

**LAND USE PLAN**  
**Rock Island County, Illinois**

**Adopted \*\*\*\* 1998**  
**By the Rock Island County Board**

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**Opening Statement**

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The Land Use Commission in composing this document intends for it to be used as a guide when future land use decisions are made by the entities entrusted with such responsibilities. It is realized by those involved that growth and development will be the impetus behind such decisions. Therefore, it is the desire of this commission that this plan be used as a tool and that, as such, it continues to change as the goals and objectives of this and future generations continue to move forward.

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# Rock Island County Land Use Plan

## Introduction

Consistent with the objectives of the 1985 Local Land Resources Management Act, this 1998 Land Use Plan promotes the planned and orderly development of Rock Island County. The orderly development will be promoted by land use decisions based on protecting the land, air, water, natural resources and environment of the County. Land planned for new growth has been identified around the existing communities and as part of their proposed land uses where infrastructure exists or is planned.

This plan focuses on managing growth and sprawl in Rock Island County. The preservation of prime farmland has been established as a high priority along with all natural resources of Rock Island County. If the plan is followed preservation will occur. The intent of this plan is not to prohibit private individuals from moving out to the rural areas of the County to enjoy the rural atmosphere, but to encourage development in a manner that will maintain that atmosphere. The Land Use Plan for Rock Island County focuses on managing growth within the county. If followed, a successful balance between economic development, residential development and the preservation of natural resources and prime farmland will occur.

The Rock Island County Board began the process of creating the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan in April of 1997, with the formation of the Land Use Planning Commission. The Local Land Resources Management Planning Act, adopted by the State of Illinois in 1985, provides the authority for land planning at the county level. This Act encourages Illinois counties to adopt a land use plan and related policies and objectives. The 1985 Act emphasizes the importance of planning in a socially, economically and environmentally responsible manner, and urges the protection of the state's natural resources.

Rock Island County adopted its first Zoning Ordinance in 1963 after several years of public hearings. The Ordinance and subsequent zoning maps have been used since that time. However, a comprehensive land use plan has never been prepared nor adopted by the county. Land use decisions have therefore been based on the needs at the time. In 1985 the Rock Island County Board adopted the LESA (Land Evaluation and Site Assessment) policy for use when AG land decisions were involved. LESA is a tool used when making zoning decisions, but more specific guidelines are needed as development pressure is felt in the unincorporated areas.

The geography of Rock Island County makes it imperative that future land use decisions be made in a manner with forethought to an overall plan. The plan should take into consideration not only the assets of the county, but also the existing municipalities. The three major municipalities, Rock Island, Moline and East Moline, find themselves landlocked between the Mississippi River and Iowa to the north and the Rock River to the south. These cities must then consider crossing the Rock to enlarge their corporate boundaries. Three other municipalities find themselves also trying to annex land from the County near the corporate limits of the three largest. Development trends in recent years has been for commercial development be in the incorporated cities, and residential growth in rural areas. The impact of residential development to county services versus the increase in revenue from taxes received shows a large disparity between the two. It is with this purpose in mind that the County Board commissioned that a Land Use Plan be created. It is important that future growth take place in an organized manner to prevent scattered and inconsistent use of the land.

### Planning Process

Bi-State Regional Commission in conjunction with the Zoning & Building Department of Rock Island County worked on the Land Use Plan. The Rock Island County Board appointed a 15 member Land Use Commission which provided the focus and personnel necessary to begin the planning process. The Commission was established to represent a wide range of interests and backgrounds to provide a true cross section of County residents. The Commission included representatives from the County Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, a representative from an incorporated city, several from the agricultural community, developers, and business representatives.

The Commission held public meetings to receive input from residents with regard to the future of Rock Island County. These comments formed the central information used in compiling the goals and objectives of this land use plan. Sample plans from counties with similar demographics were used as a guide in building the policies herein. Also considered in the development of this plan was the existing land use types in Rock Island County (**See Table 1**) and the degree of development in those zoning classifications. Another consideration was given to existing land use and proposed land use plans of the incorporated jurisdictions within the County. Current and future growth needs were given consideration when developing the goals and objectives and also when policy recommendations were made.

### Purpose of the Plan

The goal of this plan is to provide a policy framework and set of principles for future decision making. Recommendations are included as part of the plan in an effort to make changes in ordinances and regulations that will assist in sustaining the goals and objectives of the plan. The impetus for the planning process was increased development pressure and problems associated with converting prime farmland into other uses, using a shotgun approach rather than a true planning process. The purpose of the plan therefore is to avoid such problems and substantiate the decisions made by the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Rock Island County Board. The goals and objectives contained herein will establish the framework upon which future land use decisions will be based. This will lead to an orderly and planned development of the unincorporated areas of Rock Island County. The planned and orderly growth shall also take into consideration the growth potential of the incorporated communities which lie in the County. The Land Use Plan will also be used by developers when planning for growth and development prior to the actual zoning process.

This plan has been compiled as a working document. As the County continues to grow and develop, the plan will be revisited to examine the changing factors involved in land use decisions. Upon reexamination of the plan, determinations will be made concerning any necessary changes and then a reaffirmation by the legislative bodies will further support the decisions contained herein. In this manner, the plan will be an integral part of the decision making process.

Table 1  
EXISTING LAND USE CLASSIFICATION STATISTICS\*

<u>Zoning Classification</u>	<u>Number of Parcels</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Agricultural	6,953	52%
Suburban Estates	989	7.3%
Residential Single Family	5,023	38%
Residential Multi Family	4	.0002%
Neighborhood Commercial	11	.0008%
General Commercial	98	.007%
Heavy Commercial	39	.002%
Light Industrial	155	1.2%
Heavy Industrial	121	.9%

\*Based on information from Rock Island County Zoning & Building.

*Land Use Plan / Zoning Ordinance / Subdivision Regulations*

The Land Use Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations all have different roles in the planning process and yet are interdependent upon one another. The **Land Use Plan** provides a framework upon which to evaluate land use decisions that are then enforced by the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. The land use plan addresses issues and land use in a broad way. Natural resources, housing, economic development and agriculture are general in their definition. The purpose of the plan is to describe the general pattern of development within the County and how the growth patterns should move in the foreseeable future.

The **Zoning Resolution** is a tool established by state statute to control the type and intensity of land use within specific districts or zones. Rock Island County is divided into zoning districts. The zoning resolution defines the activity or uses that are allowed within the respective districts. This includes, but is not limited to: setbacks, uses, special uses, lot size, allowable signage. The zoning resolution also protects neighboring parcels from having conflicting zoning or uses. For example, transitions should occur between residential and commercial districts. Special Uses or Conditional Uses are land uses which require extra attention, and in many cases, additional restrictions to protect neighboring property owners.

While the Land Use Plan provides guidelines and criteria for making land use decisions, the zoning resolution is much more specific, therefore it becomes the legal tool that determines how the land can be used. The zoning resolution is much more detailed in its requirements. The zoning resolution is used as a means to control what is and is not allowed in the individual zoning districts.

The ***Subdivision Ordinance*** is an additional tool used to implement the policies outlined in the Land Use Plan. This tool is also authorized by state statute. This ordinance provides a means by which counties can review proposals for new subdivisions of land for compliance with the rules and regulations, and assure that such subdivisions meet the goals outlined in the Land Use Plan. These regulations include design standards for streets, utility easements, storm water runoff, erosion control, water supply and waste disposal.

As part of the Land Use Plan, recommendations are made with regard to the zoning resolution and the subdivision ordinance. The recommendations contained herein are included as a means by which the intent of the Land Use Plan can be met. If the suggested changes are implemented, the broad scope of the Land Use Plan can be followed by County staff assigned to the task.

# Population

Rock Island County is part of the Davenport-Rock Island-Moline Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The QCA, as the area is known, consists of the major municipalities of Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa and the Illinois Cities of Rock Island, Moline and East Moline. The growth and decline of the County is directly tied to the region, not just the three (3) major Illinois municipalities. The work force naturally crosses state boundaries, making it difficult to project Rock Island County alone based on any one factor.



## Projections\*

Population decline was the greatest in the smaller collar communities of the Quad Cities, which amounted to a 21% decline between 1980 and 1990. This decline most likely is consistent with the desire to work in the big city but live in a small town. When the job market decreased, there was not a job base to maintain the population in the small communities. This economic decline also drove property values down especially in the inner cities, which resulted in a shift from the smaller communities to the inner cities.

Projections for the area and the county show slight growth over the next 20 years. In fact State projections reflect a growth period and then a period of decline or stabilization of the population. As with all communities, the growth or decline will be based on the job prospects in the area, which directly affect the value of housing in the area.

\*Projections based on the Illinois Bureau of Budget Projections.

## Distribution of Population

Currently 87% of the population lives in the incorporated cities and villages of the County. For the trend to continue the incorporated areas will need to expand their corporate boundaries. Based on the geography of the area this will be difficult to accomplish. Urban Sprawl is symptomatic of development outside the incorporated areas and is a potential problem since the urban areas have become landlocked. Robert Freilich's Model Subdivision Regulations makes the following statement concerning sprawl, "The problems attendant to sprawl are numerous: wasteful and inefficient use of the land coupled with increased utility and municipal capital, maintenance and service costs, rising tax rates, environmental degradation, poor quality of services and racial and socioeconomic exclusion."

Table No.2  
POPULATION TRENDS AND FORECASTS

Year	Population
1900	55,249
1910	70,404
1920	92,297
1930	98,191
1940	113,323
1950	133,558
1960	150,991
1970	166,734
1980	165,968
1990	148,723
2000	150,123
2010	150,991
2020	149,578

Table Number 2 reflects the drastic population declines experienced as a result of the economic recession of the 1980's. One thing to note is that the population declines did not relate to a housing glut. That may be explained as shown in Table Number 4 that the county is experiencing a steep decline in the 25 and under age group. This could be a result of the loss in the number of jobs available in the region. The statistics show that a large percentage of the population pursues higher education in the area, but that employment opportunities do not exist to sustain the younger population groups. The loss of ten thousand in the under 25 age group suggests that young families are leaving the area to find employment, especially those that have a college education. Their leaving the area for more job opportunities has left an aging population in the area. Table Number 4 also shows that while the under 25 age groups are on the decline, the 65 and older age groups are on the rise. Had the younger age group remained, a housing shortage may have resulted. If the region is to see a stabilization in population growth, it will require an increase in employment opportunities. An increase in the local economy will also affect the housing stock situation.(See Housing and Economic Development)

Table No. 3  
POPULATION OF INCORPORATED MUNICIPALITIES

<b>Community</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>Percent of Change</b>
Andalusia	1,238	1,052	-15%
Carbon Cliff	1,578	1,492	-5.4%
Coal Valley	3,800	3,527	-7.2%
Cordova	697	638	-8.4%
East Moline	20,907	21,147	1.1%
Hampton	1,873	1,601	-14.5%
Hillsdale	731	489	-33.1%
Milan	6,264	5,831	-6.9%
Moline	45,709	43,202	-5.5%
Oak Grove	695	626	-10%
Port Byron	1,289	1,002	-22.2%
Rapid City	1,058	932	-11.9%
Reynolds	701	583	-16.8%
Rock Island	47,036	40,552	-13.8%
Silvis	7,130	6,926	-2.9%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>140,706</b>	<b>129,600</b>	<b>Average-8.4%</b>

According to the Illinois Budget of Bureau Projections' most recent report, Rock Island County is expected to experience only a slight population growth between now and the year 2020. For the region to thrive, additional jobs will be required to be brought into the area.

Table Number 5 shows Rock Island and Moline Townships realized the largest declines in population during the 10 year period. This was again due to the loss of manufacturing jobs, especially in these two inner city communities. Other than these two townships, the decline was consistent with the 10% overall decline experienced by the County. When Townships with one (1) incorporated city or village such as Cordova, Andalusia, Port Byron or Coal Valley were calculated after deducting the populations of the Cities, the percent of decline was significantly lower in the unincorporated areas of the County.

Table Number 4  
AGE GROUP DISTRIBUTIONS

<b>Age Groups</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>
Under 5 Years	12,789	10,292
5 to 19 Years	40,572	32,030
20 to 24 Years	15,837	9,922
25 to 44 Years	44,197	44,273
45 to 54 Years	16,818	15,789
55 to 59 Years	8,603	6,967
60 to 64 Years	7,814	7,246
65 to 74 Years	11,768	12,594
75 Years and Over	7,570	9,610
Median Age	29.9	34.8

Table Number 5  
ROCK ISLAND COUNTY POPULATIONS BY TOWNSHIP

Township	1980	1990	Percent of Change
Andalusia	2,261	1,899	-16%
Blackhawk	12,520	10,991	-12%
Bowling	3,655	3,135	-14%
Buffalo Prairie	953	838	-12%
Canoe Creek	962	761	-20%
Coal Valley	5,460	4,695	-14%
Coe	1,343	1,538	14%
Cordova	1,050	944	-10%
Drury	836	715	-14%
Edgington	1,900	1,619	-15%
Hampton	21,902	20,498	-4%
Moline	26,364	23,484	-11%
Port Byron	1,409	1,114	-20%
Rock Island	23,155	18,140	-22%
Rural	1,276	1,207	-5%
S. Moline	39,003	36,781	-6%
S. Rock Island	21,111	19,678	-7%
Zuma	808	686	-15%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>165,968</b>	<b>148,723</b>	<b>-10% overall</b>

# Transportation

The geography of Rock Island County plays a significant role in its traffic patterns, thereby impacting the patterns of development within the county. Rock Island County is served by several interstate highway systems, I-74 East to Peoria and I-80 West to Des Moines and also to the West East Coasts, I-88 Northeast to Chicago and I-280 bypassing the Quad-Cities to Des Moines. A North/South Route, Route 67, although

not an interstate provides access to St. Louis and Dubuque. This combination provides for the efficient movement of goods and services and people within the Region and other markets.



## Present Road System

The Rock River and the Mississippi River greatly influence the placement and direction of roads in Rock Island County. Illinois Route 92 crosses the Mississippi and enters into lower Rock Island County from Iowa. This Route then follows the Mississippi through the cities of Rock Island, Moline, East Moline and Silvis and then converges with I-88 to Chicago.

Thus Illinois 92 has become a major traffic corridor through Rock Island County. Illinois Route 84 also crosses Rock Island County and follows the Mississippi from East Moline north through Hampton, Rapid City, Port Byron and Cordova.

The Interstate system provides automatic corridors that lend themselves to development. The interchanges associated with the interstates create likely development areas also; especially along the I-88 corridor which extends from I-80 to the county line, along which development pressure is expected. The junction of I-88 and I-80 is already zoned M2 on both sides of I-80 south of I-88. The City of East Moline has installed a water line along this corridor as far as Joslin. With the addition of this water line, the potential for development along this corridor would be greatly enhanced with the addition of interchanges. Future development along this corridor may require interchanges to be added to facilitate access.

The limited number of river crossings, two across the Rock River within the county and four across the Mississippi also creates development pressure. New bridge locations have been the topic of major transportation studies for the past ten years. The actual locations and construction of bridges, though still in the planning stages, will affect future land use decisions. As proposed locations are solidified, land use in these vicinities may need to be readjusted.

## County and Township Road System

There are 200 hundred miles of roads in the County system and 383 miles of Township roads. The county highways tend to carry a majority of the traffic converging on the major roads. Due to the amount of traffic and speeds which the traffic moves on County highways, they do not lend themselves to residential developments that front the roads. Township roads, which began as farming infrastructure moving equipment from field to field, feel the crunch of residential development pressure. The rural atmosphere of the township roads seems to be the most desirable for not only scattered residential housing but also

subdivision developments. Many of the township roads remain gravel and designed only to carry agricultural traffic.

The township roads were not designed nor constructed to act as main thoroughfares. Many of the existing roads are unable to support increased traffic flows associated with residential development. Statistics show that each new residence on the average generates an additional ten (10) trips per day in vehicular traffic. The impact produced by scattered housing lots, even though generating the same number of trips per residence, may not be as noticeable as a 20 lot subdivision. Tax revenues associated with residential developments do not address the impact on township roads. New residences therefore only increase wear and tear while not contributing to the solution.

### Quad City International Airport

The Quad City International Airport is an important facility for the entire region not just the county. The airport is the Federal Aviation Administration "certified air carrier" for the Bi-State Region. Currently six airlines operate at this terminal providing 31 daily departures to four major midwest hubs, with connecting service to all national and international destinations. The airport serves as a U.S. Customs Port of Entry and is located in Foreign Trade Zone 133.

The airport handles over 550,000 passengers arriving and departing on a yearly basis. They currently project a 6% increase in passenger volume. In 1994 total air freight handled at the airport was 33,115,430 pounds.

The impact of the airport to the areas' economy cannot be overlooked when considering land use decisions. The airport is located in the urbanized area of the County. While much of the 3 ½ mile planning radius surrounding the airport is in the municipalities of Milan, Moline and Coal Valley, a significant portion of the undeveloped land lies within the County. The continued growth of services at the airport will continue to put development pressure on surrounding areas.

### Rail Service

Currently two rail service providers are operating in Rock Island County. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and the Iowa Interstate Railroad all provide connections with other markets and access to companies desirous of shipping by means of rail. Several industrial parks within the county have access to rail service.

There are current efforts to establish passenger rail service from Chicago to Omaha via the Quad Cities. A passenger rail task force was formed to assist in this effort. The task force conducted a survey in 1994 which determined that a majority of businesses and the general public were interested in passenger rail service. A Midwest passenger rail study is currently being conducted by nine Midwest states, Amtrak and the Federal Highway Administration, and is expected to outline viable passenger routes for future development.

### The River System

The cargo carrying capacity of the Mississippi is a valuable asset for Rock Island County. The river has served as the medium for efficient and economical movement of goods to and from the region. The river provides a link to Mississippi tributaries, the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes and connections to foreign ports. The navigation season lasts just over 10 months. Tows will operate as long as there are commodities

to move and ice conditions do not present severe risks. While barge transportation requires more shipping time than other forms of transport, the lower shipping rates and energy efficiency of this mode of transportation provide a significant cost savings to bulk material shippers.

Much of the shoreline in Rock Island County is devoted to residential development. Yet in the upper areas of Rock Island County vacant land is available and zoned M2. This zoning classification allows for heavy industrial development. Currently the only tenants of the industrial area are Commonwealth Edison, the nuclear power facility and 3M. The industrial classifications have been in existence since the late 60's with no development in the area since then.

## **Goals and Objectives**

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- Take the lead in identifying locations and funding sources for new river crossings, new Rock River Bridge(s) and a new Mississippi River Crossing.
- Protect the safety of existing primary County highways by considering ingress and egress congestions when reviewing new land uses.
- Encourage joint access off arterial roads for all types of uses, Commercial, Industrial and Residential and Agricultural.
- Require ROW dedications as part of subdivision and development in areas of projected growth.

- Promote safe and compatible development near the airport to allow for future growth.
- Encourage development of transportation systems which include provisions for public transportation, bicycles and pedestrians.
- Support and promote initiatives to return competitive, high speed passenger rail service to the region.

## **Implementation Policies**

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- Review setback requirements and make adjustments depending on road type to allow for future growth.
- Consider possible locations for new bridges and interchanges when making land use decisions.
- Incorporate existing and future land uses of municipalities with County land use and rezonings.
- Encourage moderate to high density residential development with access to existing collector streets.
- Establish mechanism for developers to fund road improvements on collector and arterial roadways when projected impact reflects a need for such improvement.
- Commercial and industrial locations should be located near existing transportation services such as highways, rivers, or rail.

# Housing

In 1980 there were 63,412 housing units in Rock Island County. In 1990 the number had only dropped to 63,327. This modest decline is largely due to redevelopment projects with the major cities within the county. The housing situation directly relates to the economic situation and potential of the region (see Economic Development) along with the demographics of the region.

Eighty six percent (86%) of the housing units in the county are located in the incorporated cities, with only 14% in the unincorporated areas. Much of the existing housing stock is classified as aged. (See Table 6)

Table Number 6  
HOUSING STOCK AGE

Year Structure Built	Number of Structures
1980 to 1990	4,653
1970 to 1979	10,913
1960 to 1969	11,902
1950 to 1959	9,648
1949 or Earlier	26,211

This information coincides with the population decline (See Population). Table Number 6 shows that the majority of the housing stock in all of Rock Island County is 20 years old or older. Of the total 63,327 housing units, 41% or 26,211 are older than 48 years. A majority of these units are in the cities of Rock Island, Moline and East Moline. Of the 4,653 units added between 1980 and 1990, 339 or 7% were built



in unincorporated Rock Island County. Compared with the Cities of Moline, East Moline, and Silvis, unincorporated Rock Island County saw the greatest increase in housing units during the ten year period. There may be two contributing factors:

1. The desire of city residents to move out into the more rural atmosphere of Rock Island County .
2. The three largest cities (Moline, East Moline, Rock Island) are primarily landlocked between the Rock River, Mississippi River and neighboring communities.

### Current Situation

The trend to move to the rural areas continues in Rock Island County. Part of the trend may be related to the older neighborhoods in the three major cities that are made up of older structures. Many of the existing structures require much work. Also associated with the older neighborhoods is the overall decline of the housing, and infrastructure, and increase in crime in some areas. Even with neighborhood redevelopment programs being offered by the cities, urban blight affects many neighborhoods. What seems to have followed the urban blight has been an exodus to the rural areas of the county. Evidence of that trend is the number of Conditional Use Permits issued to develop residential building lots since 1980. (A conditional use permit is required by the zoning ordinance prior to constructing a single family residence in the AG zoning district.) Two hundred (200) conditional use permits have been issued since 1980. This supports the fact that more and more agricultural land is being lost to scattered residential lots in the county. These permits are not issued as part of a subdivision, but tend to represent scattered homes throughout the county.

Although real estate companies report that “there are now numerous developed lots available in many price ranges for home construction”, county records do not confirm this fact. In unincorporated areas of the county, there may be 300 vacant SE (Suburban Estates) lots. (*This zoning classification is used for parcels 1-10 acres in size that are generally in open rural areas.*) The SE zoning district, considering lot size and value, is not viewed as a suitable location for affordable housing. A shortage of R1 zoned lots, single family dwellings, exists in the county. (*The R1 classification allows for a minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet when served by a central sewerage system or 20,000 square feet with a septic system.*) There have been 27 new subdivisions platted with the R1 classification since 1980 in Rock Island County. Of those 27 subdivisions, 18 consisted of 2 lots or less. Also, a majority of the lots in the remaining subdivisions have been developed. Vacant R1 lots in the county are generally located in existing subdivisions with older residential structures. These lots are typically not considered for building sites for construction of a new home when the average cost of a new home in Rock Island County is \$100,000 and property values in these subdivisions are considerably less.

### **Goals and Objectives**

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The three major incorporated cities plan for industrial and commercial growth, but will rely on future residential growth to be sited in the smaller incorporated cities and the unincorporated areas of the County.

- Promote affordable housing types for current and future housing needs.
- Encourage residential developments to locate near areas where infrastructure currently exists or where easily accessible.
- Encourage development of non-prime farmland unless proximity of prime farmland to infrastructure deems development appropriate.
- Prevent location of residential development that would be inconsistent with local or adjacent land uses which may include the raising of livestock on a large scale and or sanitary landfills.
- Allow cluster housing developments and/or planned unit developments.

- Set aside buffer zones between residential and agriculture lands.
- Encourage development of neighborhoods, which may include low key commercial establishments, schools and open space.
- Permit only rural non-farm residential growth in areas that protect rural character and discourage residential development that adversely impacts prime agricultural lands, wetlands and floodplains.
- Encourage development of senior housing in Rock Island County to respond to the aging population growth.
- Promote financing methods that would provide funding assistance for the construction of infrastructure improvements, i.e. sewer, water and street extensions.

## **Implementation Policies**

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- Amend Zoning Resolution and Subdivision Ordinance to require buffer zones of vegetation or greenspace, when developing “Major” Subdivisions.
- Establish new AG zoning district to preserve prime farmland from residential encroachment.
- Require larger lots and greater setbacks in the AG districts.
- Create a Special Use that addresses the need for children of aging parents to care for them on the same property.
- Expand the Planned Unit Development in the Zoning Resolution to provide for more efficient use of land and services.
- Establish impact fee or other similar fee structure to provide funding mechanism for infrastructure improvements.

# Agriculture

Rock Island County has a total of 271,488 acres within its boundaries. Of that number 143,573 are considered prime farmland. An additional 42,895 acres are considered of Statewide importance. The growing season averages 155 days with annual rainfall averaging 35 inches and a mean annual temperature of 55° F. Two of the three largest employers in the county are agriculture related, IBP meat packing plant, Joslin, and the John Deere Co., Moline. Thus, the soil is one of Rock Island County's primary assets. Next to water the soil is the most abundant and valuable resource in Rock Island County.

The agricultural nature of Rock Island County is consistent with the statewide role of agriculture. Illinois ranks #2 with regard to total crop cash receipts. With regard to production nationally Illinois ranks #2 in corn, #2 in soybeans, #8 in winter wheat, #22 in cattle and #3 in hog production. Statewide there are 76,000 farms, farming 28,100,000 acres of farmland. The average size of farms is 370 acres. Rock Island County statistics \*\*\*\*\* (Additional Information See Table 2)

**Table 2**  
**ROCK ISLAND COUNTY**  
**AG CASH RECEIPTS 1994\***

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Cash Receipts</u>
<b>Corn</b>	<b>15,008,000</b>
<b>Soybeans</b>	<b>11,626,000</b>
<b>Wheat</b>	<b>207,000</b>
<b>All Others</b>	<b>1,627,000</b>
<b>Total Crops</b>	<b>28,468,000</b>
<b>Cattle &amp; calves</b>	<b>7,685,000</b>
<b>Hogs &amp; Pigs</b>	<b>10,097,000</b>
<b>All Others</b>	<b>2,356,000</b>
<b>Total Livestock</b>	<b>20,138,000</b>
<b>Total Combined</b>	<b>48,607,000</b>

\* Statistics from "Illinois Agricultural Statistics Annual Report 1996".

### Land Evaluation and Site Assessment

Because of the pressure of urban expansion and the fact that prime farmland is the most desirable economically to develop, the Rock Island County Board felt a need to address the situation. So in 1985 the Rock Island County Board, in conjunction with the Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation District, formed a committee to assess the agricultural matter of prime farmland conversion and, as a result, established the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) program.

The LESA program was prepared as a tool to be used when faced with land use decisions that would remove agricultural land from production. The LESA evaluation looked not only at the production value of the farmland in question, but also its relationship to the urban areas, potential for future development, suitability for development including septic systems, and the relationship of the property to commercial, industrial and recreational areas. The system was developed as an informational tool and did not necessarily prevent ag land from being removed from production.

The LESA document makes the following statements regarding two different classifications of farmland in Rock Island County:

**Prime farmland** is defined as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops and is also available for these uses (the land could be cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forestland or other land but not built-up land or water). It has the soil quality, growing season and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained yields of crops when treated and managed, including water management according to acceptable farming methods. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible nor saturated with water for long periods of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding.

**Farmland of statewide importance** include those that are nearly prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Some may produce as high a yield as prime farmlands if conditions are favorable.

These two classifications are examined when the LESA evaluation is performed. Several factors are included in the evaluation including soil type, erosion, productivity, proximity to farmed land and/or urban development, access to infrastructure and moisture factors. This information is weighted and given a score to be used when land use decisions are made. In the past the LESA score has been looked at by the Zoning Board of Appeals in a subjective manner. If the LESA number was high but only one or two acres was being removed from production, it was viewed as a minor impact and therefore was likely to be approved. While this may have been beneficial to the property owners, the result has been scattered residential development encroaching on prime farmland.

Farmland in Rock Island County can be classified into three categories. Taking into consideration its productivity, along with soil type, erosion characteristics and existing use (i.e., forested or tilled), will provide more detailed information to the decision makers. These three categories are:

**Category One-LESA Groups 1-4** include soils that are all prime farmlands, in Capability Classes I or II, and have average productivity indices of 116 to 150. Usually flat tillable farmland suitable for row crops.

**Category Two-LESA Groups 5-7** include soils that are prime farmland or are important statewide. The group of statewide importance has a high productivity index. The average indices for all three range from 83 to 115. This category includes soils of Capability Classes II through IV; and

**Category Three-LESA Groups 8-10** include only one group of soils important statewide. The other two are “non-prime”. Their average indices range from zero to 74. Only one type is Capability Class III. All the rest of the soil types are IV through VII.

Much of the land designated as Category One and Two are prime farmland, suitable for row crops. Large parcels, (40 acres or greater) classified as Category 1 or Category 2 should remain as such. Given the quantity of steep sloped and forested ground in the County unsuitable for row crops, but suitable for development, farmland preservation should be attainable.

The preservation of prime farmland will require a cooperative effort between developers, decision makers and the Agricultural community. This must begin with the realization of at least three contributing factors:

- 1: Some prime farmland may be sacrificed to development. This sacrifice should occur when its proximity to existing development and/or infrastructure deem it appropriate.
- 2: Large parcels of prime farmland should be preserved as such even when the financial opportunities may be greater to remove them from production for development.
- 3: While flat, tillable farmland is the least cost prohibitive to develop, it must be preserved. Parcels near the urban areas should be developed first and then move to parcels that are forested and sloping.

Two things will continue to remain the same: 1) prime farmland is a valuable asset and 2) the pressure to develop the farmland. If anything the pressure will increase, not so much with the development of large subdivisions, but with scattered residential developments on 1-5 acre parcels. As discussed previously, scattered residential developments strain the resources of the County. The provision of services such as fire, ambulance, road maintenance, and classrooms for additional students strains the budgets of existing service providers. The increase in tax revenues generated from housing does not begin to cover the cost of services. Preservation of prime farmland and planned development will enhance the desirability of living and working in the County.

### Farming Trends

History has shown a nationwide reduction in farmland. Family farms are turning into corporate farms to be able to compete. Rock Island County is no different \*\*\*\*\* Development pressure, along with the desire to sell the land for a profit and programs such as CRP, Rock Island County is creating a reduction in farmed acres on a yearly basis in Rock Island County.

## Goals and Objectives

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Prime farmland is a primary asset of the County and is irreplaceable once lost to development. Therefore, considerable effort and thought should be given to the preservation of prime farmlands within the County.

- Reduce soil erosion and improve water quality by encouraging farmers to follow soil conservation plans and use soil conservation practices.
- Discourage extension of sewer and water systems that would displace prime farm lands except when in close proximity to existing infrastructure..
- Reserve agricultural land as a resource for the use and benefit of current and future generations.
- Reduce conflicts and incompatibilities between AG and other uses.
- Develop strategies that will allow transfer of development rights from prime farmlands to provide AG property owners opportunities when development pressure exists while providing for the preservation of prime farmlands.
- Identify AG land that due to location may be considered for future development and consider benefit of increased density to reduce overall reduction of farmland.
- Identify and map all existing large scale livestock operations and project future growth areas associated with each operation for use in making land use decisions.
- Include Agricultural Preservation Area in the Zoning Resolution.

## **Implementation Policies**

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- Take the lead in the completion of the Countywide GIS to identify LESA classifications prior to a zoning request and purchase of land by prospective buyers.
- Expand the criteria for the three levels of LESA classifications based on a combination of soil type, erosion, and productivity and make land use decisions that adhere to the classifications.
- Create new zoning district to protect “prime” farmland (Class I) and enforce protection by consistent land use decisions.
- Investigate and pursue Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) to allow for orderly growth from the urban areas outward.
- Use of GIS to locate existing large livestock operations and growth potential areas to reduce residential encroachment.
- Require moderate to high density residential developments to locate near existing infrastructure by means of zoning decisions.
- Require buffer zones be established in residential areas when adjacent to AG districts.

- Change setback requirements in the AG districts to require larger lots for residential structures.
- Adopt an Agricultural preservation area and policy for Rock Island County where only farming and AG related occupations may be permitted.

# Natural Resources

Development tends to follow the path of least resistance. For commercial uses location is everything. The ideal locale is generally in high traffic areas, while residential development locale tends to be along the waterfront or deep in the woods. No matter the development type, the natural resources of the County are affected. Natural resources include but are not limited to:

- Soils, Prime farmland
- Water, Lakes, streams, and associated undeveloped shore lands and floodplains
- Wetlands
- Woodlands
- Prairies
- Wildlife habitats
- Parks and recreation areas



The functional value of these resources can be affected not only by planned development, but also unplanned or scattered development. Generally speaking, once lost, natural resources cannot be replaced without considerable effort, if at all. Rock Island County is rich in natural resources and therefore they play an important role in future land use decisions.

## Forest Preserve

Rock Island County Forest Preserve has jurisdiction over three parks within the County: Dorrance, Illiniwek, and Loud Thunder. Also, the Forest Preserve has oversight of Niabi Zoo and Indian Bluff Golf Course. Illiniwek Park contains 206 acres and is located on the Mississippi River with year round camping facilities, boat ramp, shower facilities and a scenic overlook of the river. Loud Thunder Forest Preserve in southern Rock Island County has 1600 acres. Among its features includes 167 acre Lake George, walking trails, campgrounds, stable facilities, horse trails, shelters and a boat ramp. Niabi Zoo contains 227 acres, three fourths of which is set aside for the preservation of native flora and fauna.

Rock Island County is also home to several neighborhood parks, as well as at least four public golf courses located in the unincorporated area of the County. Rock Island County also boasts the Great River Trail which follows the Mississippi River from the northern tip of the County to the City of Rock Island. This trail is used for pedestrian traffic as well as bike and rollerblade traffic.

A comprehensive Greenway Plan has been prepared for Rock Island County and the communities within its boundaries. The greenway plan identifies greenway corridors or potential greenway corridors. The “Greenway Plan” defines a greenway as “a corridor of open land that connects natural areas, cultural and historic sites, and neighborhoods and communities”. The goal of the plan is to develop or protect the greenways as a natural resource for use by residents of the County. (It is possible that this tool should also be used or incorporated into future land use decisions.)

### *The Rivers and Their Ecosystems*

Another major resource of the County is its River system and their ecosystems. The Mississippi and the Rock Rivers are both predominant features of the land area. Both river systems are used for recreation purposes. Aside from recreation, the Mississippi is used as a main transportation corridor for barge traffic to the Gulf of Mexico and ports along the way. The Rock River is primarily a recreation attraction for the area with fishing and abundant water sport activities.

The natural floodplains and wetlands associated with both rivers should also be viewed as a natural resource worth protecting. Both river systems have had increases in flood event frequencies and intensities. This may be a direct result of increased development in the floodplain and conversion of high quality wetlands. The floodplains and wetlands form a natural storage of flood waters and should be protected. The intense pressure for commercial development adjacent to the John Deere Expressway, along with the desire to live on the river creates a real dilemma between the desire to develop and the desire to protect. The natural purpose of the floodplains is being lost due to the development. Sedimentation is created by both flooding and water pollution, which is one of the most detrimental problems in the development process. Along with the flooding, increased damages and dangers continue to grow as flooding events occur on a regular basis.

Since the record setting floods of 1993, barely a year goes by without a flood event. Since 1993 each flood event seems to be progressively worse, in both flood heights and length of event.

## **Goals and Objectives**

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The desire to preserve open space for the enjoyment of residents along with identifying opportunities to increase open space, parks, recreational areas and development of additional trails.

- Incorporate the “Greenway Plan” into the review process and encourage inclusion of designated greenways into the process, and use the plan to promote a countywide system of open space corridors.
- Incorporate SAMP (Strategic Area Mapping Project) into the process of making land use decisions. Identify potential wetland sites and preserve them as an essential component of hydrologic systems. Identify and/or develop funding sources to maintain areas included in the SAMP.
- Develop a strategy to acquire and protect open space lands.
- Enhance existing park system and encourage further access to both Mississippi and Rock Rivers for recreational purposes.
- Preserve and improve river quality to maximize their potential for recreational purposes.
- Encourage non-acquisition techniques such as easements for carrying out open space plans.
- Adopt county wide erosion and sedimentation control ordinance designed to protect surface waters, drainage systems and infrastructure from excessive soil erosion resulting from construction.

## **Implementation Policies**

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- Use the Greenway Plan as a tool when making land use decisions.
- Create zoning district that restricts development in wetland areas.
- Amend zoning resolution to prohibit fill in the floodplain to further protect wetlands and floodplain.
- Increase river access through acquisition of open space.
- Develop non acquisition policies to preserve open space. (i.e. easements for Conservation areas, Greenways, dedications, etc.)
- Develop a county wide ordinance to control soil erosion and sedimentation resulting from commercial and residential development construction activities.
- Develop a stormwater management ordinance to reduce impacts of increased surface water runoff caused by development.
- Implement SAMP on a county wide basis along with funding sources.

# Economic Development

Rock Island County was settled for two (2) primary reasons:

1. Proximity to the Mississippi River, the major north south transportation route for trade.
2. Rich farmland for the raising of crops and livestock.

Those two factors continued to play an important role in development for many years. The predominantly agricultural roots of the region influenced the manufacturing base that was to locate in the area. Still today,



two (2) of the largest employers in the county are AG related. The economic development of the region shaped the growth patterns not only of the municipalities in the region, but also the county. The ups and downs of the area will continue to be shaped by future economic development. Economic development potentials therefore will greatly affect the land use decisions of the future.

## History

Due to the growth of manufacturing jobs, Rock Island County experienced a total population growth of over 25% between 1950 and 1980. The growth was directly related to the burgeoning economy. John Deere, Case IH, and Rock Island Arsenal experienced employment increases through the boom years of the 50's, 60's, and 70's. Of the 18 largest employers listed in the 1985 "Annual Update of the Overall Economic Development Program for the Bi-State Region" prepared by Bi-State Regional Commission, 7 are no longer employers in the region. The 2 largest employers in 1977 remain the areas 2 largest today: Deere & Company and the Rock Island Arsenal. Notice in Table Number 8, the significant decline in numbers of employees by the two largest.

Table Number 8  
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

Employer	1977	1983	1984	1997
Deere & Company	13,000	10,709	10,822	7,491
Rock Island Arsenal	8,000	9,000	9,155	6,750

The significant population decline (10.4%) experienced between 1980 and 1990 was also directly related to the economy of the region. Rock Island County is recovering from an economic downturn that occurred in the mid 1980's. Due to the farm crisis of that time period, the region declined in total labor force by 1.1%. The decline affected not only the agricultural economy, but the smokestack industries that relied upon the farm business. The vacant industrial sites along the river are evidence of the change that has taken place in the area's economy.

The shift that has taken place is from one dependent upon heavy industry and manufacturing, to one centered on service providers. The non-professional services realized a 121.1% increase between 1980 and 1996. During the same period manufacturing declined by 41%, durable goods production by 54.4% and non-electrical machinery production by 63.3%. These labor force statistics, vacant industrial factories, and the abundance of available industrial properties reflect that a shift is taking place in the economic make up of not only the county, but as the region. Many of the smokestack sites located in the cities are coming down or being converted or marketed for non-industrial uses. The “Annual Update of the Economic Development Program”, prepared by Bi-State Regional Commission for 1997, shows available industrial land, but in many cases is missing the necessary infrastructure. Also noted is the shortage of vacant industrial sites in the 20,000 to 40,000 square foot range.

The shift to a non-professional service provider sector has created another trend that is unlikely to reverse itself in the near future. There has been an increase in the number of service providers operating businesses from their homes. Rock Island County addressed the issue in 1996 by amending its Zoning Resolution to allow “Home Business” as a Conditional Use in the AG1 District as well as the SE and R1 districts. This was an attempt to assist new businesses get a start by permitting them to begin out of the home, without the extra expense of commercial property rental. The conditions imposed encourage moving into such an area as the business grows. The number of employees and the demand placed on the “By Appointment Only” condition will be factors in determining when a business no longer qualifies as a home business and will be required to relocate to commercial property.

The aging work force who still require employment beyond retirement (see Population), availability of home computers, access to the Internet, and growth of Internet businesses, suggest the trend will continue. Also the fact that in the first 12 months since the “Home Business” amendment was adopted, 10 permits have been issued, adds further evidence that this trend is growing in the county. It is apparent that future technology advances and needs will also affect land use decisions and the county’s ability to attract a stable and growing economic base.

Currently, seventeen of the top twenty five employers in the region make their home in Rock Island County or one of its municipalities. See Table Number 9.

Table Number 9  
ILLINOIS QUAD CITIES LARGEST EMPLOYERS  
1997

<u>Regional Ranking</u>	<u>Employer</u>
1	Deere & Company of the Quad Cities
2	Rock Island Arsenal
6	IBP
7	Trinity Medical Center
8	HyVee *
10	Case Corporation
11	Eagle Food Center*
12	US Postal Service*
14	Moline-Coal Valley Community Schools
17	Rock Island-Milan Community Schools
18	MidAmerican Energy
19	Wal-Mart / Sam's*
20	Blackhawk College
21	Illini Hospital
22	Rock Island County
23	Augustana College
24	Montgomery Kone

\* Employers with sites on both sides of the Mississippi River.

### *Future Growth Potential*

The question arises: How long can an economy continue to grow when the core of its labor force is in the service provider and retail trades sector? What is needed to encourage new business to locate in the area? Do the aging population demographics give evidence of a future trend? (Population groups seem to show a decline in the younger age groups which will become the future work force. They also show significant increase in the over 60 age bracket which will be leaving the work force. Is this indicative of a change on the horizon for the low unemployment rates for the area?) What is needed to attract new production type businesses to the area? What technology needs are required to address new development in the area?

### **Education**

The "Annual Update of the Economic Development Program" produced by Bi-State Regional Commission states regarding education : "The region offers two community college districts, one 4 year liberal arts college, two universities and a college of chiropractic. Western Illinois University also provides local access to a four year public university in the Quad Cities area. The Quad Cities Graduate Study Center offers masters degrees in nine areas.

"The availability of post secondary education in the region will provide an increasing number of residents to seek higher education, whether on a part-time or full-time basis. This in turn will keep the education attainment level equal to or greater than that of Illinois, Iowa and the United States.

"There is also an emergence of a new educational program entitled "Tech Prep" for high school students. This program is being developed by area high schools and Black Hawk College to teach students in six areas

of technical study and applied business, production, agriculture science, health and consumer/family technologies. In addition, Black Hawk College has offered a comprehensive range of training and support services to many of the area small businesses and large corporations through the Business and Industry Center. Many of these organizations utilize the Center's services on an ongoing basis or as a supplement to existing human resource development efforts."

Quality education is attainable to the residents of the region and the county. The concern then becomes: Where do graduates of these facilities locate for employment purposes? The population statistics (See Population) seem to show that the declines in the under 25 age groups represent those receiving degrees leaving the area and taking their young families with them. Employment opportunities outside the service provider sector will be required in future years to retain skilled professionals in the county.

Future land use decisions, therefore, may need to give consideration to the changing employment needs of today's educated workforce. While provisions exist in the county for large scale industrial developments, consideration needs to be given to provisions for business and technology incubators to attract the new age of educated technocrats entering the workforce in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **Technology**

As reflected in the employment statistics for the area, the job market has changed considerably since the 1950's in Rock Island County. Land use decisions of the past mirrored the need for large scale industrial operations. Land was zoned for such facilities when the Zoning Maps were adopted in the 1960's. Technology has changed the way business is accomplished as we approach the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Provisions for "technology" infrastructure are being required of communities to attract new businesses and economic development.

Infrastructure primarily has been defined in the past to include streets, sewer and water lines and utilities. Today as part of that structure, high speed communication lines are also being required as part of the "technology" infrastructure. The hi-tech business of the 1990's require much less space to operate but expects the necessary communications network be in place to accommodate current and future needs. The business park of the future is no longer the vacant industrial park so prevalent in many smokestack communities.

Technology based companies look for a moderate to highly educated workforce, T-1 phone lines, fiber optic lines, and adequate Internet accessibility, among other things, when searching for new locations. Currently the Quad City Area has approximately 6 local access providers to the Internet, besides limited access to nationwide providers such as "America On-Line" and "CompuServe".

### **Infrastructure**

Essential to development potential in any community is the existence of the necessary infrastructure. This includes, but is not limited to streets, utilities, sewer and water. Fifteen of the incorporated communities have their own or share sewer and water facilities. At the present time all systems are operating below design capacity. (See Tables Number 10 & 11) Sufficient capacity exists for future growth potential until such time as a large scale user locates in the area. This existing capacity again emphasizes the need of locating moderate density residential and commercial/industrial developments within reach of such facilities.

## **Emergency Services**

As stated in the “Purpose” section of the Rock Island County Zoning Resolution, “The provisions herein are necessary to promote the public health, safety, morals, comfort and general welfare.....”. One of the main reasons for zoning is to provide comfort and safety to the residents of the County.

Development and growth translate into increased demand on emergency services. Fire and ambulance services are currently provided at great cost to County residents. The increase of scattered residential lots further extends the service areas of over extended service providers. A prime example of over extension is the Andalusia Fire and Ambulance District. The service area extends from Drury Township to Andalusia Township. Population densities may not be an obstacle for this service area, yet travel time between base stations, the injury and the hospital, in some circumstances, could result in loss of life.

Therefore consideration needs to be given to the ability of existing service providers to further extend services in such areas. Especially as residential developments are proposed should funding provisions be examined to increase the abilities of the emergency service providers. The ability or inability to provide emergency services to residential areas directly impacts corporate decisions when looking for locations for new facilities. The safety and welfare of employees on the job and at home affect location decisions.

## **Commercial**

Historically, the Cities of Rock Island, Moline and East Moline were the commerce centers of the County. As the industrial centers along the Mississippi River grew, the central business districts (CBD) of each of these communities moved to the outer edges of suburbia. With the development of strip malls and corridors of eating establishments, the CBD declined as a center for commercial activity.

**Table Number 10**  
**Rock Island County Municipal Water Survey- - 1997**

Municipality	Treatment Capacity GPD	Average Demand GPD	Peak Demand GPD	Elevated Storage Gal.	Ground Storage Gsl.	Source / No. Wells	Notes
Andalusia	432,000	108,000	125,000	310,000	320,000	1	
Carbon Cliff	110,000	75,000	110,000	100,000	10,000	4	See "H"
Coal Valley	849,600	360,566	445,000	400,000	135,000	2	See "A"
Cordova	300,000	65,000	89,000	50,000	20,000	1	
East Moline	10,000,000	5,500,000	7,800,000	2,600,000	2,500,000	Miss. River	See "B"
Hampton	1,224,000	152,750	259,000	50,000	0	Note	See "I"
Hillsdale	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	See "D"
Milan	2,550,000	600,000	950,000	350,000	40,000	3	
Moline	12,000,000	5,600,000	8,700,000	2,250,000	6,800,000	Miss. River	See "J"
Oak Grove	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	See "K"
Port Byron	446,400	77,600	210,000	50,000	0	2	
Rapids City	360,000	70,000	105,000	150,000	6,000	2	
Reynolds	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Rock Island	12,000,000	5,700,000	8,000,000	2,800,000	8,000,000	Miss. River	See "F"
Silvis	1,300,000	580,000	850,000	650,000	360,000	6	See "G"

Notes:

**A:** Connected to Oak Glen Home's water supply.

**B:** Shared with Hampton 3 interconnections between E. Moline, Hampton and Moline for emergencies.

**D:** 250 Private Wells

**E:** Eight interconnections with E. Moline & Rock Island For emergencies.

**F:** Interconnections with Moline and Milan for emergencies.

**G:** Emergency tie into Moline water, capacity approx. 1.0 MGD

**H:** Emergency Plan in effect with City of Silvis

**J:** Private Wells. Woodland Park's water Supplied from neighboring town.

**Table Number 11**  
**Rock Island County Wastewater Survey- - 1997**

Municipality	Design Capacity GPD	Peak Capacity GPD	Average Load GPD	Peak Load	Treatment Level	Percent Separation	Notes
Andalusia	320,000	320,000	125,000	920,000	Primary	100%	See "A"
Carbon Cliff	11,100,000	27,800,000	4,500,000	27,800,000	Secondary	100%	See "B"
Coal Valley	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Cordova	75,000	50,000	32,000	49,000	Secondary	100%	
East Moline	11,100,000	27,800,000	4,500,000	27,800,000	Secondary	100%	See "C"
Hampton	11,100,000	27,800,000	13,471	27,122	Secondary	100%	See "D"
Hillsdale							
Milan	1,700,000	4,500,000	890,000	1,120,000	Secondary	98%	
Moline (North)	5,500,000	13,750,000	4,560,000	9,370,000	Secondary	100%	
Moline (South)	9,000,000	18,000,000	4,600,000	8,500,000	Secondary	100%	
Oak Grove	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	See "F"
Port Byron	400,000	N/A	160,000	310,000	Tertiary	85%	
Rapids City	150,000	N/A	67,000	150,000	N/A	100%	See "E"
Reynolds	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Rock Island	8,000,000	16,000,000	6,700,000	16,000,000	Secondary	75%	
Rock Island SW	1,500,000	3,000,000	400,000	2,000,000	Tertiary	100%	
Silvis	4,500,000	N/A	475,000	N/A	N/A	99%	
Notes:		See Next Page					

A: Peak Capacity of 320,000 for months of March, April, May.

B: East Moline Regional Water Plant serves Silvis, Hampton, Carbon Cliff, and East Moline.

- C: East Moline Regional Water Plant serves Silvis, Hampton, Carbon Cliff, and East Moline.
- D: East Moline Regional Water Plant serves Silvis, Hampton, Carbon Cliff, and East Moline.
- E: Treatment Level-pumped to East Moline Regional Water Plant.
- F: Private septic systems. Woodland Park has it's own treatment.

The early 90's brought a revitalization effort to the core of each of these communities. Changes to the downtown business districts have increased with the development of the Casino Rock Island and "The District" in Rock Island, The Mark, Radisson Complex, and the John Deere Commons in Moline, and the REDEEM activities in East Moline. The majority of the focus in redevelopment has been associated with entertainment and recreation type businesses. The movement of commercial retail establishment away from downtown areas has been directed in 2 directions.

First, is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Moline and 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue East Moline/Silvis corridor is now identified as the "Avenue of the Cities". At the time of its initial development, this corridor was the center of commercial/retail activity for the region. This area, too, has realized a decline in occupied establishments, with the fast paced development along the outer John Deere Corridor.

Second, the Blackhawk/John Deere Expressway/I-5 corridor has seen extensive development. Beginning in Rock Island, commercial development increases as John Deere Expressway meets the I-74 interchange. The Southpark Mall and Wal-Mart Centers provide the anchors to retail establishments on the outer fringes of Moline and East Moline. This trend will continue with the widening of John Deere Expressway to four lanes all the way to Silvis. The shift of commercial development to centers of the residential populations is little incentive for new commercial uses to locate in the Cities' CBD's.

Continued development along John Deere Expressway should and will continue in the same current manner by making use of service road entrances off of the expressway. This development will entail the annexation of prime farmland into the cities of Moline and Silvis as commercial property to provide infrastructure to this area. Although this development may seem to be in conflict with the goal of preservation of prime farmland stated herein, the County should encourage this development corridor rather than identifying new areas of potential commercial development.

Scattered distribution of commercial activity throughout the unincorporated County should be discouraged. Numerous parcels in the County were previously "spot zoned" to accommodate existing commercial establishments or to encourage future growth in some areas. In areas where development never occurred or long since ceased operation, consideration should be given to down zoning to a more appropriate designation. Strip commercial developments should also be discouraged due to the increase in traffic congestion, signs and driveways. The impetus of this plan is to encourage commercial development in areas prepared to handle the development.

Some commercial developments may be appropriate in the County. Major traffic intersections create such locations, as well as established traffic corridors that are used as arterial roadways moving people from area to area. Acceptable uses would include service stations, eating establishments, and hotels or motels. This type of development should be discouraged where it was detrimental to the rural or small town atmosphere.

As previously mentioned in this section, businesses operated out of the home continue to increase as the service provider sector continues to grow. While the "Home Business" conditional use permit begins to address the situation, care will have to be given to protect predominantly residential areas from the traffic associated with commercial areas.

Smaller unincorporated communities such as Illinois City, Edgington, Taylor Ridge and Joslin are located throughout the County. Each of these communities has a centralized residential area and a typical crossroads nature to them. Due to the fact that all of these crossroad communities are 15-30 minutes from commercial / retail services, limited commercial development may be considered when providing necessary services to the community.

## Industrial

The downtown areas of Rock Island, Moline and East Moline and locations along the Mississippi River have historically been the center of the county's industrial base. The recession of the 80's saw the closing of several of the larger industrial sites along the river. Rock Island County encourages the renovation or, as is typical in the area, the redevelopment of the industrial areas where infrastructure and transportation opportunities currently exist. Again, as previously discussed in this section, the smokestack manufacturing base is not showing a return to its former self. Therefore, redevelopment, although more costly, should be encouraged in all ways including, where possible, by financial commitments.

Also as previously discussed, the trend across the nation seems to be to a more technical industrial base with entirely different requirements than those of the smokestack companies. This is also reflected in the proposed land use plans of Rock Island, Moline and East Moline.

Rock Island-The area designated as South West Rock Island Business Park at the southwest corner of 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Milan Beltway has developed as a new breed industrial park. Marketed to smaller industries and transportation providers, the park is 90% filled. The Thoms Proestler facility is adjacent to this park, with the entire area surrounding the two parks designated as industrial.

Moline-The City of Moline in its South Moline Plan has identified a majority of the open land adjacent to the airport and contiguous to Coal Valley as a technology and light industry center. The target market will be new tech companies requiring smaller building and lot sizes yet high tech infrastructure requirements. The ideal approach for the City would not only be to provide the necessary infrastructure but also put public/private partnerships to encourage future development.

East Moline-The City of East Moline is currently developing a Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Although not identified by way of a plan, East Moline anticipates and is planning for industrial growth along the I-5 / 92 / I-88 corridor. In 1996, East Moline water service was extended along the south side of this corridor, primarily to provide by contract, water services to an industrial customer in Joslin. Future plans include extension of sewer services along the same route. Currently all of the land south of this corridor, although in Rock Island County, is zoned and planned for heavy industry.

Rock Island County also has 2 other areas with existing heavy industrial zoning. One is north of Cordova on the Mississippi River where 3M and Commonwealth Edison are located. The second is located near the airport.

The existing parcels zoned and planned for industrial use both in the Cities and the unincorporated County provide for a great deal of growth potential. The large parcels meet a primary criteria for the siting of large industrial complexes. The second criteria is one the area finds itself lacking, which is in-place infrastructure and existing modern buildings.

To some extent, large industrial uses will continue to look for areas in the unincorporated county when lot size is important. Future industrial development should be concentrated in areas where similar land uses exist and where transportation and utilities can be provided.

## **Goals and Objectives**

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The future potential for economic development growth in the region is more and more dependent on having facilities with adequate infrastructure in place to supply the ever progressive needs of new businesses. Competition is fierce between communities marketing themselves as ideal locations for the new breed of technology based businesses. It is obvious that a regional approach is the only way to benefit the entire area. The County's role in economic development will be to support the growing economic needs of the incorporated communities.

- Emphasize the importance of the urbanized areas of Rock Island, Moline, East Moline, Milan and Coal Valley, primarily as the center for government, financial, business and industrial uses.
- Develop an economic development environment that will attract new technological businesses and industry to the area.
- Develop a regional economic development strategy.
- Provide basic infrastructure needs that enable and attract new businesses to locate and operate in the region.
- Provide land uses that will provide necessary support requirements for businesses and services that desire to locate in the incorporated cities, i.e., affordable housing, schools, roads, etc. All of this is designed so that new businesses and residents do not bear the brunt of the tax burden.

## **Implementation Policies**

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- Identify infrastructure needs to attract new business and establish mechanism to fund infrastructure needs. (Impact Fees)
- Initiate and support regional efforts to bring in new business.
- Encourage land use decisions that help maintain existing companies in need of expansion.
- Require infrastructure (sewer, water and transportation) needs to be addressed in development plans.
- Provide for potential large site industrial growth by identifying industrial growth areas and establishing or protecting zoning districts for this purpose.
- Identify existing corridors that are suitable for development based on existing infrastructure and preserve those areas.