

2011

Village of Rochester Comprehensive Plan

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Background for Planning

Location and Setting

The Village of Rochester, Illinois, is located six miles southeast of Springfield, Illinois, in the central part of the state. Connection to Springfield is via Illinois Route 29, which also intersects at Springfield with Interstate 55, providing excellent access to St. Louis (approximately 95 miles southwest of Springfield) and Chicago (approximately 197 miles northwest of Springfield).

Springfield's civic, cultural, and recreational events, as well as higher education facilities, excellent medical facilities, commercial shopping opportunities, and a wide range of employment opportunities are convenient and quickly accessible to Rochester residents.

Similarly, the amenities of the larger metropolitan areas of St. Louis and Chicago are accessible within a few hours of ground transportation time by way of interstate highways. Springfield has passenger rail service to both Chicago and St. Louis and also operates Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport for flight service.

Base Mapping

A considerable effort was undertaken in revising the existing base map to more accurately reflect the current situation relative to streets, properties, and Village boundaries. It would be advisable to update the Village map on an annual basis so an accurate base map is available for reference. A geodatabase of Village information has been created using ESRI ArcGIS 9.3.1 software, which should be maintained and updated as the Village progresses. All data collected and created for the update of this Comprehensive Plan were delivered to Village officials for ease of maintaining and updating the Rochester database as variables change over time. Exhibits throughout this document are legible at the 11" x 17" scale, but can most accurately be viewed when plotted at a larger scale, such as 24" x 36" (Arch D paper size) or 30" x 42" (Arch E1 paper size).

Topography and Development Constraints

Topography is more varied within the immediate area of Rochester than is typical of Midwestern prairie, largely due to the streams in the Rochester vicinity. Elevations generally range from 550 to 570 feet above sea level, although one area in the eastern portion of the Camelot subdivision has elevations reaching

580 feet above sea level. The Black Branch of the South Fork of the Sangamon River flows through Rochester, which presents obstacles in constructing future roadway connections in areas currently undeveloped.

The flood plain of the South Fork of the Sangamon River is to the west of Rochester, approximately 1,600 feet west of the present Village limits on Route 29. South of Route 29, the corporate limits extend to the river in several locations, resulting in substantial areas of flood plain within the Village. The flood plain restricts development, which consequently prevents much of this area from being developed. Both the Village of Rochester and Sangamon County have formally acknowledged the flood plain restrictions near the South Fork and the Black Branch and monitor development within these areas. While development plans outlined in this document have been completed with sensitivity to the identified flood plain as designated by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), additional detail may be required when various proposed development projects are near the flood plain. Minor adjustments may be required to avoid flood plain locations, once flood plain limits are more accurately defined. The flood plain in and near Rochester is illustrated on **Exhibit C** near the end of this document.

Underground mines and the possibility of mine subsidence are not an inhibiting factor to development in Rochester. There are no known records of underground mines in Rochester.

Climate

Average monthly temperatures in Rochester range from the upper 20s during January to the upper 70s during July, although considerable variation may take place within the seasons. Temperatures in the lower 90s during the summer months and in the upper teens during the winter months are not uncommon (see **Table 1** for climatological characteristics).

There are no obvious wet and dry seasons in Rochester. Monthly precipitation averages between four and five inches during May and June and between one and two inches during January and February. Snowfall in January and February ranges between four and five inches per month. Thunderstorms are common during hot weather and may be severe with heavy showers. The average year has approximately fifty thunderstorms, two-thirds of which occur between May and August. Damaging hail accompanies few of the thunderstorms and the areas affected are typically small.

Sunshine is particularly abundant during the summer months, while January is typically the cloudiest month of the year. March is the windiest month, when wind speeds average 12-13 miles per hour. Wind velocities of more than 40

miles per hour are not unusual during most months of the year. The prevailing wind direction is southerly during most of the year, with northwesterly winds during the late fall and early spring months.

A broad description of the climate in Rochester would be one indicating pleasant conditions with sharp seasonal changes, but no extended periods of severely frigid weather. Summer weather is often uncomfortably warm and humid.

Table 1: Climatological Characteristics

Annual Mean Precipitation	43.0 inches
Annual Mean Snowfall	17.2 inches
Wettest Month	June
Sunrise to Sunset (Mean Number of Days)	
Clear	115
Partly Cloudy	96
Cloudy	155
Mean Number of Days with Thunderstorms	49
Prevailing Wind Direction	
January-March	Northwest
April-December	South or Southwest
Annual Mean Wind Speed	10.5 mph

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service

Issues and Opportunities

The Issues and Opportunities element explains the nature and extent of the current and emerging issues facing the Village of Rochester. This inventory of issues, however, is not intended to remain unchanged over the next twenty years. Some of these issues may become lower in priority as planning measures are taken by the Village to address them. Additional issues will also arise that should be added to the list and addressed by the Village as they emerge.

Being able to address such issues of the Village is an integral part of a comprehensive plan. The issues currently facing Rochester, as well as the impending issues, will largely dictate the development that will occur and the planning that will need to take place. Many of the following issues and opportunities were identified during the public participation process, through both public meetings and the August 2008 community-wide survey results. More detailed information about public input for this comprehensive plan can be found in **Appendix A**. The main issues identified are used as a framework for the guidelines and recommendations found throughout this document.

Land Use and Natural Resources

- **Restricted development locations** — the flood plain of the South Fork of the Sangamon River is to the west of Rochester, which largely prevents expansion in this direction.
- **Zoning enforcement** — Rochester residents indicated that they are pleased with the overall appearance of the Village, but they would like to improve several issues, including the removal of junk from yards, methods to prevent and eliminate nuisances, and strategies to address vacant buildings that are deteriorating.
- **Lack of a streetscape plan** — through the community survey conducted in August 2008, residents widely indicated that Rochester should implement a streetscape plan, although few offered suggestions of how to implement or fund such a plan.
- **Incompatible uses** — particularly near the downtown, Rochester's zoning does not allow a buffer between residential uses and more intense uses. Therefore care must be used when considering proposed development.

- **Sprawl**—growth should occur within the Village, when possible, before new land is acquired to help minimize urban sprawl and to cut down on the costs of providing additional public infrastructure.

Transportation

- **Infrastructure maintenance and improvement** — Rochester should minimize new road construction to the extent possible to focus on maintaining current infrastructure and allow more funding for roadway improvements.
- **Walkability** — create a walkable, pedestrian-friendly community with a connected sidewalk network.
- **Integrated street systems** — new developments should connect with existing streets to allow for multiple access points and better connectivity between neighborhoods.
- **Public bike paths** — development of a public bike path system that connects community facilities like schools and parks with the Lost Bridge Trail would provide alternative transportation options for residents.

Housing

- **Recognize diverse housing needs** — Rochester has a high median home price, but lacks diverse types of housing, such as affordable and multi-family units.
- **Encourage higher densities** — promote denser development to utilize the space within the Village to the extent possible, while diversifying the housing stock and reducing sprawl.

Economic Development

- **Economic growth challenges** — Rochester's close proximity to Springfield hinders its ability to generate a substantial economic base.
- **Downtown vitality** — the core of Rochester, near its downtown, needs to be rehabilitated and revitalized.
- **Economic development that follows current and future infrastructure** — commercial and industrial development should be encouraged in areas that are currently (or will soon be) serviced by water, sewer, and streets in order to make the development more cost-effective.

- **Industry location** — new industrial development should be directed towards more compatible uses, with extensive measures taken to buffer the industrial use from other types of development.

Opportunities

- **Growing population creates housing demands** — Rochester's population growth leads to a demand for diverse types of housing.
- **Small town character and high quality of life** — Rochester is a desirable place to live due to its low crime and friendly atmosphere.
- **Expand recreational opportunities** — expand the Lost Bridge Trail to North Park and expand the bicycle network to the extent possible to allow Rochester to be a more walkable, pedestrian-friendly community by collaborating with Sangamon County on its proposed bicycle path plan.
- **Funding options** — explore grants and incentives available for Rochester, particularly for the rehabilitation and preservation of historical structures, economic development, and public infrastructure.
- **New development creates an opportunity for sustainability** — promote and implement environmentally friendly development throughout Rochester.
- **Promote innovative marketing strategies** — to strengthen the local economy, the Village should develop innovative marketing strategies designed to attract new businesses and entrepreneurs. Work to make the new, small business development process simpler by creating a resource to be published on the Village website or a printed brochure that explains the business start-up procedures.
- **Energy efficiency** — enforce the Illinois Energy Conservation Code for Commercial Buildings to reduce energy consumption and assist in protecting the environment.
- **Intergovernmental coordination** — establish and maintain relationships with neighboring and regional agencies to explore future planning opportunities and to strengthen coordination between agencies.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Through an extensive public participation process, many issues facing Rochester were recognized. Accordingly, each of these topics led to a recommended goal, a related objective, and a set of policies written to achieve the goal.

Residential Growth and Village Character

Goal 1

Provide for controlled and managed growth of residential areas while maintaining a small-town character.

Objective 1.1

Maintain the essential character of the Village as single-family dwellings, but provide for clustered multi-family dwelling units of a limited number.

Objective 1.2

Control density within new single-family residential areas to an average of three homes per platted acre with a smaller minimum lot size than has previously existed.

Objective 1.3

Provide zoning for buffer areas within the Village to separate single-family units from more intense uses like high density residential and commercial uses.

Commentary

One of Rochester's assets is its small town character, where residents feel more of an identity and more involved in the community than in a larger city. The overwhelming proportion of development has been single-family structures, although as Rochester grows, a greater desire for multi-family housing will result.

Business Growth and Village Character

Goal 2

Encourage the controlled development and expansion of a cohesive business community.

Objective 2.1

Provide adequate zoning for planned and compatible business expansion and development.

Objective 2.2

Promote and define clustered business areas within the Village.

Objective 2.3

Stimulate the development of additional services by promoting small businesses.

Commentary

Due to limited existing commercial areas and difficulty in expanding the present areas due to surrounding development, the only option appears to be locating new commercial development near Rochester's fringe or along Route 29, where appropriate, so as to not directly interfere with single-family uses. No industrial uses exist at this time, but if the opportunity presents itself in the future, the industry should be located away from residential uses to the degree possible. Extensive buffering and screening measures should be discussed at the time the development is proposed to protect the character of the surrounding area.

Village Infrastructure

Goal 3

Maintain and expand the infrastructure necessary to support a managed increase in commercial and residential areas.

Objective 3.1

Promote development in areas where infrastructure is available.

Objective 3.2

Develop and implement a long-range plan for the maintenance and expansion of existing Village infrastructure.

Objective 3.3

The impact of development on existing infrastructure should be examined and documented as development is being proposed.

Goal 4

Zone all areas within the municipal boundary according to available infrastructure and the compatibility of surrounding uses.

Objective 4.1

Require that all proposed zoning changes or special-use designations be accompanied by an evaluation of the possible impacts on the supporting infrastructure.

Goal 5

Maintain and require that existing and new residential or commercial development pay a development impact fee.

Objective 5.1

Require that a proposed development appropriately contribute to the cost of Village infrastructure by adhering to the development impact fee standards outlined in the Village of Rochester Code.

Commentary

Compatibility of proposed development with existing infrastructure will be achieved since new developments will have to relate to sewer and water systems and treatment capacity limitations. The ability to zone in relation to existing infrastructure is somewhat limited since zoning applies only to corporate limits, most of which is already developed. It is necessary that new developments contribute to the costs of their impact on the community by paying an impact fee.

Village Public Health and Safety

Goal 6

Provide for public health and safety within the Village.

Objective 6.1

Maintain and improve the level of Village services provided by the police, fire, and rescue squads and Village personnel.

Objective 6.2

Continue to facilitate and improve the access of emergency vehicles and response times through design of new streets and roadways.

Goal 7

Maintain existing and provide for new recreational facilities.

Objective 7.1

Establish a desirable ratio of recreational facilities to population and promote development of new recreational facilities.

Objective 7.2

Provide linkage of recreational facilities with greenways, pedestrian pathways, and/or bicycle paths.

Objective 7.3

Promote a recreational/mixed-use community facility.

Goal 8

Provide pedestrian sidewalks and crosswalks for safe access to all parts of the Village, including the new intermediate school on the eastern edge of Rochester.

Objective 8.1

Evaluate areas in the Village where sidewalks and crosswalks are not present and implement a plan for providing them (see **Exhibit F**).

Commentary

A major effort of the planning process is to plan for a system of future collector and arterial streets to provide better roadway connections between the various portions of the community. In time, these connections will provide considerably improved travel in the community, including improved travel and access for emergency vehicles.

The need for additional sidewalks along existing streets is a difficult problem to resolve. Some communities have allocated funds to cost share in provision of such sidewalks with property owners, which may be beneficial for the Village Board to consider. The new intermediate school on the east side of the Village presents a need to implement crosswalks and to extend the existing sidewalk network to serve the needs of the students, staff, and visitors.

Protection of Environmental Quality

Goal 9

Protect and enhance the quality of the environment within the Village.

Objective 9.1

Strongly encourage adhering to and expanding existing standards to prevent infringement upon the 100-year flood plain, intrusion into hazardous areas, destruction of natural resource areas, and control excess soil erosion and sedimentation from construction activities while simultaneously working to improve stormwater management.

Objective 9.2

Promote the utilization of natural resource areas for conservation and recreation.

Objective 9.3

Encourage LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a sustainable rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council) certified development within the Village and consider incentives for such development.

Commentary

LEED is a third-party certification program and the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high-performance green buildings. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in several key areas of human and environmental health. As environmental concerns are becoming more urgent as society develops, measures to preserve the environment are necessary. To encourage and promote LEED-certified development, the Village Board may wish to consider offering developers an incentive to develop sensibly, such as a density bonus, fee waiver, or expedited review process.

Village Administration

Goal 10

Promote community awareness of and adherence to Village ordinances, especially those related to private and commercial planning and development.

Objective 10.1

Establish clear direction for Village administration to guide future development proposals and amendments to the subdivision, zoning, and annexation ordinances.

Objective 10.2

Ensure that all proposals for future developments within the Village be required to demonstrate that they are compatible with the overall goals of the Village.

Objective 10.3

Ensure that notice of public meetings and other relevant Village information is posted in a variety of public locations, with timely notice provided. Use of electronic notification should be encouraged, as well, whether through an e-mail list and/or by a posting on the Village website.

Objective 10.4

Utilize and regularly update the Village website to reflect Village activities and news.

Commentary

Involving residents in the planning process is a key element to achieving a harmonious community. By educating the public on this process and ensuring a fundamental understanding of basic planning operations, future planning efforts would yield greater public support. By utilizing technology like e-mail and the Village website, a larger number of residents can be notified about public hearings and Village events more quickly and efficiently.

Community Profile

Population

Rochester's historic and current population growth is a product of new annexation and subdivision development. Total population trends indicate dramatic growth spurts that are independent of the growth context of Sangamon County (see **Table 2** below). Between 1970 and 1980, total Village population increased 49.3 percent compared with a 9.1 percent increase for Sangamon County. During the next 20 years, population growth slowed significantly as the Village added only 372 residents (a 15 percent increase), but still outpaced the County growth rate. Between 2000 and 2009, the Village experienced another significant growth surge, adding 646 new residents for a 22.6 percent increase at a time when the County population increased only 3.6 percent.

Table 2: Total Population Trends

		1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Rochester	Total	1,667	2,488	2,707	2,860	3,689
	% Change		49.3%	8.8%	5.7%	22.6%
Sangamon County	Total	161,335	176,089	178,386	188,951	195,672
	% Change		9.1%	1.3%	5.9%	3.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

This pattern indicates that growth is primarily a function of housing availability driven by new subdivision developments in the Village rather than regional growth trends. To capture the benefits of this growth, the Village conducted a Special Census in 2006 to adjust the Official Census Statistics for the Village (see **Table 3** below). The Special Census only included the southwest residential neighborhoods where significant new growth occurred between 2000 and 2006 (see **Figure 1**). Population counts in that area increased 63.0 percent and housing counts increased 69.8 percent (see **Table 4** for building permit activity).

Table 3: Special Census Population and Housing Counts

	Population	Housing Units
2000 Census	790	275
2006 Special Census	1,288	467
Change	498	192
% Change	63.0%	69.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 1: 2006 Special Census Area



Table 4: Building Permits for New Residential Construction by Subdivision and Type of Permit

Year	Permit Type	Maplehurst	Oak Mill Estates	Park Forest Place	Woodlands	Wyndmoor	Total
2000	House	5	-	-	3	-	8
2001	Duplex	-	-	-	-	1	1
	House	5	-	-	7	-	12
2002	House	6	-	-	14	6	26
2003	House	2	-	1	3	17	23
2004	House	2	-	20	5	17	44
2005	House	-	17	16	-	12	45
2006	Duplex	-	3	-	-	8	11
	House	-	7	12	3	14	36
2007	Duplex	-	2	-	-	4	6
	House	-	7	5	-	7	19
2008	House	-	3	4	-	1	8
2009	Duplex	-	2	-	-	1	3
	House	-	5	3	1	2	11
Total		20	46	61	36	90	253

Source: Village of Rochester

The age characteristics of the population influence many of the Villages institutions and services, including public safety, transportation, parks and

recreation, and schools. Of particular importance in Rochester is the growth in the number of school-aged children between 2000 and 2009. This growth, when combined with population growth in other areas of the school district, contributed to an unprecedented increase in school enrollment (see **Table 5** below).

Table 5: Population Age Characteristics

	1990		2000		2010	
Under 5	199	7.4%	137	4.8%	225	6.1%
5 to 9	273	10.1%	217	7.6%	347	9.4%
10 to 14	241	8.9%	263	9.2%	362	9.8%
15 to 19	223	8.2%	250	8.7%	254	6.9%
20 to 24	82	3.0%	100	3.5%	92	2.5%
25 to 34	265	9.8%	234	8.2%	251	6.8%
35 to 44	595	22.0%	485	17.0%	675	18.3%
45 to 54	331	12.2%	552	19.3%	648	17.6%
55 to 59	81	3.0%	163	5.7%	277	7.5%
60 to 64	149	5.5%	135	4.7%	159	4.3%
65 to 74	104	3.8%	196	6.8%	210	5.7%
75 to 84	151	5.6%	93	3.2%	144	3.9%
85+	13	0.5%	35	1.2%	46	1.3%
Total	2,707		2,860		3,689	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2009 estimate University of Illinois Extension

The number of children ages five to fourteen years increased 40 percent between 2000 and 2009. This growth occurred primarily because of the immigration of new residents who were more likely to be married families with children than current residents as of 2000. Prior to the growth in this decade, the number of school-aged children was declining slightly. The dominant age group continues to be adults between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-four; nearly 36 percent of the population is in this age bracket. The number of persons aged sixty-five and older increased by 17.7 percent, which was similar to the growth rate between 1990 and 2000. This indicates the Village is retaining many residents as they age and may be attracting seniors to the community.

Household and Housing Characteristics

One of the unfortunate consequences of the population growth trends in the Village is the inability to make accurate estimates for some population and household characteristics. By the beginning of 2010, neither the U.S. Census Bureau nor private data companies had captured the population and housing growth that has occurred in Rochester since 2000. Although it is possible to make some estimates based on the Special Census and building permit data, there are many household characteristics that cannot be estimated. Those data are flagged with the '(X)' symbol in this document.

In 2009, there were an estimated 1,353 housing units in the Village (see **Table 6**). Between 2000 and 2009, an estimated 238 new housing units were constructed for a total growth of 21.3 percent. The housing occupancy rate of 97.1 percent is high and indicates how robust the local housing market is despite the large number of new units added since 2000. As a point of comparison, the Sangamon County occupancy rate is 92 percent. High occupancy rates are a good indicator of how attractive the Village is now and has been in the past.

Table 6: Housing Tenure

	1990		2000		2010	
Total housing units	980		1,115		1,401	
Occupied	961	98.1%	1,090	97.8%	1,360	97.1%
Owner-occupied housing units	859	87.6%	1,010	90.6%	1,288	91.9%
Renter-occupied housing units	121	12.4%	105	9.4%	113	8.1%
Vacant	19	1.9%	25	2.2%	41	2.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2009 estimate by University of Illinois Extension

Owner occupancy rates are also high and have increased since 1990. In 2010, an estimated 91.9 percent of all housing units in Rochester were owner-occupied, compared with only 75 percent in Sangamon County (see **Table 6**).

The dominant housing type in the Village is a single-family detached home (see **Table 7** below). In 2010, an estimated 94.6 percent of all residential units were in this category. Although there was a decrease in the number of multi-family units between 1990 and 2000, there was a slight increase between 2000 and 2009. This growth was exclusively in the form of duplexes. One of the most notable housing options added since 2000 was the development of the Wyndcrest Assisted Living Community, which is classified as group quarters housing by the U.S. Census Bureau. This option will undoubtedly help to retain residents who need assisted-living housing.

Table 7: Units by Type of Structure

	1990		2000		2010	
Total housing units	980		1,115		1,401	
One-unit attached/detached	911	93.0%	1,061	95.2%	1,325	94.6%
Multi-family/other	69	7.0%	54	4.8%	76	5.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2010 estimate University of Illinois Extension

Data from the Village building permit database indicates that residential property owners are investing in property improvements (see **Table 8** below). Between 2002 and 2009, a total of 671 building permits were issued for remodeling projects. Roofing and deck/fence construction were the dominant types of property improvement with 472 permits, or 70.3 percent of the total number of residential remodeling permits issued.

Table 8: Permits Issued for Residential Remodeling from 2000 to 2009

	Deck/Fence	New Addition	New/Remodel Garage	New/Remodel Roof	New/Remodel Siding	Residential Other
Total Permits	182	6	27	290	75	91

Source: Village of Rochester

The lack of available data on the characteristics of new households makes it impossible to form an estimate for household characteristics, although some indicators from the 2006 Special Census can be used to suggest how household characteristics changed in recent years. Some notable characteristics of new households indicate that:

1. They are more likely to be married families with children;
2. They are more likely to own a home;
3. They have an income slightly higher than the Village average; and
4. They have age characteristics similar to the Village.

Table 9: Household Characteristics

	1990		2000	
1-person household:	40	14.6%	194	18.1%
2 or more person household:	822	85.4%	873	81.9%
Family households:	810	84.2%	863	80.8%
Married-couple family:	736	76.5%	754	70.7%
With own children under 18 years	402	41.7%	345	32.4%
No own children under 18 years	335	34.8%	409	38.3%
Other family:	74	7.7%	108	10.1%
Male householder, no wife present:	13	1.3%	22	2.0%
With own children under 18 years	8	0.9%	14	1.3%
No own children under 18 years	4	0.4%	8	0.7%
Female householder, no husband present:	62	6.4%	86	8.1%
With own children under 18 years	46	4.8%	62	5.8%
No own children under 18 years	16	1.6%	25	2.3%
Nonfamily households:	12	1.2%	11	1.0%
Total	962		1,067	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Household characteristics from 1990 and 2000 indicate that Rochester has a very stable base of traditional married couple families (see **Table 9** above). Although there was a slight decline in the proportion of family households between 1990 and 2000, it is likely that will reverse when the 2010 U.S. Census is completed. In 2000, 80.8 percent of all households were families and 70.7 percent were married couples. The proportion of households with children is relatively high with 39.5 percent of all households having at least one child

under the age of 18 years. The proportion of single-parent households increased slightly between 1990 and 2000.

Population and Housing Projections

Population and housing projections provide a basis for estimating future land use needs but should not be used as a prescriptive guide. Projections are at best an educated guess of future circumstances that are often influenced by unpredictable exogenous factors. Projecting Rochester's population and housing is also complicated by the lack of current data on the resident population. The robust growth that occurred between 2002 and 2007 highlights the inherent problem with projections since more growth occurred in those five years than in the previous 15 years.

Three projections were prepared using different assumptions about economic growth and migration. The 2010 Census data are used as the base year for projections. Estimates are provided by five year increments for a fifteen year planning horizon. The High Growth scenario assumes a quick economic recovery from the current recession and migration rates similar to those experienced over the last decade. The Moderate and Low Growth scenarios depend on slower rates of recovery and lower rates of migration. Migration into the Village is the driver of population growth rather than changes in birth rates or mortality. Tables 10 thru 14 provide the results of the projections.

Using the high growth assumptions the Village population is estimated to increase to 3,935 by 2015 an increase of 737 over the base year population of 3,689. By 2025 population is estimated to increase to 4,426, a 20 percent increase over the base year. To accommodate that growth an additional 364 housing units will be needed. Using current data on lot size in new developments an additional 132 acres of land will be needed for housing construction.

The Moderate Growth scenario estimates an increase in population of 118 by 2015 and 537 by 2025. An additional 278 housing units and 101 acres of land would be needed by 2025 to accommodate that growth.

Low Growth estimates indicate an increase of 96 new residents by 2015 and 416 by 2025. Only 178 new housing units, approximately 10 a year, would be needed by 2025.

Table 10: Population Projections

Growth Scenario	2015	2020	2025
High Growth	3,935	4,180	4,426
Moderate Growth	3,807	4,041	4,226
Low Growth	3,785	3,963	4,105

Table 11: Projected Population Increase from 2010

Growth Scenario	2015	2020	2025
High Growth	246	491	737
Moderate Growth	118	352	537
Low Growth	96	274	416

Table 12: Housing Projections

Growth Scenario	2015	2020	2025
High Growth	1,506	1,612	1,717
Moderate Growth	1,452	1,552	1,631
Low Growth	1,421	1,485	1,531

Table 13: Projected Growth in Housing Units from 2010

Growth Scenario	2015	2020	2025
High Growth	153	259	364
Moderate Growth	99	199	278
Low Growth	68	132	178

Table 14: Projected Number of Acres of Land Needed for New Residential Growth

Growth Scenario	2015	2020	2025
High Growth	56	94	132
Moderate Growth	36	72	101
Low Growth	25	48	65

Income Characteristics

Rochester has a relatively high income profile when compared with Sangamon County or the state of Illinois. The estimated household income in 2009 was 33 percent greater than the average for Sangamon County. The median household income was 48 percent greater than the County and 22 percent greater than the Illinois median income. The poverty rate for families in

Rochester was estimated to be less than one percent in 2009. See **Table 15** for household income characteristics in Rochester.

Table 15: Household Income Characteristics

	2000		2009	
Less than \$15,000	52	5.5%	38	3.5%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	56	5.8%	73	6.7%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	113	11.8%	60	5.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	151	15.7%	157	14.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	214	22.3%	222	20.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	169	17.6%	190	17.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	164	17.1%	248	22.7%
\$150,000 to \$249,999	30	3.2%	82	7.6%
\$250,000 to \$499,999	9	1.0%	16	1.5%
\$500,000 or more	1	0.1%	3	0.3%
Average household income	\$72,954		\$86,474	
Median household income	\$62,554		\$74,421	
Per capita income	\$26,574		\$33,008	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2009 estimate by University of Illinois Extension

Economy

There are arguably two approaches in viewing the Village economy. One is focused on the residents' source and type of employment, income level, and other characteristics that influence employment opportunity. The other is to examine the Village as a place of business. This approach describes the type of businesses, employment levels, types of jobs, and retail sales. Both approaches provide useful insight into the workings of the economy and potential opportunities and threats to the Village's future economic development.

Labor Force

Rochester is overwhelmingly classified as a bedroom community. Census data from 1990 and 2000 indicate that nearly 90 percent of residents commute outside of the Village for employment (see **Table 16**). It is likely that the majority of those workers travel to jobs in Springfield. One way to look at the economic base of the Village is to think of residents as exported labor that import money back into the community when they bring home a paycheck. The income is then spent on local services, retail purchases, and most important for the Village, on home purchases and property taxes. Residential property is 95.3 percent of the property tax base. Residents' outside income is the economic base of the Village.

Table 16: Commuting Patterns

	1990		2000	
Worked in place of residence	147	10.7%	190	12.5%
Worked outside place of residence	1,227	89.3%	1,334	87.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The large number of commuters, combined with the lack of public transportation options and relatively high-income levels, suggests that automobile transport is particularly important. Seventy-one percent of Rochester households own two or more automobiles compared with 56 percent in Sangamon County. In 2000, 85.4 percent of workers drove alone to work in a private car or truck (see **Table 17**). The relatively high density of automobile ownership combined with the large proportion of commuters and limited access to many community facilities for bicyclists and pedestrian indicates that transportation planning may be an impending issue.

Table 17: Method of Transportation to Work

	1990		2000	
Car, truck, or van	1,321	96.1%	1,444	94.8%
Drove alone	1,175	85.5%	1,301	85.4%
Carpooled	146	10.6%	143	9.4%
Bicycle	0	0.0%	7	0.5%
Walked	19	1.4%	17	1.1%
Worked at home	34	2.5%	53	3.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The Rochester labor force has many distinguishing features. First, the educational attainment for the adult population 25 years and over is extremely high. In 2008, an estimated 72.8 percent of Rochester adults had formal education beyond high school, compared with 58 percent in Sangamon County and 54.2 percent in Illinois (see **Table 18**). The proportion of adults with a bachelor's degree or greater was 45.2 percent compared with 29.5 percent in Sangamon County and 26.4 percent in Illinois. Because household income and educational attainment are highly correlated, this helps explain the high income profile for the Village.

Table 18: 2008 Educational Attainments

	Sangamon County	Illinois	Rochester
High School or less	42.0%	45.8%	27.2%
Some college, no degree	21.8%	21.7%	18.9%
Associate Degree	6.8%	6.1%	8.7%
Bachelor's Degree	18.8%	16.8%	29.1%
Master's Degree	7.4%	6.6%	12.3%
Professional Degree	2.4%	2.1%	1.8%
Doctorate Degree	0.9%	0.9%	2.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The labor force participation rate is over five percent above both the County and Illinois rates with an estimated 74.1 percent of persons 16 years and older in the labor force. The high labor force participation rate indicates that a significant number of households have two persons in the labor force. The last available data from the 2000 U.S. Census indicates that 84.7 percent of households with children have both parents in the labor force (see **Table 19**). This large proportion of two-worker households can potentially lead to several issues, many of which are centered on child care, availability of after school programs for youth, unsupervised children left home alone, and safe transportation.

Table 19: Labor Force Status of Households with Children

	Households with children	Both parents working	%
Child under 6 years	136	87	64.0%
Child 6 to 17 years	622	555	89.2%
Total	758	642	84.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Business Community

The Village is home to 100 business establishments, employing an estimated 786 persons in 2008 (see **Table 20**). The service sector, which includes the school system, is by far the largest employment sector with forty establishments and 524 employees. Retail trade is the second largest sector, with 22 businesses and 100 employees. Together, the retail and service sectors account for 80 percent of all jobs in the Village. Although the number of establishments and employment levels are low for many types of businesses there is a notable amount of diversity in the business community.

Table 20: Establishments and Employment by Type of Business

Economic Sector	Establishments		Employment	
	Count	%	Count	%
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing	3	3%	13	2%
Construction	11	11%	46	6%
Manufacturing	3	3%	16	2%
Transportation and Communications	3	3%	16	2%
Wholesale Trade	5	5%	21	3%
Retail Trade	22	22%	100	13%
Finance, Insurance And Real Estate	10	10%	41	5%
Services	40	40%	524	67%
Unclassified	3	3%	9	1%
Total	100	100%	786	100%

Source: Applied Geographic Solutions

Rochester is primarily home to small businesses. Over 85 percent of all establishments have fewer than ten employees (see **Table 21**). The largest employer in the Village is Rochester Community Unit School District #3A, which maintains over 100 employees. Over 90 percent of businesses are clustered in the commercial district, with the remainder operating as home occupation establishments scattered across residential areas.

Table 21: Business Establishments by Number of Employees

	Count	%
1 to 4 Employees	63	63%
5 to 9 Employees	23	23%
10 to 19 Employees	7	7%
20 to 49 Employees	5	5%
50 to 99 Employees	1	1%
100 to 249 Employees	1	1%

Source: Applied Geographic Solutions

Retail businesses are increasingly important in many communities, due to the benefit of sales tax revenue for the municipal government. Rochester’s close proximity to Springfield has suppressed retail development in the community, despite significant increases in the buying income of residents. In 2009, per capita retail sales in Rochester were only 14 percent of the Sangamon County average of \$14,569 and 10 percent of the Springfield per capita retail sales of \$20,430 (see **Table 22** below). Retail sales leakage from Rochester is estimated to be \$26.8 million (estimate by University of Illinois Extension).

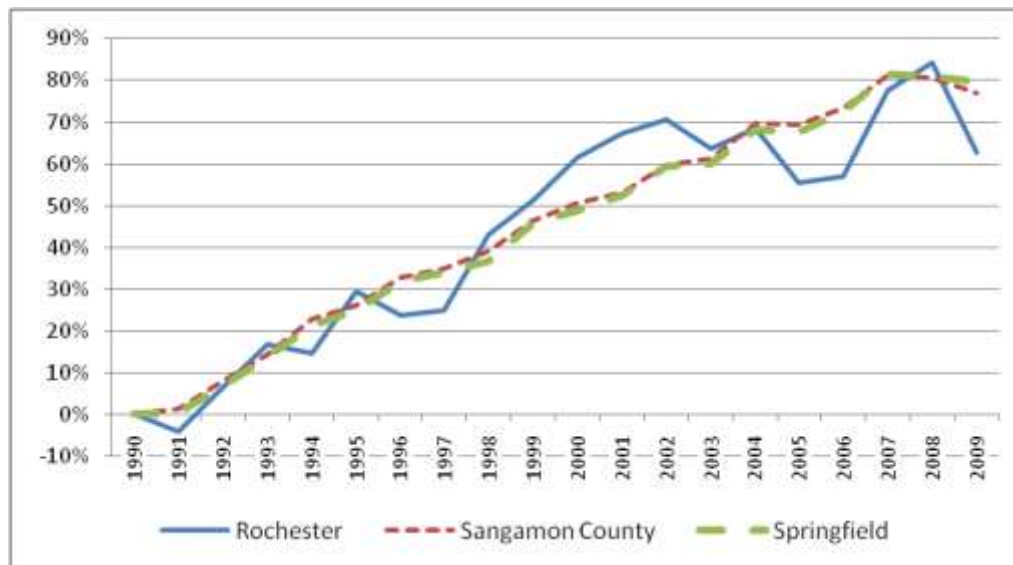
Table 22: 2009 Retail Sales Summary

	Rochester	Springfield	Sangamon County
Per capita sales	\$2,074	\$20,430	\$14,569
2009 population	3,506	117,941	195,716
2009 sales	\$7,273,128	\$2,409,563,149	\$2,851,334,125

Source: Illinois Department of Revenue

Retail sales growth trends have tracked closely with those in Springfield and Sangamon County, although with greater volatility (see **Figure 2**). See **Table 23** for total retail sales in Rochester by year.

Figure 2: Retail Sales Growth Trends



Source: Illinois Department of Revenue

Table 23: Total Retail Sales in Rochester between 1990 and 2009

Year	TotalSales	% increase from 1990
1990	\$4,469,503	0
1991	\$4,282,390	-4.2%
1992	\$4,760,688	6.5%
1993	\$5,215,542	16.7%
1994	\$5,124,523	14.7%
1995	\$5,781,919	29.4%
1996	\$5,532,274	23.8%
1997	\$5,579,021	24.8%
1998	\$6,390,293	43.0%
1999	\$6,759,226	51.2%
2000	\$7,215,576	61.4%
2001	\$7,472,531	67.2%
2002	\$7,624,300	70.6%
2003	\$7,307,684	63.5%
2004	\$7,529,816	68.5%
2005	\$6,952,462	55.6%
2006	\$7,014,768	56.9%
2007	\$7,940,545	77.7%
2008	\$8,230,526	84.1%
2009	\$7,273,128	62.7%

Source: Illinois Department of Revenue

Schools

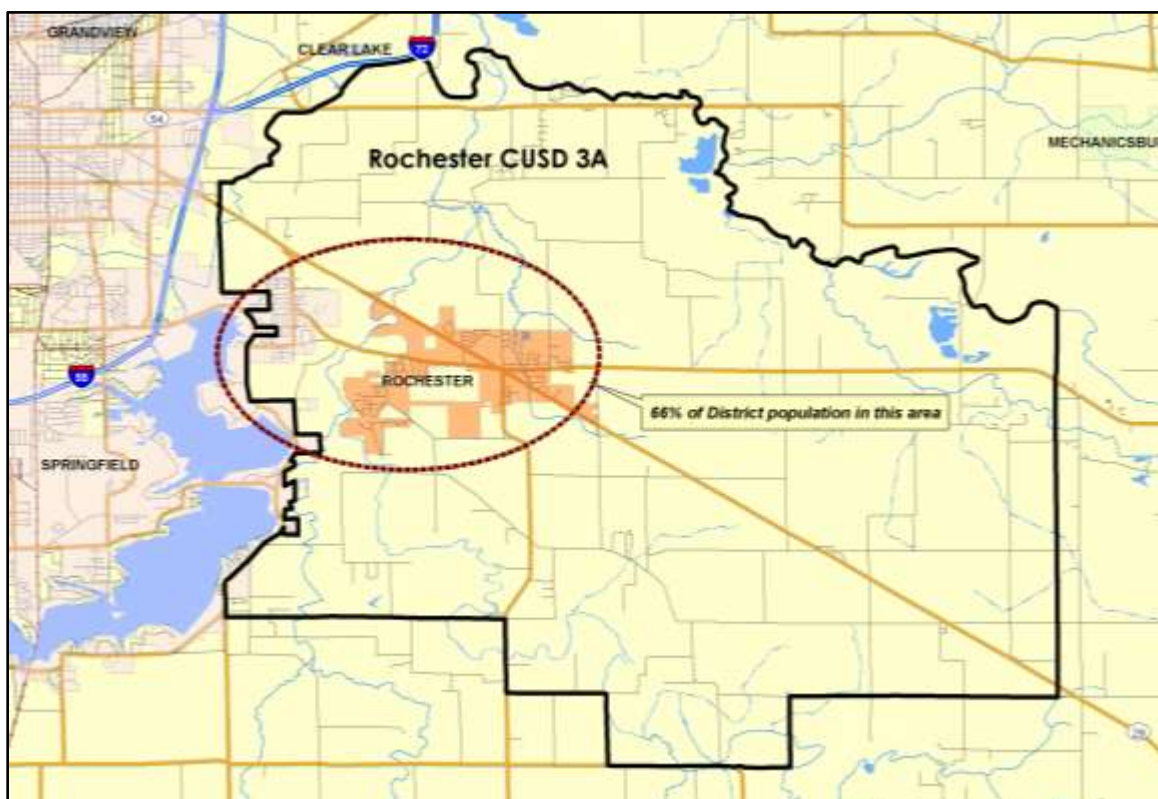
Educational services are provided by the Rochester Community Unit School District #3A. The 65 square mile district includes Rochester, a small, but growing area on the southeast edge of Springfield, and a large sparsely populated area of farmland (see **Figure 3**). Nearly two-thirds of the district's population base is clustered in an eight square mile area that includes the Village and Springfield subdivisions located just west of Rochester.

All school facilities are located within the Village. Currently, five schools are located on three campuses. The high school and junior high school share one campus north of Route 29 and the elementary and middle school share a campus on the south side of Route 29. A new intermediate school recently opened on the eastern edge of the Village, bounded by Community Drive, Buckhart Road, Maxheimer Road, and Route 29. This school is likely to create significant new demands on the transportation system in that area.

The schools occupy a unique and important role in the Village and have several impacts on current and future land use, including the following:

1. The high quality of education provided by the school system is a driver of growth. Resident satisfaction with schools is very high and taxpayers most recently expressed their commitment and satisfaction by approving a bond referendum in 2007 for new school construction. Enrollment has increased over 25 percent since 2000.
2. The schools have a large land use footprint with nearly 150 acres of land in or contiguous to the Village.
3. The schools create demands on the transportation system via bus and parent trips to school facilities during the school year.
4. The schools are a highly visible element of the landscape because of the location on Route 29, the primary transportation corridor bisecting the Village.
5. The schools have numerous athletic facilities, including a new field house that provides recreational venues for school events and resident recreation.

Figure 3: Rochester Community Unit School District #3A Boundary



Source: University of Illinois Extension

Public Safety

The Rochester Fire Protection District (RFPD) provides fire and emergency medical services. The RFPD is a volunteer department that serves a large rural area in addition to the Village. A new modern facility, Rochester Fire Station Number One, located at Community Drive and Buckhart Road, was completed in 2003 and serves as the RFPD main office. The RFPD station has sixteen bays to allow for storage of district apparatus, a communications room, a shop, and a utility room to support fire, emergency medical services, and rescue missions. There is room for public use, education, training, administration, and facilities for housing full-time firefighters. Firefighting equipment currently includes three engines, three tankers, three squad vehicles, a brush truck, and a rescue boat.

The Village provides police protection. The Rochester Police Department is housed in the Village Hall and occupies 3,500 square feet of the complex with two private offices for command personnel, a squad room with individual cubicles for each officer, meeting room, break room/kitchen, an evidence processing lab, three separate interview rooms, a locker room with shower, a two car attached garage, and several storage and evidence rooms. The Rochester Police Department has eight officers and functions as a full-time agency, providing twenty-four hour per day service. All officers are graduates of the State's police training academies and are state-certified police officers. In addition to this mandated training, all police officers have additional specialized training in various disciplines.

Parks

The Village owns and maintains two parks. Rochester Community Park, nearly 80 acres in size, is the Village's largest park. The park includes several notable and heavily used facilities, including a lighted playing field, soccer fields, a small lagoon, a large play structure with playground equipment, and restroom facilities. In addition to more traditional outdoor recreation activity, the park also serves as a venue for special community events. The most notable is "Sparks in the Park," an annual Independence Day festival. Rochester Community Park is bounded on the east by a cemetery and school, on the north by the Lost Bridge Trail and Route 29, on the west by undeveloped flood-prone land, and on the south by West Main Street.

North Park is currently an undeveloped park located at the northern edge of the Village on Park Street, in the shadow of the Village water tower. This 12-acre site is bounded by a residential housing development on the east, undeveloped land on the north (platted for a subdivision), the wooded Black Branch drainage on the west, and residential housing to the south. Current plans for park

development include athletic fields, playground area, parking, and a permanent building.

Rochester is the southeastern end of the Lost Bridge Trail, a five-mile rails-to-trails project built by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). It is operated jointly by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Springfield, and Rochester. The popular trail originates at the IDOT building on Dirksen Parkway in Springfield, crosses Sugar Creek and South Fork of the Sangamon River, and offers an unimpeded pedestrian and bicycle route between the Village and Springfield. Current plans are to extend the trail eastward to Taylorville. Lost Bridge Trail is discussed further under the Transportation section of this document.

Churches and Civic Organizations

Rochester is home to several active church and civic organizations that enrich the lives of residents and visitors (see **Table 24**). They also have notable impact on land use in the Village because of property and building ownership. This is particularly true for the developing east side near the new school and the undeveloped infill area between South Walnut Street and the Grove Park and Wyndmoor subdivisions. One of the most notable examples of civic action is the recently completed reconstruction of an historic 1830s-era home on a site adjacent to the Rochester Community Park by the Rochester Historical Preservation Society.

Table 24: Churches and Civic Organizations in Rochester

Churches

Church of St Jude (Catholic)
 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
 Rochester Christian Church
 Rochester First Baptist Church
 Rolling Prairie Baptist Church
 Rochester United Methodist Church

Rochester Clubs & Organizations

American Legion
 Lions Club
 Masonic Temple
 Mothers Club
 VFW Post 11463
 Women's Club
 Rochester Historical Preservation Society
 Rochester Youth Athletic Association

Source: University of Illinois Extension

Land Use and Natural Resources

The Village of Rochester's current land use patterns form the setting for making future land use decisions. Some evaluation of existing land use development within the community is warranted in order to relate to likely future land use development trends. The existing land use development within Rochester is simple in terms of classifications, although the development pattern is somewhat fragmented, with certain developed areas being somewhat more isolated from the remainder of the community. This is less likely to occur in the future, as public sewer and public water are essential to any new development.

Following are some descriptive comments on existing land use development in Rochester.

Zoning

Rochester's current zoning is illustrated in **Exhibit A** and **Exhibit B** at the end of this document. Rochester maintains ten zoning districts: Agricultural (A-1), General Business (B-1), Highway and Service (B-2), Light Industrial (I-1), Heavy Industrial (I-2), Medium Density (R-1), Duplex Housing (R-2), Multi-Family Residential (R-4), Multi-Family Residential (R-5), and Residential Suburban (R-S). Zoning for areas falling outside of the Village limits will defer to provisions of the A-1 district after they are annexed into the Village limits.

The Village of Rochester's Zoning Code, found in Chapter 40 of the Village of Rochester Code, is similar to most zoning codes found in small communities. The following provides an overview of each of the Village's ten zoning districts, although more comprehensive information can be found in the full text of the Zoning Code.

Agricultural District

Agricultural District (A-1): The A-1 Agricultural District is designed to accommodate and protect agricultural and related uses, as well as other uses commonly found in agricultural areas.

Business Districts

General Business District (B-1): The purpose of the B-1 General Business District is to accommodate a wide range of retail stores, offices, and service establishments compatible to a central location within the community, as the community's primary business center.

Highway and Service Business District (B-2): The purpose of the B-2 Highway and Service Business District is to accommodate those businesses who have needs for large sites, use of outdoor storage or heavy dependence on trucking large material, equipment, or supplies, and are not generally compatible with the uses in the B-1 General Business District.

Industrial Districts

Light Industrial District (I-1): The purpose of the I-1 Light Industrial District is to accommodate a wide range of manufacturing and similar industrial facilities, which can conform to a high level of performance standards.

Heavy Industrial District (I-2): The purpose of the I-2 Heavy Industrial District is to provide for and accommodate heavy industrial uses in a manner that minimizes adverse effects.

Residential Districts

Medium Density Residential District (R-1): The purpose of the R-1 Medium Density Residential District is to accommodate single-family detached residential structures at a medium density, primarily in the developed portions of the community existing at the present time.

Duplex Housing District (R-2): The purpose of the R-2 Duplex Housing District is to accommodate a variety of housing types, including detached and duplex structures.

[Note: An R-3 zoning district does not exist at the time this Comprehensive Plan was written.]

Multiple-Family Housing District (R-4): The purpose of the R-4 Multiple-Family Housing District is to accommodate housing types, including detached and multiple-family structures of no more than four dwelling units in a single structure.

Multiple-Family Housing District (R-5): The purpose of the R-5 Multiple-Family Housing District is to accommodate housing types, including detached, duplex, and multiple-family structures.

Residential Suburban District (R-S): The purpose of the R-S Residential Suburban District is to provide for a low-density single-family district.

Planned Unit Developments

Planned unit developments are permitted uses under the A-1, R-S, and R-1 zoning classifications. Article IX of the Village of Rochester Zoning Code specifies that “the planned unit development process should allow

increased flexibility in design and improvements required from what is otherwise required in the traditional subdivision requirements...” and that “in each planned development, an area should be provided as permanent open space.” Planned unit developments may contain:

- (A) Dwelling units in detached, semi-detached, attached, or multi-family structure, of any combination thereof; and
- (B) Nonresidential uses of a religious, cultural and recreational nature, and commercial uses to the extent that such commercial uses are designed and intended to serve primarily the residents of the immediate area.
- (C) No commercial use, nor any building devoted primarily to a commercial use, shall be built or established prior to substantial completion of residential buildings as specified in the Village of Rochester Zoning Code.

The area of each zoning district is presented in **Table 25**. Medium Density Residential (74.08 percent) is the largest land use in the Village of Rochester. Considering all residential classifications (R-1, R-2, R-4, R-5, and R-S), residential uses account for 92.45 percent of Rochester’s land cover. Such a high percentage of residential uses is not uncommon for communities similar to Rochester’s size and locale. Business uses (B-1 and B-2 classifications) make up 5.74 percent of the community, while Agriculture (A-1) consumes 1.81 percent of land uses within the municipal boundary. While two classifications for industrial uses exist (I-1 and I-2), there are actually no portions of the Village zoned for either category.

Table 25: Zoning District Areas

Zoning Classification		Area in Square Miles	% of Village
A-1	Agricultural District	0.04	1.81%
B-1	General Business District	0.09	3.60%
B-2	Highway & Service District	0.05	2.13%
I-1	Light Industrial District	0.00	0.00%
I-2	Heavy Industrial District	0.00	0.00%
R-1	Medium Density Residential District	1.81	74.08%
R-2	Duplex Housing District	0.01	0.33%
R-4	Multi-Family Residential District	0.00	0.00%
R-5	Multi-Family Residential District	0.01	0.39%
R-S	Residential Suburban District	0.43	17.64%
Total Area of Rochester		2.45	100.00%

Source: ESRI ArcGIS Calculations of Zoning Shapefile; Village of Rochester Zoning Map

Flood Plain

Rochester's entire western edge abuts a large flood plain, and some of its incorporated area is still covered by the flood plain. Another smaller flood plain bisects the community near Route 29 and Park Street (see **Exhibit C** at the end of this document). Chapter 14 of the Village of Rochester Code mandates that development not take place in a flood plain in order to:

- (A) Prevent unwise developments from increasing flood or drainage hazards to others;
- (B) Protect new buildings and major improvements to buildings from flood damage;
- (C) Promote and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens from the hazards of flooding;
- (D) Lessen the burden on the taxpayer for flood control, repairs to public facilities and utilities, and flood rescue and relief operations;
- (E) Maintain property values and a stable tax base by minimizing the potential for creating blight areas;
- (F) Make federally subsidized flood insurance available;
- (G) Preserve the natural characteristics and functions of watercourses and floodplains in order to moderate flood and storm water impacts, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, protect aquatic and riparian habitat, provide recreational opportunities, provide aesthetic benefits and enhance community and economic development;
- (H) Provide for the orderly growth and development [pursuant to this plan] of an environment that is especially sensitive to changes from human activity; and
- (I) Assist in maintaining the capacity of storm water conveyance systems as defined in the Ordinance Regulating the Disposal of Trash, Debris and Unwanted Materials Into the Storm Water Conveyance Systems (latest version).

Design Standards

Many residents pointed out in the community-wide survey that intense commercial uses abut less intense uses like residential properties, with no buffering or screening between them. The Village of Rochester does have landscaped buffering or screening standards in place for these instances (Section 40-3-8 of the Village of Rochester Zoning Code). The uses that were established prior to this section of the code are not required to conform to the

standards, per Section 16.140 (“Pre-Existing, Non-Conforming Uses (Grandfather Clause)”) of the Illinois Administrative Code, unless 80 percent or more of the structure is destroyed or demolished (Section 16.150 of the Illinois Administrative Code).

Public Property

As shown in **Table 26**, 22.27 percent of the Village’s property is publicly owned. The Village of Rochester owns almost half (178.03 acres) of the publicly owned property, while the State of Illinois owns about 20 percent (78.80 acres) of the public property. The State of Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) owns the land utilized for highways. The State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources owns one small parcel near the Village’s core. Rochester Community Unit School District #3A owns 143.68 acres of land in the Village. Sangamon County owns 12.64 acres of land, the vast majority of which is recorded under the Sangamon County Highway Department and provides for infrastructure.

Table 26: Public Property Ownership

Public Property by Entity	Area in Acres	% Public Property	% of Village
Village of Rochester	178.03	43.09%	11.43%
Rochester Community Unit School District #3A	143.68	34.78%	5.12%
State of Illinois	78.80	19.07%	4.90%
Sangamon County	12.64	3.06%	0.82%
Total	413.15	100.00%	22.27%

Source: University of Illinois Extension

Future Land Use

The Village experienced extraordinary growth between 2000 and 2010. The 29 percent growth in population added 285 new housing units primarily in the southwest residential neighborhoods. An estimated 104 acres of land was converted to residential neighborhood development. Growth spurts of this type have been typical in Rochester over the last 40 years often followed by periods of slow growth.

One of the positive outcomes of the recent growth is attention to where new development should occur in the future and what type of infrastructure and transportation systems will be needed. The development of new housing southwest along the bluffs above the South Fork of the Sangamon River created a horseshoe-shaped development pattern. This was accentuated by the recent construction of the intermediate school on the eastern edge of the Village. This development pattern leaves a large tract of undeveloped land bounded by South Walnut on the east, West Main on the North and Heathrow on the west. This land is currently in agricultural use but at least one subdivision has been proposed for the site. Another area proposed for housing development is Oak Mill Estates north of Karen Rose Drive. Several commercial subdivisions have been proposed at Coe Commons located south of the new intermediate school with frontage on Illinois Route 29. Other commercial sites are available on community drive north of Route 29. This represents nearly 140 acres of land for housing and 80 acres for commercial development. This substantial land bank should meet the Villages development needs through the 2025 planning horizon based on the 'High Growth' development scenario.

Although the proposed housing and commercial developments may be many years in the future it is necessary to think now about transportation systems needed to support additional growth. Exhibit G: Future Land Use Map identifies four future transportation improvements that will support community growth and improve overall efficiency of the transportation system. The first would be an extension of Community Drive north eventually connecting with North Oak Street near the proposed Oak Mill Estates. The second is a north-south arterial from West Main Street near Education Avenue extending south to Oak Hill Road. The third would be an extension of Mill Dale Drive east to Cardinal Hill Road. Finally, an extension of Oak Hill Road from Cardinal Hill Road to Maxheimer Road would provide an additional access route to the eastern edge of the Village and Route 29.

Additional park land will be needed to meet the needs of residents in the future. With the shift in the geographic location of new residential development to the southwest and potential infill development south of West Main Street a park may be needed on the south side of the Village. A long term proposed location for a new park is at the intersection of South Walnut and Oak Hill Road (see **Exhibit G: Future Land Use**).

Transportation

Transportation is a personal activity, a social service, and an industry. The Village of Rochester recognizes the need to coordinate with Sangamon County, the State of Illinois, and the Federal government. Transportation systems must meet identified and projected transportation needs in a timely and cost-effective manner, while maintaining compatibility with the Village. A well-functioning transportation system is crucial for Rochester to ensure the efficient movement of people and goods, while both maintaining its small town character and stimulating economic growth.

Perhaps the largest factor in Rochester's transportation and street system is the location of Illinois Route 29. Although Route 29 (a controlled-access arterial street) provides excellent service through Rochester and to Springfield and Taylorville, it bisects the community in a difficult, unconnected way. In doing so, it presents difficulty in traveling between the northern half and southern half of the Village.

Traffic counts provided by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) cannot conclude how Route 29 affects travel patterns between the northern and southern halves of the Village, but they do indicate which roads residents and visitors are heavily relying upon to navigate within the Village (see **Table 27**). Traffic counts taken by IDOT in 1969, 1985, 1987-1988, and 2007 show historical trends of the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes, which is calculated by the total volume of vehicle traffic for a particular road in one year, divided by 365 days. Aside from knowing which roads are subject to high volumes of traffic, the AADT is most important in that it determines the amount of federal funding a state will receive for its roadways.

Many public transit options are available in Sangamon County, although routes do not currently serve Rochester and Rochester does not operate its own public transit system. In conjunction with Village Goal 9, which is to "protect and enhance the quality of the environment within the Village," the Village Board may wish to consider exploring opportunities available to partner with the Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) to reduce the number of automobile trips made daily and to provide transportation opportunities for the disadvantaged and elderly.

Analysis and Recommendations

In a small community such as Rochester, the hierarchy of street classifications is somewhat simplified. Essentially, it includes arterial streets, collector streets, and local streets. Arterial streets are major thoroughfares that serve as traffic ways for travel between and through the Village. Collector streets are relatively low-

speed, low-volume streets that provide circulation within and between neighborhoods. Local streets are those that are primarily residential and are generally used by residents of that neighborhood. It must be realized that as Rochester continues to grow, it will have to plan for a future street system that overcomes the dividing effects of Route 29 through the center of the community. With the significant residential growth occurring in Rochester, it must take advantage of the opportunity to plan for a future system of roads chiefly controlled by development. It is imperative that the Village be vigilant so that a sensible and connected network of streets results as development proceeds. The Planning Commission and Village Board Members should not deviate from a policy of requiring developers to incorporate planned collector streets in the street pattern of the new development.

Because of the new intermediate school near Route 29 and Community Drive, additional traffic and pedestrian safety concerns need to be addressed. Sidewalks need to be extended to the school with marked crosswalks. Additional traffic control may be necessary to manage automobile access to the school.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation

Pedestrian and bicycle transportation systems are increasingly important components of community planning. Results from the Comprehensive Plan Survey highlighted residents concern about pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The condition of sidewalks and streets were the two highest ranked infrastructure concerns of residents with 36 percent dissatisfied with sidewalks and 39 percent dissatisfied with streets. This observation when coupled with the high proportion of residents that utilize the Lost Bridge Trail, 36 percent are frequent users (more than 20 visits per year), it is important to consider how to enhance the safety and experience of walkers, runners and cyclists.

Rochester currently has 22.4 miles of sidewalk (see **Exhibit F**). Despite the extensive sidewalk network there are notable gaps in the connectivity of sidewalks. Recommendations for improving the connectivity are noted in Exhibit F and Figure 4. Closing these gaps, while requiring sidewalk construction in new subdivisions, will improve the safety of pedestrians and increase transportation options for residents. The Village currently does not have a bicycle network system. A Proposed Bicycle Network plan (**Figure 5**) is currently being developed in cooperation with the Sangamon county Regional Planning Commission.

Lost Bridge Trail

Constructed in 1995, Lost Bridge Trail currently begins on the east side of Springfield at a trailhead near the IDOT building. Over five miles long, the trail continues through the grounds, under Interstate 55, and continues east on the abandoned railroad bed to the community of Rochester where it terminates.

Acquired and built by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the three-mile western section was transferred to the Springfield Park District and the two-mile eastern section was transferred to the Village of Rochester. Rochester has subsequently extended the trail on their eastern boundary and constructed a loop through Rochester Community Park. The corridor is very scenic, crossing several creeks and bordering the lake at IDOT. The proximity of busy Interstate 55 and Route 29 do not deter from the recreational quality of the trail.

In 2009, a state grant supplemented by a fundraising effort headed by the Rochester Women's Club, paid for the addition of a \$90,000 comfort station for Lost Bridge Trail recreationalists. The station, located on the corner of West Main Street and Route 29, includes a unisex, handicapped-accessible restroom, water fountains, vending machines, and picnic tables.

Residents responding to the Comprehensive Plan Survey identified the Lost Bridge Trail as the most frequently visited recreational facility in the Village. With such an amenity, Rochester must take full advantage of Lost Bridge Trail and actively seek to maintain and expand its section of the trail. The new school near the end of the trail creates an opportunity to connect the school to the trail. By doing so, students, faculty, and staff will have the option of traveling safely by bicycle or foot to school and school functions.

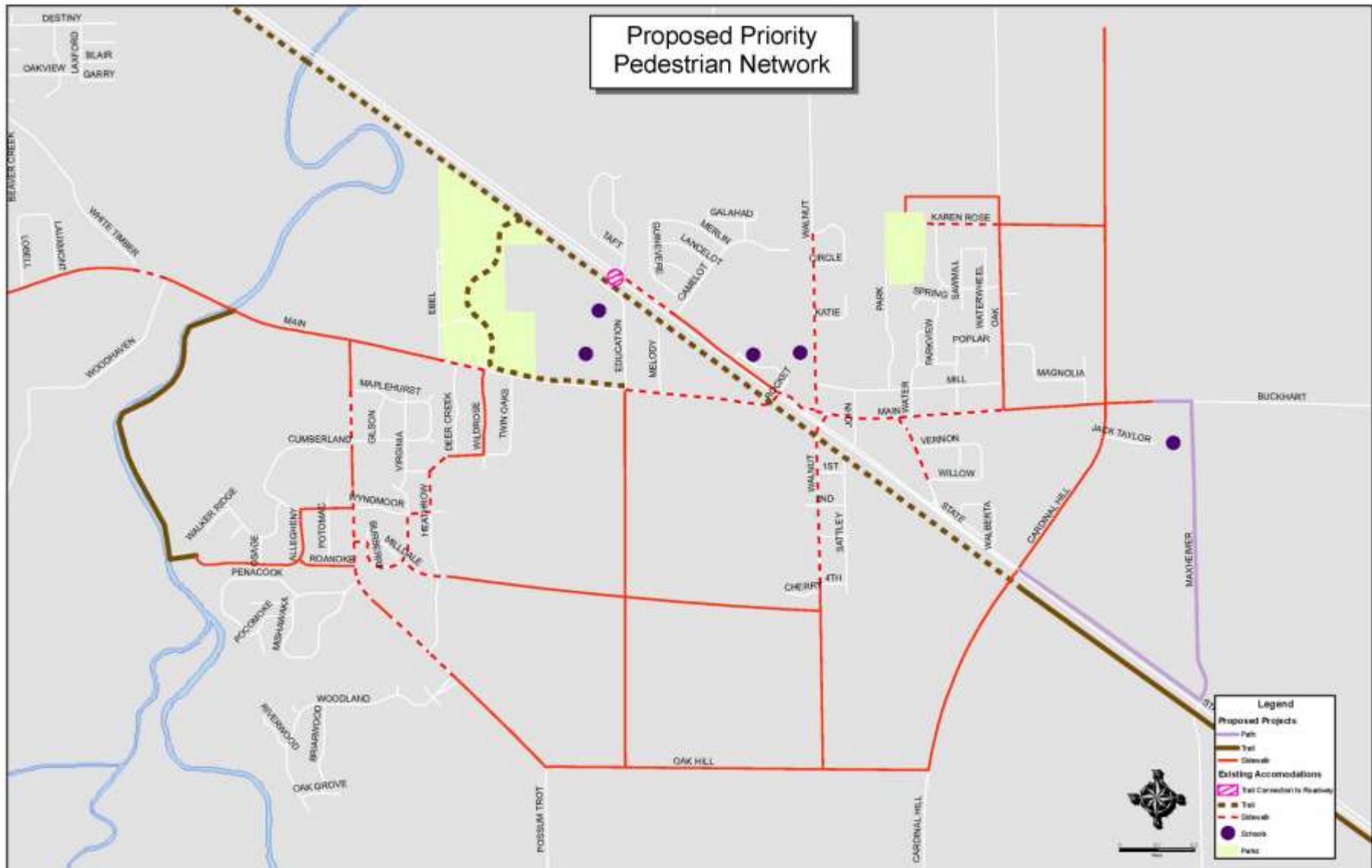
Adherence to Required Standards

While Rochester has implemented several notable street improvements since the last Comprehensive Plan update in 1991, many of the streets still do not meet the required standards. This is understandable for the older areas of Rochester, where streets were constructed prior to the establishment of standards. All new development must adhere to the requirements set forth in Chapter 35 of the Subdivision Code of the Village of Rochester. Right-of-way width of non-Village streets should be in accord with the more restrictive requirements of the governmental unit having jurisdiction over right-of-way width.

It is critical that new subdivision developments meet the minimum requirements in right-of-way and pavement width to provide adequate service to proposed developments. It is especially critical that as new development occurs, it be

required to provide adequate right-of-way and setbacks for buildings to be constructed on proposed or designated collector and arterial streets. Even if the space is not necessary at the time, right-of-way should be dedicated for future upgrades and expansions. Similarly, all new streets that are developed must conform to the required standards of right-of-way, pavement width, and materials set forth in the Village Code. If this is not done at the time of development, it is extremely difficult to have streets upgraded in the future. The standards that are adopted and the inspection methods established in the subdivision regulations are to provide a minimum level of quality and service to residents of the Village. If that level is not required and maintained residents and the community suffer the results.

Figure 4: Proposed Priority Pedestrian Network

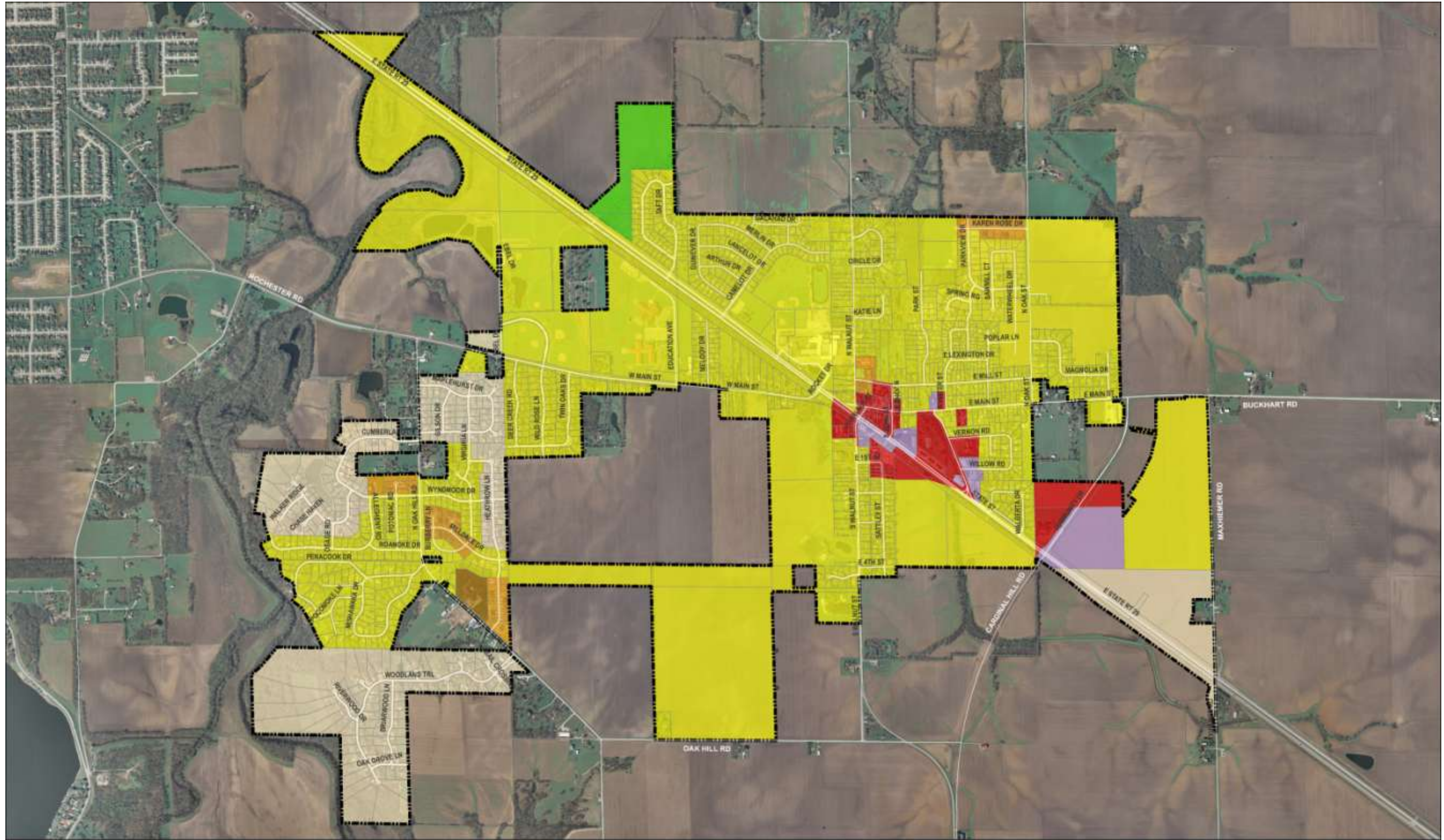


Source: Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

Table 27: Traffic Counts

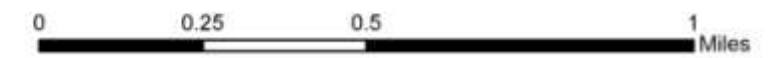
			Year			
			1969	1985	1987-88	2007
Location	Average Annual Daily Traffic Volumes (AADT)					
IL-29 from W. Main Street to Walnut Street			-	12,500	14,500	14,200
IL-29 from Taft Drive to W. Main Street			6,000	-	11,500	13,500
IL-29 from western municipal boundary to Taft Drive			9,800	10,300	-	13,300
IL-29 from Walnut Street to Cardinal Hill Road			4,450	7,300	-	10,600
IL-29 from Cardinal Hill Road to Maxheimer Road			3,650	-	6,100	9,300
Rochester Road from Woodhaven Drive to Oak Hill Road			-	-	-	6,600
W. Main Street from Oak Hill Road to Deer Creek Road			-	2,900	-	4,750
Oak Hill Road from W. Main Street to Cumberland Drive			-	1,200	-	4,550
W. Main Street from Deer Creek Road to IL-29			900	3,300	-	4,450
Oak Hill Road from Cumberland Drive to Roanoke Drive			-	-	-	3,000
E. Main Street from Water Street to Oak Street			-	-	-	2,950
E. Main Street from N. Walnut Street to John Street			-	-	-	2,650
E. Main Street from Oak Street to Maple Lane			-	-	-	2,350
E. Main Street from Maple Lane to Maxheimer Road			-	-	-	2,100
Oak Hill Road from Roanoke Drive to Heathrow Drive			-	-	-	2,000
Cardinal Hill Road from Oak Hill Road to Buckhart Road			-	-	-	1,400
State Street from E. Main Street to IL-29			900	3,050	-	1,225
Oak Hill Road from Heathrow Drive to Possum Trot Road			-	-	-	1,050
Camelot Drive from IL-29 to Merlin Drive			-	900	1,400	1,050
Walnut Street from northern municipal boundary to IL-29			175	250	-	1,000
Oak Street from Magnolia Drive to E. Main Street			-	-	-	750
Oak Street from Karen Rose Drive to Magnolia Drive			-	-	-	550

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation, 2007 and the Village of Rochester Comprehensive Plan, 1991

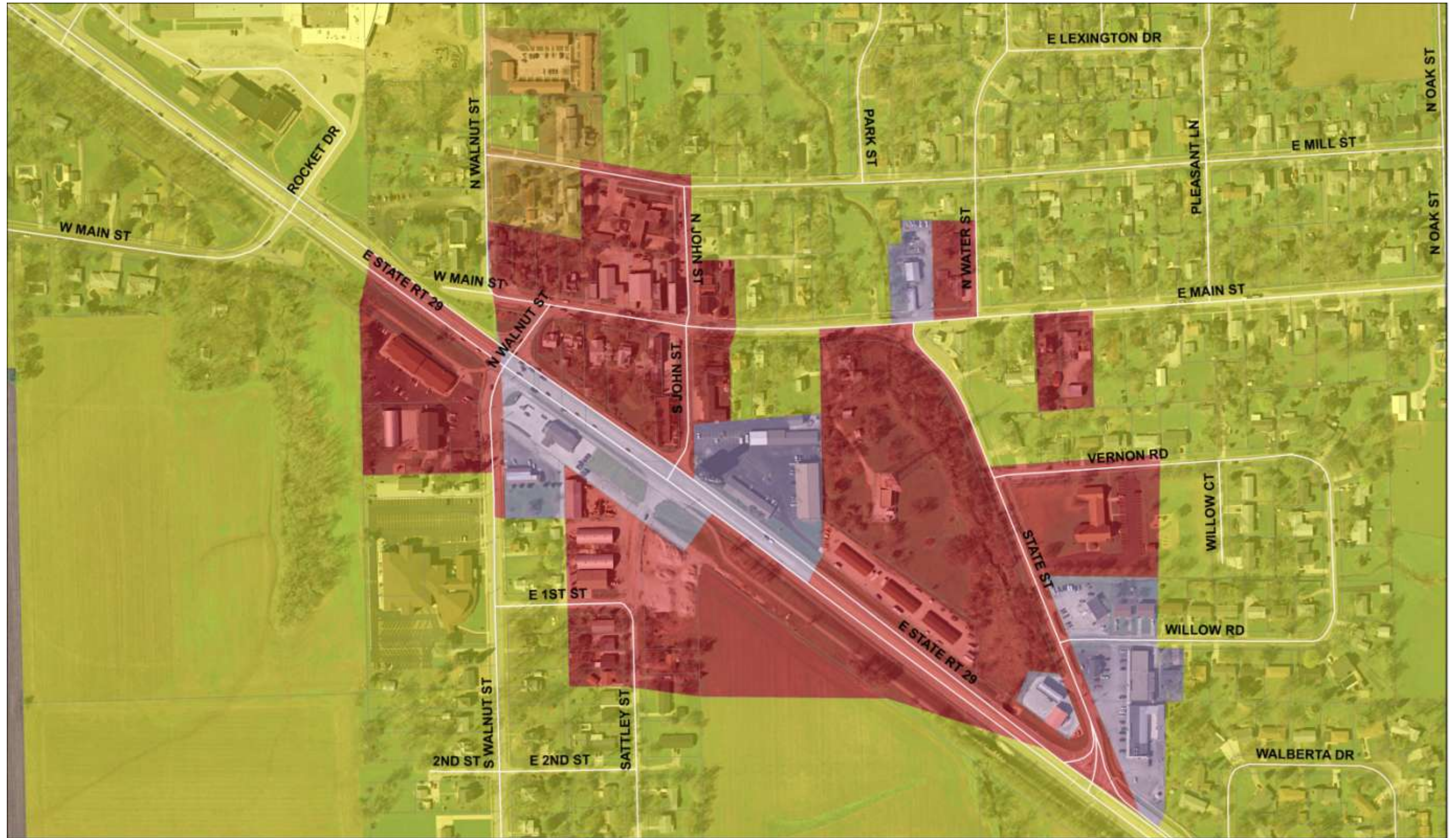


Source: Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, Inc. (CMT), Adapted by University of Illinois Extension, CADS, 2010

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Municipal Boundary | B1 - General Business | R1 - Medium Density Residential | R5 - Multi-Family Residential |
| A1 - Agricultural | B2 - Highway & Service Business | R2 - Duplex Housing Residential | RS - Residential Suburban |



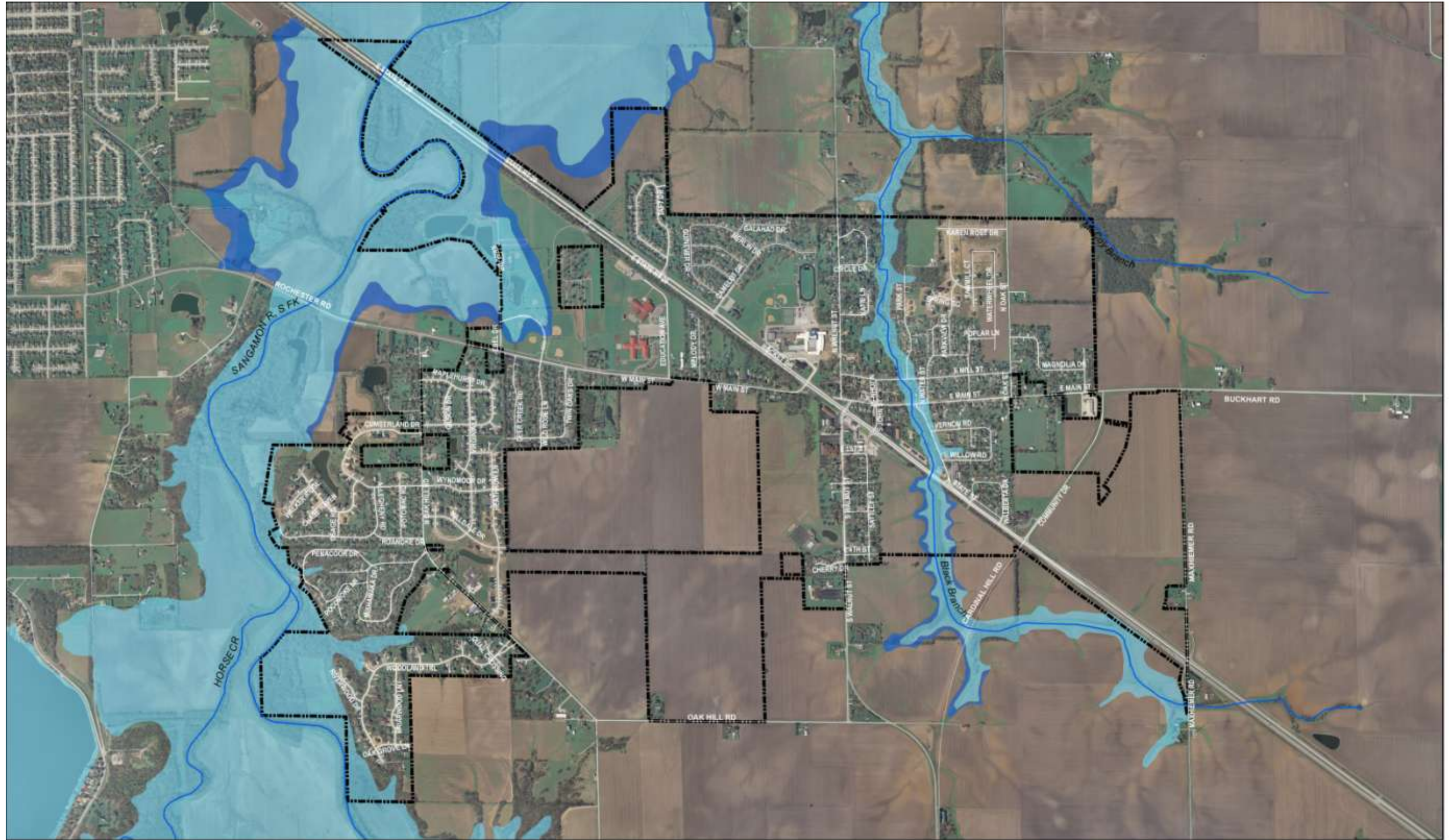
**Exhibit A: Zoning Map
Rochester, Illinois**



Source: Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, Inc. (CMT); Adapted by University of Illinois Extension, CADS, 2010



**Exhibit B: Zoning Map--Downtown Inset
Rochester, Illinois**

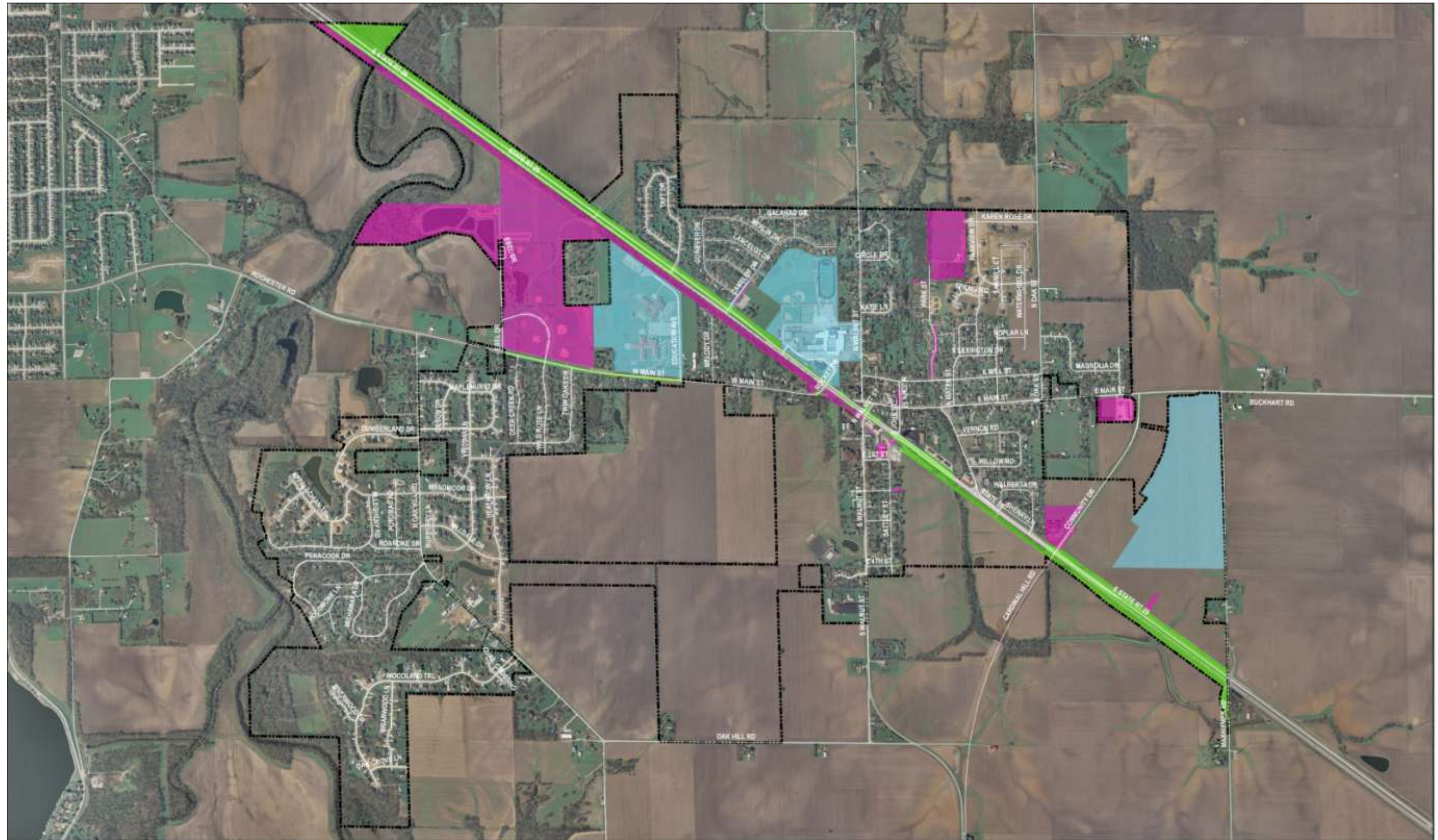


Source: University of Illinois Extension, CADS, 2010

- Hydrology
- 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
- Municipal Boundary
- An area inundated by 100-year flooding, for which base flood elevations have been determined



**Exhibit C: Flood Hazard Map
Rochester, Illinois**

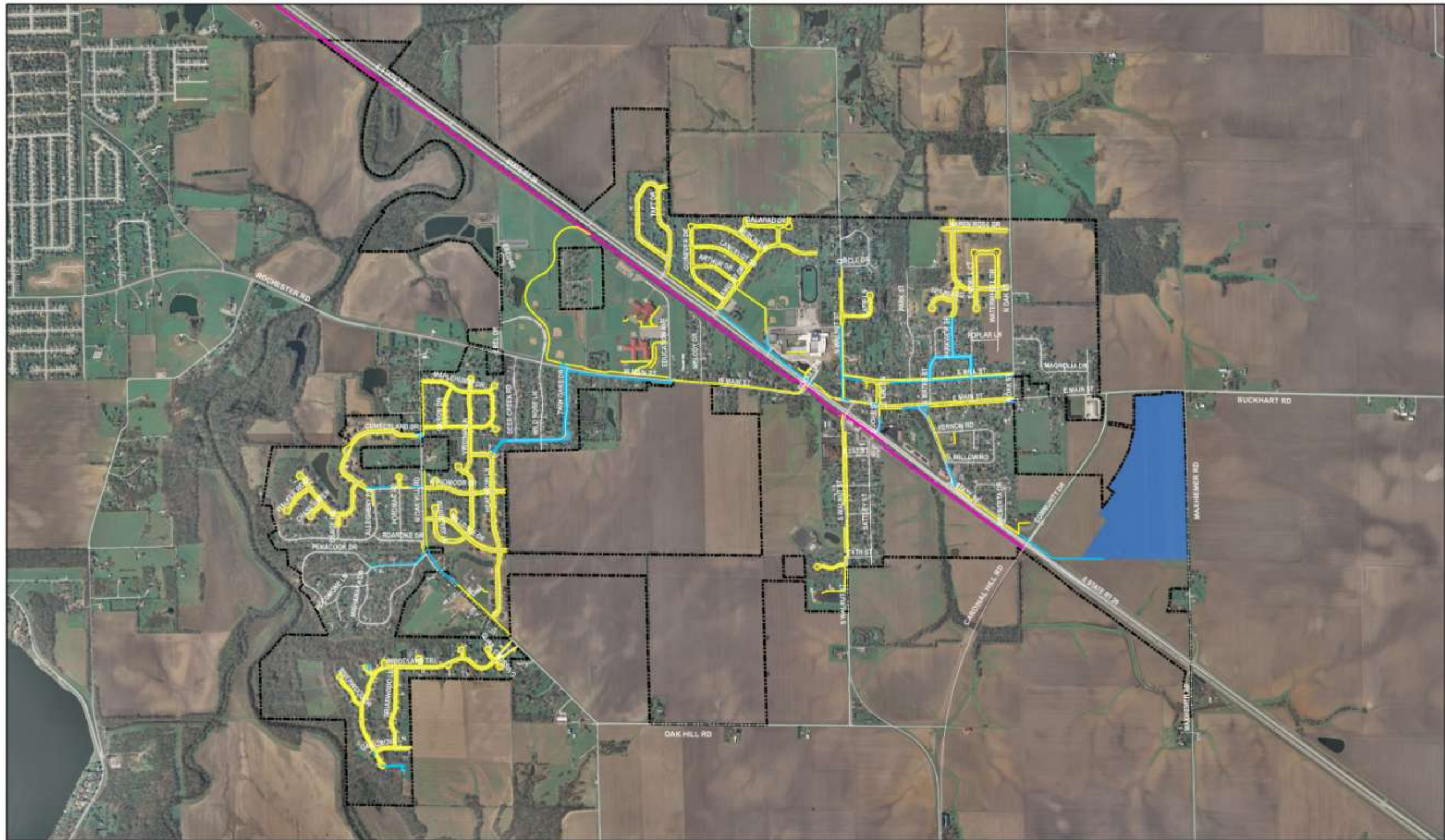


Source: University of Illinois Extension, CADS, 2010

-  Rochester Schools Property
-  Village of Rochester Property
-  Municipal Boundary
-  State of Illinois Property



**Exhibit E: Public Property Map
Rochester, Illinois**

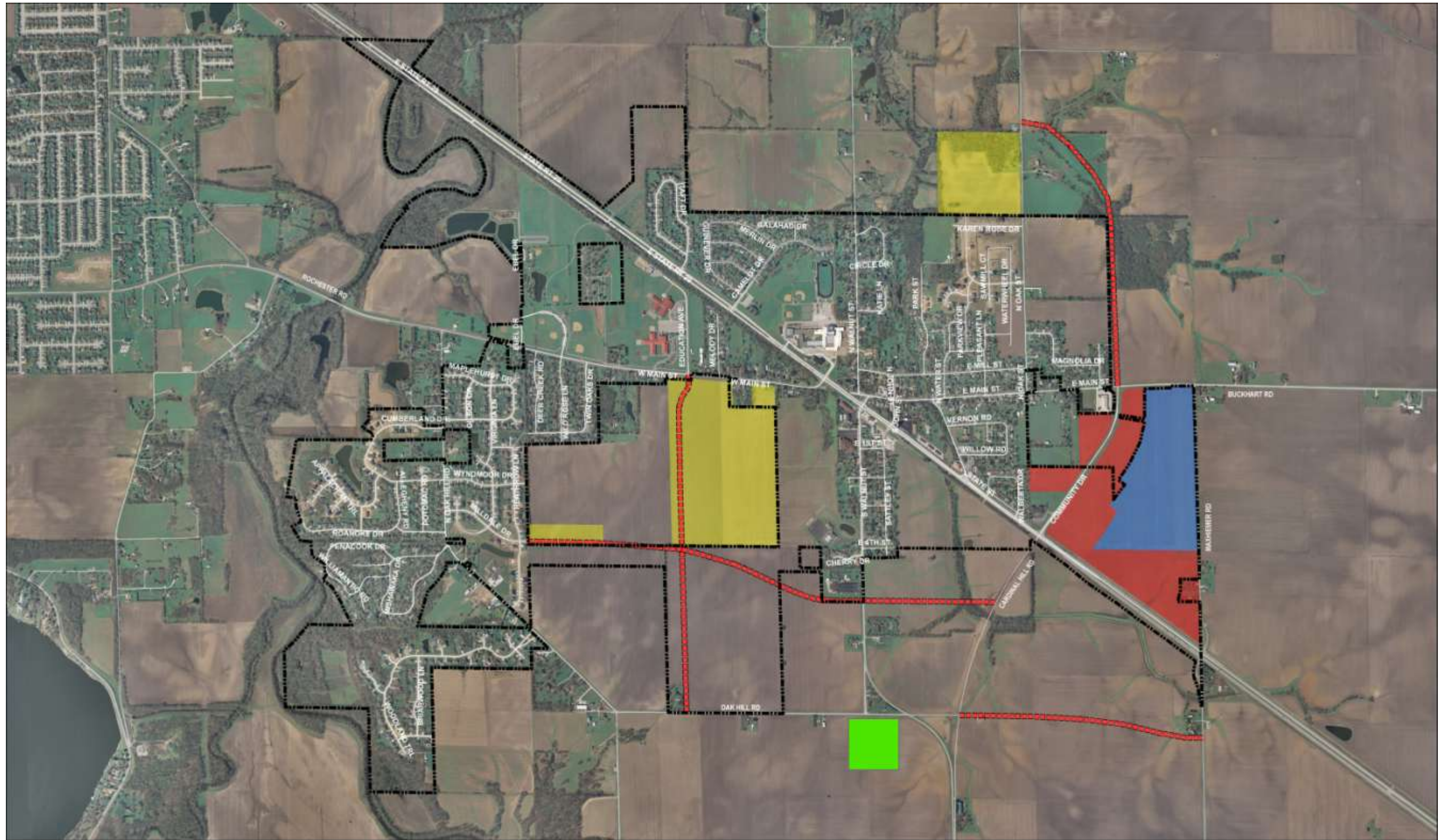


Source: University of Illinois Extension, CADS, 2010

- Existing Sidewalks
- Proposed Sidewalks
- Lost Bridge Trail
- Municipal Boundary
- New Intermediate School

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

N
Exhibit F: Existing and Proposed Sidewalk Network Map
Rochester, Illinois



Undeveloped Subdivisions

Proposed Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial

Municipal Boundary

Future Transportation

Proposed Park Location



**Exhibit G: Future Land Use Map
Rochester, Illinois**

Appendix A

Public Participation Process

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Summary

Prepared by
University of Illinois Extension

March 2009

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

BACKGROUND

Public participation is an essential ingredient in the recipe for successful community planning. In a recent survey of planning commission members increasing public participation was identified as one of the five most important community planning needs. Public meetings, often viewed as the key strategy for involving residents, often fail to attract a representative cross section of the community. This is the squeaky-wheel problem where a few very vocal individuals who are avid meeting goers can exercise inordinate control over public decision-making. Community surveys, in stark contrast to meetings, offer every resident an opportunity to voice an opinion from the comfort of their home. By any measure the participation rate for community residents is always higher in a survey than in public meetings. With this in mind, the Rochester Comprehensive Plan Committee conducted a community-wide survey as a key component of the Rochester comprehensive planning process.

In August 2008 a community survey, designed with input from the Rochester Planning Commission and guidance from University of Illinois Extension, was mailed to all households in Rochester. The survey was also available on the community web site. A total of 1,471 surveys were mailed with 639 surveys returned and included in the analysis, a 43% response rate. University of Illinois Extension entered the survey data and completed the tabulation of the results. The full report includes over fifty pages of tables and seventy-five pages of written comments. The following report summarizes the responses with a focus on the highlights.

“Glad to see that you are polling the residents of Rochester. I believe this community has a lot of untapped resources (i.e. new businesses). And because we are located on a major highway, the possibilities are limitless. However, I don't want to see Rochester become too commercialized and lose its small town atmosphere. I think that expanding our business district can be done with class and bring some economic growth.”

WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY

In most community surveys there is a bias in the response rates for different types of households. The bias can be recognized by comparing the demographics of respondents with other sources of data like those from the US Bureau of the Census. This doesn't invalidate the results any more than an election is invalidated because certain types of people don't vote. The following comparisons are based on 2008 estimates from Claritas a leading provider of demographic data.

Figure 1. Household Characteristics

Characteristic	Survey	2008 Estimate
Home owner	97.1%	90.9%
Households with Children	45.2%	42.2%
Average HH Size	2.71 persons	2.62 persons
Age of Respondent		
Under 25	0.7%	0.7%
25 to 34	11.9%	8.6%
35 to 44	14.1%	22.2%
45 to 54	28.5%	24.7%
55 to 64	20.5%	22.5%
65 to 74	13.1%	12.2%
75+	11.3%	9.28%

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

Figure 1 displays a comparison of household characteristics. Overall results show a very good match between the survey respondents and the 2008 estimates for the Village. The larger proportion of households with children that participated in the survey explains the slightly larger average household size. The most notable age deviation occurred in the 35 to 44 year old cohort where the gap was eight percentage points.

Other notable demographic characteristics include:

Nearly equal proportions of males and females participated in the survey, 48.2% male and 51.8% female.

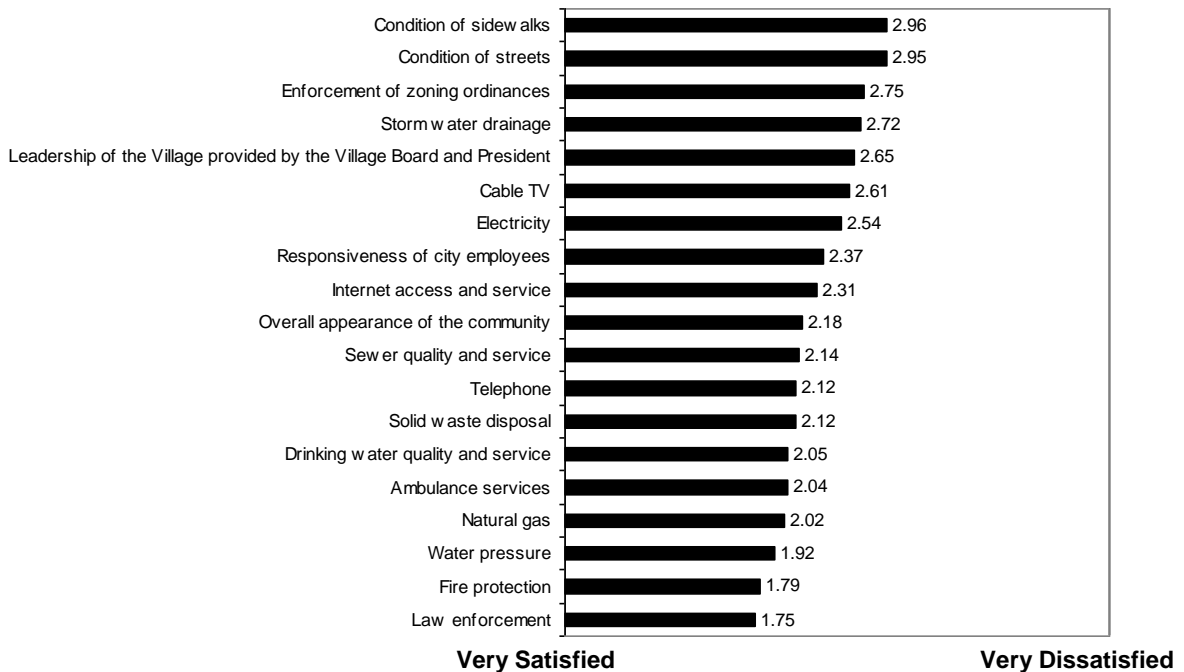
The average respondent has been living in the Village 18.8 years but the range was large with about 25% having lived here less than 5 years and 10% over 39 years.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Several questions addressed resident’s satisfaction with community infrastructure like roads and utility systems as well as essential public services like fire and police protection. These are often the foundation upon which healthy sustainable communities are built. In particular, a feeling of safety and security are essential ingredients for community development and growth.

Overall results from the survey indicate that Rochester residents are satisfied with most community services. The following figure ranks the level of concern by the average score. A score of “1” means everyone rated that issue very satisfied and a score of “5” means everyone is very dissatisfied, a score above 3 means respondents tended to be more dissatisfied than satisfied. Respondents were least satisfied with infrastructure concerns such as streets, sidewalks and drainage, village enforcement of ordinances and village leadership.

Figure 2. Ranking of Community Infrastructure and Services by the Average Score



Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

The Villages surface transportation system, including streets and sidewalks, is the most important infrastructure concern among residents.

There was a moderate level of concern about streets and sidewalks with 39% indicating they were dissatisfied with streets and 36% with sidewalks.

Figure 3. Satisfaction with Streets and Sidewalks

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Indifferent	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Condition of sidewalks	6.4%	37.8%	19.6%	26.3%	9.9%
Condition of streets	6.6%	42.1%	11.9%	28.2%	11.2%

Comments on the streets and sidewalks in Rochester dominated the responses to open-ended questions about improving Village services with numerous comments specifically mentioning problems or improvements that are needed. A summary of the major concerns includes:

- ❖ Streets
 - Repairs and maintenance (potholes, asphalt)
 - More street lights
 - Improve visual appearance – remove trash in ditches, use street sweepers, trip weeds, etc.
- ❖ Sidewalks
 - Increase number of streets with sidewalks
 - Repair cracks and broken segments throughout Rochester

Comments

“Repave a % of village streets on an annual basis.”

“Potholes are never fixed correctly.”

“Repave streets. We pay high taxes due to perceived high property values, but the pavement into our subdivision is in disrepair.”

“All streets should have lights and sidewalks.”

“There has been a barricade up over a hole in front of real estate office for one year! Fill the hole in people!!!! Replace sidewalks in old part of town, they are terrible.”

“Sidewalks are needed along all streets. Example - a sidewalk is needed along Cardinal Hill Road to the Library.”

“The appearance of Rochester would be better if the road and sidewalks were better maintained.”

Storm water drainage was identified as the second most important infrastructure concern by residents, followed by sewer service and drinking water quality.

Storm water drainage is the next most important concern by far, with just over 30% of residents expressing dissatisfaction. In sharp contrast, dissatisfaction scores for the remaining infrastructure concerns (sewer quality and drinking water quality and pressure) were under 10%.

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

Figure 4. Ratings of Sewer, Water and Drainage

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Indifferent	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Storm water drainage	12.8%	44.0%	11.9%	20.8%	10.6%
Sewer quality and service	18.9%	60.6%	10.7%	6.8%	2.9%
Drinking water quality and service	25.1%	58.3%	6.8%	6.5%	3.3%
Water pressure	25.6%	63.0%	5.8%	4.9%	.6%

Although storm water drainage received the highest dissatisfaction score of this group of concerns, residents commented the most on general water issues. Cost and supply concerns were not specifically addressed in the above question which accounts for the change in ranking of water and storm water drainage. The most frequently mentioned concerns about improving these types of Village services were:

- ❖ Water
 - Cost
 - Need to be independent of Springfield
 - Quality
 - Change how irrigation meters are billed
- ❖ Storm water drainage
- ❖ Sewer
 - Cost

Comments

"I do not feel there should have been such an increase in water (44%) all at once."

"Get away from purchasing water from CWLP because our water bills are ridiculous."

"What do we get for \$101 a month for water that a Springfield resident does not get? My friend right down the road uses Rochester schools etc. And pays \$18 a month for the same water. Seems crazy that ours is so high."

"Rochester should develop own water supply."

"We need to partner with Chatham for water. This is a no brainer."

"Water pipes in neighborhoods N of E. Main need updating as water gets tainted by broken pipes too often. Water & sewer rates could be more competitive."

"Drainage in the eastern sections of Rochester is abysmal-need to work toward improved drainage in old Rochester."

"Something needs to be done about the storm drainage by Eastgate Meadows. Even during some light rains the storm sewers back up into Eastgate Meadows' basements and it can take weeks for the ditches to drain which provides breeding grounds for mosquitoes."

"There is not adequate storm drainage in the alley in the 200 block of Mill St. After each rainfall, the alley drains into my garage and floods it."

Rochester residents are cautious and unsure about paying higher taxes for community improvement projects.

In a separate question that asked whether the respondent would be willing to pay higher taxes or fees to improve community services and facilities, only two improvements earned a narrow-margin majority 'Yes' response: "To improve streets and roads" and "To fix drainage problems".

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

The remaining improvements were voted down with over 40% saying 'No' and over 25% wanting more information before they make a decision. Nearly 60% of residents are opposed to raising taxes to expand services at the library.

"I would like road, drainage & sidewalks corrected, but I guess I'm satisfied as I can't afford to pay more to have them done. ..."

Figure 5. Willingness to Pay for Community Improvement

	Yes	No	Need more information
To improve streets and roads	38.1%	32.1%	29.8%
To fix drainage problems	34.9%	34.7%	30.4%
To support economic development	30.2%	41.0%	28.9%
To make improvements to the parks	27.1%	45.2%	27.7%
To upgrade law enforcement system	25.0%	46.2%	28.8%
To expand services at the library	15.6%	58.7%	25.7%

Respondents provided mixed feedback on Village services and leadership.

Just over 20% expressed dissatisfaction with the enforcement of zoning ordinances and leadership provided by Village elected officials. It is a possibility that the concern about zoning ordinances may have included residents' frustration with several issues other than zoning. In fact, a number of residents' complaints included burning, animal control, maintenance of private property, and other local issues that are controlled by nuisance ordinances. Local elected officials are often an easy target for criticism and the results highlight this observation. On the other hand, residents appeared to favor two critical public safety services, fire protection and law enforcement services, which had dissatisfaction ratings of under 5%.

Figure 6. Satisfaction with Village Services and Leadership

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Indifferent	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Enforcement of zoning ordinances	8.6%	38.6%	29.3%	16.7%	6.8%
Leadership of the Village provided by the Village Board and President	9.6%	42.2%	28.8%	12.5%	6.9%
Responsiveness of city employees	16.3%	49.0%	20.8%	9.0%	4.9%
Overall appearance of the community	18.1%	58.3%	12.2%	10.3%	1.0%
Solid waste disposal	18.2%	61.0%	13.6%	5.3%	2.0%
Ambulance services	30.6%	43.5%	18.2%	6.8%	.9%
Fire protection	36.9%	51.9%	7.6%	2.4%	1.3%
Law enforcement	40.6%	49.0%	5.9%	3.5%	1.0%

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

The most frequently mentioned concerns about improving these types of Village services were:

- ❖ Community pickup days
 - Branch and limb
 - Junk day
 - Large item pickup
- ❖ Better snow removal
- ❖ Enforcement of Village nuisance ordinances
 - Burning
 - Parking
 - Home maintenance
 - Animal control
- ❖ Garbage
 - Limit to one waste hauler for entire village
- ❖ Fire Department personnel concerns
- ❖ Prioritize police services

Ambulance service

Comments

"Annual clean-up day like we used to have."

"Annual junk pick up."

"Better snow removal on city streets."

"Improve snow removal - terrible last year."

"Enforce ordinances about property maintenance."

"Enforcement of village junk ordinances in yards."

"Enforcement of the burning ordinance. Too much burning at night & not following rules on what is burnt."

"Get around and let people know who is who in Village Offices."

"If you call the Village; I think you should get a call back."

"Improve public works response to village commitments."

"Rather than ignore growth the village board needs to demonstrate vision and leadership for the future."

"Too many waste haulers visit my street. Why not divide village up by zone and assign one hauler by zone. Think of the fuel \$ that would be saved!"

"Too many garbage trucks on the streets."

"EMT service is very good and we have a great deal of confidence in them but I think ambulance service here in Rochester would be better-minutes can mean lives in an emergency."

There are differences in the satisfaction with franchised utility services.

Franchise utility services are provided by contract with businesses that the Village has little control over. There are often a limited number of businesses providing that service and often there is only one provider. Respondents were most dissatisfied with electrical service, 26% said they were dissatisfied with the current service. Responses to open-ended questions cited multiple, lengthy outages as the biggest reason for dissatisfaction. Cable service and internet

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

access and service followed in dissatisfaction rankings (24% and 13%, respectively) with the most common complaint focusing on the lack of options for consumers rather than specific deficiencies in service. Telephone and natural gas service received very high ratings with fewer than 6% saying they were dissatisfied.

Figure 7. Satisfaction with Franchise Utility Services

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Indifferent	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Cable TV	10.9%	46.6%	18.6%	18.3%	5.7%
Electricity	13.7%	51.4%	9.4%	18.1%	7.5%
Internet access and service	13.6%	57.1%	16.4%	10.3%	2.6%
Telephone	15.2%	63.4%	15.8%	5.1%	.5%
Natural gas	21.2%	62.9%	9.8%	4.8%	1.3%

Comments

"A better electricity infrastructure so it doesn't go out all the time."

"A more cost efficient electricity company whose service doesn't go out at the slightest storm."

"Ameren CILCO power lacks dependability."

"Ameren electricity service is terrible, needs a loop or should be studied too many power outages."

"Ameren Loop Feed to reduce outages of electric or a feed from CWLP."

"Ameren must be held accountable for providing reliable service."

"Please help us in Oak Hills subdivision. We lose power very frequently. We are beginning to incur significant property damage and loss due to power outages. Our sump pump, refrigerator, freezer, etc. Cannot run without power. Our furnaces and air conditioners cannot take much more. We've lost a computer. Insurance companies do not cover flooded basements due to power outages. We need help, Ameren is doing nothing."

"I can see the lower Springfield CWLP power plant but can't get CWLP....you sneeze and the power goes off."

"Need competition with Comcast - especially internet."

Community Facilities Key Points:

- ❖ Sidewalks, streets, storm water drainage and the cost of water are important infrastructure concerns, but residents do not overwhelmingly support raising taxes to improve or provide additional community services.
- ❖ Zoning ordinances and nuisance ordinances are important issues to residents along with increased Village leadership accountability and availability.
- ❖ Residents are dissatisfied with the quality of electrical service and the limited options for cable television and internet.

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

PARKS AND RECREATION

Residents frequent Rochester Public Park more than any other recreational area in Rochester.

Nearly 93% of respondents indicated that they visited Rochester Public Park at least once in the previous year, followed by the Lost Bridge Trail with 81%. Not nearly as many residents utilized the school facilities for recreation purposes outside of school sponsored activities, with only 29% using the facilities over 10 times.

Figure 8. Frequency of Visits to Rochester Parks

	Frequent (more than 20 visits)	Occasional (20 to 10 visits)	Infrequent (fewer than 10 visits)	Never
Rochester Public Park	34.8%	26.3%	31.8%	7.1%
Public school facilities (outside of school sponsored activities)	14.0%	15.7%	41.3%	28.9%
Lost Bridge Trail	35.9%	22.2%	23.3%	18.6%

A low proportion of respondents were satisfied with available recreation programs for adults (28%) and youth (54%), compared to the remaining facilities and programs which earned over a 70% satisfaction rating. These low satisfaction rates may be attributed to the high percentage (over 25%) respondents that selected 'Don't know' for their answer to their satisfaction with youth and recreational programs.

Figure 9. Satisfaction with Parks and Recreation Facilities and Programs

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Indifferent	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
Recreational programs for adults	7.2%	20.6%	25.4%	9.6%	2.2%	35.0%
Recreation programs for youth	18.5%	35.4%	13.5%	5.6%	.5%	26.6%
Park maintenance	22.5%	53.7%	5.7%	8.7%	1.1%	8.2%
Recreational facilities at parks	23.2%	52.8%	9.6%	4.3%	1.3%	8.8%
Personal safety when at a park	23.3%	57.8%	6.9%	2.2%	.0%	9.7%

Survey respondents jumped at the chance to provide ideas for improving parks, facilities and other recreation programs. Even though over 70% of respondents indicated they were satisfied with park maintenance, park recreational facilities and their personal safety when at the park, respondents provided a number of suggestions on how to improve these topics in the open-ended comments. The following list is a detailed breakdown of their responses in order of those most frequently mentioned.

Rochester Comprehensive Plan Community Survey Results

1. Bike trail improvements
 - a. More water fountains and restrooms along trail
 - b. Trail maintenance (remove large brush, fix holes in pavement)
 - c. Add new and expand existing bike trails
 - d. Improve rest areas (more benches, trash cans)
2. Add a community pool
3. Park restrooms
 - a. Better and cleaner facilities (stocked with supplies)
 - b. Open restrooms in the early morning and evening for walkers and bikers
 - c. Keep restrooms open longer in the season
 - d. Find ways to curb vandalism
 - e. Locate restrooms near activity areas (playgrounds, sports fields)
4. Playgrounds
 - a. Maintenance (remove weeds, add mulch, regular mowing)
 - b. Clean and repair equipment
 - c. Add another playground area
 - d. Add more playground equipment - especially some for young children
5. General park maintenance
 - a. Weeding and landscaping throughout
 - b. Routine and timely trash collection
 - c. Regular mowing and trimming
 - d. Remove geese droppings
6. Widen scope of park activities
 - a. Additional programs to target adults, older teens and senior citizens
 - b. Adult leagues (basketball, volleyball, softball)
 - c. More festivals and community events
 - d. Offer programs and classes other than soccer, football and baseball
 - i. Arts/music, technology classes, cultural programs
 - ii. Dance, fitness classes, recreational biking clubs, open gyms at the high school
7. Sports programs
 - a. Additional athletic fields (baseball, soccer, tennis, volleyball)
 - b. Lighted fields and courts
 - c. Increased field maintenance (patched, mowed, trimmed, aerated)
 - d. Open concession stand during activities
8. More parking areas
9. Pond
 - a. Clean pond and remove pile of dredged material
 - b. Add benches for resting and fishing
 - c. Wheelchair accessible fishing area
10. Create a Park District and hire someone to coordinate park activities and sports programs
11. Water fountains
 - a. Need more located throughout the park
 - b. Dog-friendly watering station
12. Suggested park improvements
 - a. Additional covered picnic shelters/rest areas
 - b. Another park in town
 - c. Dog park
 - d. Indoor recreation center/community center
 - e. Specialty areas (golf practice area, skateboard park, horseshoe pitching, Frisbee golf)
 - f. Wildlife/nature areas
13. Public awareness
 - a. Advertise park programs and activities
 - b. Promote suggested walking and biking areas
 - c. Increase safety through signage, emergency call stations, police patrols

Comments

"Please keep up maintenance on the trail; cracks, litter and tree debris, trimming shrubs and trees, plowing in winter."

"Community pool would be great, but you would put the elks club out of business."

"It would be nice if the police could keep the punks from vandalizing the bathrooms at the park so they wouldn't have to be locked all the time."

"Having restrooms open in the morning in the park for runners and bikers."

"I took my grandchildren to the playground area in the park. It had weeds all over some fairly tall. In fact at the sign I stopped and pulled some of them. I had never seen it this bad."

"I don't know who is responsible for maintaining the park playground, but it is full of weeds and debris. Could this be a summer job for youth of the community to work at the park & maintain the grounds?"

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"There are a lot of youth programs, but I know about nothing for adults. (basketball, volleyball, softball leagues?)"

"Concession stand needs to be used to provide food and drinks at ballgames. They are missing out on good revenue."

"Parking is a problem at the park; may be attributed to overbooking/scheduling (soccer practices, football practices)"

"Movies in the Park are great! My kids love them. It's why I love this town--this is a great way to spend time with the family with some small town fun. I like how the community groups also are invited to support. I hope these are around for a long time. I know a lot of people who regularly attend and they feel the same way. Alderman Greer is doing a great job."

"More water fountains, especially on the trail."

"Non-leash dog park."

"Possibly put an electronic message board along the edge of the park with coming events - sometimes I don't know what is going on."

"Make people aware of approved walking, routes besides Lost Bridge Trail, park, i.e. High school track, or create another walking track - open air."

"We need either a park district or a recreational program director."

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"The Village Board and the Zoning Committee have continued to allow new subdivisions, but have not allowed new business to develop. Therefore, Rochester does not have an adequate sales tax base of income to use for funding the village. Instead Rochester continues to rely on property taxes to fund its village. There should be a balance between the two sources of income. You can't continue to build new subdivisions and have the number of kids in the schools and people using the services of Rochester and continually rely on property taxes to fund these things. A sales tax base of income is needed to support the Village."

Economic development is often a major challenge for small bedroom communities near larger cities. Businesses in these communities have small local markets and must compete with large discount merchandise stores a short drive away. Establishing priorities can be very difficult under these circumstances.

Respondents to the survey clearly understand that local small businesses need local support or they will not survive, as nearly 70% indicated that this should be the highest priority. Further economic development in Rochester should strike a balance between promoting new businesses and maintaining the small town feel the people of the Village crave. Attracting new service and retail businesses and providing incentives to encourage business development gained the majority of the respondents support with over 50% of respondents indicating these developments as high priorities. Increased residential development, however, was frowned upon by the majority of the residents with 54% listing it as a low or very low priority.

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Figure 10. Economic Development Priorities

	Very high or high priority	Medium priority	Low or very low priority
Supporting and expanding existing businesses	68.8%	20.4%	8.0%
Attracting new retail businesses	67.8%	16.7%	12.8%
Attracting new service businesses	56.5%	24.8%	14.8%
Providing incentives to encourage business development	53.2%	21.5%	21.6%
Promoting new residential development	17.6%	25.2%	54.0%

Comments

"Support the business that we have - keep the small town feel - don't allow over development of the area."

"Supporting community business growth will help local teen employment opportunities & elders on fixed incomes."

"Springfield is easy to get to. I think it is more important to support existing businesses."

"I don't think it's government's job to sustain/encourage businesses--waste of tax dollars in my opinion."

"I like the small town feel & would rather not have more businesses."

"I don't see Rochester as a business center. I'm concerned development will detract from residential aspects."

"Rochester is too close to Springfield to support new businesses."

"None! (except maybe an ice cream shop) The charm of Rochester is the small town feel. Keep it that way, and don't over run us with businesses. Apply an ordinance for uniform design for new development."

"I would support any business that would provide significant tax revenue so that we can reduce our ridiculously high residential property taxes."

"Anything to increase the tax base."

Many ideas for new or improved retail businesses were suggested:

Survey participants were invited to list their top three suggestions for new businesses they would like to see located in Rochester, particularly those that they would be likely to support. This was one of the most commented on questions in the survey as we received and coded over 950 comments. Food service establishments received the most mention, followed by a pharmacy or drug store and a new or improved grocery store. The bulk of the remaining responses fell into these general categories:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restaurants/food service (fast food, coffee shops, family dining, pizza, bar & grill) 2. Pharmacy/drug store 3. Grocery 4. Ice cream parlor 5. Gas station 6. Video store 7. Convenience store | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Car wash 9. Dry cleaners 10. Fitness center 11. Medical center 12. Automotive repair 13. Gift shops 14. Bowling alley 15. Public / community pool 16. Clothing store |
|---|---|

Comments

- "More eating establishments. We need more tax revenue so the people are not taxed all of the time."*
- "More choices in restaurants, gas stations, grocery/retail, and recreational options."*
- "Eating establishments, office complex, gas station & convenience store."*
- "Full service pharmacy - like Walgreens, CVS, Osco's, Etc."*
- "Additional grocery store with a larger choice of products and competitive pricing."*
- "Ice Cream/Dessert Oriented Restaurants (i.e. Dairy Queen, Baskin Robbins, Cold Stone Creamery, etc.) And a bar & grill type of restaurant."*
- "Dairy Queen - can't believe it was denied."*
- "An upscale mall, that has a lot of character to the building and one that would incorporate a restaurant type service, dry cleaners, convenience store, a nice video rental store."*
- "Entertainment type businesses for youth and family such as bowling, ping-pong, basketball, baseball batting cages, etc."*
- "Build a modern strip mall with parking at the end of town to offer a variety of services and restaurants."*
- "We would like to give local business more support, but their prices must compare to Springfield."*

HOUSING

Housing fulfills many needs in a community. Shelter is fundamental to human health and safety. It is also a reflection of the economy and history of a place. Dilapidated rundown housing presents not only a bad image for the community but may represent a real threat to resident's health and welfare. Well-maintained older homes proudly display the community's history while new housing is a sign of growth and prosperity. Because Rochester is an established bedroom community housing is one of the Villages most important assets. Although there were not any flashpoint housing issues there is concern about housing affordability for both rental and owned homes. There is also moderate concern about housing options for the elderly. Residents are very satisfied with the appearance of housing.

Figure 11. Housing

	Serious or moderate problem	Slight or not a problem	Don't know
Availability of affordable housing for purchase	27.1%	58.2%	14.7%
Quality of affordable housing for purchase	25.2%	60.8%	14.1%
Availability of affordable rental housing	24.5%	28.3%	47.2%
Quality of affordable rental housing	21.5%	30.7%	47.8%
Availability of assisted living and long term care	19.5%	39.3%	41.2%
Availability of elderly public housing	18.9%	37.9%	43.3%
Quality of low income housing	15.9%	30.9%	53.3%
Availability of low income housing	15.7%	32.0%	52.3%
Quality of elderly public housing	12.2%	44.9%	42.9%
Appearance of housing in your neighborhood	11.2%	88.2%	.6%
Overall appearance of housing in Rochester	9.7%	88.6%	1.8%

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1. No more residential development (growing beyond means, strain on services)
2. Enforcement of residential nuisance ordinances
 - a. Home repairs/maintenance
 - b. Accumulation of "junk" in yards
 - c. Parking (trailers, wrong way, crowding street, etc.)
 - d. Animal control (dogs running loose, barking, waste pickup)
3. Do not want any more rental apartments
4. Lack of affordable housing for middle class & retirees
5. High property taxes
6. More rental apartments
7. Poorly organized development and city planning
8. Sidewalks
 - a. Need sidewalks in all residential areas
 - b. Connect sidewalks to businesses to promote walking and bike riding
9. Do not want any low income housing
10. High cost of water
11. Springfield area residents attending Rochester School District need to pay taxes to Rochester
12. Need infrastructure improvements before pursuing new development
 - a. Sewer, water mains, streets
13. Drainage
14. Too much tax money going to school and not any other service
15. Need a long term / assisted living facility
16. Do not want a long term / assisted living facility
17. Water quality

Comments

"ENOUGH new subdivisions!"

"Building too many subdivisions too fast putting pressure on school district. We don't want to live in Chatham and Rochester is becoming Chatham."

"Rochester has way too much residential development compared to business development. There needs to be a better balance."

"Cars parked in streets & old vehicles piled in front of homes Infrastructure - current roads, sidewalks, water & sewer needs brought up to date - don't add more homes & businesses if we can't maintain what we have."

"Does Rochester give fines to people who don't fix up or clean up their property?"

"Yes, but I don't believe they are things that Government can solve. Lots of folks need to cut their grass, pull weeds (look at the northeast corner of 1st and Walnut. Looks like a wildlife preserve.) You can't regulate "Clampet-ness"."

"Loose animals, cats & dogs, day & night."

"Affordable housing for older residents."

"Affordable housing for younger growing families."

"Affordable is really not an option if you are looking at new construction, factoring in water rates and taxes."

"Affordable starter family homes (70,000 - 90,000) seem almost nonexistent."

"Taxes are too high for people with low to medium income."

"Most of us can't afford to live here."

"Don't want apartments only duplexes with high costs - no low rent housing."

"Rental property in my neighborhood isn't taken care of and is a nuisance."

"Rentals seem to remain vacant because of outrageous rent (600-800 per month)."

"Schools are becoming as large as Springfield - need moratorium on new housing."

"Lower the cost of everything. Why do people who send their kids to our schools pay less for everything and the people who live in the village pay so much more? You should charge them more to send their kids to school in Rochester and lower the cost for the individuals/families that live in the village."

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“Residents that use Rochester schools need to pay taxes to Rochester.”

“Making sure housing developments have sidewalks and that sidewalks/developments are connected to businesses. Help promote walking as an option versus dependence on vehicles for all errands and activities.”

Figure 12. Satisfaction with Neighborhood Characteristics

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Indifferent	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Drainage	22.6%	37.0%	7.5%	23.0%	9.9%
Ease of walking	44.8%	32.4%	3.1%	13.4%	6.3%
Municipal services	32.4%	49.7%	8.7%	7.2%	2.0%
Overall appearance of your neighborhood	37.0%	46.4%	4.6%	10.3%	1.8%
Access to parks	38.2%	48.5%	6.2%	5.7%	1.3%
Ease of automobile travel	40.7%	46.2%	3.8%	7.7%	1.6%
Trash collection	36.1%	52.6%	6.1%	4.4%	.8%
Safety from crime	48.0%	45.5%	3.1%	2.9%	.5%

COMMUNITY ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Several questions addressed the community attitudes and values. Learning why people originally located in Rochester and whether those reasons have changed over time provides insight into what will motivate future residents to move out of the area and what needs to be done to retain current residents.

Low crime rate is the most important reason for living in Rochester.

Rochester’s low crime rate was cited as the most important reason for living in the Village with 95% rating it as an important or very important factor. This high rating is mirrored by the residents’ high satisfaction with the law enforcement services (see Figure 2). The quality of schools was listed as the next most important reason (88% important/very important) followed by the rural, uncongested nature of the area (85%). On the other end of the spectrum, very few people (under 20%) indicated life-long residency in the Village as an important reason for living in Rochester.

Figure 13. Reasons for Living in Rochester

	Very important	Important	Somewhat or not important
Low crime rate	65.4%	29.9%	4.6%
Quality of schools	67.9%	19.7%	12.4%
Uncongested rural area	49.8%	35.5%	14.7%
Reasonable cost of living	18.8%	46.3%	34.9%
Lower taxes	27.3%	31.3%	41.5%
Recreational opportunities	18.5%	32.3%	49.2%
Near employment	19.7%	34.2%	46.1%
Availability of housing	15.2%	38.2%	46.7%
To be near family	25.1%	19.6%	55.3%
I have lived here all my life	10.5%	8.8%	80.6%

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Residents enjoy the small town atmosphere, quality schools and sense of community found in Rochester.

In an open-ended question, residents were asked to list up to three things they liked about Rochester. This question received the largest response of any question in the survey with over 1,000 comments. The small town atmosphere and corresponding values of small town living (sense of community, quiet, low crime rate, friendly people, family values) made up the bulk of the comments. The most frequently mentioned responses were:

1. Small town atmosphere/feeling
2. Schools
3. Sense of community
4. Park and park activities (Sparks in the Park, jumbo movies)
5. Quiet
6. Proximity to Springfield
7. Low crime rate
8. Lost Bridge Trail
9. Nice/friendly people
10. Safety
11. Family values
12. Rural town/rural feel
13. Library
14. Neighborhoods
15. Police department
16. Churches

Comments

"Small town, people friendly atmosphere. Excellent schools. Low crime, no congestion."

"Small community - don't want it to become too big like Chatham."

"Small community atmosphere. The need to restrict additional residential development."

"Schools-maintain high quality education from K-12."

"Quality of schools and the like-minded families that reside around us."

"Quality of living (housing & schools)."

"Small community with very low crime and caring neighbors."

"There is a real sense of community, i.e. Sparks in the Park and movies."

"Sparks in the park & movie night - functions like these are great!"

"We like that it is a bedroom community and yet within driving distance of all that Springfield has to offer."

"Safe feeling you get residing in Rochester."

"Like low crime rate, small town atmosphere, library, good schools, and churches, good neighbors."

"I like that Rochester is a quiet family oriented community built around its great schools, parks and trails."

"Character and feel of a small town - don't get too big like Chatham."

The high cost of living expenses in Rochester (including taxes, water, and sewer costs) worry residents.

When asked if respondents' reasons for originally locating in Rochester have changed, 25% of those who answered the question said 'Yes'. The majority of these residents feel as though the high cost of living is the biggest cause for concern in maintaining residence in Rochester, particularly for those approaching retirement age or those living on a fixed income. Although the quality of schools is an important factor in promoting community growth, residents are quick to note that the school system has a limited benefit

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to those who no longer have children in school. In fact, continued increases in enrollment amplify the need for school and community infrastructure improvements resulting in additional stress on the current Village infrastructure, all of which inevitably raises taxes for the residents.

- ❖ High cost of living
 - Taxes
 - Cost of Water
 - Cost of Sewer
- ❖ No longer have children in school
- ❖ School system
 - Overcrowded
 - Too much community focus on the school system and not the rest of the village
- ❖ Retired
- ❖ Too much traffic

Comments

"If property taxes, water & sewer rates and Ameren rates continue to rise, I'm not sure I'll be able to retire and live here in five years."

"No longer a reasonable cost of living in Rochester area."

"High cost of sewer & water. Taxes keep getting higher."

"The property taxes are beginning to become burdensome. Its beginning to exceed the quality of life it offers."

"Property taxes too high - utilities are very high - always adding new additions to school (taxes)."

"Property taxes needed to support the schools are too dependent on residential property."

"Rochester has changed from a small family community to a "place" with no cohesiveness where most people move to enroll their kids in the school."

"We no longer have children at home. School district is why we moved here."

"Children are grown and schools are no longer important."

"Rochester has nothing to keep people in the community after their children are out of school."

"There are beginning to be many seniors who are having difficulty economically, many who have lived here most of their lives. You never seem to consider that many of us are on fixed incomes, and bills escalating by up to 40% on utilities, higher real estate taxes and a poor economy are taking a real bite out of our disposable income. It costs too much to live here now."

Although residents feel their utility costs and taxes are too high for the services they receive they would still recommend Rochester as a good place to live.

Over 80% of residents agreed that "Utility rates are too high for the services I receive" and "Property taxes are too high for the services I receive". The concept of high taxes is a reoccurring theme throughout all of the survey responses. However, it is interesting to note that even with this negative opinion, 83% of residents would recommend living in Rochester to a friend. In contrast, just over 50% indicated they were happy with the way things are currently occurring in Rochester, signifying room for improvement.

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Figure 14. Community Attitudes

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Utility rates are too high for the services I receive	52.1%	34.8%	9.7%	.3%	3.1%
Property taxes are too high for the services I receive	46.9%	34.4%	14.3%	1.0%	3.4%
If I had a friend looking for a place to buy a house I would recommend Rochester	35.4%	47.9%	7.2%	2.6%	6.9%
More should be done by local officials to create jobs and new business development	32.7%	35.8%	14.5%	6.8%	10.1%
Expansion of the schools is good for the Village	29.6%	40.6%	17.1%	7.2%	5.6%
The future of Rochester looks bright	11.3%	64.2%	14.4%	2.6%	7.4%
The Village should provide financial incentives to encourage new business development	28.4%	33.2%	20.3%	10.1%	8.1%
I am concerned about traffic safety at the school	16.2%	26.7%	26.4%	5.3%	25.4%
I am satisfied with things as they are	5.2%	49.3%	35.8%	7.5%	2.2%

In a separate question, respondents were asked to list what they thought Rochester's most pressing problems were. The responses mirrored the results already seen in the survey, such as cost of living, schools, infrastructure, development, etc. A summary of the major concerns includes:

1. Cost of water
2. Lack of local businesses
3. High taxes
4. Schools
 - a. Overcrowding
 - b. Strain on community (Rochester students coming from Springfield)
 - c. Secure state money promised from (former) Governor Blagojevich
5. Roads
 - a. Poor condition
 - b. Create new roads and extend current roads to reduce congestion
 - c. Make safer (lights, snow removal, etc.)
6. Electricity
 - a. Outages
7. Cost of sewer
8. Responsible development
 - a. Improve infrastructure before approving any more development
 - b. More commercial development
 - c. Limit residential development
9. Strain of community growth on existing services
 - a. Stratified community demographics
 - b. Lack of cohesiveness
10. Infrastructure improvements
11. Storm water drainage
12. Village accountability
 - a. Development, leadership, planning
13. Traffic congestion/flow
 - a. Road improvements/congestion on Main
14. Housing

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- a. Too much (need to manage residential growth)
- b. Lack of affordable

Comments

"A vision statement of Rochester's future from Village leadership. The perception is that developers set the direction and the board follows."

"Village government accountability."

"Inclusion of the new residents. I'd like to participate in the planning for the future of Rochester."

"Planning and notification, long term, to the community. The city changes planned subdivisions without concern for previously developed subdivisions."

"Utility cost and service. Electric and water rates are high. Power outages are too frequent."

"Ability to get power back on after an outage."

"Affordable water and a long term solution to water/sewer service."

"Dependence on Springfield for water."

"Business development so I can give business to locals instead of driving in to Springfield."

"Controlling development to maintain a cohesive downtown area and to make sure the school system can keep up with the growth of the town."

"Maintenance of our existing infrastructure is an urgent problem including streets and sidewalks."

"Make house and yard appearance a priority - don't let people trash the neighborhood."

"Drainage is a major problem in our neighborhood. Ditches have been filled in to park cars."

"When it rains hard & long, the creek floods everything. We need better drainage, the creek needs dug out deeper and a little wider."

"Too rapid expansion of residential areas and subsequent tax increases."

"High property taxes with no industry to offset burden."

"Cycle of more subdivisions requiring more schools attracting more residents. Too much building for no good reason."

"Do not burden the community with school district issues."

"I don't feel that we have urgent problems. I do, however, wonder what the village has to offer to families who live here who don't have kids."