objective: Substandard housing should be identified and upgraded before slipping into a dilapidated condition.

Objective: The city should continue its active program of razing dilapidated housing stock.

Objective: Some mobile homes should continue to be allowed in the city to provide affordable housing, but these units need to be well maintained, meet housing codes, and derelict mobile homes should be removed.

Objective: Appropriate separation distances need to be maintained between mobile homes to inhibit the spread of fire.

Objective: The City should work with both the Alton Housing Authority and the Madison County Housing Authority to demolish substandard residential units, to create modernized residential units through the use of rehabilitation and new construction and to seek conversion of a portion of those modernized units to non-governmental control. Ideally, the modernized residential units would be a mixture of single-family detached, single-family attached and duplexes.

Goal: **The City should continue to promote owner-occupied dwellings.**

Objective: Continue the current incentive programs such as Alton's Homebuyer program and the Urban Decay Tax Abatement Program.

Objective: Give preference to tax credit applications that promote owner-occupied units versus rental.

Goal: **Construction of new in-fill homes should be in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.**

Objective: New construction should be sensitive to the historic nature of many of Alton's homes.

Goal: **The City should continue efforts to rehabilitate dwellings to maintain the City's existing housing stock.**

Objective: Continue to partner with various not-for-profit organizations in order to efficiently address a variety of rehabilitation options.

Objective: Continue to utilize Madison County Community Development Rehabilitation Programs including the Lead program, Weatherization and Energy Conservation Housing Rehabilitation (ECHR).

Objective: Continue to search for additional housing improvement funds.

Goal: **The City should focus revitalization efforts on the older, inner-core of the city which has suffered from years of disinvestment.**

Objective: Priority should be given to tax credit applications or projects seeking assistance from the City that are in the inner-city.

Objective: Continue to provide extra incentives for home ownership in targeted areas that have suffered decline.

Objective: Lend technical assistance for projects within the inner core of the City.

Objective: Down-zoning areas that are predominantly single family which are currently zoned multi-family.

Goal: **The City should continue efforts to take a proactive role in future housing development.**

Objective: The city should continue to purchase property in areas that are targeted for future housing development.

Objective: Increase code enforcement particularly in redevelopment areas.

Objective: The City should continue to develop Requests For Proposals (RFPs) to solicit developers in order to better control development of new housing.

Objective: partner with necessary for profit and not-for profit agencies who play important roles in housing development.

Goal: **Future development should focus on Alton's strengths.**

Objective: Develop housing on sites with a view of the Mississippi River.

Objective: Introduce New Urbanism Housing which is in keeping with existing housing stock.

Objective: Utilize green space and the numerous inner-city parks within residential neighborhoods.

Goal: **Address the need for quality affordable single-family housing.**

Objective: Support private development of quality single-family homes versus multi-family homes.

Housing Plan

Critical issues facing Alton's future include the maintenance of its existing housing stock, the provision of additional housing and a variety of housing to meet housing demand. While the city is fortunate to have a solid base of sound housing stock, maintenance of this housing stock will be increasingly important over the next 20 years as this stock continues to age. A diversity of housing types to meet the needs of an aging population will also be necessary.

Diversity of Housing

A diversity of housing types including single-family detached, single-family attached, two-family, multiple-family and manufactured housing needs to be encouraged in the city. This needs to include nontraditional housing such as single-family attached dwellings, zero-lot line dwellings, and mixed-use developments mixing residential and commercial uses in the same structure. Many vacant lots in residential areas of the city can be redeveloped for single-family attached and duplex dwellings.

In-Fill Development

The city should encourage the development of vacant lots in existing residential areas for housing. Vacant lots can be an eyesore, present maintenance problems, drain limited city resources, and present a bad image of established residential areas. Encouraging development of these properties enhances neighborhood appearance, cuts city efforts to ensure that such lots are maintained and boosts the tax base. Many of these lots are suitable for single-family dwellings and some are suitable for two-family structures.

Program for Maintaining Residential Property

As the housing stock of a community ages, more and more dwellings belong to absentee owners. This is partly due to the fact that some people who move from a home retain ownership and then rent it for income. It is also due to individuals buying housing units for rental income. Problems with this phenomenon are that some owners of rental property (particularly absentee owners who do not live in the community) do not maintain the property as well as many owner-occupied dwellings are maintained. Often times, health and/or safety problems occur in dwellings that are not properly maintained.

In order to protect current and future housing renters in Alton as the city's housing stock continues to age, it would be beneficial for the city to enact a program which would require interior inspections of rental housing when there is a change in occupancy to ensure that there are no health or safety problems. Any problems identified by city inspectors could then be reported to the owner of the property who would be responsible for correcting the problem.

Mobile Home Regulations

To ensure safe and healthy accommodations for residents, the city needs to update its regulations for mobile homes. These regulations need to ensure adequate separation distances between the mobile homes and ensure that any mobile homes brought into the city comply with the Federal *National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974*, and the National Fire Protection Association's *Code of Specifications for Mobile Homes and Travel Trailers*.

Single-Family Programs

The Illinois Housing Development Authority has developed two programs, the "First Time Home buyer Program" (MRB) and the "Mortgage Credit Certificate Program" (MCC), to assist the first-time buyer in overcoming some of the financial issues that arise in purchasing a home. IHDA offers 30 year fixed-rate mortgages at below market interest rates with the MRB program. With the MCC program, IHDA offers a tax credit that can assist home buyers in qualifying for a mortgage by reducing one's federal income taxes. Both of these programs help bring the dream of home ownership within the reach of low and moderate income Illinoisans.

Multifamily Programs

The multi-family financing programs facilitate the creation of multi-unit rental developments that typically earmark at least 20% of their units for occupancy by low-income tenants.

Affordable Housing Trust Fund

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund serves as a source of gap financing for affordable housing, making developments possible that otherwise would not be feasible. In addition, the Illinois Affordable Trust Fund helps fund affordable housing programs statewide through roughly \$16 million allocated to eligible sponsors and developers to benefit low-income households.

HOME Program

The 1990 National Affordable Housing Act created HOME programs designed to expand the availability of affordable housing, meeting unique local needs of low and very low-income populations. Depending upon the program, people earning between 50% and 80% of a region's median income will usually qualify for HOME – assisted housing.

Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program

The Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program helps low-income Illinoisans reduce heating and cooling costs by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. The

Program provides grant funds to the state's network of Community Action Agencies/community based organizations, enabling them to assist low-income households, particularly senior citizens and those with disabilities, to save fuel and money while increasing the comfort of their home through energy conservation improvements.

Regulation of Floodway Construction

This permit program, run by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR), regulates construction activity in the floodways of the lakes and streams of the state to ensure that the flood-carrying capacity of the streams is maintained. Coordination with federal, state and local governmental units occurs through the use of a joint application for permit form and coordination/sign-off with related programs of other state agencies. Extensive coordination with local governmental units occurs through delegation of state floodway regulatory authority to qualified local governmental entities. Additional coordination occurs through DNR's responsibilities as the national flood insurance program coordinator within the state, which assists local compliance with federal flood insurance requirements including local flood plain management.

Preservation Grants and Tax Incentives for Historic Properties

National Register of Historic Places Program. This federal program, administered by Historic Preservation Agency (HPA), allows qualifying buildings to be recognized for their historic significance (local, state or national). Once listed, a property can still be used and modified as it could prior to listing. Listing can be a great advantage since most grant programs require historic designation as a prerequisite.

CLG Program. The Certified Local Government (CLG) program allows participating cities to provide formal input into the National Register of Historic Places Program. They are also entitled to at least 10% of the annual federal allocation from the National Park Service to Illinois for the preservation program. While the dollar amount has been relatively low for several years, recent action in Congress indicates a likelihood that the amount could increase substantially in the near future. This program is administered by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (HPA).

Preservation Services Fund. The National Trust's *Preservation Services Fund* (PSF) is an important tool for fostering historic preservation at the local level by providing seed money for community preservation projects. A PSF grant often is the first financial commitment a project receives. It usually serves as a catalyst that inspires a community to support a preservation project. PSF grants leverage approximately \$9.00 in local monies for every dollar awarded. These funds could potentially be used to preserve existing historic buildings.

Historic Preservation Agency (HPA) Tax Incentive Programs. Homeowners who rehabilitate historic buildings can qualify for substantial state and federal tax benefits. These programs encourage the rehabilitation of historic buildings and often help generate affordable

housing units.

Illinois Heritage Grants. The Illinois Heritage Grants Program has been established with first year funding of \$500,000. Owners of historic buildings can apply for brick and mortar grants to assist them in restoring or rehabilitating their property. Many applicants are expected to be local governments as owners of historic buildings.

State Programs. Property tax assessment freeze program for historic residences are available in Illinois administered by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Division of Preservation services. This program freezes the property assessed valuation of a historic property for eight years at the level the year rehabilitation began. The valuation is then brought back to market level over a period of four years. This benefits both the property owners and the city (because the property is rehabilitated and the property assessment increases).

Business Development

Introduction

Economic development has different meanings to different people. To be true economic development, a proposed land use must provide jobs, generate tax revenue and promote the creation of other jobs through spin-off economic activity. A proposed warehouse employing three persons is not a solid economic development opportunity because it provides few jobs, does not generate much tax revenue, and does not promote creation of other jobs in the economy. However, a manufacturing plant that employs 200 persons provides jobs, generates tax revenue (including property taxes and utility gross receipts taxes) and promotes the creation of other jobs to provide the goods and services demanded by the 200 employees of the manufacturing plant.

Existing Economic Development

Commercial Areas

Many of the city's commercial uses are located in the Northeast Corridor (primarily along Homer Adams Parkway), as well as along Broadway and Downtown. However, many individual commercial uses and small concentrations of commercial activities are scattered throughout the city. Many of these uses serve as neighborhood commercial activity centers and should be preserved. Some, however, are intensive commercial uses that do not belong in residential areas. These uses should be changed, over time, to lighter-intensity commercial uses.

Industrial Areas

Historically, Alton has housed a number of heavy industrial uses, as well as many light industries. Heavy industrial uses are concentrated in the Industrial Corridor in the southeast portion of the city between the Mississippi River and Broadway. Light industrial uses, as well as some heavier industrial uses, are scattered throughout the central part of the city. Unfortunately, many industrial uses are adjacent to or surrounded by residential uses. This problem is compounded by the fact that many of these industrial uses in residential areas are relatively small and the sites do not lend themselves to expansion of industrial activity.

Retail Trade

A general comparison of Alton's retail trade strengths to other cities in the region was conducted. Data was acquired from the U.S. Census of Retail Trade, 1997. This data can be used to show the city's relative strengths and weaknesses in various retail sectors. In 1997, Alton ranked 3rd among the comparative cities in the region in terms of total retail sales (see Table 22).

A comparison of Alton's retail activity to similar retail uses in Madison County was also

conducted. The U.S. Census divides retail activity into major components which are described by North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) category. There are a number of businesses included in each major NAICS category. A Trade Area Capture formula compares Alton retail sales to Madison County retail sales in each NAICS category. This formula first establishes county-wide per capita expenditures for each retail category, and assumes that Alton residents spend along those same patterns, adjusted for income differentials built into the formula. Per capita expenditures are then compared to total Alton retail sales by each NAICS retail category. Total sales which exceed Alton residents' ability to purchase that quantity (based on per capita patterns) are considered trade areas that go beyond the city's boundaries. Trade Area Capture is depicted in terms of the number of people served by a particular retail market.

The 1997 Alton and Madison County retail sales figures are included in Table 24. There are three categories (NAICS Codes 452, 453, 454) where data was not available. In these cases, there are generally only zero, one or two service providers in the community and this data is not published for confidentiality purposes. For example, if there were two drug stores in the city, owners of one store could derive their competitor's sales by subtracting their own sales from census figures.

Calculating the formula for each retail NAICS category, the Trade Area Capture figures show how many people are served by each retail category (see Table 23). For example, in Alton, Electronics and Appliance Stores serve 111,573 people. With an approximate 1997 population of 31,806 (based on US Census population estimates for 1997), the city's market for NAICS 443 served a population 3.51 times the city's population. Alton is a net attractor of business in this NAICS category serving the city's population and drawing consumers from other communities to shop in the city.

A "Pull Factor" calculation was made by taking the Trade Area Capture and dividing by the city's population. A Pull Factor of 1.0 indicates that the local market for a particular NAICS category was serving the city's population and no others. A Trade Area Capture of 63,612 people (a Pull Factor of 2.0) would indicate that the city is serving a population of twice the size of the city. The Trade Area Capture and Pull Factor numbers are good tools in identifying potential retail uses that the city should try to attract. In Alton, the numbers indicate that the city is not capturing its own population in the following categories: Gasoline Service Stations. While some of these categories are self-explanatory, examples of Miscellaneous Retail Stores include Florists; Office Supplies, Stationary & Gifts; Gift Novelty & Souvenir; Used Merchandise; and Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers (including Pet Stores).

| | | |
|----------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Fairview Heights | \$569,317,000 |
| 2 | Belleville | \$543,398,000 |
| 3 | Alton | \$392,637,000 |
| 4 | O'Fallon | \$380,045,000 |
| 5 | Collinsville | \$366,643,000 |
| 6 | Granite City | \$250,151,000 |
| 7 | Edwardsville | \$177,280,000 |
| 8 | East St. Louis | \$71,156,000 |

Source: 1997 US Economic Census, Illinois

| Table 23 Retail Retention and Leakages in Alton, 1997 | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------|--------------------|
| NAICS Code | Retail Category | Trade Area Capture | Pull Factor |
| 441 | Motor Vehicles & Parts Dealers | 43,160 | 1.36 |
| 442 | Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores | 58,675 | 1.84 |
| 443 | Electronics & Appliance Stores | 111,573 | 3.51 |
| 444 | Building Materials & Garden Equipment and Supply Dealers | 76,048 | 2.39 |
| 445 | Food & Beverage Stores | 38,189 | 1.20 |
| 446 | Health and Personal Care Stores | 56,330 | 1.77 |
| 447 | Gasoline Service Stations | 13,239 | .42 |
| 448 | Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores | 80,493 | 2.53 |
| 451 | Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores | 88,793 | 2.79 |
| 452 | General Merchandise Stores | N/A | N/A |
| 453 | Miscellaneous Store Retailers | N/A | N/A |
| 454 | Non-store Retailers | N/A | N/A |

Source: 1997 US Economic Census, Illinois

| NAICS Code | Retail Category | Alton | Madison County |
|-------------------|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| 441 | Motor Vehicles & Parts Dealers | \$105,322,000 | \$630,896,000 |
| 442 | Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores | \$10,237,000 | \$45,106,000 |
| 443 | Electronics & Appliance Stores | \$9,118,000 | \$21,128,000 |
| 444 | Building Materials & Garden Equipment and Supply Dealers | \$59,178,000 | \$201,183,000 |
| 445 | Food & Beverage Stores | \$58,801,000 | \$398,069,000 |
| 446 | Health and Personal Care Stores | \$19,936,000 | \$91,498,000 |
| 447 | Gasoline Service Stations | \$11,296,000 | \$220,594,000 |
| 448 | Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores | \$12,956,000 | \$41,613,000 |
| 451 | Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores | \$5,726,000 | \$16,672,000 |
| 452 | General Merchandise Stores | \$89,535,000 | not available |
| 453 | Miscellaneous Store Retailers | \$10,532,000 | not available |
| 454 | Non-store Retailers | not available | \$22,608,000 |

Source: 1997 US Economic Census, Illinois

Issues, Goals and Objectives

Issue: **Commercial and Industrial Development**

Goal: **Sufficient business development will be encouraged to present the image of a vibrant city, to provide business and employment opportunities for residents in the area, and to ensure stable municipal revenue.**

Objective: The city should be business-friendly.

Objective: A “Shop Alton First” campaign and other programs to support local businesses should be undertaken.

Objective: Development of a downtown hotel should be encouraged.

Business Development

- Objective:** Development of lodging facilities at convenient locations near major highways should be promoted.
- Objective:** The city shall encourage small businesses to relocate to Alton.
- Objective:** Redevelopment of land along the river should consider uses other than industrial.
- Objective:** High-technology industries should be recruited.
- Objective:** New businesses that can use skills of the city's existing labor force should be recruited.
- Objective:** A specific list of target businesses needs to be developed by the city.
- Objective:** The city needs to identify development incentives for targeted businesses.

Goal: Further Develop the three main business districts within Alton.

- Objective:** Implement the various Streetscape Plans that create a more pedestrian friendly business district and promote more foot traffic for local businesses.
- Objective:** Continue working with the three not-for-profit business organizations within these districts for further redevelopment and growth.
- Objective:** Continue utilizing the Appearance Review Commission as a means of promoting design guidelines.

Goal: Take advantage of many tourism items as an economic development effort.

- Objective:** Continue to promote the Scenic Byway Designation.
- Objective:** Stress the importance of Gordon Moore and Riverfront Park as an integral part of economic development as the Parks are host to numerous activities and sporting events that bring a multitude of patrons.

Issue: **Building Development Theme**

Goal: **A business development theme of historic building services and products should be promoted.**

Objective: Alton should become the historic building product center for the Mid-West.

Objective: Businesses involved in design and construction of renovations to historic buildings should be encouraged to locate in Alton.

Objective: The city should recruit firms that manufacture building materials used in historic building renovations that could employ some of the city's skilled workers.

Objective: The city should recruit firms that manufacture wrought iron fences and wrought iron street furniture.

Business Development Plan

Desirable Land Uses

There are three sets of desirable land uses recommended for the city. One set is health care services, one is commercial uses which either are under-represented in the city and/or which would be compatible with and foster development of new business, and the third is industrial uses which will promote economic development by creating jobs, increasing the tax base, and creating other positive spin-off effects.

Health Care Services. Based on the large number of hospitals in the city, Alton could become the health care center for Madison and Jersey Counties. Since health-related services like to locate together, room should be provided near the hospitals for additional health services, including specialty hospitals. Desirable health care services to attract to the city include the types of uses listed below. These uses are listed according to their titles in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), United States, 1997, published by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget in 1998. The NAICS classification system has replaced the SIC classification system.

- Offices of Physicians
- Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists
- Outpatient Care Centers
- Medical and Diagnostic laboratories
- General Medical and Surgical Hospitals
- Specialty Hospitals
- Nursing and Residential Care Facilities

Commercial Uses. While there are many retail and commercial service uses that would be assets to the community, the list below is intended to specifically target commercial uses that would strengthen Alton's position as a historical building center. These uses include uses to expand the tourism industry and certain segments of the retail market. As with the health care services, these uses are listed according to their titles in the NAICS manual.

- Antique Stores
- Architectural Services
- Bed and Breakfast Inns
- Boat Dealers
- Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers
- Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores
- Hotels and Motels
- Restaurants, Full Service

Industrial Uses. There are a number of land uses that would be desirable in the city to promote economic development. Such uses include building materials related manufacturing. Some industries were selected based on the talents of skilled workers in the city that previously worked in the steel industry. To truly promote economic development, retail and storage businesses are not generally considered prime economic development activities. Desirable land uses that the city should have an interest in include the businesses listed below. These businesses are listed according to their titles in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), United States, 1997, published by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget in 1998.

- Architectural Metalwork Manufacturing
- Architectural Woodwork and Fixtures Manufacturing
- Computer and Peripheral Equipment Manufacturing
- Custom Architectural Woodwork and Millwork Manufacturing
- Cutlery and Handtool Manufacturing
- Freight Transportation Arrangement
- Forging and Stamping
- Foundries
- Masonry and Stone Contractors
- Millwork
- Ornamental and Architectural Metal Products Manufacturing
- Ornamental and Architectural Plaster Work Manufacturing
- Ornamental Ironwork Wholesaling
- Telecommunications

Business Development Strategies

The following business development strategies are recommended to be begun or continued by the city.

Existing Business and Industry Search. This strategy includes regular visits to local businesses to keep apprized of their concerns and potential needs.

Community Documentation. This strategy consists of maintaining community statistics, creating marketing materials, and keeping specifications on available buildings and land. As part of this work, a Web Page on the Internet is recommended. This could be done in conjunction with the Web Page maintained by the Riverbend Growth Association.

Establishing Key Partnerships. Relationships need to be maintained with local utilities, site consultants, banks, commercial realtors, Chambers of Commerce, the Riverbend Growth Association, and appropriate State agencies.

Prospecting. A number of activities need to be initiated/maintained to prospect for new businesses. These activities include maintaining target industry lists (including business types identified in this plan), and advertising in site selector and industry magazines (particularly potential industrial redevelopment sites). Attendance at annual trade shows focusing on identified target industries is also recommended.

Incentives. In addition, it will be necessary to identify and maintain a number of incentives to attract and retain target businesses to Alton. A number of incentives and/or financing techniques are identified below.

Financing/Incentives

Availability of financing incentives is an important consideration for new, expanding, and relocating businesses. Expansion capital is available from a number of sources including the U.S. Small Business Administration. In addition, there are several incentives provided by the State of Illinois. Many financing and incentive programs are described below.

SBA 504 Loan Program. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Loan Program is designed to stimulate business and industrial expansions. The program offers businesses long-term, fixed rated financing for fixed asset acquisition. Most types of businesses are eligible including retailers, distributors and manufacturers. Existing businesses are eligible for SBA 504 financing, and in some instances start-up businesses are also eligible. In order to be eligible, businesses must:

- Be for-profit;
- Have total assets valued at less than \$9 million;
- Have net worth less than \$6 million;
- Have net profit after taxes averaging less than \$2 million.

Loans are structured such that the SBA 50% of the loan comes from a participating bank, 40% is an SBA guaranteed debenture, and 10% is owner equity. The interest rate is fixed, approximately 2-to-4 percent below market rate with a term of 10 to 20 years. There are no

limits to the size of the bank loan or total loan size. However, the minimum project size is \$120,000 and the maximum debenture which can be guaranteed by the SBA is \$750,000. One full-time job should be created within a two-year period after loan closing for every \$35,000 in debenture proceeds.

Illinois Property Tax and Inventory Tax Exemptions. The State of Illinois has no personal property tax and does not assess taxes on machinery, equipment, vehicles, aircraft, inventories and intangibles. In addition, the state does not assess property tax on merchants' or manufacturers' inventories.

Illinois EDGE Program. The State of Illinois has an Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) program that provides tax credits for businesses that create new jobs and make capital investments in the state.

Illinois Investment Tax Credits for Purchase of Property. Firms in Illinois can receive an investment tax credit against Illinois Personal Property Replacement Income Tax for the purchase of qualified property (including buildings) used in manufacturing, mining or retail businesses. The credit is equal to one-half percent of the adjusted basis of tangible new or used property with a useful life of four years or more. An additional one-half percent tax credit is available for any year in which the firm's base employment increase by one percent or more over the preceding year.

Illinois Industrial Training Program (ITP). The State of Illinois administers an Industrial Training Program (ITP). This program offers employee recruitment services including job fairs, advertising, applicant screening and testing, and customized employee training.

Madison County CDBG Economic Development Loan Program. This program provides below-market gap financing to expanding or new firms whose projects create permanent jobs for qualified low and moderate income individuals within Madison County. Loans are typically for 10-to-25 percent of the business' total project costs, up to \$100,000. Most of the jobs created because of the business project must be filled by low and moderate income individuals. Loan funds may be used for the purchase of land, buildings, equipment and the construction or renovation of facilities. The loan funds are normally at a rate of 3 percent interest for five years.

City of Alton Incentives. Based on the city's list of desirable land uses, it would be beneficial for the city to offer some incentives to appropriate businesses that would like to locate or expand their business in the city. These business should meet all of the following criteria:

- Be on the city's list of desired land uses, or be similar to one of those uses;
- Make a capital investment of at least \$10 million in the city;
- Provide employment opportunities for city residents where the average salary is at least 100% of the average household income of city residents.

Incentives could include one or more of the following:

- City staff assistance in fast-tracking development approvals (rezoning, site plan approval, etc.);
- City property tax abatement;
- Traffic signalization funded by the city;
- City-funded road improvements;
- Tax-Increment Financing (see the Infrastructure Plan for information);
- Business license abatement, or portions thereof; and
- City-initiated zoning changes.

City Property Tax Abatement. Under the state Property Tax Abatement Program, local taxing authorities may abate property taxes on any new or expanded industrial or commercial facility. Any industrial or commercial firm meeting the following conditions may receive an abatement of up to \$8 million per project:

- The firm located to the taxing district during the preceding calendar year from out of state or from another country;
- The firm was newly created in Illinois during the past year and either proposed to, or has located, an industrial or commercial operation in the area; or
- The firm expands a previously existing facility in the area.

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Economic Development Grant

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) offers grants to fund local road improvements that will promote economic development.

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Truck Access Route Program (TARP)

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) offers grants to fund local road improvements that will allow trucks to access lands slated for economic development through the Truck Access Route Program (TARP).

State of Illinois “Brownfields” Programs

The State of Illinois launched the nation’s first voluntary cleanup program for contaminated sites in 1989. This program was designed to clean-up “brownfields” or lands that had been contaminated by heavy industries. A key objective was to clean-up and encourage redevelopment of “brownfields” for appropriate industry rather than continue to encourage new industry to locate in “greenfields” which were more appropriately used for agricultural, residential and/or recreational uses.

Site Environmental Information Data System (SEIDS). The Illinois EPA created a Site Environmental Information Data System (SEIDS) for the Internet. Prospective developers and

other interested parties can visit SEIDS at www.epa.state.il.us/land/seids for information about properties enrolled in the site remediation program.

Brownfield Technical Assistance Program. Cities eager to return Brownfields properties to productive use often find it can be a complicated process. Local governments may lack the expertise and resources needed to locate funding, negotiate property transactions, perform environmental investigations and cleanups, and resolve legal concerns. Representatives from the Office of Brownfields Assistance are available to assist cities in the revitalization of abandoned properties, vacant factories, and closed gas stations. They will explain cleanup options, regulatory program requirements, and environmental liability status. In addition, they can assist municipalities in securing public and private financial assistance and guide potential grant and loan recipients through the brownfields cleanup and redevelopment process.

Illinois Environmental Remediation Tax Credit. Developers who complete approved environmental clean-ups are eligible for a state income tax credit equal to 25 percent of remediation costs, up to \$150,000 per site.

Illinois Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program. The Brownfields Redevelopment Grant Program offers grants worth a maximum of \$120,000 each to municipalities to inventory and investigate brownfields properties. Grants may be used to perform environmental site assessments and prepare cleanup plans, but cannot fund actual cleanup activities. Grant recipients are required to share in any grant award through a 70/30 match. The Office of Brownfields Assistance in the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, steers municipalities to brownfield grant opportunities, reviews and approves grant applications, observes activities, and reviews reimbursement requests.

Illinois Brownfields Redevelopment Loan Program. The Illinois Brownfields Redevelopment Loan Program offers low interest loans to support efforts by local governments and private parties to clean up brownfields sites that have already been assessed for contamination. These cleanups take place under the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's voluntary Site Remediation Program. The loans will pay for limited investigation, remediation, and demolition costs at brownfields sites. The maximum loan amount for any single loan application is \$500,000. The Office of Brownfields Assistance administers the loan program, which includes soliciting loan applications and managing funds.

Site Remediation Voluntary Program. The intent of the program is to provide any person seeking to perform or performing investigative or remedial activities the opportunity to receive review and evaluation services, technical assistance and no further remediation determinations from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Illinois EPA intends this program to be flexible and responsive to the requirements and the needs of the applicant, to project constraints and to variable remediation site conditions. The goal and scope of actions at program remediation sites are normally defined by the applicant, subject to the regulations. Persons apply for entry into the program and successful participation results in the issuance of a No Further Remediation letter by the Illinois EPA.

Linked Development Programs. A five-year, \$30 million grant program initiative, has been created which is designed around the concept of linking, or leveraging, a community's existing resources and potential investments to a broader economic development strategy. Examples of linked development could include bundling transportation funding to areas of job surplus in order to tie together areas of high unemployment and areas of worker shortages; linking affordable housing investments to areas that have low unemployment or worker shortages; and leveraging funds to provide infrastructure upgrades for remediated brownfields. Currently there is \$6 million in Illinois The Fund for Infrastructure, Roads, Schools & Transit funding through Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) for linked development grants, for the purpose of making grants to community organizations, for not-for-profit corporations, or local governments linked to the development of job creation projects that would increase economic development in economically depressed areas within the state.

State of Illinois Reinvestment and Redevelopment

Prime Sites. Since 1999, the State has provided \$66 million in new funding for the Prime Sites Program, which will provide grant funding for local infrastructure needs (water, sewer, road or utility improvements, for example) in existing urban and industrial areas that are tied to future job creation and retention at the site. The Large Business Development Program has a cap of \$500,000 for grants and \$2 million for loans. The Business Development Program does not have a statutory ceiling, but is generally limited to \$500,000 or less per project.

River Bend Enterprise Zone Program. The Enterprise Zone Program offers a number of state and local tax incentives to businesses that make investments to create or retain jobs in any of the 92 certified zones located in communities throughout Illinois. Enterprise zones are among Illinois' most important tools to stimulate economic growth and neighborhood revitalization in existing urban areas. Incentives are designed to encourage companies to locate or expand within a designated zone, which will keep companies from developing in undeveloped areas. For example companies redeveloping brownfield sites located in Enterprise Zones pay reduced fees and receive tax benefits.

The River Bend Enterprise Zone, which includes Alton, offers investment opportunities for companies seeking a full range of location or expansion incentives. Start-up costs and long-term operating costs can be significantly reduced through state and local tax incentives, low-cost financing, and employee training programs. River Bend Enterprise Zone Incentives area as follows:

- Property tax abatement on increased assessed valuation due to new construction or renovation for four years;
- 6.5% sales tax exemption on building materials purchased locally;
- 1% investment tax credits on machinery, equipment and buildings;
- 0.5% investment tax credit for firms that increase their employment in Illinois by 1%;
- \$500 jobs tax credit for each eligible new employee (minimum five eligible new

- hires in one year);
- Deductions from state income tax dividends paid by corporations doing substantial business within the zone;
- Low interest business financing program; and
- Employment training assistance programs.

Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) Participation Loan Program. Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) works with banks and other conventional lenders to provide financial assistance to small businesses that will employ Illinois workers. The state will participate in loans up to 25% of the total amount of a project, but not less than \$10,000 and no more than \$750,000. Banks that assist companies expanding or retaining jobs at sites located in Enterprise Zones receive more favorable security on the Department portion of the loan.

Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) Participation Loan. Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) will purchase a portion of a loan from local banks that finance small and mid-sized Illinois businesses, up to 50% of the bank loan or \$300,000, whichever is less, and will offer its portion at up to 150 basis points below the bank's rate of interest. Loan proceeds must be used for the purchase of fixed assets. Participating banks perform all of the underwriting, servicing, and closing with the customer. Participation loans are most frequently used for existing businesses located in established portions of communities. Retail projects, those most often associated with the expansion into outlying green spaces, are not usually financed with participation loans.

Title IX Revolving Loan. Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) will lend directly to a borrower up to \$100,000 or 30% of total project costs, whichever is less, to finance the acquisition of fixed assets. Loans are made at a 7.5% fixed rate of interest for up to 7 years for equipment purchases or 10 years for real estate activities. Loans are restricted to manufacturers located in 25 specific counties designated by the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) as eligible for Title IX assistance. Underwriting, servicing and closing is performed by IDFA staff. Title IX loans are frequently utilized to revitalize manufacturers located in established city areas that have experienced high levels of unemployment.

Microloan. Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) will lend directly to a borrower, up to \$25,000 for project costs, including working capital needs, fixed asset acquisitions, and marketing. Loans are made at a fixed rate of 10.75%, with the customary required payback period of three years. Underwriting, servicing and closing is performed by IDFA staff. Loans are usually made to start-up operations or businesses in the early stages of business expansion.

Industrial Revenue Bond. Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) will issue tax-exempt revenue bonds on behalf of manufacturing companies to finance the acquisition of fixed assets such as land, buildings, and equipment. Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB) assist balanced growth in several ways. IRB's are frequently used to refurbish old-line manufacturers

in established areas of communities in order to alleviate further expansion into outlying green spaces. Also, IDFA's Industrial Revenue Bond volume cap scoring provides additional points to those applicants located in economically distressed areas.

Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP). The Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP) assists smaller Illinois local governments in financing public facilities and housing rehabilitation. There are numerous categories of grants with CDAP, including: up to \$400,000 for public facility construction and \$100,000 for design; \$25,000 for water and sewer planning; \$100,000 for emergency public facilities and \$150,000 for removal of architectural barriers; \$400,000 for housing rehabilitation; and \$500,000 for economic development. Grant funds also may be awarded to communities that utilize the funds to make loans to businesses for projects that will create or retain jobs in the community.

Focusing on redevelopment, within already existing communities, with established transportation networks, helps reduce urban sprawl into undeveloped areas. Under the public facilities component, grants are provided to assist communities with planning, engineering, and construction costs associated with public works improvements. Under the housing component, grants are provided to communities to assist with rehabilitating substandard housing.

Industrial Training Program. The Industrial Training Program (ITP) was created for work force development programs. Funding has helped upgrade the skills of 11,700 workers at about 450 more companies. By helping provide a trained work force, this program is an integral part of Illinois's strategy to retain and attract employers to established communities.

Venture Capital. In conjunction with the Illinois Venture Investment Fund (IVIF), Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) provides seed stage equity financing for small high-technology companies.

Not-for-Profit Bond. Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) will issue tax-exempt revenue bonds to finance capital improvements such as the purchase, rehabilitation, improvement or expansion of land, buildings, and equipment. Bonds are typically issued for projects having total costs in excess of \$2 million.

Not-for-Profit Lease. Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) will issue tax-exempt leases to finance capital improvements such as the purchase, rehabilitation, improvement or expansion of land, buildings and equipment. IDFA will enter into a lease-purchase agreement with the not-for-profit for projects usually having total costs less than \$1 million.

Small Business Energy Assistance Program. The Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) provides energy information and technical assistance to small businesses with services including on-site walk-through energy surveys, small business energy educational seminars, and the "Motor Master" computer software program.

Preservation Grants and Tax Incentives for Historic Properties

National Register of Historic Places Program. This federal program, administered by Historic Preservation Agency (HPA), allows qualifying buildings to be recognized for their historic significance (local, state or national). Once listed, a property can still be used and modified as it could prior to listing. Listing can be a great advantage since most grant programs require historic designation as a prerequisite.

Historic Preservation Tax Credits. This program provides federal income tax incentives for the rehabilitation of historic income producing properties.

Preservation Services Fund. The National Trust's *Preservation Services Fund* (PSF) is an important tool for fostering historic preservation at the local level by providing seed money for community preservation projects. A PSF grant often is the first financial commitment a project receives. It usually serves as a catalyst that inspires a community to support a preservation project. PSF grants leverage approximately \$9.00 in local monies for every dollar awarded. Use of these funds for capital improvements are limited in the city, but they could potentially be used in the future to preserve existing historic buildings.

Historic Preservation Agency (HPA) Tax Incentive Programs. Business owners who rehabilitate historic buildings can qualify for substantial state and federal tax benefits. These programs encourage the rehabilitation of historic buildings and often help generate affordable housing units.

Illinois Main Street Program. Illinois Main Street, a preservation-based economic development program, assists Illinois communities with the development and implementation of downtown revitalization strategies. Illinois Main Street follows the comprehensive Four-Point Approach of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Center. The state program currently has 55 participating communities, including Alton.

The Illinois Main Street program recognizes that current development patterns are not in the best interest of downtown areas. Technical assistance and services are available on a competitive basis to help communities in economic restructuring, promotion, organization, and design. Communities involved in the Main Street program are working to strengthen their traditional downtown centers and preserve historic commercial buildings rather than building anew. Additionally, Main Street communities are committed to recapturing their vitality by creating a mix of housing, commercial, and retail uses in downtown areas.

Illinois Heritage Grants. The Illinois Heritage Grants Program has been established with first year funding of \$500,000. Owners of historic buildings can apply for brick and mortar grants to assist them in restoring or rehabilitating their property. Many applicants are expected to be local governments as owners of historic buildings.

Infrastructure

Major components of Alton's infrastructure include transportation resources, utilities and communication facilities. Communication facilities are described in the communications section of this plan.

Transportation Resources

Alton enjoys a wide range of transportation resources in or in close proximity to the city. These include air, land, and water resources for transporting people and goods. Significant resources are described below and depicted in Figure 7.

Upper Mississippi River

The Upper Mississippi River is the portion of the river extending from the river's confluence with the Missouri River, below Alton north to St. Paul, Minnesota. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Upper Mississippi River was not reliable for navigation. During low water, this portion of the river had many obstacles including small waterfalls, shoals and sandbars. In 1930, Congress authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to create a 9-foot deep navigation channel on the Upper Mississippi River through the construction of a series of pools, or small lakes, created by dams across the river. The pools are connected by navigation locks that raise or lower vessels from one pool to the next.

Port of St. Louis. Alton is located in the Mississippi River inland waterway system. The Port of St. Louis stretches for 72 miles along the Mississippi River from Grafton, Illinois on the north, to Chester, Illinois on the south. The port encompasses several port districts and authorities in Illinois and Missouri and is the second busiest port on the inland waterway (second only to Pittsburgh). It is also the northernmost year-round ice-free port on the waterway and the southernmost port with lock-free navigation to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico.

The Port of St. Louis is situated at the headwaters of open navigation. North of St. Louis, the Upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers have their elevations regulated by a series of locks and dams. South of St. Louis to the Gulf of Mexico, there is open navigation. Since St. Louis is situated at this change in navigation, it is an important boat turning point and fleeting area. To the north, tow size is limited to 15 barges. South of St. Louis, tow size is limited only by the vessel's ability to control the tow. The Port of St. Louis is the second largest fleeting area on the river system behind New Orleans.

Alton Barge Terminal. The Alton Barge Terminal is located on the Mississippi River, a short distance southeast of downtown Alton. The terminal provides facilities for shipping and receiving products. The primary goods shipped and received are coal, grains, and petroleum products. It has a minimum operating depth of nine feet to facilitate commercial traffic.

Tri-City Regional Port. Tri-City Regional Port is the largest public port in the St. Louis area. Its harbor and terminal facilities are located on the Chain of Rocks Canal adjacent to lock #27, approximately 10 miles south of Alton. The Port District is made up of four townships in the southwest corner of Madison County. The District owns four public river terminals and one privately operated terminal. The Port has a minimum operating depth of nine feet to facilitate commercial traffic and is open year-round. The Port District also owns an industrial park within the Melvin Price Support Center and is the license holder of Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) #31.

Melvin Price Locks and Dam. The Melvin Price Locks and Dam, located south of Alton, replaced Lock and Dam No. 26. Construction of the Melvin Price Locks and Dam constituted the first replacement of an original installation of the river’s 9-foot channel. The amount of tonnage that went through the Melvin Price Locks and Dam since its opening in 1990 is listed in Table 25.

| Year | Tonnage | Lockages |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1990 | 80,447,308 | 9,577 |
| 1991 | 74,515,995 | 9,054 |
| 1992 | 74,673,715 | 9,023 |
| 1993 | 62,343,108 | 7,101 |
| 1994 | 71,179,460 | 8,319 |
| 1995 | 78,420,608 | 10,488 |
| 1996 | 73,873,169 | 9,085 |
| 1997 | 70,871,839 | 8,140 |
| 1998 | 73,721,633 | 7,677 |
| 1999 | 77,580,836 | 8,740 |
| 2000 | 77,120,885 | 9069 |

Airports

Lambert-St. Louis International Airport. Lambert-St. Louis International Airport is located approximately 20 miles southwest of Alton. The airport is operated by the St. Louis Airport Authority, and covers approximately 2,000 acres of land. The airport authority owns more than 2,700 acres including land that has been purchased through a noise abatement buy-out program.

Lambert has five runways. Three parallel runways are oriented northwest/southeast and have lengths as follows: runway 12R/30L is 11,019 feet long, runway 12L/30R is 9,003 feet long and runway 13/31 is 6,286 feet long. There are two cross-wind runways. Runway 6/24 is oriented northeast/southwest and is 7,602 feet long. Runway 17/35 is oriented north/south and is 3,008 feet long. The shorter runways (13/31 and 17/35) are primarily used for general aviation traffic (small planes). Aircraft are designed to operate into the wind and at Lambert the predominant wind direction is from the northwest. Approximately 60 percent of aircraft take-offs and landings are to the northwest using runways 30L, 30R and 24. Approximately 40 percent of aircraft take-offs and landings are to the southeast using runways 12R, 12L, and 6. In peak weather conditions, the airport can handle 120 flights per hour.

The airport averages approximately 1,377 scheduled daily arrivals and departures and serves approximately 30 million passengers annually. Lambert serves as a hub for American Airlines. Other airline service is provided by Air Canada, American West Airlines, Continental Airlines, Delta Airlines, KLM, Northwest Airlines, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines and USAir. Lambert is also served by two commuter airlines: Comair and Trans World Express. Major air cargo carriers at Lambert St. Louis airport include Emery Air Freight, Federal Express, and United Parcel Service. In 1999, Lambert had 502,865 total aircraft operations. In 1994, the airport had 63,150 tons of enplaned cargo.

St. Louis Regional Airport. St. Louis Regional Airport, formerly Civic Memorial Airport, is located in Bethalto, approximately six miles east of Alton, and serves as a general aviation/reliever airport for the St. Louis region. At an elevation of 544 feet above mean sea level, regional covers 2,300 acres of land. The airport has an annual operating budget of \$1,000,000, and is governed by a seven-member board. Three members of the Board are appointed by Madison County and the other four members are appointed by one of the four area cities with populations over 5,000 (Alton, Bethalto, East Alton, and Wood River). The airport's main runway (designated 11/29) is 8,100 feet long and 150 feet wide. A second cross-wind runway (designated 17/35) is 6,500 feet long and 100 feet wide.

MidAmerica St. Louis Airport. MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, a joint-use (military/civilian) airport is located in Mascoutah adjacent to Scott Air Force Base (AFB) and Interstate 64 approximately 28 miles southeast of Alton. The airport has an elevation of 459 feet above mean sea level and is open 24 hours a day. Its tower operates from 6:00 a.m. until midnight and the runway is lighted during those times. MidAmerica's main runway (designated 14L/32R) is 10,000 feet long and 150 feet wide. It is parallel to and offset from Scott's main runway by 7,000 feet. A crossover taxiway connects the civilian runway with the military side. A passenger terminal with six gates is operational and has potential expansion for up to 85 gates. A large cargo terminal is planned. MidAmerica has dual Category II Instrument Landing Systems.

Downtown St. Louis-Parks Airport. Downtown St. Louis-Parks Airport is a general aviation airport. The airport is located in Cahokia on 958 acres of land. Facilities include a 7,000 foot long runway with full instrument rating, and a parallel runway 3,800 feet in length.

A cross-wind runway, 2,800 feet in length is also available. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) tower operates 14 hours per day. Parks College of Saint Louis University, Southwest Illinois College, and Downtown Air Services operate flight training schools at the airport.

Railroads and Intermodal Terminals

Historically, the St. Louis area has been the second largest rail center in the United States (behind Chicago). The Alton area is served by seven Class I railroads. Table 26 lists the railroads in the Alton area, the area of the country they serve, and the coastal ports they connect with. In addition to these line haul railroads, the Alton area is served by two switching railroads: Alton and Southern (A&S) and Terminal Railroad Association (TRRA). These switching companies provide a number of services including carrying inter-line traffic between carriers for through-car movements, and serving local industries.

Alton and Southern. Alton and Southern (A&S) operates Gateway Yard in East St. Louis. A&S performs freight car classification in southern Illinois for Union Pacific.

Terminal Railroad Association. The Terminal Railroad Association (TRRA) was formed in 1889 and quickly became the largest freight and passenger terminal in the world. TRRA operated St. Louis Union Station and owned the Merchants and Eads rail bridges. TRRA's primary yard is the Madison Yard, however, they also have operations at Number 2 Yard in Brooklyn and Garden Yard in East St. Louis.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF). BNSF operates one of the largest rail networks in North America, with 33,500 route miles serving 28 states and two Canadian provinces.

Norfolk Southern. Norfolk and Western Railway was the product of more than 200 railroad mergers from 1838 until 1982. Begun as the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad, the railroad grew slowly until 1959 when it merged with the Virginian Railway. This merger ushered in a merger movement and modernization including the 1964 merger with the former Wabash; Nickel Plate (the Nickel Plate served the Alton area); Pittsburgh & West Virginia; and Akron, Canton & Youngstown railways. In 1982 the Interstate Commerce Commission approved the merger of Norfolk & Western and Southern Railway. Norfolk Southern Railway Company is a major freight railroad owned by Norfolk Southern Corporation. In 1997, Norfolk Southern and CSX Corp. filed a joint application for authority to operate the routes and assets of Conrail. This application was approved in 1998 and Norfolk Southern's rail operations added 7,200 miles of the Conrail system (predominately the former Pennsylvania Railroad). Today the railroad operates over 21,800 miles of road in 22 states, the District of Columbia and Ontario, Canada. The railroads operating revenue comes primarily from the shipment of coal and iron ore (23%), automobiles and parts (15%), chemicals (13%), metals and construction products (11%), paper, clay and forest products (10%), and agriculture and consumer products (10%).

Union Pacific. Union Pacific (UP) has 38,654 miles of track and is one of the largest railroads in North America serving 23 states and linking every major West Coast and Gulf Coast port. UP has one of the most diversified commodity mixes including chemicals, coal, food and food products, forest products, grain and grain products, intermodal metals and minerals, and automobiles and automobile parts. Most north-south traffic in the Alton area moves through the Dupo terminal. Dupo is the site of the Union Pacific intermodal terminal which serves the St. Louis area. Union Pacific acquired Southern Pacific in 1992 and acquired Chicago and Northwestern in 1995.

Intermodal terminals. Several intermodal terminals exist in and near the Alton area. These terminals are listed in Table 27.

| Railroad | Symbol | Regions Served | Coastal Port Connections |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--|--|
| Burlington Northern Santa Fe | BNSF | Northwest, Upper Mid-West, South, Southwest and California | Galveston, Houston, Los Angeles, Matagordo, Mobile, Pensacola, Portland, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Vancouver |
| CSX Transportation | CSX | Mid-West, East, Southeast | Baltimore, Charleston, Jacksonville, Miami, Mobile, New Orleans, Newport News, Pensacola Philadelphia, Savannah, Tampa, Wilmington |
| Gateway Western | GW | Kansas City | None |
| Illinois Central | IC | Chicago to Gulf Coast | Mobile, New Orleans, Pensacola |
| Norfolk Southern | NS | East, Mid-West, Southeast | Brunswick, Charleston, Jacksonville, Mobile, Morehead City, New Orleans, New York, Norfolk, Philadelphia, Savannah |
| Union Pacific | UP | Mid-West, West, Northwest, Southwest | Brownsville, Galveston, Houston, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Portland, San Diego, San Francisco, Tacoma |

| Railroad | Location | Distance | Direction |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Norfolk Southern | Fairmont City | 22 miles | Southeast |
| Union Pacific | Dupo | 31 miles | South |
| Illinois Central | Venice | 17 miles | South |
| Southern Pacific | East St. Louis | 25 miles | South |
| Gateway Western | Venice | 16 miles | South |

Highways and Motor Freight

Highways. The Alton area is served by six interstate highways: I-44, I-55, I-64, I-70, I-255 and I-270. These major freeways are supplemented by state highways 3, 111, 140 and 143. In addition, U.S. Highway 67 runs through Alton and provides direct access to St. Louis over the Clark Bridge.

Motor Freight Resources. The St. Louis metropolitan area is the second largest trucking center in the U.S. with more than 300 common carriers and 50 contract carriers. The region has the lowest aggregate miles between major point of destination on the continental U.S. Over-the-road trucks can reach the following major cities in less than 8 hours: Chicago, Cincinnati, Dayton, Des Moines, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Louisville, Memphis, Milwaukee, Nashville, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Tulsa and Wichita.

Mass Transit

Madison County Transit District. Madison County Transit (MCT) District was created in 1980 by the Illinois State Legislature to promote public transit. The district operates fixed-route bus service throughout the county. Routes that serve Alton are listed in Table 28. Many of these routes intersect with bus routes that are operated by the Bi-State Development Agency. The District has implemented a hub and spoke system utilizing transit centers as transfer location. Express bus service is provided to major park-and-ride centers along major arterials and interchanges. Transit centers have been completed in Alton, Collinsville, Edwardsville and Wood River. Three additional transit centers are planned.

In 1985, demand responsive service was begun for older adults and persons with disabilities. Local shuttle service using small buses was initiated in 1986. Van pool service was begun in 1987 and expanded to include car pool matching assistance in 1993. In 1994, MCT became the regional operator of the RideFinders program serving the eight-county St. Louis metropolitan area.

Metro. Metro (formerly Bi-State Development Agency) serves the St. Louis Metropolitan Area and operates 580 buses over 112 fixed routes, 41 light rail vehicles, and 63 call-a-ride paratransit vans.

Light Rail Transit. Metro introduced service on MetroLink, a light rail system in July 1993, over a 17-mile long line. MetroLink completed a major expansion in 2001 and currently operates a 34.4 mile long line that connects Lambert-St. Louis International Airport through downtown St. Louis to East St. Louis and eastward to Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville. MetroLink was projected to carry an estimated 12,000 passengers per day during its first year of operations and 30,000 riders by the year 2000. The system greatly exceeded those projections and in 2000 averaged more than 50,300 riders per day.

| Table 28 Madison County Transit District Routes Serving Alton | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Route Number | Route Name | Areas Served |
| 1 | Riverbend East St. Louis Metrobus | 5th & Missouri MetroLink Station, East St. Louis, Brooklyn, Madison, Downtown Granite City, Wood River, Alton, Alton Sq. |
| 1X | Godfrey Riverbend Express | Alton Square, Downtown Alton, Eastgate Plaza, Hartford, Downtown St. Louis |
| 7 | Alton-Edwardsville Shuttle | Alton Square, Upper Alton, Eastgate Plaza, East Alton, Wood River, Edwardsville, SIUE |
| 8 | Central Shuttle | Alton Square, Lewis & Clark Community College |
| 9 | Washington Shuttle | Alton Square, Alton Memorial Hospital, Venture/K-Mart Center, Marian Heights, Shop n Save, Target |
| 10 | State and Elm Shuttle | Alton Square, Beverly Farms, Lewis & Clark Community College, Alton Acres |
| 11 | Brown Shuttle | Alton Square, Alton Memorial Hospital, Oakwood Estates, Washington Square Shopping Center, Salvation Army |
| 12 | Bethalto Shuttle | Alton Square, Amtrak Station, Bethalto, Cottage Hills, Wood River, Wal-Mart Plaza, Villa Rose Senior Housing, Wonderland Mobile Home Park |

Programmed Transportation Improvements

Illinois Route 255 Extension (Federal Aid Route 310)

The extension of Illinois Route 255 from IL Route 143 in Wood River north and west to U.S. 67 is planned by Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). This extension, which is currently designated as Federal Aid Route 310, will continue the highway as a four-lane divided highway.

IL Route 143 to IL Route 140. This extension of Route 255 from its current terminus at Illinois Route 143 in Wood River to Route 140 in Bethalto is under construction. This segment of the road will be a freeway designed to meet interstate standards.

IL Route 140 to Fosterburg Road. This next section of Route 255 is approximately 3.2 miles long and will extend the expressway north westward from Route 140 to Fosterburg Road. This extension of the road is anticipated to be designed as a four-lane, access controlled, divided highway with an interchange at Fosterburg Road.

Fosterburg Road to U.S. 67. The final section of Route 255 will be 6.7 miles long and will extend the highway from Fosterburg Road to its final terminus at the intersection of U.S. 67. This extension of the road is also anticipated to be designed as a four-lane, access controlled, divided highway with an interchange at Seminary Road.

MetroLink

MetroLink Extension. A 3.6 mile extension of the existing MetroLink line from Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville to a new Shiloh-Scott station (near MidAmerica St. Louis Airport) is under construction. Of the \$75 million construction cost, \$60 million is funded by the Illinois FIRST program and the rest comes from the St. Clair County Transit District.

Cross County Extension. Segment 1 of the Cross County MetroLink extension will be under construction by 2004. It will connect the Forest Park MetroLink station in St. Louis to University City, Clayton, Richmond Heights, Brentwood and south to Maplewood and Shrewsbury in St. Louis County.

Utilities

The City of Alton provides sanitary sewer service. Water service is provided by Illinois-American Water Company. Illinois Power Company provides electricity and natural gas to the area. Telephone service is provided by Ameritech.

Sanitary Sewers

Alton's public works department runs the sanitary sewer operation. The city has a

combination sanitary and storm sewer system. This is common for cities with older sewer systems.

Treatment Plant. Alton's sewage treatment plant was constructed in 1963 and expanded in 1977. The plant is located at 19 Chassen Lane and is an activated sludge plant. The plant has a design capacity of 10.5 million gallons per day (mgd) and a peak capacity (of storm and sanitary sewers) of 26.25 million gallons. Average flow is approximately 8.0 million gallons per day. While the plant is a combined sanitary and storm sewer treatment facility, the plant does not handle heavy industrial waste. Major industries in town, including Olin, Laclede and Jefferson-Smurfit, have treatment plants for their industrial wastes.

Water Service

Alton Water Company constructed many of the water mains that serve central portions of Alton, including Hunterstown. Alton, as many other cities have found, discovered that being in the water business was becoming increasingly challenging. With stricter state and federal environmental and health regulations, combined with aging infrastructure, many communities have found that it is easier to turn water systems over to private companies who maintain experts in all aspects of running and operating a water utility.

Illinois-American Water Company now provides water service to Alton. Illinois-American is a subsidiary of American Water Works Company, the largest water utility enterprise based in the U.S. Illinois-American provides water service to approximately 757,000 people in Illinois. Illinois-American has a water treatment plant on the River Road. This plant has treatment capacity of 16,000,000 gallons per day with an average daily demand of 9,335,000 gallons. Illinois-American has storage capacity for 6,890,000 gallons.

Issue, Goal and Objectives

Issue: **Circulation**

Goal: **To provide a safe, cost-effective, efficient and convenient transportation system utilizing motorized and non-motorized modes of travel available to all residents and visitors of Alton.**

Objective: The city shall promote alternate modes of transportation through the development of bike paths and pedestrian facilities, and by encouraging the use of mass transit.

Objective: Additional bike paths should be developed.

Objective: Sidewalks should be at least five feet wide.

Objective: Parking needs to be provided in neighborhood areas.

- Objective:** To reduce wear and tear on the city's historic brick streets, the shipment of goods through the city shall be limited to the arterial street system except for local deliveries.
- Objective:** Interconnected parking areas shall be provided between adjacent commercial developments to promote safe traffic movements.
- Objective:** Downtown businesses west of Piasa should be oriented to pedestrians and not the automobile. This shall be accomplished through smaller signs, no drive-through businesses, pedestrian paths to parking areas and secure crosswalks.

Infrastructure Plan

Walking/Bike Trails

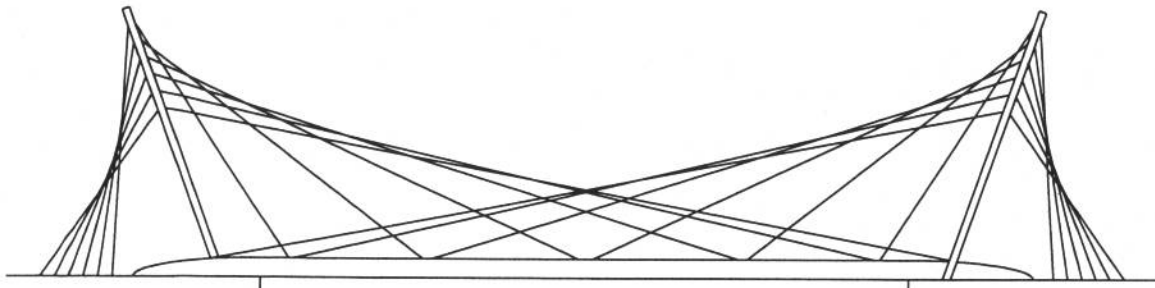
A significant improvement to the city's walking and bike trails is proposed to connect downtown Alton to the river front. Previous plans have included a proposed pedestrian bridge over Highway 67 and the railroad tracks to make this connection. This plan includes that planned improvement with the following recommendations:

- The bridge should be a combination pedestrian/bike trail facility to provide a way for bicyclists to safely cross the highway and railroad tracks.
- The bridge should be a cable-stayed bridge and should accomplish the following design concepts:
 - (1) A cable-stayed bridge would emulate the Clark Bridge on a smaller scale;
 - (2) Masts on the bridge and the cables would be reminiscent of a sailing ship reinforcing Alton's river heritage;
 - (3) The bridge should be constructed of steel to reflect Alton's steel making heritage.

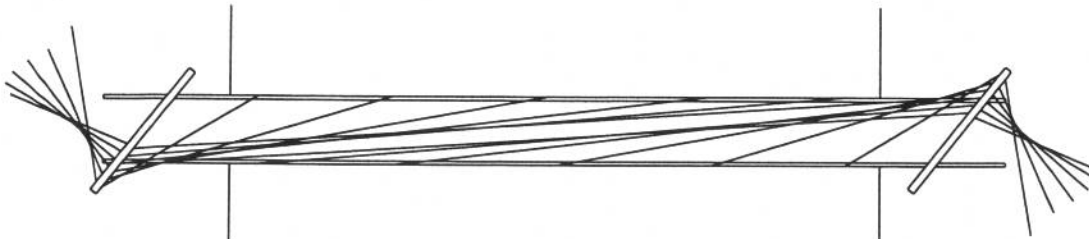
A potential design for the bridge is included in Figure 8.

Roads

As the City annexes additional territory, improvement to the existing road system should be undertaken to improve circulation to and from land that will be developed and Illinois Route 255. Roads to be considered should include but not be limited to, Fosterburg Road, Harris Lane, Wood Station Road, Vonnahmen Road, Wolf Road, North Rodgers, and Culp Lane.



Alton Pedestrian Bridge- West Elevation



Alton Pedestrian Bridge- Plan View



Alton Pedestrian Bridge- South Elevation

Design By Richard S. Shearer- Richard Shearer & Associates
Figure 8

Proposed Pedestrian Bridge

Sewer System

Significant improvements are anticipated in the city's sewer system. The Sewer Service Area and Facilities Planning Area Boundary Expansion Plan as prepared by the engineering firm Sheppard, Morgan and Schwabb, Inc., include proposals that are divided among improvements to the existing system, extension of existing sewer lines, and potential expansion of the sewer plant.

Improvements to Existing System. The city has an active program to replace aging sewer lines. A part of this program is the gradual replacement of the existing combined stormwater and wastewater system to provide two separate systems. Separate systems are constructed as a part of new development. In addition, the city is replacing aging lines which also separates stormwater and wastewater flows.

Extension of Sanitary Sewer Service. The city is undertaking a plan to extend sanitary sewer service to the north in the West Fork of the Wood River Growth Corridor. This plan will determine future sewer demands and outline a plan to service the growth through a combination of gravity flow and force main sewers, and lift stations.

Expansion of Sewer Plant. The existing sewer plant is capable of expansion by 50 percent of its capacity. This would provide for a design capacity of approximately 16 million gallons per day which is double the existing average daily demand of 8.0 million gallons. It is anticipated that the existing sewer treatment plant, combined with its expansion capability, will provide adequate capacity to handle the sewer demand through the life of this plan.

Financing Techniques

The techniques available to the city for funding capital improvements include General Obligation Bonds, Revenue Bonds, Community Development Block Grants, Tax Increment Financing, and many other grants and special financing alternatives. These financing techniques are described below.

General Obligation Bonds

A General Obligation bond may be issued to fund relatively large improvements that are a benefit to the city as a whole. For example, a new fire station or a new city hall. General Obligation bonds may be issued to incur indebtedness. Since Alton is a Home-Rule City, there is no limit on the amount of General Obligation Bonds that may be issued. They are issued based on the ability of the city to pay back such a bond. The city has used general obligation debt in the past to finance major capital expenditures including improvements to the electric system, city hall renovation, and an addition to the library. A large bond issue might require an increase in property taxes to meet the debt service requirements. Such a bond could be structured to be repaid over 20 years.

Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds may be issued for projects that generate revenue for a municipality. For example, they may be used to fund new sewer mains for an area that will pay for sewer service. In this way, user fees retire the revenue bonds. The city has used revenue bonds in the past and the current sewer bonds will be retired in 2003.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Community development block grant (CDBG) funds are allocated by the federal government to local governments based, in part, on population. Municipalities may request these funds through their County government. The grants may be used for a wide range of activities including park development, housing improvements and water main improvements.

Federal-Aid Urban (FAU) System

The Federal government provides funding for highways through several programs. One program for cities of 5,000 population or greater is the Federal-Aid Urban (FAU) system program. To be eligible for funding, a road must be a major road and shown on the official State map of the area showing all roads eligible for Federal funds roads. Projects on FAU roads are eligible for up to 75% financing by the Federal government.

Local Government Bond

Illinois Development Finance Authority (IDFA) will issue double tax-exempt revenue bonds for any unit of local government having the authority to issue debt to finance capital improvement projects such as infrastructure needs, land and building projects, and major equipment acquisitions. Project costs must typically exceed \$2 million to be cost effective. Exemption from both state and federal taxes provides units of local governments with significant savings in their project financing needs.

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA)

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) offers construction grants for wastewater treatment facilities. Such grants may be for up to 70 percent of the cost of an approved wastewater compliance project. In addition to treatment facilities, certain sewer main projects may also be funded. The IEPA administers the Illinois Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund (WPCRF) which offers low interest loans to communities to design and construct wastewater system improvements.

Illinois Department of Conservation (IDOC)

The Illinois Department of Conservation (IDOC) provides Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grants to develop

outdoor recreational facilities. Local governments may use these funds to acquire land and develop picnic areas, city parks, campgrounds, bike trails and support facilities such as roads and water supply. An IDOC Bicycle Path Grant is also available to construct recreational facilities for public bicycle paths and connector trails for bicycle paths.

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Enhancement Grants

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) offers enhancement grants to fund a number of facilities and activities including the following:

- Facilities for pedestrians and bicycles;
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites;
- Scenic or historic highway programs;
- Landscaping and other scenic beautification;
- Historic preservation;
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities;
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors;
- Control and removal of outdoor advertising (billboards);
- Archaeological planning and research; and
- Mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff.

Affordable Financing of Public Infrastructure Program

This program provides financial assistance to local governments, public entities, medial facilities, and public health clinics to help make affordable the financing of public infrastructure improvements needed to ensure health, safety and economic development in a community. Loans are available to a maximum of \$400,000 for up to 10 years at low interest. Funding can be combined with IEPA, Rural Bond Bank or other infrastructure programs.

Illinois FIRST Local Infrastructure Projects

This program was started as a public works program. The program is funded by increases in vehicle registration fees. This program provides funding for major infrastructure projects including roads, highways and parks. The majority of quality of life infrastructure improvements contained in Illinois FIRST were developed by state legislators, working in concert with their local officials to identify the pressing infrastructure needs in the communities they represent. From sewer improvements to drinking water upgrades, from fire trucks to community centers, Illinois FIRST has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure improvements will be made over the next five years to help communities improve their quality of life.

Illinois Legislature Discretionary Funds

The Illinois legislature has provided for discretionary funds that may be allocated by state legislators to municipalities for various purposes.

Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)

The Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) offers loans to local governments in rural areas to construct or improve community facilities such as water and sewer systems, fire stations, fire and rescue vehicles and other essential facilities.

Water Revolving Funds: Wastewater and Drinking Water

The Water Revolving Fund provides low interest loans to local governments and privately owned community water supplies and wastewater systems through two programs. The Water Pollution Control Loan is available for upgrades and repairs to community sewer and wastewater systems and the Public Water Supply Loan can be used for projects relating to community water supplies and clean drinking water. The state match for both programs is funded through Illinois The Fund for Infrastructure, Roads, Schools & Transit for the next 5 years.

Special Service Area Financing

Special service area financing permits a city to finance a capital improvement for a specific area by assessing a separate property tax on the land owners within the area. This type of financing may be used when a capital improvement benefits a certain area of the city and not necessarily the city as a whole. An example might be a stormwater main that serves a relatively small area.

Special Assessment Financing

A special assessment financing technique may be used for water and sewer mains, streets, sidewalks and parking lots by assessing the property owners that are benefitted. For example, a sidewalk could be constructed along a street and each of the property owners along the street assessed for its cost. The amount of the assessment is generally determined on the basis of the cost per front foot of the property benefitted.

Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing (TIF) is a locally permissible municipal financing technique that may be used to renovate blighted areas while improving the tax base of such areas. The program allows a city to acquire property, prepare it for redevelopment, and capture the incremental increases in property taxes in a redevelopment area to pay for necessary improvements without increasing general obligation debt or general property taxes. Use of TIF

financing requires a well defined redevelopment project area. A city can then write-down the cost of real estate acquisitions and improvements in the redevelopment area. Future additional property taxes generated by the improved property are used to finance the write-downs. These write-downs may be applied to various costs including, but not limited to, land acquisition, public site improvements, infrastructure, site preparation costs, etc. The city then obtains loan money for the company which pays back the debt from its property taxes, or directly pays for improvements from the proceeds of bonds sold in anticipation of future tax increment revenues. The County Assessor freezes the assessed valuation of all real property in the district. As a result, property tax money is distributed to taxing bodies based on the frozen figure until the TIF district ends. Development of the area raises the actual assessed valuation. Any additional tax money brought in while the TIF operates, is put in a special fund used to pay off the TIF debt, instead of being divided among the taxing districts.

TEA-21 Funds

In June of 1998, a new federal transportation bill was signed into law. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) provides funding for a wide range of transportation programs and projects. The Act provides \$120 million over six years in the Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program. This program is designed to investigate and address the relationships between transportation, community preservation, and the environment, and to identify private-sector initiatives to help implement preservation practices. Key objectives of the program are to:

- improve the efficiency of transportation systems
- reduce the impacts of transportation on the environment
- reduce the need for costly public infrastructure investments
- ensure efficient access to jobs, services, and businesses, and
- encourage private sector development patterns that meet these objectives

Eligible projects include sidewalks, bike paths, lighting, and other historic-related elements. Approved projects receive 80 percent federal funding.

Parks and Recreation

Alton's parks department maintains 15 city parks, three city golf courses and 13 fountains. The parks department includes the forestry division for the city which provides planting and maintenance of street trees. Landscaping the city entrance signs also falls under their care. The individual parks are described below. Facilities available in each park are summarized in Table 29. Fountains are summarized in Table 31. Golf Courses are described in Table 30.

Parks

Dr. Gordon F. Moore Community Park

Gordon Moore Park contains 704 acres and is the newest facility. It is located in the northeast portion of the city, east of Homer G. Adams Parkway and primarily on the south side of Illinois Route 140. Approximately 84 acres are currently leased to a farmer. Because of its size and facilities available, it serves as a regional park. Facilities in the park include:

- A 19-acre lake and dam with a walking bridge. The lake is stocked by the Illinois Department of Resources.
- A 400-bush Hosta Garden with a walking path.
- A 1,800-bush rose garden with a fountain and the Carrilon House. Roses are replaced by donations and a procurement fund.
- An Oriental garden features a pond with a waterfall, Koi fish and a walkway around the pond includes a small bridge and access to a pagoda. This also begins the Handicap Nature Trail, a 1/4 mile walkway with Braille signage.
- 34 acres of athletic fields with 10 baseball diamonds with a drinking fountain and bleachers on each diamond (Diamond # five is irrigated).
- Baseball diamond #5 has an air-conditioned press box with a public address system and lighted score board and TV lighting.
- 17 soccer fields (four irrigated) for tournaments and league play, most with bleachers.
- A natural area with prairie grass restoration with a 1/3 mile non-paved walking path.
- Six picnic shelters with grills.

Parks and Recreation

- Six playgrounds, one strictly for toddlers with an adjacent picnic shelter.
- Three Concession buildings with seasonal restroom facilities.
- 5,400-square-foot pavilion (Muenstermann Pavilion) with central air and heat, a large 60' by 60' room, a 30' x 30' kitchen with stove, refrigerator and restroom facilities.
- Dr. Raymond Simpson Tennis Center has 8 tennis courts (4 lighted). A two-story viewing stand and bleachers. It also includes 78 permanent and 10 portable picnic tables and 31 moveable chairs. A pro shop, tournaments and adult and junior programs and clinics are also available.

Rock Spring Park

Rock Spring Park contains 87 acres, with an additional 69-acre 9-hole irrigated golf course. Of the park acreage, 47 acres are left natural with the other 40 mowed. There are six tennis courts, a ball diamond, sledding and three picnic areas with pavilions and grills. There are also a playground cushioned with wood chips, seasonal restrooms, and two bleachers at the ball diamond. This park is located near the center of the city.

Piasa Park

Construction on this new park is underway. On Highway 3 with a view of the river, the park is under the bluffs where the historic Piasa bird is located. The caves into the cliff will be blocked by bars. It will serve as the starting point of the river road bike trail. It will be ADA accessible and have 45 trees, 450 shrubs (evergreen and flowering) and flowers. A picnic shelter and seasonal restrooms will be provided. The project will be completed in two phases and will provide a much more attractive setting for viewing of the art work. When complete, the park will be approximately 20 acres. The Illinois Department of Transportation is providing partial funding for project construction. Ongoing maintenance will be covered in the parks department budget.

River Front Park

Located south of downtown alongside the Mississippi River, its 19 acres (4 acres irrigated) are located between the Alton Belle casino and the Alton Marina. There are seasonal restroom facilities, two picnic shelters and playground equipment. The playground surface is fine wood chips with rubber mats at the bottom of the slides. A kids fountain is located along the old lock wall. A masonry and painted metal fence separates a walking path from the Mississippi River bank. A sail-shaped canopy serves as a sculpture and sun shade. It is one of the newer parks in Alton and is in good condition.

**Table 29
Alton Park Facilities**

| Park | Acre- age | Basketball Courts | Ball Diamonds | Tennis Courts | Football/ Soccer Fields | Seasonal Restrooms | Picnic Pavilions | Play- grounds |
|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Gordon Moore | 449 | -- | 10 | 8 | 17 | x | 5 | 5 |
| Rock Spring | 87+ | -- | 1 | 6 | -- | x | 1 | 2 |
| Piasa | 20 | -- | -- | -- | -- | x | -- | -- |
| River Front | 19 | -- | 2 | -- | -- | x | -- | -- |
| Russell Commons | 12 | ½ | -- | -- | -- | x | 3 | -- |
| Milton | 11.8 | -- | -- | -- | 1 | -- | -- | 1 |
| Haskell ¹ | 8 | 1 | -- | -- | -- | x | -- | 1 |
| River View | 8 | -- | -- | -- | -- | x | -- | -- |
| Barth | 4.5 | -- | -- | -- | 1 | -- | -- | -- |
| Northside | 4.4 | 1 | 1 | -- | 1 | -- | -- | 1 |
| Olin | 4.4 | 1 | 1 | -- | -- | x | -- | 1 |
| Salu | 3.5 | 2 | -- | -- | -- | x | 1 | 1 |
| Hellrung | 2.6 | 1 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 1 |
| Doorman | .5 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Totals | 634.7 | 6.5 | 15 | 14 | 20 | x | 14 | 12 |

¹ Administrative Office for Parks Department + Park acreage does not include golf course

Russell Commons

This park is located near the Mississippi River at the south end of Ridge Street. It is one of the newest parks in the system. It has 12 acres with 10 acres mowed. The park contains a nature area, ½ basketball court, three picnic pavilions with grills and seasonal restroom facilities. It is close to the marina under the Clark Bridge. A grassy berm hides a view to the river. A bike route terminates here. The Vadalabene Bike way links the park to both the Great River Road and the Katy Trail over the Clark Bridge into Missouri. There is ample off-street parking with four designated as handicapped spots.

An asphalt walking path, approximately ¾ of a mile long, winds through the natural area and mowed portion of the park. The playground equipment combines plastic and metal with a school age and toddler section. There is bench seating available around the equipment. The ground surfaces are small wood chips with rubber pads at the base of the slides.

Milton Park

This 11.8-acre park is located in the eastern portion of the city. It mainly serves as a neighborhood park with playground equipment and a football/soccer field. Organizations often arrange to use the field for practice of soccer, football and softball. Temporary restroom facilities are brought in on an as-needed basis. The existing gravel parking lot is in poor condition and the surfacing does not allow for proper drainage. There is an abandoned concrete pad that poses a safety hazard. There is an electrical box and storm water drain entrance hatch, these items are currently a focal point as one enters the park.

Haskell Park and House

Haskell Park. Haskell Park is 8 acres with 7 acres mowed. This park has one basketball court, sledding and playground equipment. The Haskell Doll House, built in 1885, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It is available for rent for small tea parties. It houses a collection of antique toys and is utilized for Santa's visit. It also has a cellar and contains seasonal restrooms. Free weekly concerts are given by the municipal band between Memorial Day and Labor Day. They perform on a concrete pad south of the Doll House. Limited bench seating is available.

Haskell House. The parks administrative offices are housed in the first floor of the Haskell House. The city's personnel department is located on the second floor. The upper floors include a kitchenette and conference room.

Beautiful stained glass flanks the oversized front door. The interior of the house appears to have been renovated in the 1970s. The exterior of the house is in need of tuck pointing and painting. These maintenance issues should be addressed before damage begins to occur to the house. The drive around the house is concrete and has many damaged pads. The stairs of the porch are steep. There is an access ramp in the rear of the house although the interior of the

house is not ADA accessible. To make it accessible would be costly and cause undue hardship.

River View Park

Located on the southwest side of town overlooking the river at the end of Belleview, this 8-acre park (4 acres mowed) has a natural area, mature trees and flower gardens. Sledding is an activity here during appropriate weather. From Memorial Day thru Labor Day a weekly concert by the municipal band is given at the band shelter. This octagonal shaped structure is stucco and has an asphalt shingle roof. The shelter also provides storage for miscellaneous park supplies. The structure overall is in disrepair and should be renovated in the near future.

Barth Memorial

This park located at 6th and Langton street is 4.5 acres. It has a football/soccer field. It is landscaped and irrigated. This is the future site of the Paul Owens Holly Memorial which will include a Holly tree lined brick sidewalk with benches.

North Side Park

This 4.4-acre park (3.4-acres mowed) is located in the northwest portion of the city. It has playground equipment, one basketball court, one lighted baseball field and a football/soccer field with bleachers.

Olin Park

Located at State and Grand, the 4.4 acre park (2.4 acres mowed) offers playground equipment and seasonal restrooms. This park has 1 basketball court and a baseball diamond, a football/soccer field with concrete bleachers, sledding and serves as a neighborhood park. The asphalt walk within the park is in disrepair. Wood railroad tiles are deteriorating. The playground equipment is older and a large sandbox has no cover. Bathroom facilities are locked and have been vandalized. A stone retaining wall separates a six foot wide brick sidewalk along State Street from an unkempt natural area.

Salu Park

The 3.5-acre park has two lighted basketball courts, one picnic area with grills, a relatively new small playground and seasonal restrooms. It is located in the northeast portion of the city at the corner of Salu and Locust and serves as a neighborhood park. This is a well-used park.

Hellrung Park

Hellrung park is located in midtown Alton. It has a basketball court and a playground. The playground equipment is minimal, deteriorating and located in a grassed area. This 2.6-acre

park is in a depression surrounded by residential and commercial development. It also serves as a neighborhood park. Its lack of visibility contributes to it being an under-utilized park and subject to heavy vandalism.

Dormann Park

The half-acre park is located in the Midtown area of the city and appears to be a historic city square with extensive landscaping. There are four brick staircases centered on each side of the park that lead to a center circle. Asphalt walkways connect the staircases to the center. The asphalt walks are in poor condition. There are historic style street lights around the park but they are ill-placed in the center of the walkways. While the four asphalt paths lead to the center of the park, there is no object to focus on.

Specialty Parks

Eunice Smith Arboretum

The arboretum consists of a four-acre passive park. It has minimal off-street parking, which has not been well maintained. Most of the trees are grown in natural growth habit and Shields Creek has low visibility.

Lincoln Douglas Square

This site located just north of Broadway street is .25 acres. It features irrigated landscaping gardens and brick pavements inscribed with donor names. It was the site of the final debate in the 1858 senate election between Stephen A. Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. The platform built in front of city hall located at Broadway and Market is commemorated. Life-size statues of Lincoln and Douglas stand at this site. The first weekend in October is the time of the annual Lincoln-Douglas Days.

Recreational Demand

Recreation programs and clinics for youth and adults offered in Alton include tennis, golf, softball, baseball, volleyball, bowling, and basketball. Soccer programs and clinics are also offered for youth. Youth activities and summer camps are also available. Currently, weather dictates the range of outdoor activities offered. A limited number of basketball and volleyball programs are offered during the winter months. The recreation department works with the school system to use their facilities for these indoor programs.

Golf Courses

The three city run golf courses offer a variety of course types. Specifics on the three courses are included in Table 30.

| Table 30 Alton Golf Courses | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|------------------|--|--|
| Course Name | Course Acreage | # of Holes | Irrigated | Golfer Profile | Remarks |
| Robert P. Wadlow Golf Course (Previously Muny Golf Course) | 54 acres | 9 holes | yes | walking golfers favorite seniors Par | * No lessons available * Erosion problems at one hole |
| Gordon F. Moore Park Spencer T. Olin Golf Course | 255 acres | 18 Holes separate (9 hole) learning center | yes | Par Par | * Rated 4 ½ stars by Golf Digests' Best Places to Play guidebook (2000-2001) * Designed by Arnold Palmer and leased to Arnold Palmer Management |
| Rock Spring Golf Course | 69 acres | 9 Holes | yes | | * Former Country Club * Built between 1913-1919 * Historic trees, well maintained Hilly |
| * 1) Pro shops at all courses. 2) Golf Pro at Spencer T. Olin Golf Course. 3) A variety of tournaments are available from mid-April thru September | | | | | |

Fountains

Fountains are a visible sign through the city of its commitment to green space and beautification. There are currently 15 city-owned and maintained fountains, each unique, some more traditional and others more contemporary. A summary of information regarding fountains is shown in Table 31.

| Table 31 Alton Fountains | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|-------------------|----------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name/Location | Acreage | Landscaped | | | Remarks | |
| | | * | + | o | lighted | St. lights |
| 3 rd Street Fountain | .75 acres | * | + | o | ✓ | ✓ Well-maintained |
| 4 th 5 th 6 th Court Fountains | .3 acres each | * | + | | ✓ | |
| Rock Spring College Park Fountain | entrance | * | + | o | | * Waterfall, lighted at Christmas |
| Rufus Easton Fountain | .5 acres | | + | | | |
| State & Bell Fountain | .1 acre | | | o | | ✓ |
| State House Square | 1.5 acres | * | | o | ✓ | ✓ |
| Union Park | 1 acre | * | + | o | ✓ | ✓ |
| Washington Ave | .5 acres | * | + | o | ✓ | ✓ |
| Veterans Fountain in Golden Moore Park | .75 acres | * | + | o | ✓ | ✓ |
| Rose Garden Gordon Moore Park | 1.5 acres | * | + | o | | |
| State & William Fountain | .3 acres | * | + | o | ✓ | ✓ |
| Kids Fountain Gordon Moore Park | | * | | | | ✓ |
| Riverfront Park Kids Fountain | | * | + | o | | ✓ |
| | | * Trees | + Shrubs | o Flowering Plants | | |

Open Space Needs

Alton Compared to State

Alton has approximately, 634.7 acres within the city limits of open space (this includes parks only but does not include fountains and city golf courses) to serve a year 2000 census listed population of 30,400. This equates to 20.19 acres per 1,000 population. This far exceeds

the state wide average, which is 9.81 acres per 1,000 population. (Source: 1999 *State Outdoor Recreation Partnership Plan–SORPP*–published by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.)

The 1999 Illinois SORPP includes a summary of the results of a survey of Illinois residents regarding perceptions about outdoor recreation, and participation in outdoor recreation activities. Among the findings, it revealed that Illinoisans most often recreate locally, frequently at a city park; and that most people would like to spend more time on outdoor recreation activities. The SORPP also lists popular outdoor recreation activities in Illinois and in the United States, in descending order of participation as listed in Table 32.

| Table 32 Top Ten Outdoor Recreation Participation Rates in Illinois and the U.S. | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|
| | Illinois | United States |
| 1 | Pleasure Walking | Exercise Walking |
| 2 | Picnicking | Swimming |
| 3 | Swimming–pool | Camping |
| 4 | Bicycling | Bicycling |
| 5 | Swimming–lake/river | Fishing |
| 6 | Fishing | Basketball |
| 7 | Softball/Baseball | Hiking |
| 8 | Running/Jogging | Motor Boating |
| 9 | Motor Boating | Roller Skating |
| 10 | Basketball | Golf |

Goal and Objectives

Goal: **The city shall provide a park/green space system that is actively used by adults and children.**

Objective: More park and recreation facilities should be centrally located.

Objective: The city shall strive to provide 20 acres of park land per 1,000 inhabitants of the city.

- Objective:** Green space should be available throughout the city.
- Objective:** The city should continue to look for opportunities to improve public access to the Mississippi River.
- Objective:** Playground equipment throughout the city should be updated and surfacing made accessible based on Americans with Disabilities Act standards.
- Objective:** Recreation activities should be available on a comprehensive and convenient basis throughout the year.
- Objective:** Ways to improve access to Gordon Moore Park should be investigated.
- Objective:** A bike path should be developed to connect the central part of the city to Gordon Moore Park.
- Objective:** A community center should be considered to provide indoor recreation space.
- Objective:** As areas develop and redevelop based on new urbanism principles, additional park and recreation areas must be available, particularly for children to play.
- Objective:** A public swimming pool should be considered.
- Objective:** The city should consider development of a fishing pier along the Mississippi River.
- Objective:** The economic development potential of the city's parks system need to be recognized.

Parks and Recreation Plan

Parks and recreation areas are critical to the development and maintenance of a stable urban environment. Lands acquired and developed for parks and recreation areas are the soundest of civic investments. Such lands promote health; decrease crime; add tremendously to the amenities of city life; enhance property values, and such lands never wear out. To facilitate the maintenance of a stable urban environment in Alton, a number of improvements to the city's parks are planned.

It is recommended that restroom facilities continue to be seasonal due to the economic realities of turning off the utilities at each location. These costs and man hours could be better spent elsewhere.

Resources in the park system have been mainly put into Gordon Moore Park since its original development. The other parks in the system have suffered from a lack of attention. A parks maintenance schedule needs to be created and followed setting priorities. The long-term success of the overall parks system needs to be considered. Neighborhood parks are important to community families. Having a safe common activity area for a section of the community makes for a more attractive neighborhood. Consistent signage throughout the parks system needs to be implemented. Brochures should be available for the public at the park sites not just the main park office. The budget for the parks system needs to allow for maintenance and periodic replacement of the facilities at all parks and not just the newest parks in the systems. The following are recommendations for individual parks.

Dr. Gordon F. Moore Community Park

This park is one of the most well-maintained parks in the city. Because of its size and facilities, it is often used for tournaments for a variety of sports. There are a large number of projects planned including replacements and maintenance. Many of these projects will be paid for, in part, through grants.

Gordon F. Moore Community Park should continue to function as Alton's primary park. The existing ballfields and soccer fields will eventually be lit. In addition, irrigation and water fountains will be added.

The park is bisected by Route 140. The northern side of the park needs to have restroom facilities and water fountains added. Bleachers should also be added for soccer and football viewing.

Rock Spring Park

Trees that are no longer living or those that create a potential hazard need to be removed. The fountains at the entry to the park needs to be painted for a more natural appearance. The bathroom facilities need to be updated. Drives throughout the park need to be replaced or maintained. Additional signs need to be added to direct people to different amenities within the park.

Piasa Park

This park should be constructed as planned. Consideration should be given to having year-round bathroom facilities versus seasonal.

River Front Park

This is one of the newer parks in the system and it should be maintained and updated as needed. Potential development could involve adding a fishing pen for public use over the Mississippi.

Russell Commons Park

This is one of the newer parks in the system and it should be maintained and updated as needed. The walking path should have a sign that denotes distance and indicates a starting point. The start of the bike path should indicate that it starts the Vadalabene Bike trail between Alton and Pierre Marquette State Park. It should also be noted that if you travel into Missouri from this point, it is connected to the Katy trail.

Milton Park

The gravel parking lot should be paved in the future and should be engineered for proper drainage. The focal point upon entering the park is a large electrical box and storm water drain. Without affecting the function of these elements an enclosure and/or landscape buffer should be added. The abandoned concrete pad should be removed due to the safety hazard it poses. The view of Homer Adams Parkway to the east should be screened by landscaping. The natural area of this park is under utilized and if nature parks were added, the natural area would get a lot more use.

Haskell Park and House

Renovation of the park office should be scheduled. The concrete drive should be replaced. Maintenance should be performed on the house before damage to the interior occurs. The water fountains need to be scheduled for replacement. The Haskell doll house needs to be maintained.

River View Park

The seasonal bathrooms have recently been repaired. The band shelter needs to be renovated. The fence which creates a barrier from the cliff needs to be repaired or replaced. The street allowing access to the park needs to be repaired and maintained. The vegetation is overgrown on the cliff and should be cut back.

Barth Memorial Park

This is an open field with no specific function. Adding a playground and some restroom facilities would make this park more inviting. One concrete walk bisects the park and prohibits use as a play field. The concrete walk should be removed, or the park should be redesigned to make the concrete walk an asset rather than a liability.

North Side Park

The ballfield although designed for fast pitch ball is still utilized for practices and for over flow when required.

Olin Park

The playground equipment and ground cover should be replaced. The sand box should be removed and not replaced due to health issues. Existing wooden railroad ties should be removed or replaced with a more long-lasting material such as concrete or perma-lock due to their poor condition. Redesign of the topography should be considered. The field lighting is also in need of repair.

Walkways within the park need to be replaced and resurfaced where damaged. Restrooms are deteriorating and need to be renovated or replaced. The retaining wall has adjacent vegetation which needs to be maintained. The concrete bleachers provide a good viewing area for the field and should be kept in good condition.

Dormann Park

This could be a great place for contemplation with appropriate sculpture and seating. Some of the older bushes should be removed and replaced with shrubs. All the sidewalks lead to a center circle but there is no focal point. A statue or other art work would provide the focal point and make this a much more pleasing park.

Eunice Smith Arboretum

The parking lot should be repaired and resurfaced. The creek has been allowed to become overgrown and needs to be kept under control. A number of the trees need to be replaced.

The park would be more inviting and useful if a walking path and benches were added. Since this is a city arboretum, it creates an opportunity to teach community members about trees native to Illinois. A map depicting a park plan and species information would be an asset.

Additional Land

The parks department owns additional land. Hoffmeister right-of-way is 1.5 acres of green space and McKinley Boulevard right-of-way is .75 acres. The latter is part of the street scape program. Brentwood and Miami/Cut St. each have rounds and/or medians that are city right-of-way maintained by the parks department. Additional park land needs to be acquired. Specifically, lands in the Milton area need to be acquired, at a minimum to provide playgrounds and tot lots. As additional land is annexed to the city, neighborhood parks will need to be developed in those areas.

Funding Sources

The State of Illinois provides a number of programs to assist local governments in acquiring and developing open spaces. These programs are described below.

Open Lands Trust

In the past, Illinois has ranked near the bottom among the states in the amount of public land set aside for its residents. The state has undertaken an historic effort to conserve the state's natural heritage by creating the Illinois Open Lands Trust. This four year, \$160 million bonding program, run by the Department of Natural Resources, sets aside land for open space, provide new outdoor recreation opportunities, and promote wildlife habitat. The Open Lands Trust initiative is the largest open space acquisition and preservation program in the history of the State. Approximately \$40 million is made available each year for state land acquisition, as well as a combination of competitive grants and loans to local governments for open space protection. Maximum grant awards to local governments are \$2 million and require a local match. Local governments, in rural areas where the state purchases land, will be provided with community planning grants for capital projects. The program also allows for partnerships with non-governmental organizations, provided that lands acquired with state funds remain under governmental ownership. All land acquired through this program will be from willing sellers only.

Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD)

The Open Space Land Acquisition and Development, (OSLAD) program has awarded more than \$125.3 million to nearly 800 local park projects since 1986. OSLAD funds are used to provide competitive grants for projects such as parks, outdoor recreation facilities, and urban forests. The program is funded by a dedicated percentage of the state real estate transfer tax. Maximum awards are \$750,000 for acquisition and \$400,000 for development projects. A local match is required. In 2000, \$21 million was provided throughout the state to create new local parks, further develop and improve existing park areas, and preserve natural areas.

Bike Paths

Approximately \$120 million has been awarded to nearly 140 community bicycle path projects, adding hundreds of miles of trails to Illinois' current park system and expanding recreational opportunities in every part of the state. The Fund for Infrastructure, Roads, Schools & Transit program, the Illinois Department of Transportation, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) generate the funding for bicycle path projects.

The DNR grants are available to any local government with statutory authority to acquire and develop land for public recreation. The grants are funded from a percentage of motor vehicle title transfer fees and provide up to 50% of an approved project's total cost. Grants through DNR to develop bike paths are limited to \$200,000 and there is no cap for

acquisition projects. Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) administers the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) in cooperation with DNR, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, and the Capital Development Board. ITEP is a federally funded program designed to support projects that provide facilities beyond traditional accommodations for cars, trucks, and transit, including bike paths, historic transportation structures, and roadway beautification projects.

Natural Areas Acquisition Fund

The Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) is used by the Department of Natural Resources to purchase high-quality natural areas and habitat for endangered and threatened species. All of the sites acquired through the NAAF are natural areas of statewide significance and are included on the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory. The Natural Areas Acquisition Fund has spent \$3.1 million to purchase 997 acres of high-quality natural land and habitat, including recent acquisitions at Volo Bog State Natural Area, Prairie Ridge State Natural Area, and the Cache River State Natural Area.

Burial Protection Program

Cemeteries provide non-traditional open space while also providing sacred burial places entitled to protection. Through the Burial Protection Program, the State Historic Preservation Agency works with property owners and units of local government to protect older cemeteries from intentional desecration or encroachment with the aim of preserving open space.

Greenways Program

This program of the Department of Natural Resources provides incentives and technical assistance for local communities to protect greenways corridors and to provide bike trails; coordination occurs with Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) on bike trail projects with federal funding. The program encourages the formations of coalitions within counties and communities for the applications of grants, up to \$20,000 per grant, to prepare plans for the improvement of greenway systems.

Flood Mitigation Buy-out Program

This land acquisition program uses state dollars to purchase flood-prone properties, reduce future flood damages, and create open space. DNR coordinates this program with other state and federal partners that also provide dollars through the State Interagency Mitigation Advisory Group (IMAG). IMAG prioritizes projects and coordinates with local units of government who ultimately hold land title and maintain open space.

Communications

Telecommunications

Telecommunications technology is divided among four categories: broadcasting (radio and television), cable television, computer networks and telephone services. However, this breakdown is becoming more artificial because phone companies can deliver video programming and cable companies can provide phone service. Telecommunications technology has exploded over the past several years and is destined to continue expanding rapidly. This expansion must be considered by cities in planning for the future. The basic types of telecommunications technology and issues to be considered in the near future are outlined below.

Broadcasting

Broadcasting provides video and audio programming over the airwaves to radios and televisions within range of a signal of a specific station. The technology is point to multi-point or a signal from a station to a large number of receivers. The physical capacity of the usable electromagnetic spectrum limits the number of frequencies available to broadcasters. To provide for the orderly allocation of these scarce frequencies, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has the authority under the Communications Act of 1934 to license broadcasters based on "public interest, convenience, and necessity."

Cable Television

Cable television sends video programming as analog signals over coaxial cable. Analog signals are measurable impulses of voltage and differ from digital signals which are gaining favor among telecommunications providers. Digital signals will be discussed further under the section on personal communication services (PCS). As with broadcasting, cable allows for primarily one-way transmission. Unlike broadcasting where viewers only receive what the broadcaster sends in a single signal, the subscribers select from a basic package of programming that may be supplemented with premium channels. Cable systems currently carry approximately 75 channels of programming although the technology exists to carry over 500 channels.

Computer Networks

Computer networks and electronic information services have expanded rapidly over the past two decades. Accessing a network requires a computer, modem and phone line. Users dial the "host" computer of the network or service, and, once connected, can communicate over the network through the modem. The modem translates digital data from the sending computer into analog signals appropriate for phone lines. The best known computer network is the Internet, a noncommercial information highway that connects universities, laboratories, government bodies, and more than fifty million individual users in 102 countries. These networks and electronic information services provide a multitude of functions. Some operate as electronic

mail boxes and allow users to communicate via electronic mail (E-mail). Networks also provide access to electronic bulletin boards which allow users to post and read messages on specific topics.

Telephone Technology

Telephone technology has traditionally sent voice conversations by analog signals over networks of copper wires which link individual phones. Telephone companies use their switching technology to route millions of phone calls to the individual numbers dialed. Unlike cable or broadcasting, telephones are designed for point-to-point, interactive communication. Telephone networks are divided into local and long-distance carriers. Regional telephone companies operate local telephone networks within cities. These networks consist largely of copper wires, but many companies have upgraded their networks to use fiber-optic cables. Fiber-optic cables carry streams of digital information (bits of ones and zeroes) at the speed of light. This speed is hundreds of thousands of times faster than the speed information can be transmitted over copper wire. Long distance phone companies operate cross-country fiber-optic cables that run between cities.

With the expansion of telecommunication services, it is important to define the various types of telephone, cellular phone and digital personal communications systems (PCS) available and the technological implications of cellular and digital phones. This plan must consider the increasing demand for cellular and digital PCS phones and the need to plan for expanded fiber-optic services.

Recent technological developments have allowed telephone companies to expand beyond their traditional sphere to send video programming over their copper or fiber-optic wires. Video programming differs from that provided by cable or broadcasting. A video signal sent over a phone line goes to a single user and not to every television in the area. This is similar to a voice conversation that goes only to the number dialed and not to every telephone. The technology that allows telephone companies to switch millions of calls to the correct telephone also allows them to switch video programming to whomever request it. Telephone companies can send out as many video signals as it has lines so a switched video network has as many channels as it has users.

Telecommunications Act of 1996

Congress enacted the federal *Telecommunications Act of 1996* P.L. No. 104-104 on February 8, 1996. One purpose of this Act is the deregulation of the telecommunications industry to provide a more competitive environment for wired and wireless telecommunication services in the U.S.

The 1996 Act preserves the authority of the city to regulate the placement, construction, and modification of Towers and Antenna Support Structures and to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public. In addition, the city has been granted the authority to enact legislation to

regulate the construction, placement, and operation of telecommunications towers and antennae pursuant to its zoning powers delegated to the city by the State of Illinois.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has exclusive jurisdiction over the regulation of the environmental effects of radio frequency emissions from telecommunications facilities, and the regulation of radio signal interference among users of the radio frequency (RF) spectrum.

Cellular/PCS History

In 1974, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) expanded the radio spectrum available to the public. The purpose of this expansion was to provide space for expanding cellular telecommunications technology. In 1978, a mobile radiotelephone system was tested in Chicago. That system, which was a miniature version of a large radio network, was named for the unit cells into which it divides an area. Each cell has a radius of about one to two and one-half miles. Over the next five years, the industry developed higher-quality transmission devices and cellular technology was marketed to consumers as car phones. Cellular technology made it possible for a caller to travel while talking with someone at a conventional telephone or with another mobile user. Over the past few years, personal communication services (PCS) have been developed and expanded to include hand-held portable phones and paging systems. Cellular technology is an analog based system while PCS is a digital system.

Cellular Technology

Cellular technology differs from land-based communications (telephone lines), microwave or satellite communications systems because it is based on a network of short-range cell sites with a fixed capacity. The cells must be linked by cellular antennae sites (towers or other facilities), microwave dishes, or ground-wired towers or the transmission will fail. In addition, if a cell is crowded by too many users, it must be split into two cells, each having its own radius. A single cellular phone service provider must have a number of dispersed antennae to successfully provide service.

Low-power mobile radio (cellular) communication is accomplished by linking a wireless network of radio wave transmitting devices such as portable phones, pagers or car phones, to conventional ground-wired communications (telephone lines) through a series of contiguous cells. This technology entails a signal being transmitted from a portable phone to the nearest cellular antenna. This signal is then relayed from the cellular antenna to the nearest land-based telephone line or microwave dish, and then to a central switching computer. The computer then sends the call to its destination. If the destination is a land-based telephone, the call is transmitted over telephone lines. If the destination is another mobile communication device, the call is sent to the closest cellular antenna.

Calls originate or are received from a wireless source because antennae share a fixed number of frequencies across the cellular grid. When a caller cannot successfully place a call

or maintain a call (the call is “dropped”), the caller is either out of range or the nearest antenna is at full capacity. Calls originate within the radius of a cell antenna site. While the caller is moving in a vehicle, the call proceeds uninterrupted as the transmission is “patched” from one antenna to the next as the caller moves among the radii of various cell sites. While the caller is moving, the cellular antennas are automatically looking for an unoccupied frequency on the next antenna to enable continued transmission.

As the demand for cellular telecommunications increases, cells in a given area must be subdivided, or additional carriers must be permitted to operate there. The end result is the need for more antennae.

PCS Technology

PCS technology is also wireless and is similar to cellular technology although it operates on a network of small cells and uses a higher frequency in the spectrum to transmit data in a digital format. PCS operates in the form of “follow me calling” such that communication is routed to an individual rather than a telephone number via a more sophisticated version of a pager. The receiving end of the system is generally a phone, fax, video screen or a database. PCS systems are networked via cell sites which operate at higher frequencies on the electromagnetic spectrum than cellular phones. PCS frequencies are between 1,850 and 2,200 MHz and have smaller radii than cell technology. It has been estimated that in the year 2003 there will be 167 million PCS users which will require 100,000 cell sites.

Towers and Antennas

The height of wireless communications towers generally range from 50 to 200 feet in order to be taller than trees, buildings and other objects. Required height is generally proportional to a combination of the distance antennas can cover and the demand within their radius. Generally, higher towers cover a larger geographic area, but have a lower service demand. These towers are known as coverage sites. Shorter towers generally cover smaller radii with high demand and are known as capacity sites. Towers may be freestanding cellular monopole towers, guyed towers and lattice towers which have three or four legs. Antennas are placed on these towers or can be placed on other tall objects such as power poles, water towers, or roofs of buildings. In addition, antennas can be placed inside of some tall structures such as church steeples. In order to receive approval from municipalities with concerns about aesthetics, wireless communications providers have developed camouflaged or stealth antennas which may be disguised as trees or flag poles.

Issue, Goal and Objectives

Issue: **Wireless Communications Facilities**

Goal: Alton shall strive to provide reasonable areas for the location of wireless communications facilities through zoning while ensuring that the aesthetics and

convenience of the citizens are not compromised.

- Objective:** It is the city's intent to be consistent with the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 in all decisions regarding communications facilities.
- Objective:** It shall be the policy of the city not to discriminate among wireless communications providers and regulate all in a similar fashion.
- Objective:** The beauty and unique character of the city should be protected from the unnecessary intrusion of many unsightly communication facilities.
- Objective:** The city shall regulate wireless communications facilities in a manner to permit competition in the telecommunications industry but discourage a proliferation of communication towers.
- Objective:** Reasonable regulations shall be included in the city's zoning ordinance to provide appropriate zoning districts and procedures for various types of wireless communications facilities.

Communications Plan

Wireless Communications Facilities

Based on the increasing demand for wireless communication devices including cellular phones and PCS phones, it is likely that the existing wireless communications facilities in the city will not be adequate to keep up with demand. There will be additional inquiries of the city concerning locating such facilities within Alton in the future. It is recommended that the city allow such facilities based on a set of policies prepared which are designed to protect the beauty and unique characteristics of the city. These policies also need to recognize the guidance set forth in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

Fiber Optics

There has been considerable discussion about the information superhighway. This information superhighway will consist of a fiber-optic network that will carry virtually limitless television channels, home shopping and banking, interactive entertainment and video games, computer data bases, and commercial transactions. Technically a broadband communications network, the information superhighway will link households, business, and schools to virtually all available information resources. Rather than the traditional technology of analog signals and electromagnetic waves, the superhighway will carry all information (from voice to video) in the form of digital bits.

Completion of the information superhighway will require a substantial upgrade of

Communications

existing networks including expanded use of fiber-optic technology, interconnection of existing networks, linking individual users to the network, and deployment of complex hardware and software to manage and direct the flow of information. It is apparent that the private sector will have the primary responsibility for constructing the network. Cable companies have had a competitive edge over the telephone companies in beginning construction. However, the telephone companies have steady streams of revenue and huge amounts of capital because of their local phone monopolies. Cooperation between the cable and phone companies will be key in constructing the information superhighway. Governments at all levels need to ensure that their regulations do not unreasonably hinder construction of the information superhighway.

In Alton, it is imperative that the city cooperate with cable and telephone companies in the installation of fiber-optic lines. Road rights-of-way need to be available for this installation. In addition, the city should consider making provisions for easements or other means of ensuring that fiber-optic cable can be installed in all new subdivisions as they develop.

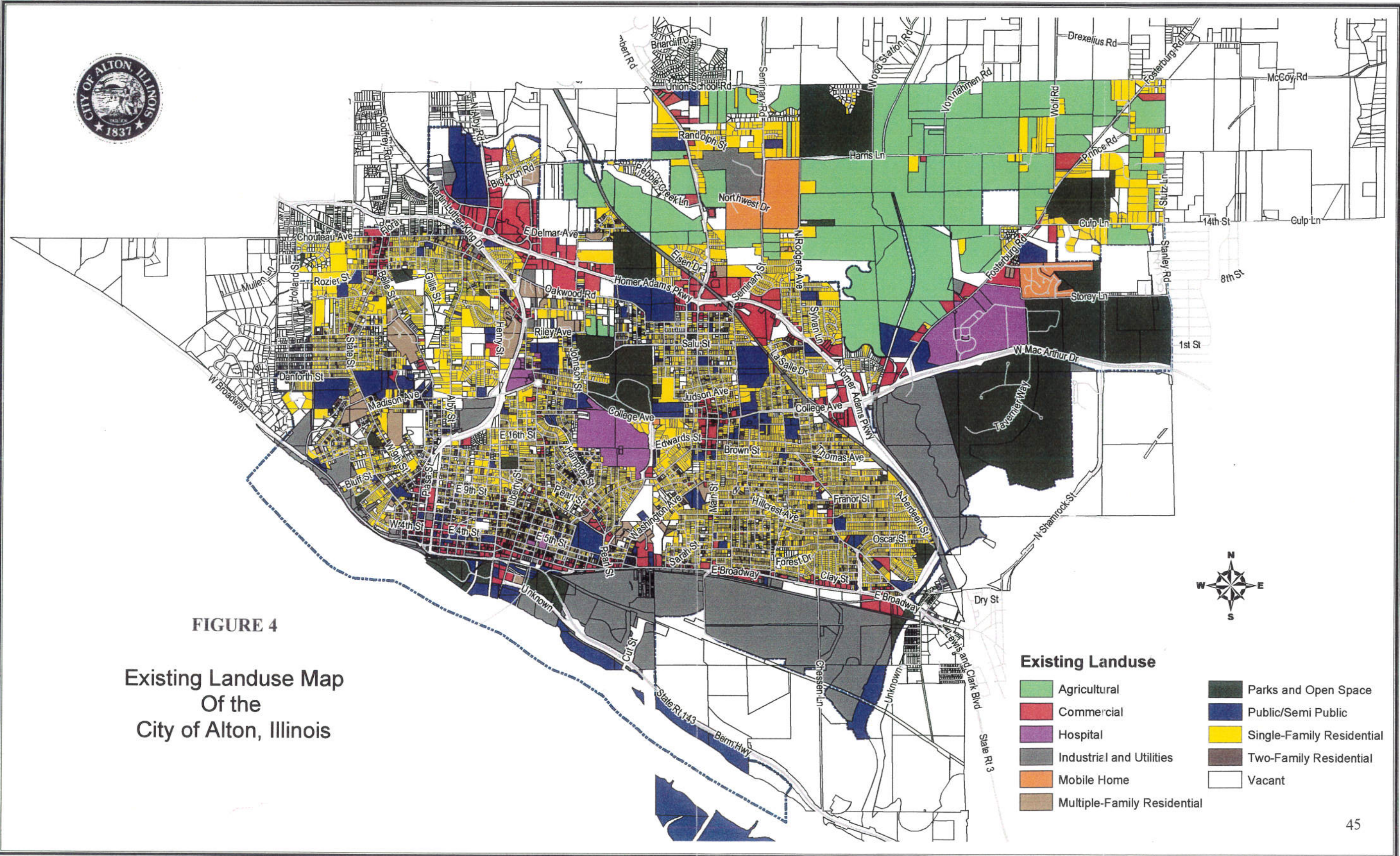
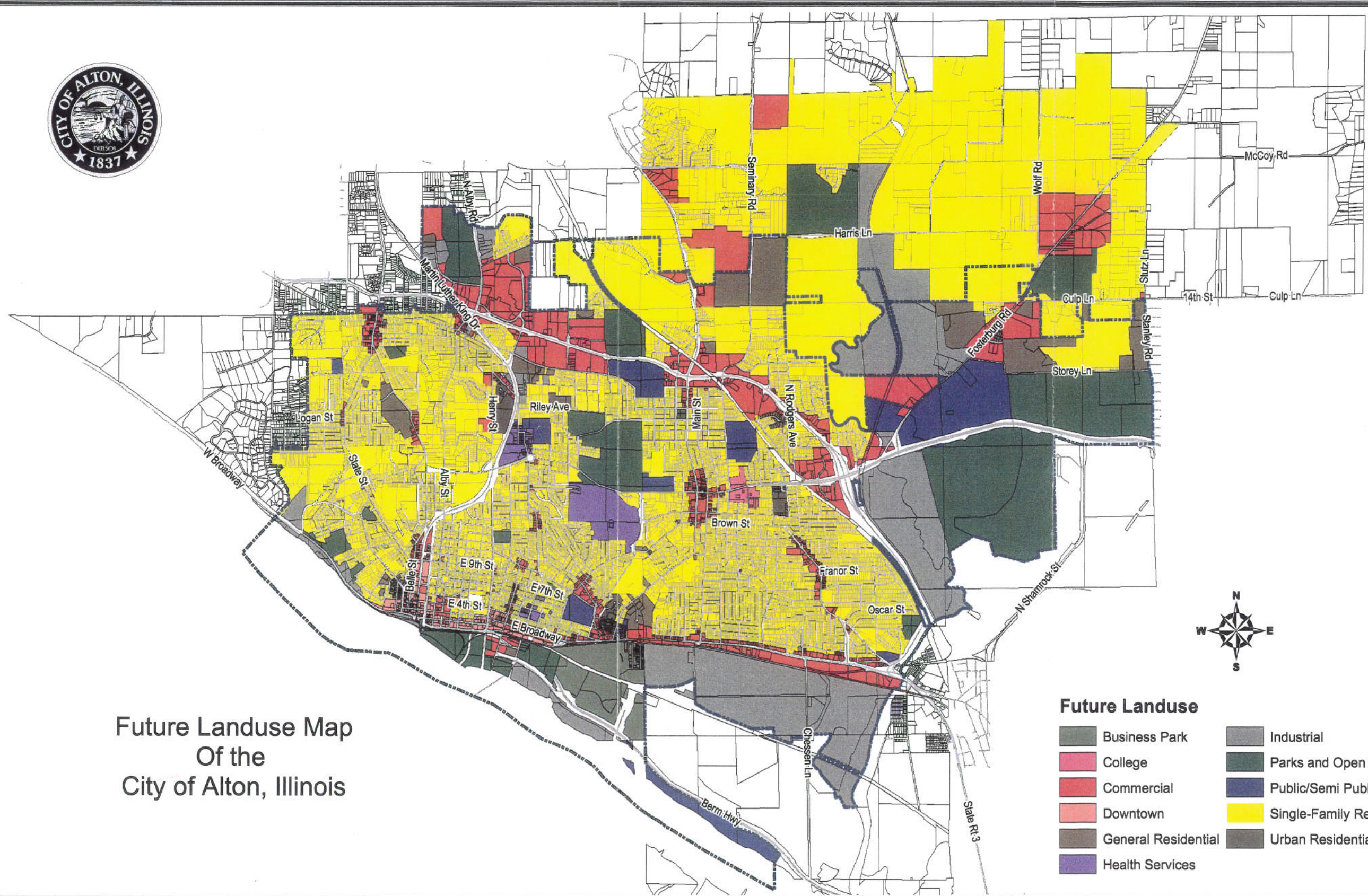


FIGURE 4
Existing Landuse Map
Of the
City of Alton, Illinois

- Existing Landuse**
- Agricultural
 - Commercial
 - Hospital
 - Industrial and Utilities
 - Mobile Home
 - Multiple-Family Residential
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Public/Semi Public
 - Single-Family Residential
 - Two-Family Residential
 - Vacant





Future Landuse Map
Of the
City of Alton, Illinois



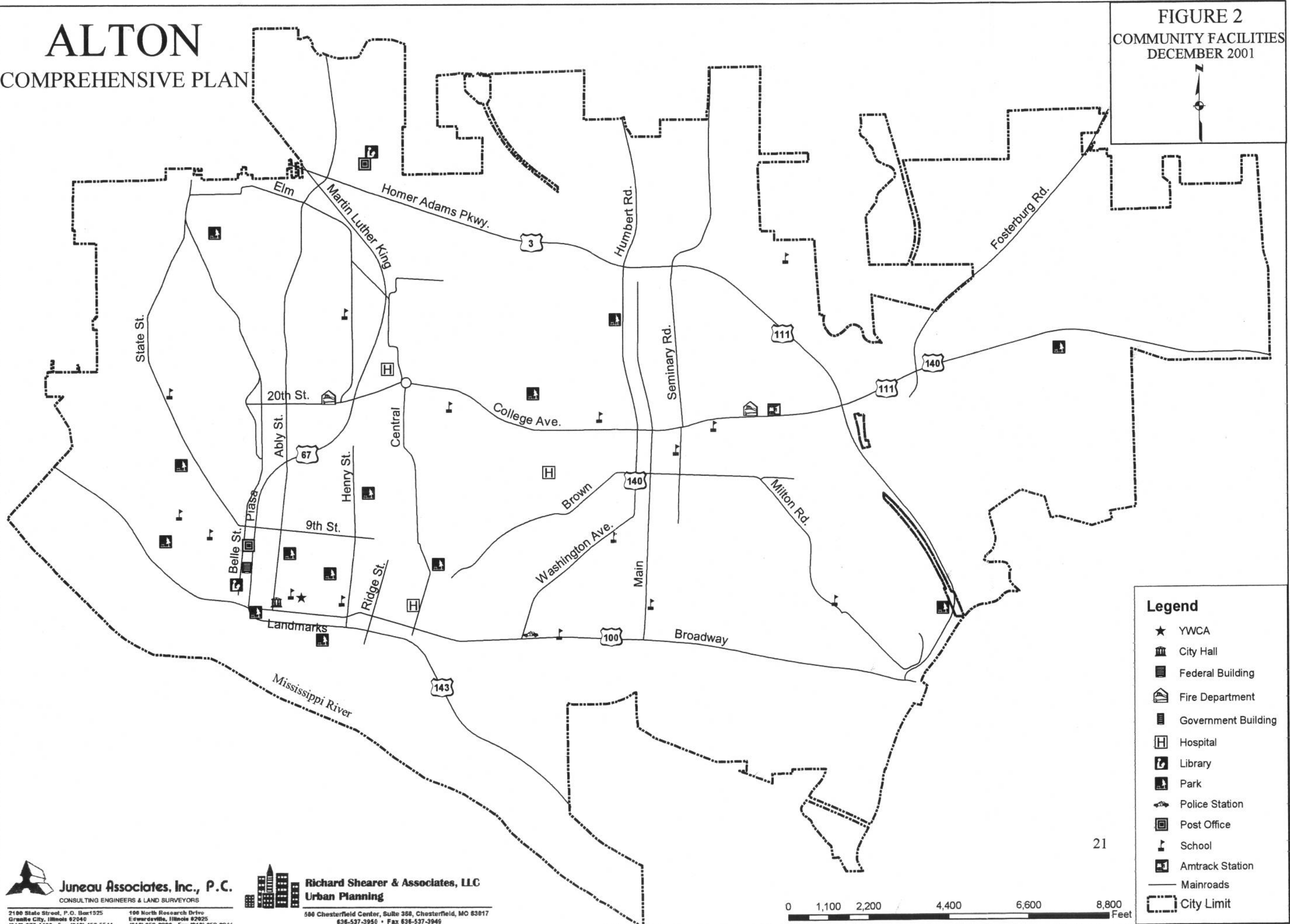
Future Landuse

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Business Park | Industrial |
| College | Parks and Open Space |
| Commercial | Public/Semi Public |
| Downtown | Single-Family Residential |
| General Residential | Urban Residential |
| Health Services | |

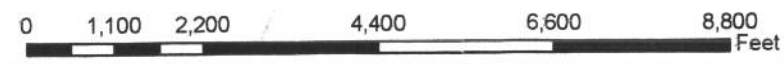
ALTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIGURE 2
COMMUNITY FACILITIES
DECEMBER 2001




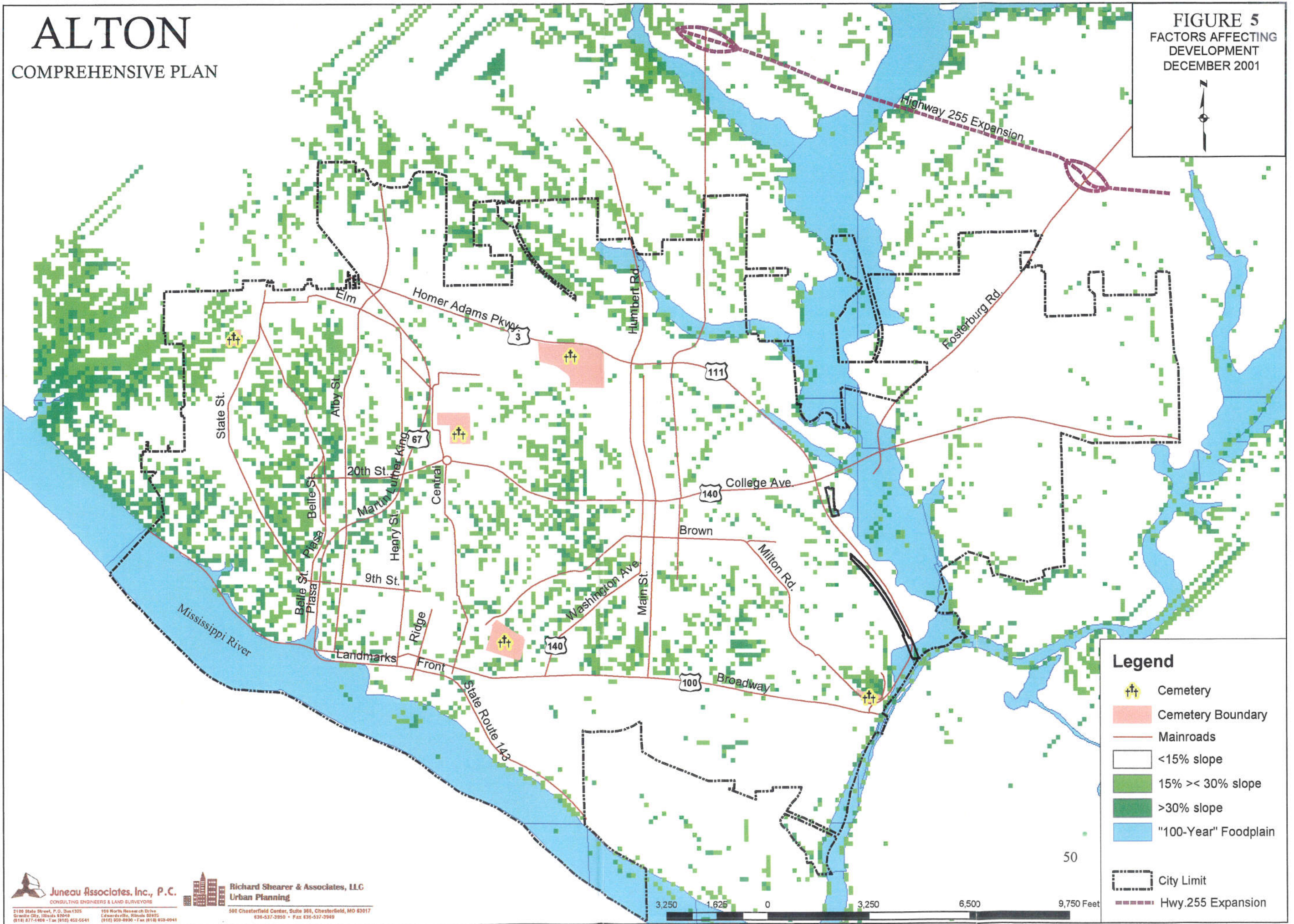
- Legend**
- ★ YWCA
 - City Hall
 - Federal Building
 - Fire Department
 - Government Building
 - H Hospital
 - Library
 - Park
 - Police Station
 - Post Office
 - School
 - Amtrak Station
 - Mainroads
 - City Limit












ALTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIGURE 5
FACTORS AFFECTING
DEVELOPMENT
DECEMBER 2001

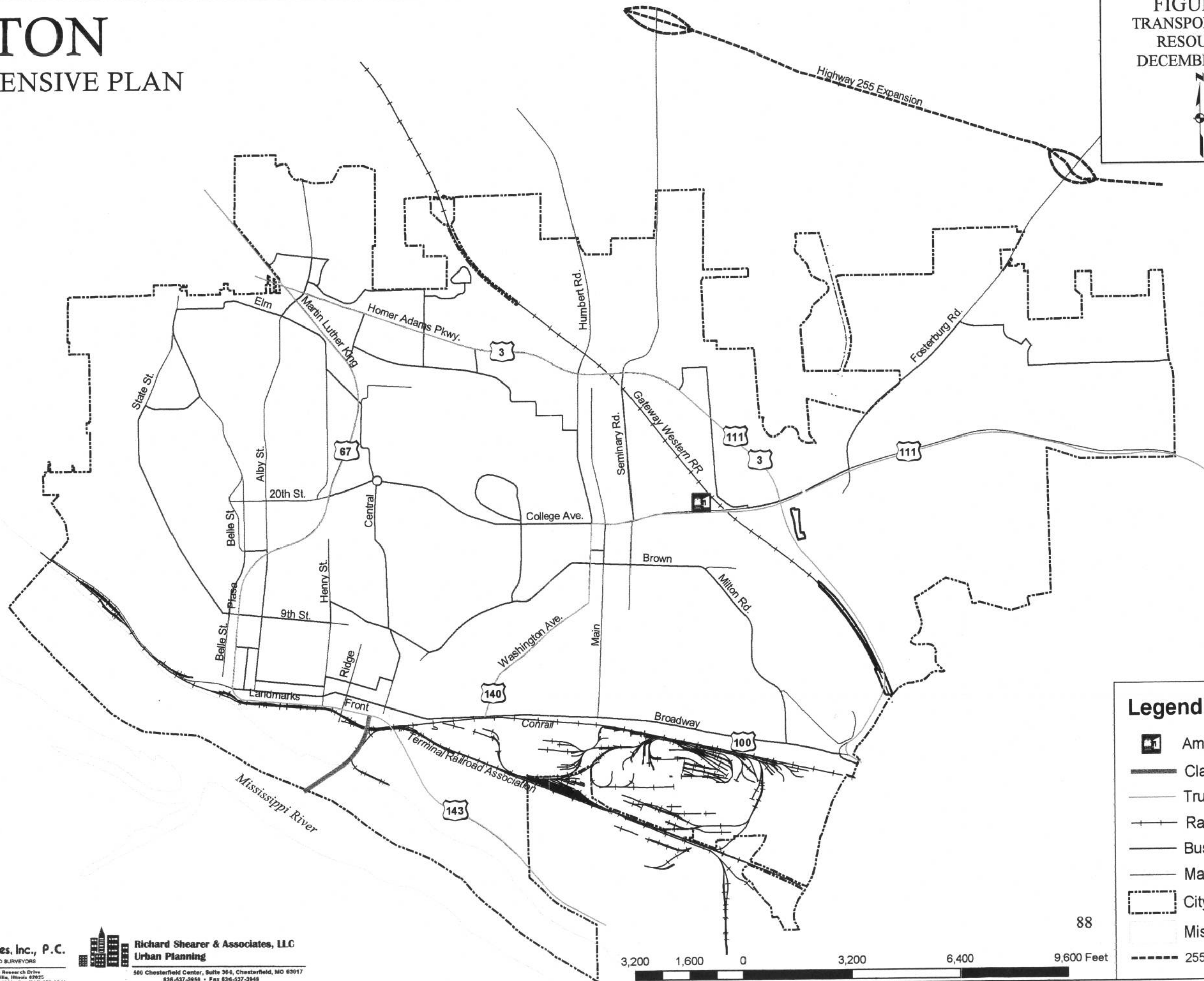
Legend

-  Cemetery
-  Cemetery Boundary
-  Mainroads
-  <15% slope
-  15% >< 30% slope
-  >30% slope
-  "100-Year" Foodplain
-  City Limit
-  Hwy.255 Expansion










ALTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIGURE 7
TRANSPORTATION
RESOURCES
DECEMBER 2001



Legend

-  Amtrak Station
-  Clark Bridge
-  Truck Routes
-  Railroads
-  Bus Routes
-  Mainroads
-  City Limit
-  Mississippi River
-  255

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