

Greater Byron Area Comprehensive Plan



Adopted August 25, 2008

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HOUSEAL
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ASSOCIATES

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Introduction

This document presents the Comprehensive Plan for the Greater Byron Area. The Comprehensive Plan is the official policy guide for future growth and development. It considers not only the immediate needs and concerns of the community, but also projects improvements and development 10 to 15 years in the future. The Plan is "comprehensive" in both scope and coverage. It addresses the use of land and buildings, the movement of traffic and pedestrians, and the provision of parks, schools, and other public facilities. It also addresses residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, industrial districts, public and institutional lands, and public rights-of-way.

Pursuant to the Illinois Municipal Code, the City Council of the City of Byron has implemented this Comprehensive Plan into its Development Control Ordinance (Title 16) and Zoning Ordinance (Title 17). As such, compliance with the Comprehensive Plan shall be considered as a factor in making decisions regarding zoning and other land use determinations.

The benefits of the planning program extend to all Byron area residents. It coordinates the actions of public and private entities into a directed strategy for future change. In this context, the Comprehensive Plan will help direct the energies and efforts of the community to realize mutual needs and aspirations.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a basis for refining the Zoning Ordinance and other development codes which are used to implement planning policies and recommendations.

Finally, the Comprehensive Plan can serve as a marketing tool to promote Byron's unique assets, and it can be used to help attract new families, new business, and desirable new investment and development to the community.

The 2001 comprehensive planning program was initiated in October 2000 and consisted of a five-step planning process. This process focused on: community outreach and input, identification of issues and concerns, evaluation of alternative planning concepts, preparation of goals and objectives, refinement of Plan recommendations, and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The development of the Plan was guided by Byron Community Revitalization, Inc. (BCR), representing the Greater Byron Area.

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2001, the City has continued to grow and is experiencing development pressures especially in the northwestern sector of the community called the North Tower Road Drainage Basin. In order to continue to control growth and expansion of the infrastructure systems, the update of the Comprehensive Plan includes an analysis and Land Use Plan for the North Tower Road Drainage Basin.

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update began in October 2007 and includes community outreach and input to review and update the community's opportunities, issues and concerns, planning concepts, goals and objectives and plan recommendations. The following is a history of the creation for the 2001 Comprehensive Plan, as well as, the planning process used to update the Plan in 2008.

2001 Comprehensive Planning Program

The program for preparing the Greater Byron Area Comprehensive Plan consisted of extensive study and community participation. Key steps in the planning process are highlighted below.

1. **Project Initiation.** The project began in April 2000 when BCR began searching for a consulting firm to assist in the preparation of the new Comprehensive Plan.
2. **Early Citizen Participation Activities.** A variety of early citizen participation activities were undertaken to gain insight into the community's assessment of issues and potentials for the Greater Byron Area. These included:
 - **Key Person Interviews.** The Consulting Team conducted interviews with 9 individuals possessing varying interests in the community. In general, the objectives of key person interviews are to obtain candid, first-hand responses and views about the Greater Byron Area as it exists today, and discuss community issues and potentials that should be taken into consideration as part of the planning process.
 - **Community Workshop.** On October 12, 2000 a community workshop was undertaken at the Byron Forest Preserve Jarrett Center. Approximately 50 residents attended and participated in the workshop program.
 - **Community-Wide Survey.** A community-wide survey was distributed to approximately 3,300 households in the Greater Byron Area in January 2001. Approximately 740 surveys (22.5%) were completed and returned. The survey responses provided a sound understanding of the trends, concerns, and aspirations of the people living in Byron and the surrounding area.
3. **Background Studies.** A series of background studies were prepared by the Consultant dealing with various aspects of the community, including land-use, development trends, demographic analyses, transportation, community facilities, parks and open space. These were discussed in detail with the BCR Planning Group and presented in *Interim Report 1: Outreach, Inventory, and Analysis*.
4. **Community-Wide Plans.** Based on the conclusions reached in the background studies and community outreach efforts concerning overall issues and opportunities within the Greater Byron Area, preliminary community-wide plans were prepared addressing community setting, land-use, community facilities, and transportation. These preliminary plans were reviewed in detail with the BCR Planning Group and refined prior to preparing the draft plan document.
5. **Subarea Plans.** Based on the conclusions reached in the background studies and community outreach efforts concerning overall issues and opportunities within the Greater Byron Area, specific preliminary subarea plans were prepared. The subarea plans addressed the residential development areas, Downtown and Blackhawk Drive commercial areas, and the industrial areas. Through discussion and detailed review by the Planning Group, revisions were made prior to preparing the draft plan document.

6. *Goals and Objectives.* Based upon the conclusions of all previous work activity, Planning Goals and Objectives dealing with various components of the community were developed and reviewed with the BCR Planning Group.
7. *Plan and Program Preparation.* Based on preliminary consensus reached on preferred concepts, a draft Plan was prepared by the Consulting Team and reviewed by the BCR Planning Group. The Plan included recommendations for specific land-use areas within the Greater Byron Area as well as a more detailed study of key geographic areas.
8. *Plan Refinement.* The Plan was refined based on detailed review by the BCR Planning Group, the City Council, City staff and the public.
9. *Final Plan Preparation.* The Plan was then prepared in final form.

2008 Comprehensive Planning Program

The program for updating the Greater Byron Area Comprehensive Plan was based upon the considerable amount of work that was completed from the original Plan as well as the current issues, opportunities, and successes that have happened since the Plan's adoption. Like the original Plan, the update consisted of a number of community participation steps. The focus of these community meetings was to receive input and comments regarding not only the entire City, but including growth areas such as the North Tower Road Drainage Basin. The Consultant Team began working with City Staff and the Plan Commission in October 2007 to start the planning process for updating the document.

Organization of the Plan Report

The Comprehensive Plan is divided into eight sections:

1. *Community Setting* which presents an overview of geographic and demographic profile of the Greater Byron Area as situated in a regional context.
2. *Community Vision* which establishes "visions" for The Greater Byron Area, reflective of desired changes and future conditions.
3. *Goals and Objectives* presents the overall community goals and objectives which reflect the needs and aspirations to be addressed under the Plan.
4. *Land-Use Plan* presents the overall land-use plan for the Greater Byron Area including a land-use classification system, detailed subarea improvement recommendations, and key redevelopment site recommendations to guide for future improvement, growth, development and preservation within the community.
5. *Community Facilities* provides an overview and recommendations for the Greater Byron Area community facilities including parks and recreation, forest preserve, schools, municipal facilities, and library facilities.
6. *Transportation* which provides policies and recommendation to improve the street system as well as enhance and improve the area's network of bicycle and pedestrian paths and facilities.

7. *North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan* provides a detailed analysis and recommendations for this sector of the community including a suitability analysis, development potential, and a Land Use Plan for the area.
8. *Implementation*, which provides the required components of successful Plan implementation.

Section 1: Community Setting

The City of Byron, Illinois is situated along the Rock River in northeast Ogle County, 12 miles southwest of Rockford (Figure 1). Byron offers an excellent regional location with easy access to State Routes 2 and 72, and I-39, providing convenient transportation routes to Rockford and the Chicago Metropolitan Area. The Byron community has seen a significant increase in population over recent years, with most of the Byron area's recent-year growth occurring outside Byron's current municipal limits.

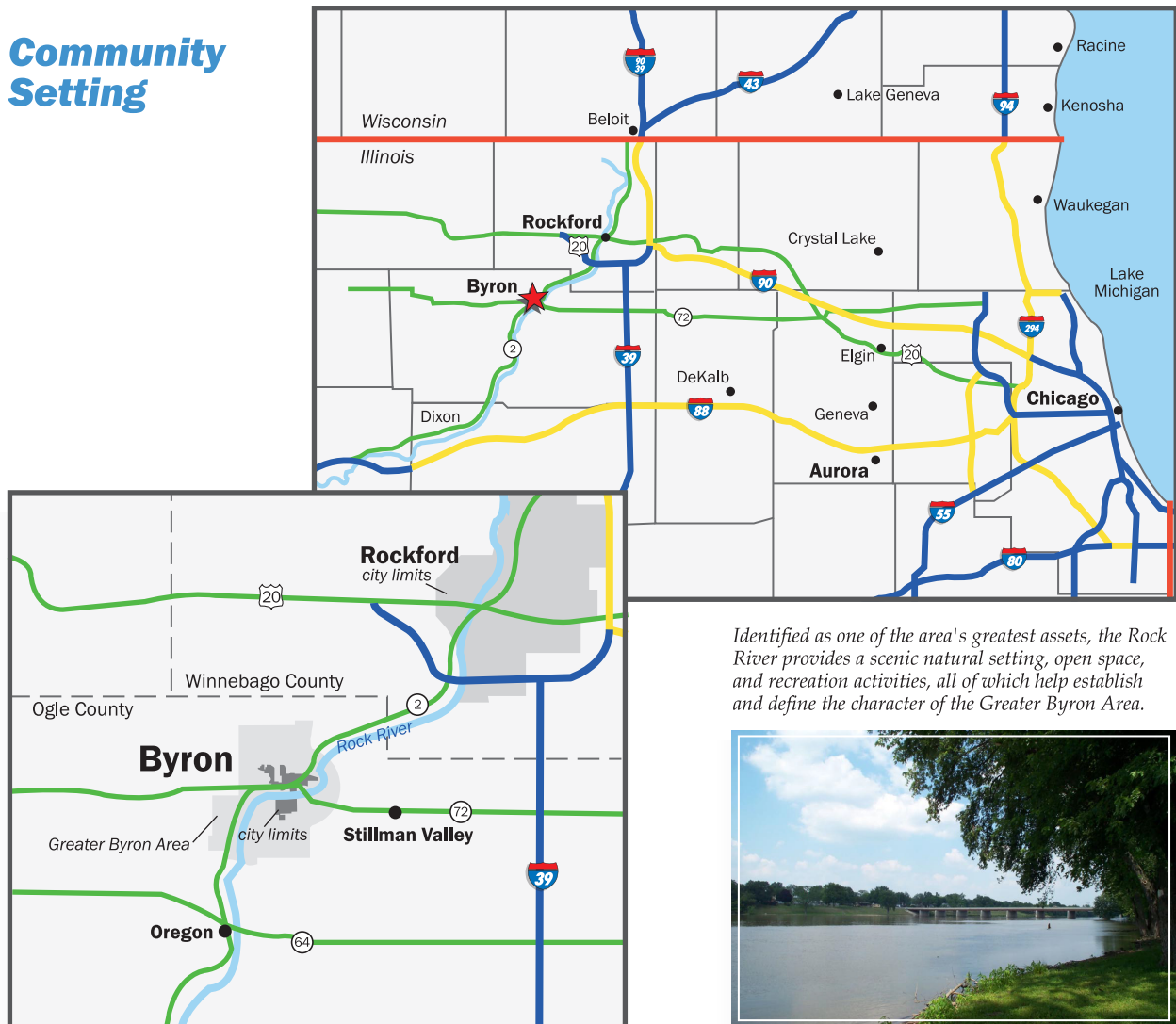
The Greater Byron Area is a strongly growing community, and is anticipated to experience a substantial future growth in population, households and employment. Like the remainder of the Rockford MSA and Ogle County, the Greater Byron Area has a stable population and a resident base that is becoming slightly more diverse in terms of its racial and ethnic composition.

The Byron community offers a highly desirable quality of life with quality schools, excellent community services and facilities, large areas of developable land, excellent access to regional transportation routes, abundant open space and recreational amenities, and a beautiful natural setting including the picturesque Rock River Corridor and large areas of rolling prairie. Coupled with the small town character and charm, Byron distinguishes itself as a community with a rich history and a bright future.

Several of the community's qualities were defining components during the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Listed below are those community characteristics that residents identified as being the most important to maintain and build upon in the future.

1. Overall sense of community and quality of life
2. The beautiful Rock River corridor
3. Open space and environmental features
4. Quality public schools
5. Small town atmosphere and charm
6. Friendly people
7. Forest Preserve facilities and programs
8. Park District and overall recreational programs and opportunities
9. Excellent community facilities, including the Library and Fire Protection Districts
10. Proximity to Rockford

Community Setting



Identified as one of the area's greatest assets, the Rock River provides a scenic natural setting, open space, and recreation activities, all of which help establish and define the character of the Greater Byron Area.



Byron is situated along the Rock River in North Central Illinois, approximately twelve miles southwest of Rockford. The City of Byron has a population of about 3,900 and its larger planning area, defined in this Comprehensive Plan as the *Greater Byron Area*, is home to approximately 11,000 people.

Byron's scenic setting, proximity to Rockford, and availability of developable land will make it an increasingly

desirable place to live. In recent years, Byron has experienced a significant increase in residential development. It is anticipated that the growth trend will continue, pushing the population from 11,000 to 13,400 persons by the year 2020.

Byron offers a high quality of life, excellent schools, responsive local services and an abundance of recreational opportunities, all in a beautiful natural setting that builds and reinforces a peaceful rural

setting and charm.

Byron offers excellent access and a convenient location, increasing its desirability as a destination for new commercial and industrial development.

With all it has to offer, the Greater Byron Area is well situated to face the challenges and opportunities that await it in the years ahead.

Byron Comprehensive Plan

Houseal Lavigne Associates • August 2008

Section 2: Community Vision

The community of Byron is known for its beautiful setting along the Rock River, its traditional charm and character, open spaces and areas of natural environment, and friendly cooperative people that make Byron an attractive place to live, work, and visit. The Community Vision is comprised of several “vision statements” that together provide the foundation for the future of the Greater Byron Area. The different vision statements represent primary areas of the community that are of special interest to residents.

The Community Vision is to be realized in a number of ways and these are described briefly below. The Community Vision builds upon these guiding principles and vision statements, that reflect future conditions within the Greater Byron Area. Vision statements are written to reflect “*existing conditions in a future setting.*”

Planning – A Comprehensive Plan for the community that guides future land-use and policy decision making. The Comprehensive Plan helps the community to manage growth while integrating industrial, agricultural, residential, commercial, environmental and recreational development. It provides for the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of life and encourages cultural, spiritual and social development within the community. There is full cooperation between community members, local, county, state, and federal units of government, and business and civic bodies in the development, implementation and periodic review of the plan.

Rock River Corridor – A comprehensive Riverfront Development Plan is in place, which provides for realization of a full service marina, restaurants, lodging, recreational paths, and environmental preservation with beautification, public parks and a community/cultural center with a river overlook and a wildlife sanctuary.

Business Organization and Support – Byron’s retail business districts, Second Street (Downtown) and Blackhawk Drive (Route 2), are jointly managed while enjoying separate identities. The buildings on Second Street are historically preserved and the buildings on Blackhawk Drive are well designed. We have pleasant green spaces and comfortable public areas, which provide a welcoming and successful business environment. Our retail management and organization is well staffed and self-supporting through a variety of unique events and reliable funding sources.

Overall Economic Development – The City of Byron’s Economic Development Department and the Byron Area Chamber of Commerce continue to support and improve the community’s local economy wherever feasible. These agencies, along with other community groups and governmental bodies support existing businesses and industries, while also attracting new desirable businesses and industries to locate in the community.

Community Aesthetic and Design – The Byron community is a uniquely successful and well-designed mix of recreational spaces, business areas, residential areas, and public places. Each area of the community thrives because of its attractiveness and diversity. The citizens enjoy a well-designed and comfortable environment for pedestrians as well as vehicles through functional roadway improvements, streetscape elements, landscaping and architectural detail which reinforces the identity of the community and creates a visual theme.

Adult and Teen Life – The Byron Community is a place where all age groups – individually and intergenerational – have a dynamic set of programs and activities that meet their recreational, social, spiritual, service, and growth & development needs and interests through a unified community planning and working effort.

Retail Environment – The Byron Business Community is alive and active with well-defined and attractive business clusters that are fully serving the needs of residents and visitors. The synergy of the clusters is energized and supported by reliable data. Byron businesses are profitable for the owners and the community.

Tourism – The Greater Byron Area is one that both visitors and area community members enjoy the many activities and facilities available to them year-round in a unique natural setting.

Section 3: Goals and Objectives

To be effective, the Comprehensive Plan must respond to the expressed values and desires of the local community. Goals and objectives help to provide this focused guidance. These statements transform the collective values of the community into operational statements which are used, in part, as guidelines in the planning process.

Goals and objectives each have a distinct meaning and purpose in the planning program:

- **Goals** articulate long-range aspirations of the community. They are stated in terms that can promote agreement on major issues or needs necessary to support actions and strategies required to realize aspirations. They represent an end to be sought, although some may never be fully realized.
- **Objectives** identify the types of initiatives that must be taken to realize goals. Objectives are stated to provide a means of measurement toward goal attainment.

The Goals and Objectives have been created around substantive topic areas for: General Goals; City Image, Design and Identity; Housing and Residential Land Use Areas; Commercial and Retail Development; Industrial Land-Use Areas; Transportation; Community Facilities and Services; Parks and Recreation; Intergovernmental and Organizational Coordination; Fiscal and Economic Development; and Program Administration.

A. General Goals

The following general goals have been developed as a “guiding framework” directing future change in the community.

Goal 1

Continue to create a physically distinctive and high-quality community environment through efforts that preserve the existing quality of life, character, and heritage of the area, while anticipating change and progress in the future.

Rationale

To enhance a sense of community and pride, there is a need to physically enhance and improve areas of the City and surrounding areas. We expect to accomplish this through the designation of land-use areas as well as in the coordination and improvement of public facilities and services. In support of the identity as a strong residential community, the Greater Byron Area is committed to providing community facilities and services that meet citizens’ expectations.

Goal 2

Achieve a balanced pattern of development in the community that provides for well designed, compatible and economically sustainable business, employment, and residential areas.

Rationale

There is a high level of consensus in the community on the need to develop and re-develop sites in a manner which has long-term economic stability and meets the social, cultural, educational, recreational and lifestyle needs of the residents.

Goal 3

Protect and enhance the natural environment, open space, and Rock River corridor as key public amenities that contribute greatly to the overall character and quality of life of the Greater Byron Area.

Rationale

Identified as some of the most important and defining characteristics of the area, the natural environment, open space, and Rock River distinguish Byron from other communities, and contribute to the area's overall desirability as a place to live and visit.

Goal 4

Forge and maintain strong public and private partnerships to capitalize upon and coordinate all resources and assets the community has to offer in carrying out plans, policies and programs.

Rationale

The Greater Byron Area seeks to continue meaningful and productive relationships with local organizations, civic groups, institutions, and individuals to create awareness and understanding of community needs and potentials, as well as to mobilize organizations into action for change. This participatory philosophy is a central element in the strategic approach to community involvement and change.

Goal 5

We will continue to enhance and improve the quality of life for our citizens through the provision of quality community facilities and services.

Rationale

The provision of quality community facilities and services demonstrates the Greater Byron Area's commitment to its citizens and strengthens community's identity as a strong residential community.

B. Image, Design and Identity

Goal

Maintain a strong physical community image through public and private improvements which enhance various physical features of the community and contribute to Byron's sense of place.

Objectives

1. Improve the image and appearance of all existing commercial areas, with particular emphasis on the appearance of buildings, signage, and landscaping along Blackhawk Drive and in Downtown (Second Street).
2. Improve and maintain the attractive appearance of all areas of the Greater Byron Area.

3. Encourage compatible and high-quality design and construction for all new developments, including residential, commercial, industrial, and public space, with an emphasis on quality site design, building orientation, and site improvements.
4. Maintain consistent and high quality improvement of all local streets and public parking areas.
5. Establish an improvement program that results in the development of physical facilities and features which distinguish Byron from surrounding communities.
6. Develop and implement landscaping and tree planting programs that beautify the residential and business areas.
7. Promote the advantages and benefits of living, working, or doing business in Byron.
8. Improve communication to residents in an effort to increase awareness of, and participation in, programs, services and events within the community.
9. Improve and maintain relationships with the press and other media.
10. Support and develop tourism as an integral part of Byron's overall image.

C. Housing and Residential Land-Use Areas

Goal

Provide a housing inventory and living environment which supports the local population and maintains the overall quality and character of the Greater Byron Area.

Objectives

1. Maintain the predominantly rural single-family character of the Greater Byron Area.
2. Encourage new residential development to take place in areas contiguous to and adjacent to existing residential areas, thus avoiding "leap frogging" and fragmented development patterns.
3. Protect residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses and the adverse impacts of adjacent activities.
4. Expand and encourage senior citizen housing options through new development or redevelopment.
5. Seek to provide a variety of housing types that meet the lifestyles and needs of the community by working with property owners and developers.
6. Express the economic importance of the diversity of the community's housing stock and work to ensure neighborhood stability in all areas of the community.
7. Encourage new development and infill development which is complementary to the scale and character of surrounding residential uses.
8. Preserve and rehabilitate sound existing housing, especially in the areas adjacent to Downtown, through regular and active code enforcement and preventative maintenance.

9. Develop and enforce strong building, safety, zoning and fire codes to prevent overcrowding, unsafe conditions, and misuse of residential dwellings.
10. Work to keep local financial and lending institutions committed and involved in meeting all housing needs of the community.
11. Consider the implementation of Neighborhood Watch Programs to encourage efforts to increase community awareness of public safety.
12. Seek funding sources which assist in the maintenance and improvement of housing conditions and meet the diversity of housing needs in the community.

D. Commercial Development

Goal 1

Enhance the economic viability and productivity of the Downtown (Second Street) and Blackhawk Drive (Route 2) as the City's primary commercial activity areas.

Objectives

1. Maintain Downtown and Blackhawk Drive as mixed-use commercial areas providing a variety of commercial, retail, service, restaurant, and entertainment uses.
2. Promote new commercial development and redevelopment within select locations within the Downtown and along Blackhawk Drive.
3. Minimize non-commercial use and expansion along Blackhawk Drive.
4. Ensure that commercial properties, both existing and proposed, located in unincorporated areas are annexed into the City to further strengthen its tax base.
5. Develop and improve Downtown as a pedestrian-oriented shopping and service area.
6. Develop and improve Blackhawk Drive as a vehicular-oriented shopping and service area that also accommodates pedestrians and bicyclists in a friendly and safe environment.
7. Ensure adequate parking for all existing and proposed commercial uses.
8. Identify and develop select locations along the Rock River for appropriate commercial and mixed-use projects, including restaurants, marinas, retail, entertainment, cultural and public spaces.
9. Identify and prioritize economic strategies in conjunction with commercial property owners and managers to ensure economic vitality and stability in all commercial shopping areas of the community.
10. Identify specific actions and strategies to be undertaken which will enhance the economic health of the City's commercial areas.
11. Initiate programs to encourage the improvement of older commercial buildings and areas which are, or are becoming, functionally obsolete.
12. Develop and implement regular and active property maintenance and code enforcement in commercial areas of the City.

Goal 2

Develop aesthetically pleasing and functionally well-designed retail and commercial shopping areas.

Objectives

1. Encourage high-quality site development and amenities in commercial areas.
2. Identify potential locations where additional private off-street parking and loading improvements may be appropriate and desirable along Blackhawk Drive and in Downtown.
3. Encourage the design of new commercial development to facilitate a system of pedestrian access.
4. Encourage coordinated and shared vehicle access wherever possible, thus limiting the number of curb cuts along Blackhawk Drive.
5. Establish a program that reasonably and uniformly regulates signage while providing for the identification of commercial businesses.
6. Ensure that new development and redevelopment of private property is designed in scale with, and complementary to, existing development.
7. Establish special design and improvement standards for commercial areas, including screening and buffering treatments for commercial activity adjacent to residential properties.

E. Industrial Land-Use Areas

Goal

Provide a system of light industrial, commercial service and business park development which maintains a diversified economic base and complements other types of local development.

Objectives

1. Encourage diversification of employment opportunities within the community.
2. Encourage the development of the Kysor Road industrial area as an industrial, office, and commercial service complex providing for larger uses requiring more land and excellent truck access.
3. Work to de-intensify the industrial nature of the area along Walnut Street and Barker Road, reducing truck traffic in the area, and improving the appearance, roads, and buffering/screening.
4. Maintain and enhance local efforts for employment retention and facilitate the expansion and development plans of local industrialists.
5. Minimize the negative impact of industrial activities on neighboring land-uses.
6. Require all new employment development to meet performance standards for noise, air, odor and other forms of environmental pollution.

7. Establish special design and development standards to ensure that new industrial development complements the overall character of the Greater Byron Area.
8. Encourage the development of a new “ComEd Business Park” just north of the Byron Exelon Nuclear Plant.

F. Transportation

Goal

Provide a balanced transportation system which ensures the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, trains, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Objectives

1. Ensure safe design of street intersections, street lighting, and surface conditions in all portions of the community.
2. Minimize non-local traffic within residential neighborhoods.
3. Ensure adequate resources for maintenance of streets and public rights-of-way in the community.
4. Encourage the development of new streets, or the improvement of existing streets to conform to the natural topographic character of the land and minimize impacts to natural features.
5. Protect the function of the overall street hierarchy within the community through effective land-use and property access controls.
6. Ensure adequate capacity and safe design of street intersections along the City’s principal arterial streets.
7. Encourage the development of the bicycle and pedestrian systems in a manner which complements the character and design of the City’s street system.
8. Provide a contiguous sidewalk system in all areas, especially along both sides of Blackhawk Drive, throughout the Downtown, in all existing and future residential areas, and connecting to all parks, public areas, and employment areas.
9. Explore opportunities for mass transit that may provide circulation throughout the Greater Byron Area and service to and from Rockford.

G. Community Facilities and Services

Goal

Ensure high quality and responsive municipal, educational, recreational, library, and utility services to all residents of the Greater Byron Area.

Objectives

1. Ensure an adequate level of fire and police protection throughout the Greater Byron Area.

2. Generate interest in, and communicate the value of, maintaining and improving the Byron public school system.
3. Improve and expand specialized facilities and services for senior citizens and youths.
4. Limit expansion of community facilities onto key priority commercial sites, as designated by the Land-Use Plan.
5. Provide the proper mix of governmental and community facilities in appropriate locations.
6. Ensure that adequate municipal services and facilities can be provided in all existing and new development areas within the community.
7. Ensure the water distribution system provides adequate pressure for fire protection in all areas of the City.
8. Consider expansion of the City utilities only when economically feasible, and where the extension is consistent with the Land-Use Plan.
9. Continue to provide adequate City public services including, but not limited to, public works, public safety, and administration.
10. Continue to coordinate with and support the efforts of the Fire Protection District, Museum District, School District, Forest Preserve District, Park District, Library District, City of Byron, and Township governments.
11. Ensure that new public sites and buildings are well designed and will enhance the appearance and image of the community.
12. Adopt criteria for the selection and development of new park and recreation sites.
13. Work to increase the supply of land for local recreational activities and facilities.

H. Parks and Open Space

Goal

Provide an adequate park and open space system which satisfies the recreational, social, and leisure-time needs of Greater Byron Area residents.

Objectives

1. Maintain/support a local public park system that complements the private recreational opportunities available in the community.
2. Establish locations for open space which contribute to a pleasing and economically viable community-wide development pattern.
3. Ensure adequate resources for and maintenance of City, Park District, and Forest Preserve parks and recreational facilities.
4. Protect and enhance the natural scenic setting along the Rock River corridor.
5. Monitor local community needs and perceptions and develop new recreational facilities and services which respond to specific desires of Byron area residents.

6. Promote continued cooperation between Byron Park District, Byron Forest Preserve District, and Byron School District in the provision of recreational services.
7. Establish a minimum standard for the amount of parkland and open space to be incorporated into new residential developments throughout the greater Byron Area.
8. Protect and enhance open space and environmentally sensitive areas within the Greater Byron Area.
9. Develop a network of bicycle/recreation paths and routes connecting parks, recreation facilities, and open space throughout the Greater Byron Area.

I. Natural Environment

Goal

Seek to protect natural resources which enhance the quality of life, preserve the character of the Greater Byron Area, and provide a balance between developed and natural areas.

Objectives

1. Preserve and protect key natural features of the area including topography, open space and woodlands.
2. Protect important hydrologic features such as the Rock River, streams, ponds, flood plains and drainage ways, all of which affect other natural processes.
3. Special attention should be given to the conservation and protection of environmentally sensitive sites and areas characterized by a number of overlapping environmental and natural features, such as woodlands, unusual topography, wetlands, flood plains, streams and other features.
4. Emphasize the importance of preservation, new planting and replanting of trees along public and private yards.
5. Require a tree survey, and a corresponding plan to protect this growth, as part of any development to identify and preserve existing trees and significant vegetation both during and after construction.

J. Intergovernmental and Organizational Cooperation

Goal

Encourage the coordination and cooperation among federal, state, county, and local agencies and organizations potentially having interest in the Greater Byron Area to ensure the greatest level of efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of community services.

Objectives

1. Coordinate with state, regional and local agencies and Districts to ensure continuity and consistency of overall community planning and development activities.
2. Establish meaningful lines of communication with those Districts, agencies and organizations that can assist the community in meeting its overall planning objectives, and work to secure participation of these agencies and organizations in realizing mutual objectives.
3. Continue to seek cooperative working relationships with adjoining communities and local Districts in the financing of local community facilities and services.
4. Continue to seek grants, loans, and other sources of intergovernmental funding transfers.
5. Continue to encourage communication and collaboration among service providers to provide the most efficient and cost effective services possible.

K. Fiscal and Economic Development

Goal

Achieve economic prosperity by maintaining and enhancing the diversity of commercial, office, office research, distribution, light manufacturing, and other industrial uses.

Objectives

1. Coordinate planning and economic development activities in a manner which provides regular opportunities for contact between business and development interests within the community.
2. Seek opportunities for new employment growth through the retention and expansion of existing Byron employers and the establishment of new industrial/business park uses.
3. Establish marketing strategies to retain and attract businesses and developers to Byron and to enhance the community's business image.
4. Target and selectively recruit growth firms that will strengthen or develop local concentrations of similar and related firms.
5. Ensure that new development pays its fair share of public facilities and service costs which are attributable to the demand for additional facilities or services as a result of new development.
6. Institute budgeting processes and procedures that provide necessary revenues for current periods, while allowing financial reserves for the future.
7. Continue to provide resources for maintenance of the City's physical facilities.
8. Promote locally based marketing programs to boost local investment and awareness between the residential and business community.
9. Continue to support and develop tourism as a means of economic development and community image.

10. Promote the development and installation of a “high tech” infrastructure to support new industrial and commercial development.

L. Program Administration

Goal

Implement, monitor, and update the Comprehensive Plan.

Objectives

1. Make available existing and/or new financial resources to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Establish a process for the regular review and update of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. In the Comprehensive Plan review and amendment process, consideration should be given to any input and involvement from the Plan Commission, City Council, various governments, local organizations, business groups and individuals.
4. Identify and engage agencies and organizations willing to share in the responsibility for active implementation of the Plan.

Section 4: Land-Use Plan

This section presents the recommended Land-Use Plan for the Greater Byron Area. Much of this section is presented in a highly graphic format which allows for the better communication of land-use information. This section includes:

- A. *Land-Use Classification System* which establishes the community's intentions for the type, intensity, and character of future land-uses anticipated under the Comprehensive Plan.
- B. *Existing Land-Use* (Figure 2) which illustrates the overall pattern of development in the Greater Byron Area and highlights important community features, influences and needs.
- C. *Land-Use Plan: Greater Byron Area and City of Byron* (Figures 3 and 4) which illustrates the general recommendations for the type and location of various land uses within the Greater Byron Area.
 - *Residential Uses* (Figure 5) which illustrates the overall distribution and approach to residential growth and development and the improvement of existing single-family and multi-family dwellings throughout the Greater Byron Area.
 - *Blackhawk Drive Corridor and Downtown* (Figure 6) which highlights and illustrates the recommendations for improvement and redevelopment of the two primary commercial areas within the Greater Byron Area.
 - *Industrial Area Development Policies and Improvement.* (Figure 7) which illustrates the recommendations for the type and location of new industrial development as well as improvements to existing industrial areas of the community.

A. Land-Use Classification System

A new land-use classification system has been developed to help organize and arrange future land-use areas in the Greater Byron Area. A land-use classification system is necessary to accurately reflect the Greater Byron Area's intentions for the type, intensity, and location of future land-uses anticipated under the Comprehensive Plan. A land-use classification system is an important part of the Comprehensive Plan. It defines the different types of land-use areas that will be mapped as part of the Comprehensive Plan Land-Use Plan Map. Each of these areas is described in terms of its *future function*, and may not necessarily translate to existing zoning ordinance districts. In fact, some of the classifications indicated below may not be currently represented in the City's or County's zoning scheme.

Residential

1. ***Single-Family Detached Residential*** - a residential area occupied exclusively (or predominantly, in new development areas) by detached single-family residential dwellings.
2. ***Single-Family Attached Residential*** - a residential area occupied primarily by attached single-family residential dwellings, including duplexes, 2-flats, 3-flats, and townhomes.
3. ***Multi-Family Residential*** - a residential area occupied by multiple-family dwellings including apartments, condominiums, and townhomes, including senior housing.

Commercial and Industrial

1. ***Commercial*** - a commercial area which provides a wide range of commercial and retail products and services on both local and community-wide scale, including restaurants, retail, office, service, and entertainment uses.
2. ***River Commercial*** - a commercial area located along the Rock River which provides an appropriate mix of compatible uses such as restaurants, river-oriented service and retail, entertainment, and river-oriented recreation. River Commercial areas should incorporate site designs and amenities that enhance the river front experience for the public through use of riverwalks, scenic outlooks, public open spaces, and other features to enhance the natural setting of the Rock River Corridor.
3. ***Commercial Recreation*** - a commercial area which provides outdoor commercial recreation activities, events, and services. Currently, only three uses are designated Commercial Recreation: *Lake Louise*, *Byron Motorsports Park*, and *Byron Dragway*.
4. ***Commercial Service/Light Industrial*** - includes areas used for "smaller scale" light manufacturing, assembly, production, storage, distribution, warehousing, office research, and other related land-uses compatible with commercial and residential uses.
5. ***Hospitality*** - an area which provides lodging facilities such as hotels and motels, and other related uses such as commercial and retail uses.
6. ***Quarry/Mining*** - includes areas used for commercial mining and quarry operations. Current areas with this designation reflect active operations. No new areas are so designated.

Public, Quasi-Public, and Agricultural

1. *Agricultural/Open Space* - an area intended to be maintained for agricultural use or as a natural open space.
2. *Parks/Recreation/Planned Open Space* - an area intended to be maintained as a park, recreation site or planned open space.
3. *Public/Institutional* - an area containing community facilities or public buildings such as schools, churches, municipal buildings, libraries, museums and cultural facilities.
4. *Forest Preserve* - an area occupied by a Byron Forest Preserve District and maintained in a primarily “natural” state.

B. Existing Land-Use

Future land-use and development within the City of Byron will be largely determined by the pattern of existing residential, commercial, industrial and public land uses. However, the future land-use and development of the unincorporated areas surrounding Byron, much of which is undeveloped agricultural land, will likely be shaped by growing pressures for new development. The location and extent of existing land use, and the manner in which it is grouped and related, significantly affect the quality of life within a community. To determine the type and location of land uses currently existing within the Greater Byron Area, a field survey was in October 2007.

The land-use survey has resulted in an up-to-date representation of how land in the Greater Byron Area is presently used. This not only permits an analysis of land-use conditions and potentials as a part of the *Comprehensive Plan*, but also provides an important database which should be useful in other ways in the future.

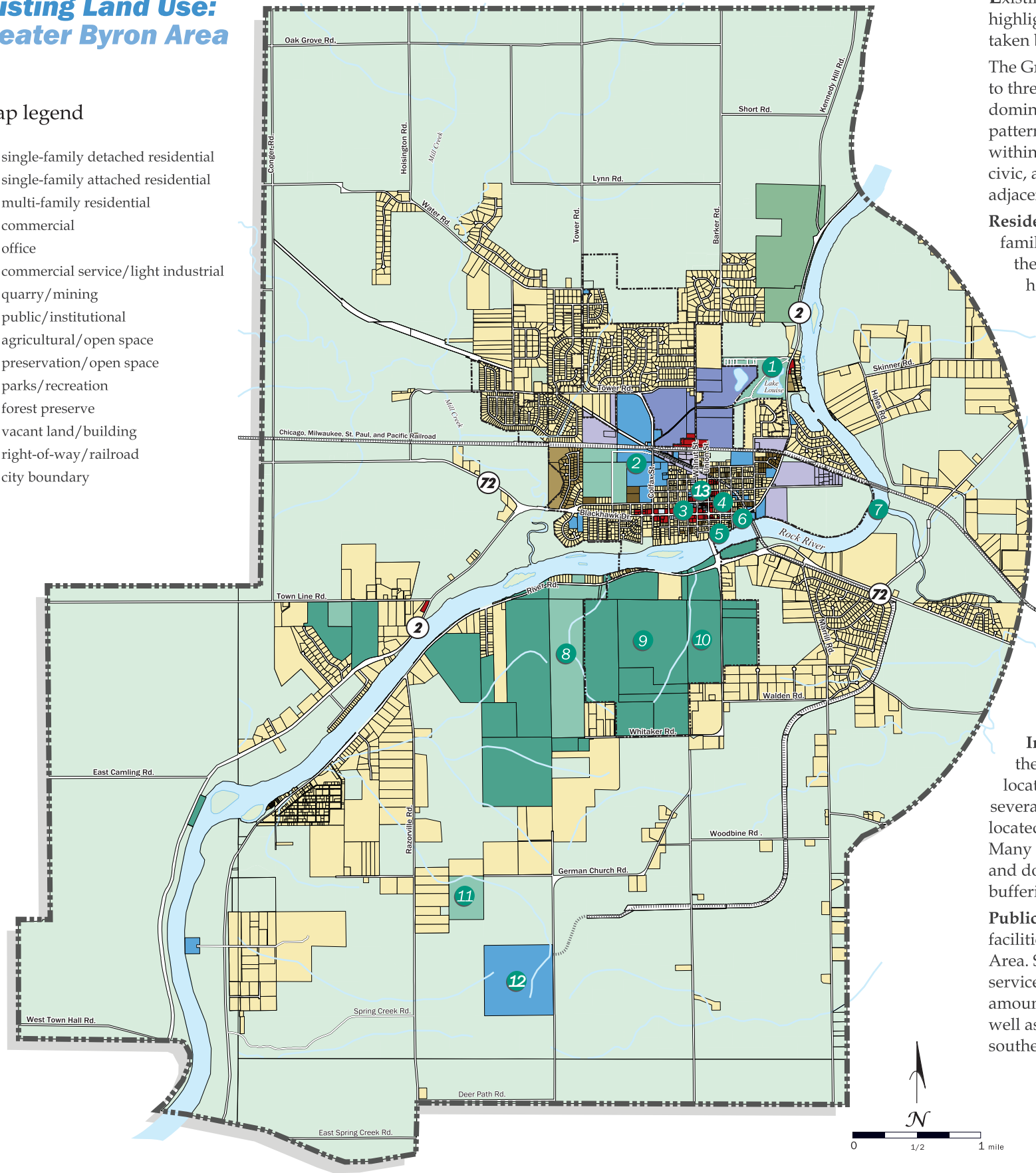
Figure 2, *Existing Land Use: Greater Byron Area*, provides an overview of the entire planning area and is useful in visualizing the location of key elements, understanding the current allocation of land for various uses, and in forming concepts and ideas for future desired land use changes.

The existing land use information provides an overview of residential uses, commercial uses, industrial uses, public and institutional uses, recreational facilities and open space, and agricultural land.

figure two
Existing Land Use:
Greater Byron Area

map legend

- single-family detached residential
- single-family attached residential
- multi-family residential
- commercial
- office
- commercial service/light industrial
- quarry/mining
- public/institutional
- agricultural/open space
- preservation/open space
- parks/recreation
- forest preserve
- vacant land/building
- right-of-way/railroad
- city boundary



Existing land use in the Greater Byron Area is highlighted in Figure 2, based on field surveys undertaken by the Consultant in the fall of 2007.

The Greater Byron Area depicted here, generally a two to three-mile radius from downtown Byron, is dominated by agricultural and other rural land use patterns. Most non-agricultural land uses are centralized within and near the City of Byron. Several recreational, civic, and employment uses are located within and adjacent to Byron city limits.

Residential uses, most commonly in the form of single-family homes, are found throughout the area. Much of the established central area of the City of Byron is home to older, smaller single-family homes and multi-family dwellings. Newer single-family developments comprise much of the western portion of the city. Most residential uses outside the city limits are characterized by more recent development trends incorporating larger homes and lots. As the majority of homes both within and outside the Byron corporate limits are relatively new, most are attractive and in sound physical condition.

Commercial uses are located primarily within and near downtown Byron. Blackhawk Drive (IL 2/72) serves as the primary commercial and circulation corridor through the City and is home to several retail and service uses. Downtown Byron, comprised of the blocks surrounding Second and Walnut Streets, is the commercial center of the area. Most restaurant, retail, and service businesses are located within this walkable area. Few commercial uses are found outside of the city.

Industrial uses are located along the periphery of the City of Byron. A large gravel excavation site is located immediately north of the city limits, and several smaller-scale light industrial businesses are located in the eastern portion of the city along IL Route 2. Many industrial properties are visible from major roads and do not provide adequate screening or proper buffering.

Public and Institutional uses, from churches to civic facilities, are scattered throughout the Greater Byron Area. Several churches, cemeteries, and municipal services are within and near central Byron. A significant amount of land is devoted to Byron public schools as well as the Byron Exelon Nuclear Plant, located in the southern portion of the area.

Recreational Facilities and Open Spaces provide residents and visitors exceptional opportunities to enjoy the area’s scenic natural setting. The Byron Forest Preserve District, located at the southern edge of Byron city limits, is home to several hiking trails, the Jarrett Nature Center, and Prairie View Golf Course. The Byron Forest Preserve District continues to acquire more land throughout the community, primarily adding to its existing properties. In addition to properties south of the river, the District also owns the Atnar Forest Preserve, located north of the river. Recreational facilities throughout the Greater Byron Area, including the Byron Dragway, Lake Louise, horse riding and stables, and the Byron School District athletic facilities, contribute vital and unique assets to the community.

Agricultural land comprises most remaining land in the area. Many large farms with related residences are located primarily along the periphery of the Greater Byron Area. A significant portion of this land is undeveloped open space, a possible reflection of topographic, soil, or market conditions.

Land Use and Development Trends currently result in new single-family development in agricultural areas with no established growth boundaries or annexation policies on behalf of the City. This trend is likely to be a source of concern as future planning efforts are undertaken. The City must be attuned to its needs of infill and redevelopment while responding to greenfield development in outlying areas.

Growth Areas have been identified as being the area in the northern sector of the community known as the North Tower Road Drainage Basin area. As development pressures continue, a plan for this area is vital to controlling growth in this area that is keeping with the community’s vision.

Points of Interest:

- 1 Lake Louise
- 2 Byron School District Facilities
- 3 Byron Public Library
- 4 Downtown Byron
- 5 Katharyn Hamas Memorial Park
- 6 Sunset Park & Public Boat Launch
- 7 Rock River
- 8 Byron Dragway
- 9 Byron Forest Preserve
- 10 Prairie View Golf Course
- 11 Byron MotoSports Park
- 12 Byron Exelon Nuclear Plant
- 13 Byron Museum of History

C. Land-Use Plan: Greater Byron Area and the City of Byron

This section presents the Long-Range Land-Use Plan for the Greater Byron Area. The Plan builds upon the existing land-use and development patterns in some areas and designates new land uses for much of the unincorporated areas. The Land Use Plan identifies the sector of the community known as the North Tower Road Drainage Basin. Although shown on the City-wide plans, more detailed analysis and recommendations for this area are presented in Section 7.

The Land-Use Plan strives to promote a compatible arrangement of uses which continue to make efficient use of land resources and community facilities and services. The *Land-Use Plan* also emphasizes an approach that encourages continued protection to the community's character and charm, recognizing the overall contribution of the rural setting and natural environment to the area's highly desirable quality of life. Key concepts are highlighted below and illustrated in Figures 3 and 4.

1. Residential Land-Use

Accommodate new residential growth and development in an organized manner that minimizes impact on the natural environment and open space setting of the community. Protect and enhance, where possible, the older single-family homes near the center of town that add to the overall character and charm of the City (Figure 5)

2. Commercial Land-Use

Maintain, enhance, and strengthen Downtown (Second Street) and Blackhawk Drive (Route 2) as the community's primary commercial retail, service, and entertainment areas. Downtown should be revitalized, redeveloped, and improved as a pedestrian-oriented shopping, service, and entertainment area. Blackhawk Drive should be developed and improved as a vehicular-oriented commercial corridor that is also pedestrian and bicycle friendly and safe. The successful revitalization and improvement of both areas will require the utilization of priority development sites as identified in the Plan (see Figure 6).

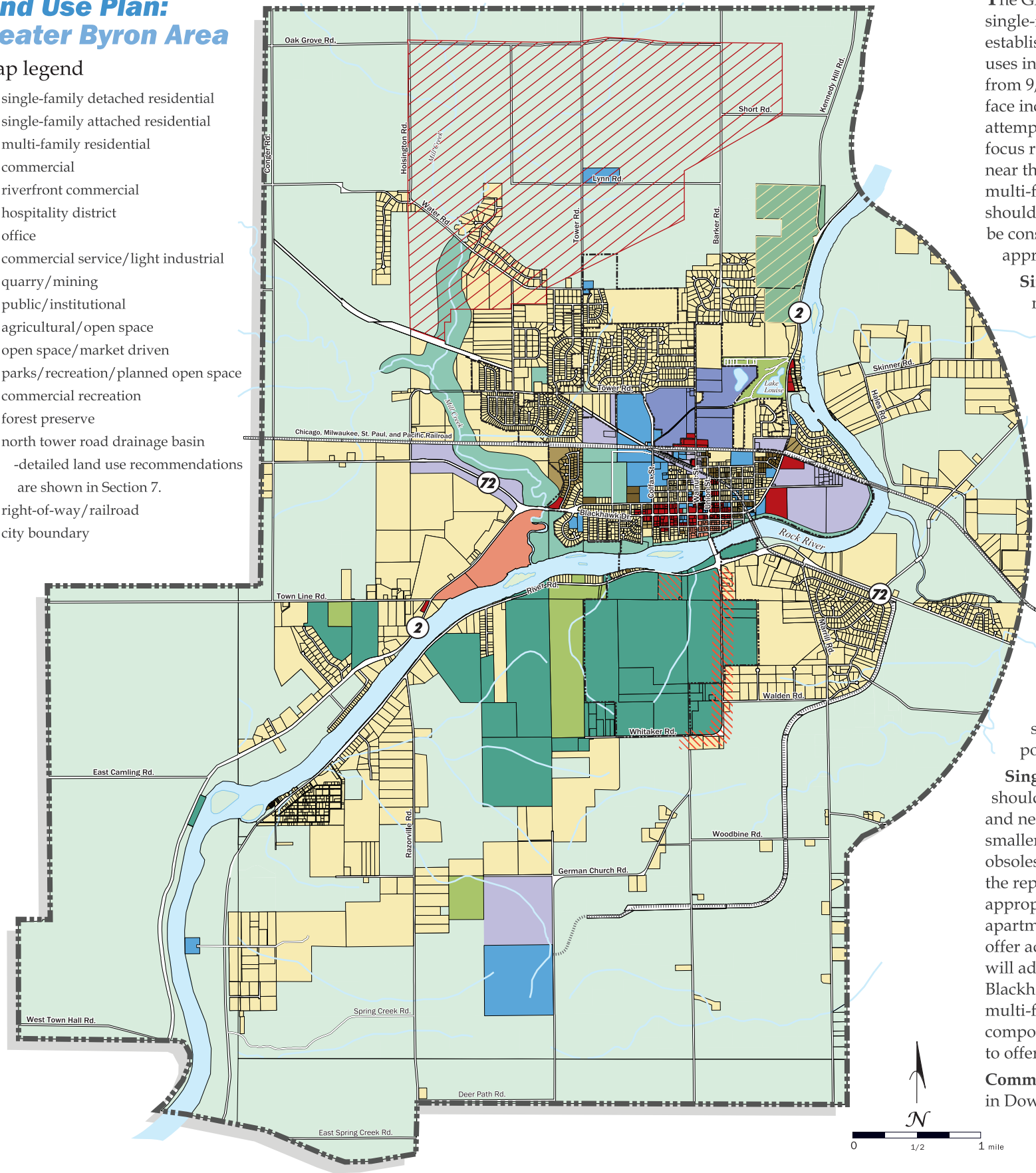
3. Industrial Land-Use

Two primary industrial areas are established in the Plan: Walnut Street/Barker Road commercial service area and the Kysor Road industrial area. The Walnut Street/Barker Road area should be de-intensified to a level more compatible with surrounding residential uses. Significant road improvements and landscaping, screening, and buffering improvements are needed for this area. The Kysor Road industrial area is designated as the development area for new light industrial, business park, distribution, office research, and commercial service uses. The area provides generous land area for development and excellent truck access via Route 2 (see Figure 7).

figure three
**Land Use Plan:
Greater Byron Area**

map legend

- single-family detached residential
- single-family attached residential
- multi-family residential
- commercial
- riverfront commercial
- hospitality district
- office
- commercial service/light industrial
- quarry/mining
- public/institutional
- agricultural/open space
- open space/market driven
- parks/recreation/planned open space
- commercial recreation
- forest preserve
- north tower road drainage basin
- detailed land use recommendations are shown in Section 7.
- right-of-way/railroad
- city boundary



The Greater Byron Area has experienced significant new single-family home construction that has begun to establish and confirm a market demand for residential uses in the future. With an expected population increase from 9,900 to 13,400 by 2020, the Greater Byron Area will face increased development pressure. The Land Use Plan attempts to guide future land uses in a way that helps focus residential uses near the developed areas in and near the City of Byron. It also designates areas where multi-family, commercial, industrial, and park uses should be located. Changes to the Land Use Plan should be considered if needed to accommodate desirable and appropriate development.

Single-family homes are expected to be the most market-desirable form of development in this still-developing area. Proximity to Rockford, available open land, and Byron’s scenic setting provide necessary ingredients for residential subdivision development. In general, subdivisions should be built on land that is adjacent to or contiguous to existing developed areas. Homes should be developed so that subdivisions adjoin one another as much as possible - developments should not take place in a “leapfrog” pattern, isolated and removed from nearby developed areas. Concentrating developments in adjacent and contiguous areas will help to decrease infrastructure costs, keep more of the population near emergency response services, and create a more cohesive pattern with easier access to commercial and other uses. Existing single-family homes contribute significantly to the community’s overall character and charm, and should be restored and preserved whenever possible and appropriate.

Single-family attached and multi-family dwellings should typically be located near existing similar uses and near Byron’s commercial areas. Many of Byron’s smaller, older homes in its historical core may face obsolescence or development pressure in coming years, the replacements of which could incorporate some appropriately located townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and senior housing. These developments will offer additional housing choices to the community and will add a greater resident base for the Downtown and Blackhawk Drive commercial areas. Limited attached and multi-family housing may also be appropriate, as components of large-scale residential developments seek to offer a diversity of housing options.

Commercial uses should continue to be located in Downtown Byron and along Blackhawk

Drive. The current mix of service, office, retail, and restaurants should be maintained and enhanced to make these areas major local commercial centers. Downtown should be improved with a comprehensive streetscape and parking system design and should continue to be a unique, walkable destination with a greater concentration of restaurants and retail shops. Blackhawk Drive should continue to be developed as a local retail and service corridor, with larger uses utilizing assembled parcels where possible. Recommendations are given in further detail in Figure 6.

Industrial uses include light industrial and commercial service areas. New industrial areas should be limited to areas adjacent to existing industrial and commercial service uses. The Barker Road area should be improved with screening and small, more residential-compatible infill developments. Land near Kysor Road east of IL 2 should be developed as a large industrial park. Planned intersection improvements, coupled with annexation and street reconstruction, will make this area more desirable and functional for large industrial and commercial service uses. Recommendations are given in further detail in Figure 7.

Public and Institutional uses, should be maintained on existing sites. Significant additions or expansions should be accommodated near the center of Byron. Public schools, should continue to provide exceptional education, services, and programs to the community. Other public uses and services should help contribute to the multi-function nature and vitality of the City of Byron. More detail is given in Figure 8.

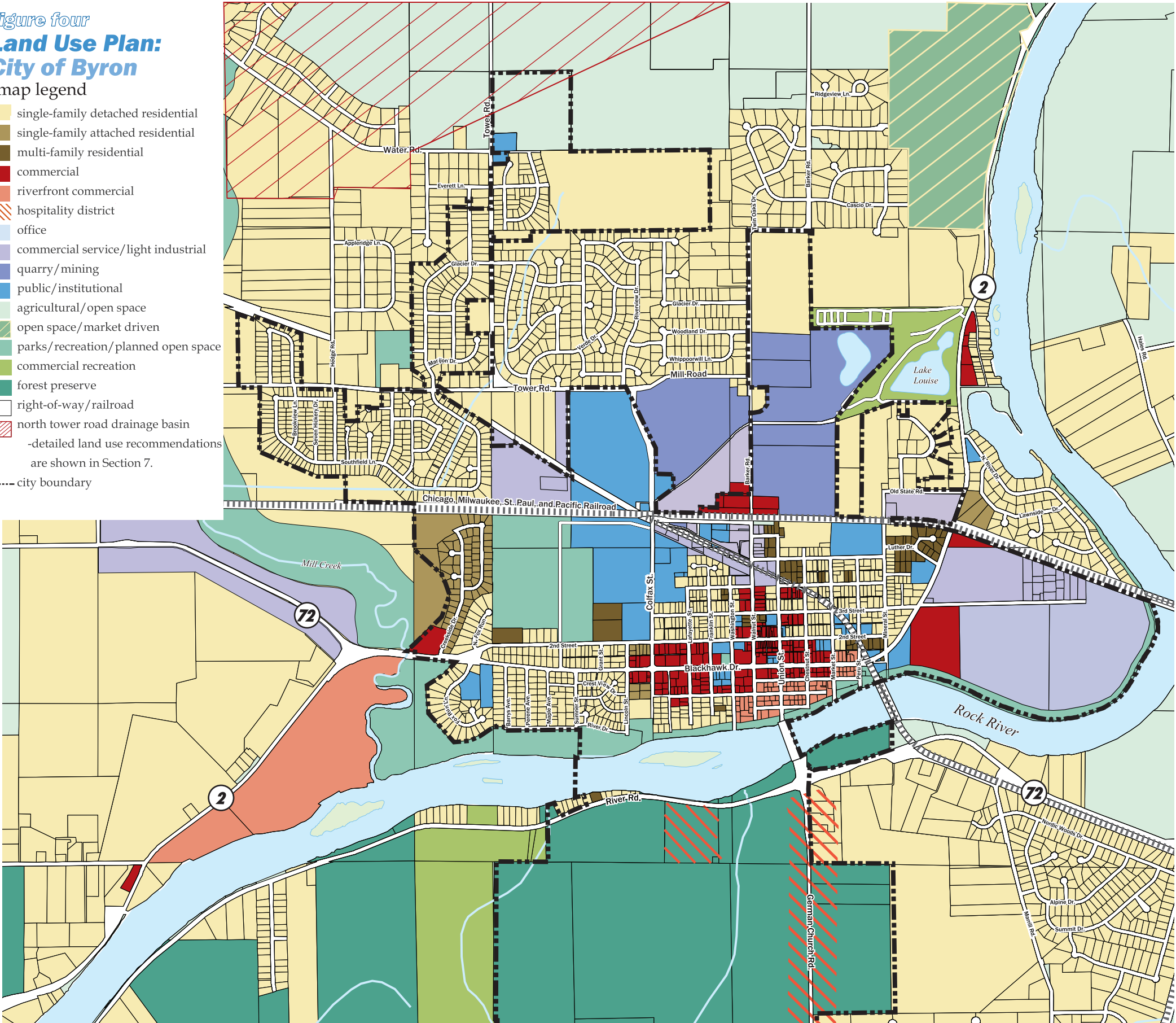
Recreational Facilities and Open Spaces are essential to Byron’s current and future desirability. Future public and private developments should capitalize on any topographic or other natural features to retain the area’s scenic character. Additional parks should be incorporated into subdivisions to provide communal open space in newer residential areas. Large tracts of land should be acquired and set aside for public access and recreation, especially near the Rock River and smaller streams and riparian areas.

Agricultural land should continue to dominate the landscape in the Greater Byron Area. Maintaining significant contiguous areas for agricultural use will help secure the area’s attractiveness and desirability and will preserve its rural character.

North Tower Road Drainage Basin Area is identified as the priority growth area for the community. Detailed land use recommendations for this area are giving in Section 7.

figure four
**Land Use Plan:
City of Byron**
map legend

- single-family detached residential
- single-family attached residential
- multi-family residential
- commercial
- riverfront commercial
- hospitality district
- office
- commercial service/light industrial
- quarry/mining
- public/institutional
- agricultural/open space
- open space/market driven
- parks/recreation/planned open space
- commercial recreation
- forest preserve
- right-of-way/railroad
- north tower road drainage basin
- detailed land use recommendations are shown in Section 7.
- city boundary



The area included in Figure Four highlights the City of Byron and focuses on this important “heart” of the Greater Byron Area and the vital mixture of uses it represents.

Single-family homes and established neighborhoods contribute greatly to the City’s overall appearance and character. Existing single-family home areas should be maintained and enhanced; new single-family areas should be established in the nearby undeveloped areas to the north and west. New developments should incorporate sidewalks to allow for and improve pedestrian and bicycle access to Byron’s schools, commercial areas, and recreational facilities. New development should also include neighborhood parks. The City’s current housing stock should be maintained and its historic fabric retained. Infill housing within the historical street grid, generally bounded by Mineral, 5th, Colfax, and Merchant Streets, should respect the traditional development pattern. Several older homes near Downtown and along Blackhawk Drive, which may soon face redevelopment pressure before other areas in the City, present opportunities for appropriately-scaled commercial or multi-family uses especially if part of larger consolidated master planned developments near the river.

Single-family attached and multi-family dwellings should continue to serve as an alternative to the single-family home. As Byron grows over the next twenty years, townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and additional senior housing are likely to be in greater demand. These units are favorable generally within the city limits and should be located near Downtown and Blackhawk Drive to take advantage of nearby services, restaurants, and facilities. Sites along and near 2nd Street offer the possibility of ground-floor commercial space with residential above.

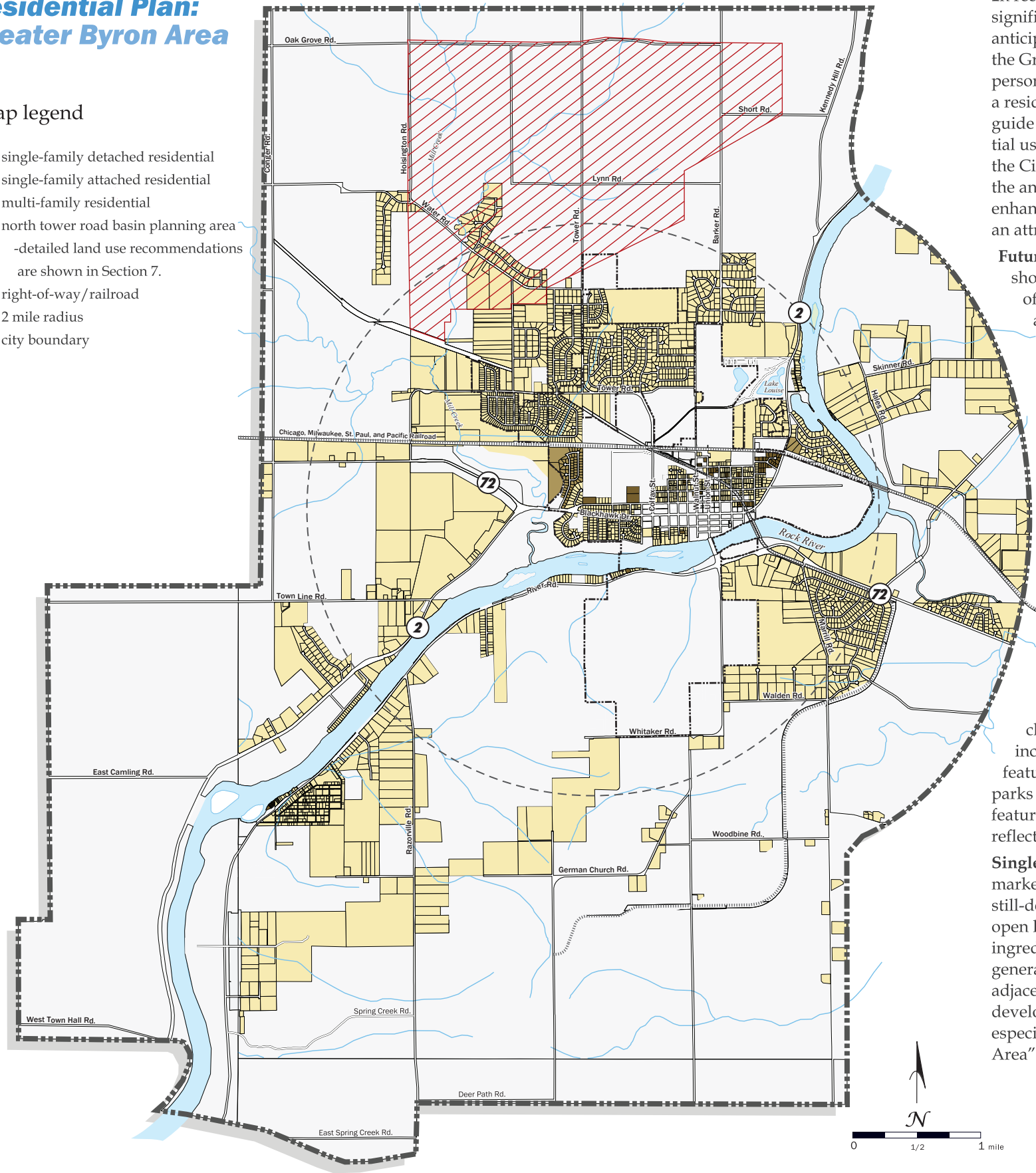
Commercial uses should continue to be located along Blackhawk Drive and in Downtown Byron. Consolidation of several vacant, underutilized, or currently residential properties will provide significant opportunity for new retail, service, and restaurant uses along Blackhawk. Uses can be local or regional in market draw. Larger uses such as chain restaurants, national retail, and larger services that may be inappropriate in Downtown could be accommodated along Blackhawk. Consolidating commercial uses along Blackhawk will create a more cohesive commercial district, be more accessible to residents, and add to the City’s tax base. Downtown Byron should continue to be a unique resource to the area, serving as a pedestrian-friendly, locally-oriented retail and restaurant/entertainment destination. Uses should encourage an active pedestrian environment and establish evening activity. Specific recommendations are in Figure 5.

Commercial service and industrial uses should be expanded to respond to increasing demand for large, contiguous industrial and service space. The Walnut/Barker area, although home to a large regional employer, should not be encouraged to absorb significant new industrial development. Limited vehicular access and surrounding residential uses are not conducive for major industrial growth. A few properties could be redeveloped to provide sites for several businesses that may be displaced from downtown or Blackhawk redevelopment. Kysor Road should be improved and the area targeted for significant industrial growth. Large tracts of flat land with direct access to State Routes make this property a key location for new investment.

figure five
**Residential Plan:
Greater Byron Area**

map legend

- single-family detached residential
- single-family attached residential
- multi-family residential
- north tower road basin planning area
-detailed land use recommendations
are shown in Section 7.
- right-of-way / railroad
- 2 mile radius
- city boundary



In recent years, the Greater Byron Area has experienced significant new single-family home construction, and it is anticipated that this growth trend will continue, pushing the Greater Byron Area’s population from 9,900 to 13,400 persons by 2020. In order to maintain its attractiveness as a residential community, the Land Use Plan attempts to guide future land uses in a way that helps focus residential uses near the established developed areas in and near the City of Byron. As the City prepares to accommodate the anticipated growth, it is important to protect and enhance those features that make the Greater Byron Area an attractive place to live.

Future Growth Areas for new residential development should generally be encouraged within a 2-mile radius of the center of the City. This designated “growth area” encompasses much of the existing newer residential development and would allow for significant new residential development on converted agricultural lands to accommodate the anticipated growth over the next decade. Two areas within the radius are not encouraged to absorb new development. The area generally east of the Rock River and north of IL 72, as well as land adjacent to and west of the Byron Forest Preserve. These areas should remain undeveloped to preserve their scenic and environmental qualities and their overall importance as contributing factors to Byron’s natural setting.

By encouraging new residential development in the “Future Growth Area” first, rather than scattered across the Planning Area in no particular priority, there is a greater chance of preserving the area’s open space and agricultural/rural character. New residential development should incorporate natural topography and environmental features, open space preservation, habitat protection, parks and other recreational components, and other features that guarantee a quality residential environment reflective of Byron's character and charm.

Single-family homes are expected to be the most market-desirable form of development in this still-developing area. Proximity to Rockford, available open land, and Byron’s scenic setting provide necessary ingredients for residential subdivision development. In general, subdivisions should be built on land that is adjacent to or within established borders of existing development, as depicted in the figure to the left, especially within the above-mentioned “Future Growth Area” ring.

Homes should be developed so that subdivisions adjoin one another as much as possible. Developments should not take place in a “leapfrog” pattern where a subdivision is built isolated and removed from nearby development. Concentrating developments will help to decrease utility infrastructure costs, keep more of the population within a serviceable distance from emergency response stations, and create a more cohesive pattern with easier access to commercial and other uses.

New developments should incorporate appropriate single-family densities, with larger lots appropriate for “higher-end” subdivisions. A community park or open space(s) should be integrated into all new residential developments, providing recreation opportunities to residents. In addition to providing parks and recreational areas, large natural open spaces should be preserved and incorporated into developments wherever possible to further offset the impacts of development with regard to ecology, habitat, hydrology, and scenic value. Sidewalks, water and sewer service should also be provided as components of new development.

For large developments the desirability and feasibility of townhomes or condominiums could be explored when other community objectives such as open space protection and habitat preservation can then be achieved as part of the proposed development.

Single-family attached and multi-family dwellings are an important component of a vital housing stock. Opportunities for such housing, including senior housing, exist throughout the Planning Area; they should be located near existing similar uses and near Byron’s commercial areas. Within the older residential areas near Downtown, opportunities for infill residential development will provide appropriate sites for multi-family and single-family housing. Townhomes, condominiums, apartments, and senior housing offer additional housing choices to the community and will add a greater resident base for the Downtown and Blackhawk Drive commercial areas. Other appropriate areas for these alternative housing options are near major rights-of-way, including railroads and main roads, and near any future vacated gravel excavation sites. Multi-family and senior housing components can also be included as part of a larger single-family development.also be included as part of a larger single-family development.

figure six
Blackhawk Drive Corridor and Downtown Plan

Figure 6 highlights Byron’s primary commercial areas and sets forth development, redevelopment, and improvement guidelines for the Blackhawk Drive Corridor and Downtown Byron, consisting primarily of the area around 2nd Street.

Both Blackhawk Drive and Downtown Byron suffer from an inconsistent and overall “unimproved” appearance. Whereas most adjacent residential properties are well maintained and attractive, many commercial buildings and properties are functionally obsolescent, underutilized, or suffer from facade or other appearance issues. Few properties offer adequate site or building size to accommodate contemporary uses or developments to serve Byron’s growing population.

Recommendations made here attempt to improve the function, appearance, and accessibility of the area’s properties and structures. Development/redevelopment sites, public and private improvements, and urban design characteristics are intended to improve and fully utilize Byron’s commercial areas.

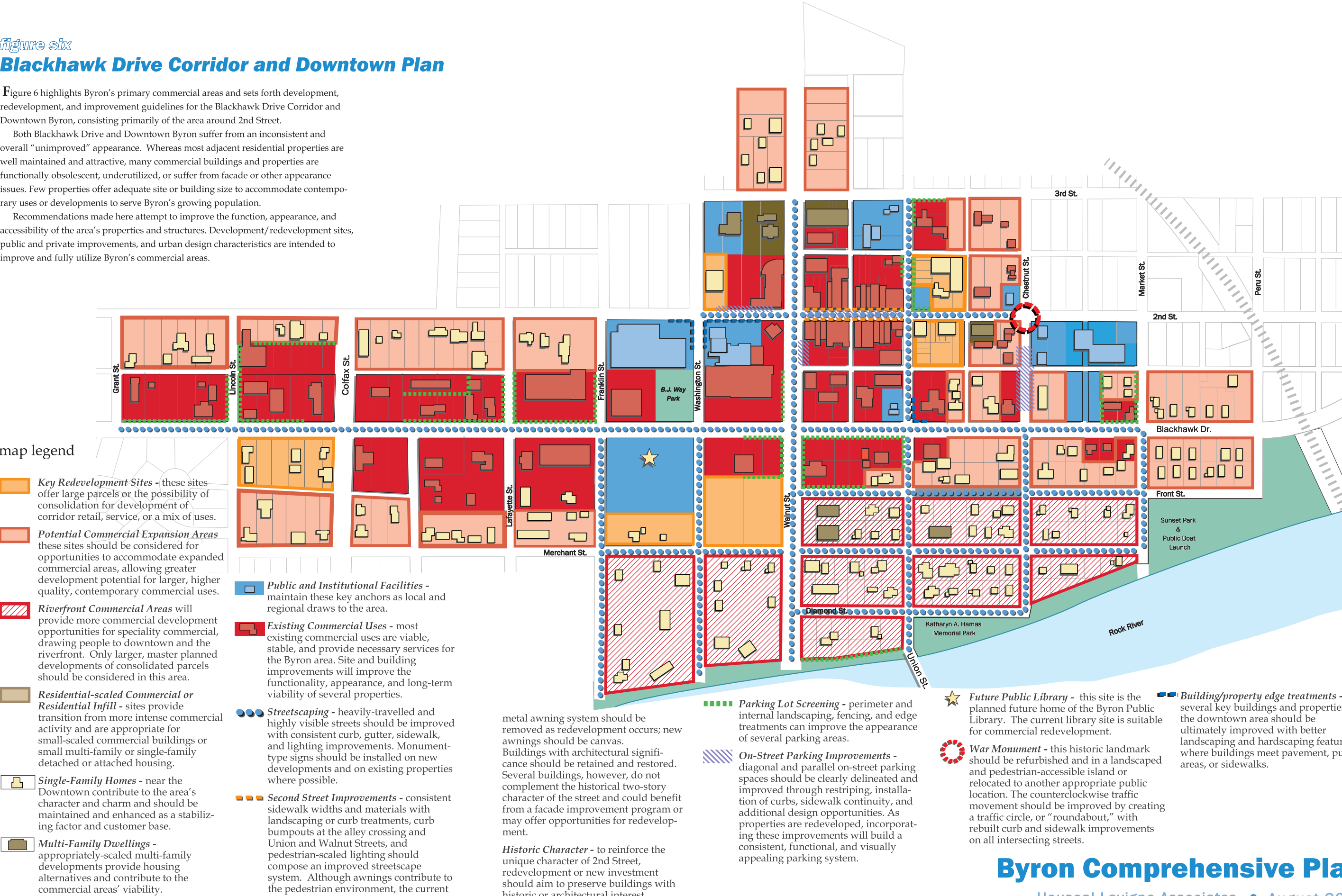
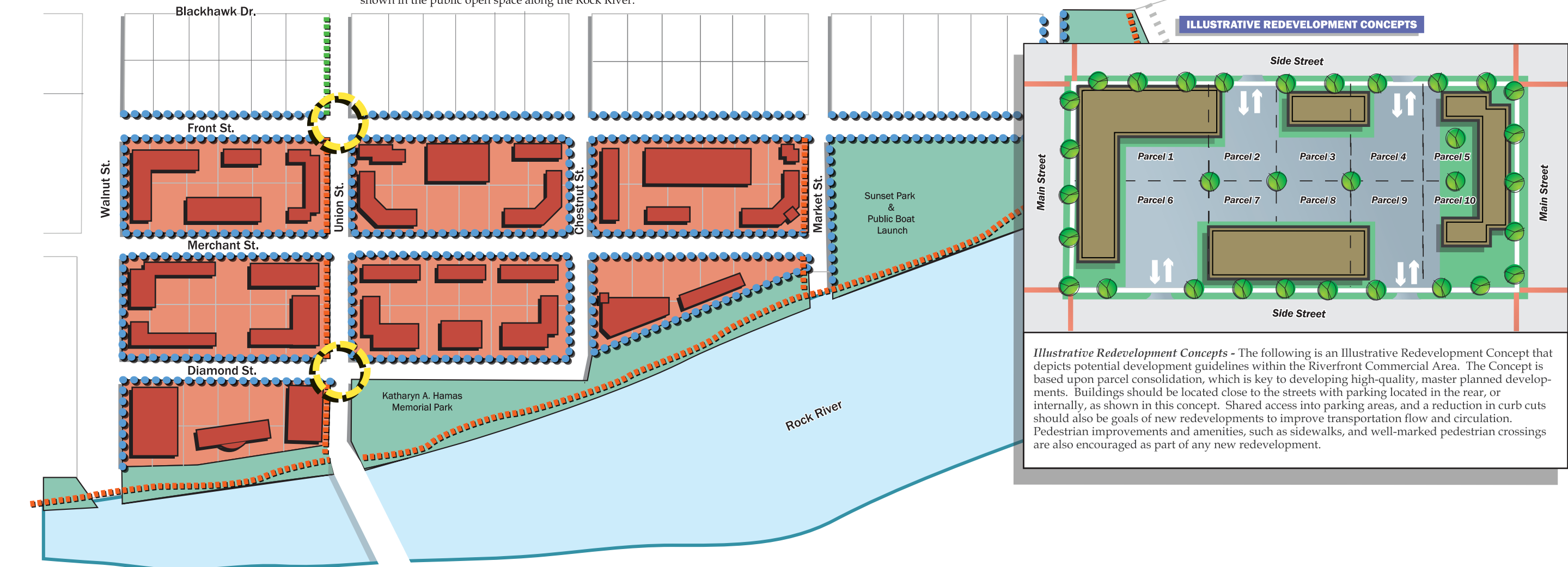


figure seven

Riverfront Commercial Redevelopment Concept

Figure 7 highlights Byron’s primary riverfront commercial areas and sets forth development, redevelopment, and improvement guidelines for the area. The concepts shown on this figure illustrate potential redevelopment and improvements scenarios that could occur in the City’s

Riverfront area. Key features of these concepts include the need to consolidate parcels to allow for high-quality, better planned developments that are attractive and create a strong street wall. Streetscaping and screening are important components of any redevelopment in this area. In this concept, a multi-use path is shown in the public open space along the Rock River.



map legend

Potential Riverfront Commercial Areas will provide more commercial development opportunities for speciality commercial, drawing people to downtown and the riverfront. These sites should be considered for opportunities to accommodate expanded commercial areas, allowing greater development potential for larger, higher quality, contemporary commercial uses. These sites offer large parcels or the possibility of consolidation for development of corridor retail, service, or a mix of uses. This plan identifies potential concept buildings for the areas. New development along the riverfront should incorporate the river in their architecture and site design. Buildings should not

turn their backs on the river, but embrace the river, by creating views and connections towards it. Windows, seating areas, and outdoor areas should be designed to take advantage of views overlooking the Rock River.

Streetscaping - heavily-travelled and highly visible streets should be improved with consistent curb, gutter, sidewalk, and lighting improvements.

Business Signage - monument-type signs should be installed on new developments and on existing properties where possible.

Street Improvements - consistent sidewalk widths and materials with landscaping or curb treatments,

curb bumpouts at the alley crossing and Union Street, and pedestrian-scaled lighting should compose an improved streetscape system.

Building Improvement/Reuse-Buildings with architectural significance should be retained and restored. Several buildings, however, do not complement the historical two-story character of the street and could benefit from a facade improvement program or may offer opportunities for redevelopment.

Parking Lot Screening - perimeter and internal landscaping, fencing, and edge treatments can improve the appearance of several parking areas.

Parking Improvements - As properties are redeveloped, parking areas should be located within blocks, or at the rear of buildings. Access should be from side streets with cross-access connecting parking areas wherever feasible. Incorporating these improvements will build a consistent, functional, and visually appealing parking system.

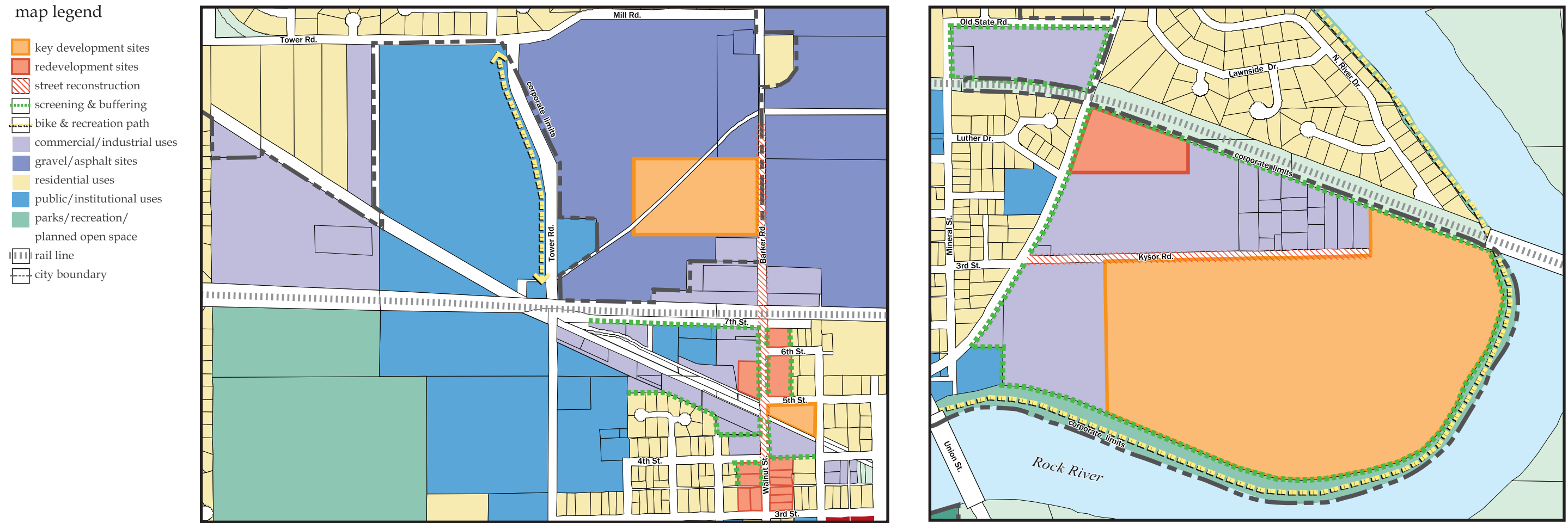
Sidewalks/Recreation Path - Sidewalks should be installed on both sides of the streets within the Riverfront Commercial area. Sidewalks should have pedestrian crossings that are well-lit, and clearly marked. These sidewalks should connect with the Downtown area and the riverfront.

Connections to the recreation path along the river will promote usability of the path and bring visitors and potential customers into the Downtown.

Intersection Improvements - sidewalks and crosswalks should be improved to provide more comfortable pedestrian access at these important intersections.

Building/property edge treatments - several key buildings and properties in the downtown area should be ultimately improved with better landscaping and hardscaping features where buildings meet pavement, public areas, or sidewalks.corridor retail, service, or a mix of uses.

figure eight
Industrial Area Development Policies & Improvement



Byron's industrial areas, along Walnut Street/Barker Road north of the City and along Kysor Road on the City's eastern edge, do not function as cohesive commercial areas and provide few options for large tenants. Vehicular (especially truck) access is limited, streets are generally in poor condition, and adjacent uses are not compatible with industrial or commercial service uses. This section provides improvement and development recommendations that attempt to make Byron's industrial areas attractive and accommodating to new development.

Walnut/Barker/Tower Road Areas - this area developed at the confluence of Byron's two rail lines and serves as a local employment, storage, and service center. Quality Metal Finishing, a major regional employer, occupies several sites adjacent to the now-abandoned railroad right-of-way. Its facilities are generally in sound and stable condition but could benefit from better screening, especially in parking areas adjacent to residences. Where possible, its facades along Walnut Street could also be better screened from the street. Should expansion be necessary, vacant sites along the abandoned right-of-way and immediately to the north could provide significant land for building or parking expansion. Any new developments should incorporate extensive screening along the street across from residential areas.

The presence of large storage tanks, although necessary for business operations, is not desirable near residential areas. If this site is not redeveloped, extensive screening on both sides of Walnut Street could help buffer the existing homes from the incompatible facility. Residential properties along Walnut Street should ultimately be replaced with small commercial service or light industrial uses, which could include those potentially displaced by downtown or Blackhawk Drive redevelopment, such as auto repair and service uses. Any new developments should be limited in size and service level and should provide extensive screening at the rear of properties.

Several storage facilities along Barker Road are acceptable and desirable forms of development for the area, as they provide storage options for a growing residential and business base.

Two additional larger sites exist for development at the northern end of the corridor. Currently agricultural land, these sites back up to the gravel excavation/asphalt processing areas on either side of Barker Road. Their positions between existing light industrial uses and the potentially long-term presence of the gravel sites make them prime locations for complementary service or industrial development. However, their distance from Blackhawk and the presence of surrounding residential areas decrease their desirability for major truck-oriented uses. These sites should be developed as a series of small service uses, either in a large service strip center or in several smaller buildings.

The gravel/asphalt sites comprise significant amounts of land on both sides of Barker Road. These sites' uses in the future will largely shape any possibility of adjacent development. Should the sites become inactive in their current capacities, development pressures could bring residential uses along their periphery. These sites should attempt to minimize their impact on the surrounding environment and developments.

The Walnut Street/Barker Road area's appearance is crucial to the longevity of the residential and commercial environments of the area. Extensive street reconstruction, including curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and consolidated curb cuts are essential to making the area attractive and safe for residents and employees. The commercial/industrial area west of the future middle school should be well buffered from the adjacent school and residential properties.

Kysor Road/Jackson Knoll Industrial Areas - this area is home to more recent office and light industrial/commercial service developments and offers significant available land and good regional access to and visibility from State Routes.

Current uses include the Byron Clinic, Bergstrom, and several smaller service uses. The Bergstrom and Byron Clinic facilities are representative of current and anticipated demands for large buildings with ample parking and good regional access and visibility. These facilities should continue to serve the community and are key to the future development of the area.

Properties further east on Kysor Road are generally less attractive and do not make optimal use of the expansive sites and good access. These repair and service uses, although likely viable, should be encouraged to consolidate in a large, contiguous development within the Kysor Road area or be relocated to a site along the Walnut Street/Barker Road corridor.

The area's large, contiguous tracts of undeveloped flat land, currently used for agriculture, are crucial for large-scale investment. Two Jackson Knoll parcels off Old State Road will require adequate screening as commercial service and light industrial uses are developed. Developments off Kysor Road will need to account for the Rock River floodplain and develop accordingly, with a minimum setback from the river of 100 feet.

Additionally, Kysor Road will require significant improvement, including consistent curbs, gutters, and lighting. IDOT has planned for an expansion of its intersection with IL 2 to provide a left-turn lane for southbound traffic onto Kysor Road; a traffic signal at IL 2 may become necessary based on traffic volumes at the intersection. The right-of-way should also be expanded to accommodate greater truck automobile traffic. Depending on specific development pressures, small access streets branching off of Kysor Road could be constructed to enable or improve access to more isolated sites.

A recreation trail located within a natural buffer area along the Rock River will help preserve the river's scenic quality and provide additional recreation and transportation opportunities for residents and employees. The space could incorporate picnic tables and small recreation areas to allow employees to benefit from being near the river. The trail and open space area should be within a buffer area at least 100 feet wide from the normal edge of the river to any adjacent industrial development. The Kysor Road area's good access and visibility and availability of land, coupled with a demand for large, quality space, create the potential to become Byron's key industrial service site. Incorporating this entire area into the city will provide needed tax revenue and will continue to balance Byron's economy.

Section 5: Community Facilities Plan

Byron community facilities and services have special emphasis in the Plan. They provide for the day-to-day needs of residents and businesses, and help define the quality of community life. In the Greater Byron Area, the services and facilities which support and enhance the quality of life are of great importance. They include activities traditionally provided by local governments, districts and agencies, and include: education, public recreation and open space, police and fire protection, library services and historic and cultural programs and services. Some public facilities and services are absolutely necessary, while others are highly desirable. In either case, it is essential that the Greater Byron Area make plans for their provision in the future.

The Plan designates areas for the expansion of community facilities that are anticipated in the future, under concept development presently, and that have recently been approved. These expansion areas include: School District Middle School relocation to the area north of its present location and a potential new northern area elementary school; Forest Preserve expansion in several areas that reflect recent activities by the District, including the addition of 53 acres to the Atnar Forest Preserve property; Library District relocation to a new library facility south of its current location; a northern area satellite Fire District facility; and planned open space areas that may require the joint efforts of the City, Forest Preserve, and developers/landowners to protect and enhance key areas in the future. The Plan also designates possible areas along the Rock River for potential marina/canoe launch/river commercial development.

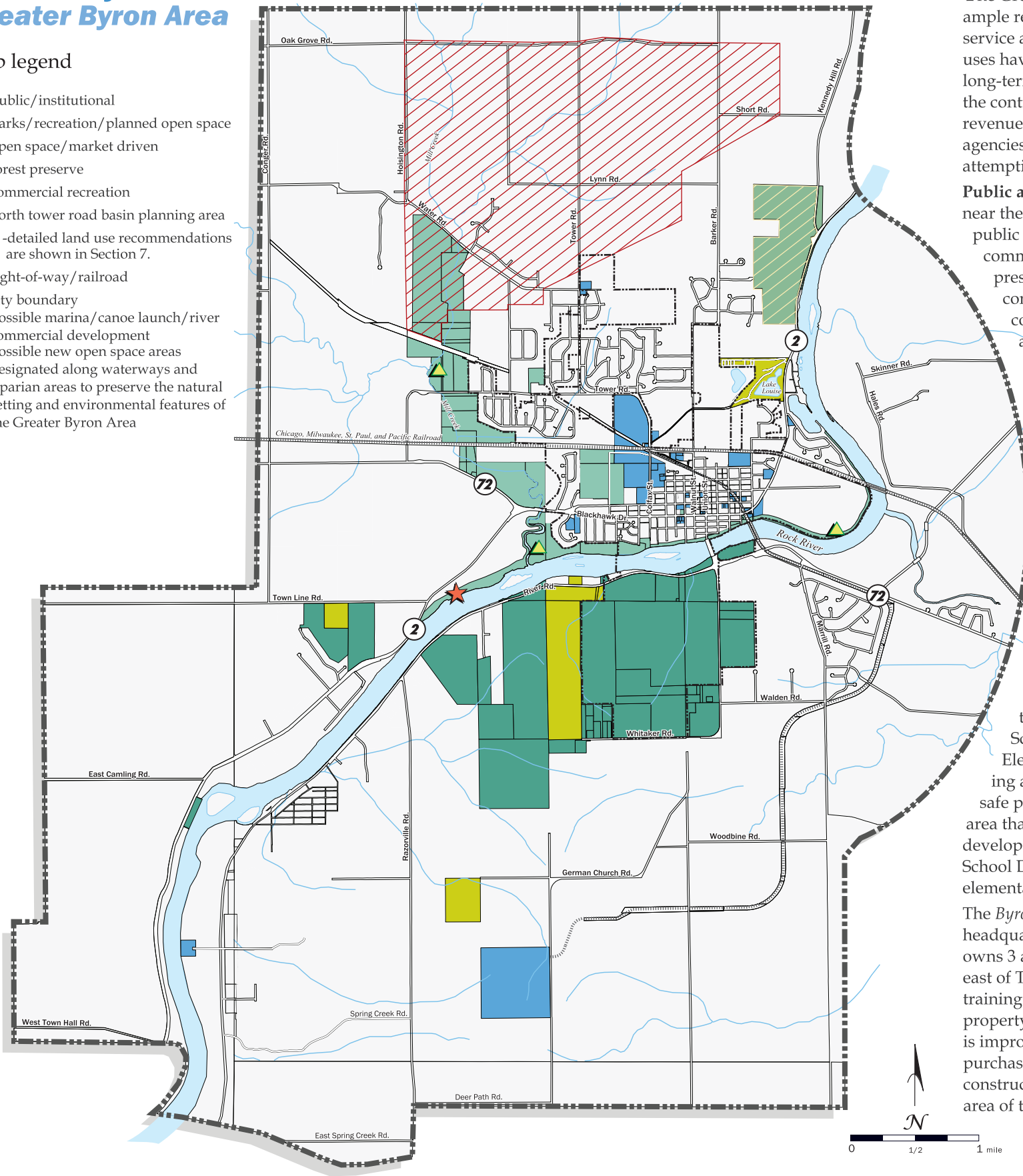
Also, included, as part of the Community Facilities Plan is a preliminary Sewer and Water Utility Plan. The Sewer and Water Utility Plan illustrates existing conditions, such as the location of the current wastewater treatment plant basins, as well as four new preliminary sanitary sewer locations that would extend service north into the North Tower Road Drainage Basin Area. The four preliminary sanitary sewer options are based upon the City's 2006 *Facilities Report*. The land within the City of Byron that is currently tributary to the existing Wastewater Treatment Plant has nearly reached capacity, leaving little room for growth. The City has identified the area outside of the current Plan tributary, the North Tower Road Drainage Basin Area, as a priority area for new growth. Providing infrastructure and utilities, such as sewer and water service to this area are crucial to the future development pattern of this area.

This section summarizes future needs and long-range recommendations for community facilities. Key recommendations are presented in Figure 8, *Community Facilities Plan*, and Figure 9, *Sewer and Water Utility Plan*. It is important to emphasize that the Comprehensive Plan presents general policies and guidelines for community facilities throughout Byron's Planning Area. It is not intended to pre-empt or substitute for the more detailed planning and programming which should be undertaken in the future by various districts, municipal departments and other public agencies and organizations.

figure nine
**Community Facilities Plan:
Greater Byron Area**

map legend

- public/institutional
- parks/recreation/planned open space
- open space/market driven
- forest preserve
- commercial recreation
- north tower road basin planning area
- detailed land use recommendations are shown in Section 7.
- right-of-way/railroad
- city boundary
- possible marina/canoe launch/river commercial development
- possible new open space areas designated along waterways and riparian areas to preserve the natural setting and environmental features of the Greater Byron Area



The Greater Byron Area benefits from a scenic setting, ample recreation opportunities, and responsive public service agencies. Its range of public, institutional, and park uses have helped establish Byron’s high quality of life. The long-term desirability of the area, however, will depend on the continuation of services now heavily reliant on tax revenue from the Byron Nuclear Plant. Various taxing agencies will be forced to seek alternate funding while attempting to maintain the current high levels of service.

Public and institutional uses should continue to be located near the center of Byron. The current mix of churches, public buildings, and schools provides a valuable set of community resources and should maintain a strong presence in the future. However, as development continues to expand outward, these uses should consider smaller, satellite facilities in order to provide appropriate service levels.

Churches, traditionally having served a small, compact population, may face expansion pressures with increased population growth. Expansion on current sites should be favored over relocation, however, new churches may be forced to build in developing areas due to higher land costs and land assemblage difficulties in the city. New churches should be located as close to Downtown Byron as possible.

Byron’s City Hall and administrative complex will likely be adequate for many years. The complex is centrally located within the City and provides administrative and meeting space for residents. The City should continue to promote the meeting space for residents, such as seniors, to utilize.

The *Byron School District* currently has the following three schools located along Colfax Road: Byron High School; Byron Middle School; and Mary Morgan Elementary School. The District is currently constructing a new Middle School north along Tower Road. A safe pedestrian rail crossing should be constructed in this area that connects to the City’s recreational paths. As new development expands in the northern growth area, the School District should continue to investigate if a new elementary school is needed in that area.

The *Byron Fire Protection District* operates out of its headquarters at 123 North Franklin Street. The District also owns 3 acres across the tracks near the Byron Middle School, east of Tower Road. This property is used primarily as a training location for the District. The District’s third property is 3 acres north of Well #4. The property currently is improved with a 200’ cellular tower. The District purchased this property in 1999 with the intention of constructing a satellite station to serve the northern growth area of the City. As new growth continues northward, this

property may no longer be ideal for a satellite facility. The Fire Protection District should pursue the acquisition of another satellite location further north. If a new property is acquired, the District should work with the Park District to develop the property as a future park site, or sell the property for future commercial/retail development to take advantage of the Tower Road frontage.

The *Byron Public Library* has plans to construct a new library facility, south of its current location on Blackhawk Drive. After relocation, the current library facility should be redeveloped into a commercial/retail use to capitalize on the site’s excellent frontage along Blackhawk Drive in the Downtown area.

The Lucius Read House and Byron Museum of History are part of the *Byron Museum District*. Since its organization in the early 1990s, the Museum strives to preserve Byron’s rich local and area history. There are no plans at this time to expand the Museum.

Parks and recreational facilities are some of Byron’s greatest assets and should be protected, enhanced, and expanded in the future. Byron’s scenic setting along the Rock River provides numerous opportunities for enhancing the park and open space system.

The *Byron Forest Preserve District*, which currently owns a large amount of property in the community will likely remain active in purchasing and preserving recreational lands. Where possible, large areas along the river should be preserved to ensure public access in the future. The current Forest Preserve/Prairie View Golf Course site should be expanded to the south to provide a larger, contiguous space and to prevent incompatible uses from being developed near German Church Road and the west. The district should also continue its role as a regional program and service provider, especially as the population grows.

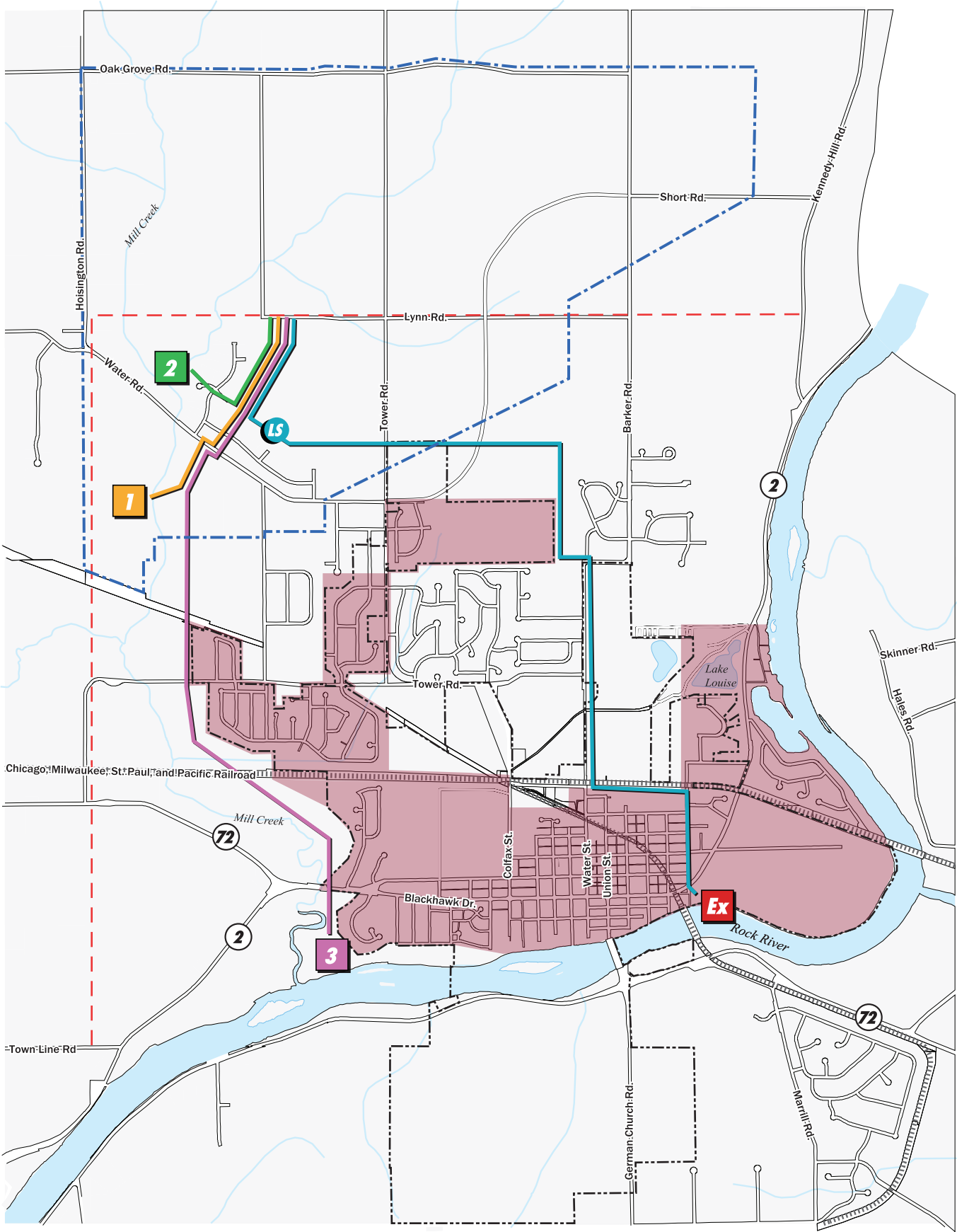
The *Byron Park District*, which currently owns little land, should be encouraged to acquire large areas along the river and near creek or stream beds, especially in the northwest part of the area, for public access and recreational use. Residential developers should be encouraged to set aside significant public open spaces, managed by the Park District, that would add to the subdivisions’ overall value and beauty.

Recreation paths should be expanded to utilize the riverfront and to serve the growing population to the north. Recreational access to the Rock River for boating, fishing, canoeing, walking, bike riding, and other related water/shore activities should be encouraged. However, it is important that the natural setting and atmosphere of the Rock River and adjacent area be preserved.

figure ten
Sanitary Sewer and Water Options

map legend

- Ex existing sewage treatment plant
- 1 proposed treatment plant option 1
- sanitary sewer line option 1
- 2 proposed treatment plant option 2
- sanitary sewer line option 2
- 3 proposed treatment plant option 3
- sanitary sewer line option 3
- proposed sewer line option 4
- LS proposed lift station option 4
- serviced wastewater treatment basin areas
- creek/drainage ditches
- north tower drainage basin boundary
- existing FPA boundary
- city boundary



The City of Byron completed a infrastructure plan for the community in August 2006. The *2006 Facility Report for the Evaluation of the Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant* provides a detailed review and analysis of the existing municipal infrastructure. As new development continues in the community, especially in the growth areas, such as the North Tower Road Drainage Basin area, the City should continue to evaluate options for providing municipal infrastructure to these areas.

The City's current wastewater treatment plant is located on the southeast side of Byron near the Rock River. The plant has been in operation for approximately 70 years. The design average flow of the plant is 573,000 gallons per day. As of March of 2006 the average daily flow was 390,000 gallons per day, with capacity for an additional 183,000 gallons per day, or approximately 522 homes.

Much of the property within the City's current existing plant tributary is developed. Therefore, there is little opportunity for growth within this area, and to deal with new growth, the North Tower Road Drainage Basin has been identified as the next logical area for expansion.

Four options are presented in the City's *2006 Facility Report for the Evaluation of the Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant*, which are illustrated on this figure.

- Options one and two provide new infrastructure and facilities in close proximity to the North Tower Road Drainage area. Option three proposes a new plant along the Rock River to the south while option four requires significant expansion of the existing plant and existing infrastructure.
- Other issues impacting potential options for new infrastructure include the drainage of the North Tower Road Drainage Basin area and significant grade changes along its southern boundary.
- Options for providing the capacities required for future development in this area will most likely require an expansion to the existing plant along with replacement of existing infrastructure for accommodating the increased capacity, or constructing new facilities and infrastructure along Mill Creek at key locations.

The 2006 Facility Report provides detailed comparative analysis for the four options. Each is reviewed based upon estimated costs, future growth areas, the current conditions of the existing wastewater treatment plant, and the ability to expand the current FPA limits.

As growth occurs within the community, especially in the future growth areas such as the North Tower Road Drainage Basin, the City should continue to work with the public sector to ensure appropriate infrastructure is installed to service these areas.

Section 6: Transportation Plan - Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

This section presents the *Transportation Plan* for the Greater Byron Area. There are a variety of specific transportation improvement recommendations planned to maintain and improve the basic street system, circulation, and parking in the developed areas, as well as recommendations for improvements to the extraterritorial planning areas that are facing significant development and growth pressures.

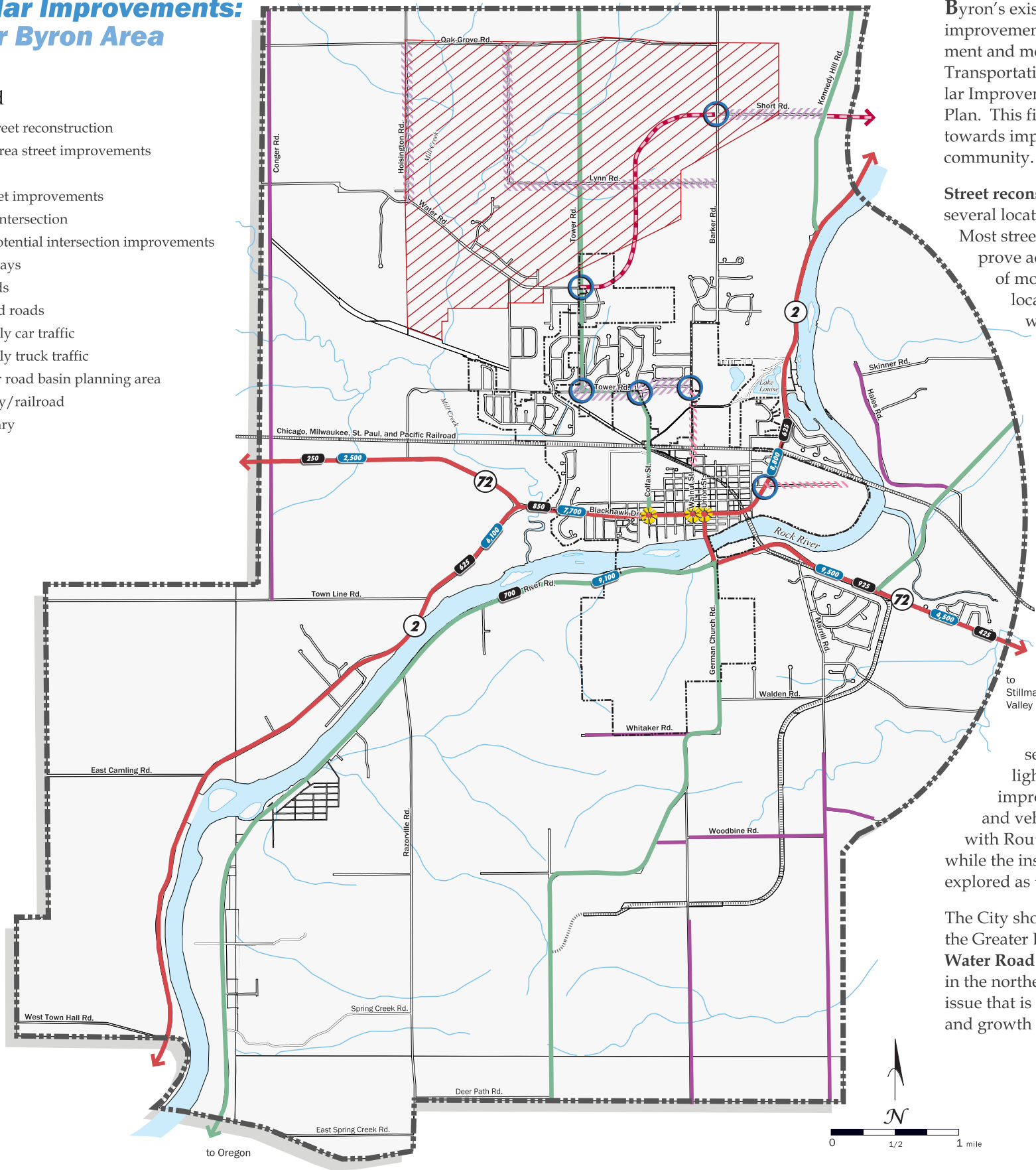
The Transportation Plan is comprised of two figures; a *Vehicular Improvement Plan* (Figure 10), and a *Pedestrian Improvement Plan* (Figure 11). Together, both these figures form the Transportation Plan. The Plan addresses several important components of the Greater Byron Area including: street reconstruction projects and priority areas; intersection improvements; projects needing county or state assistance; and recreation path plans and recommendations for future expansion and connection to the Grand Illinois Trail. More detailed intersection, street, circulation, and parking improvement recommendations for the commercial and industrial areas of the community can be found in *Section 4: Land-Use Plan*, Figures 6 and 7.

figure eleven

Vehicular Improvements:
Greater Byron Area

map legend

- areas for street reconstruction
- industrial area street improvements
- new road
- second street improvements
- signalized intersection
- planned/potential intersection improvements
- state highways
- county roads
- unimproved roads
- average daily car traffic
- average daily truck traffic
- north tower road basin planning area
- right-of-way/railroad
- city boundary



Byron's existing transportation system and proposed improvements will help to shape the area's development and mobility for many years to come. The Transportation Plan is formed of two figures: A Vehicular Improvement Plan, and a Pedestrian Improvement Plan. This figure illustrates improvements oriented towards improving vehicular flow and circulation in the community.

Street reconstruction projects should be undertaken in several locations throughout the Greater Byron Area. Most streets within the current City limits should prove adequate to serve local traffic. The condition of most streets is relatively good, with few locations where significant improvements would affect traffic flow.

The City should continue to build upon the completed improvements to the **Walnut Street/Barker Road**, at the northern edge of the Byron City limits. The street should be reconstructed to improve rail crossings, street conditions, and the appearance of the corridor. Potential development along this short stretch of road will benefit from an improved and enhanced street. New surface, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and lighting will help to make the area more desirable and functional for residents and businesses.

Kysor Drive should be rebuilt and widened to provide better access to this developing industrial and commercial service area. New surface, curbs, gutters, and lighting should be incorporated into any improvements to accommodate increased truck and vehicular traffic. Intersection improvements with Route 2 planned by IDOT should be carried out, while the installation of a traffic signal should be explored as the area develops.

The City should work to connect the northern area of the Greater Byron Area to Route 2 with a new road from **Water Road to Route 2**. A lack of east-west connections in the northern area of Byron connecting to Route 2 is an issue that is expected to worsen as new development and growth occurs.

Montague Road is the only arterial road running east-west in this area and it is well north (5 miles) of the City. As shown on the Plan, Tower Road connects with Route 2 by extending Water Road to the east to Short Road to Route 2. The City should also work to connect this new road east of Kennedy Hill Road to Route 2.

Tower Road/Mill Road Intersections, two intersections where Tower Road meets Mill Road, should be improved. Based upon further engineering studies, Tower Road and Mill Road should be realigned where feasible in two locations to improve the street grid. This would eliminate the current irregular intersections that exist at these two locations. Both intersections will continue to see increased traffic especially with any new additional residential development to the north and west areas. Increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic may require these intersections to be improved with sidewalks and crosswalks at full-way-stop intersections. By improving these intersections, the City will also create improved recreation path crossings. These crossings are important to provide safe access for trail users traversing throughout the City.

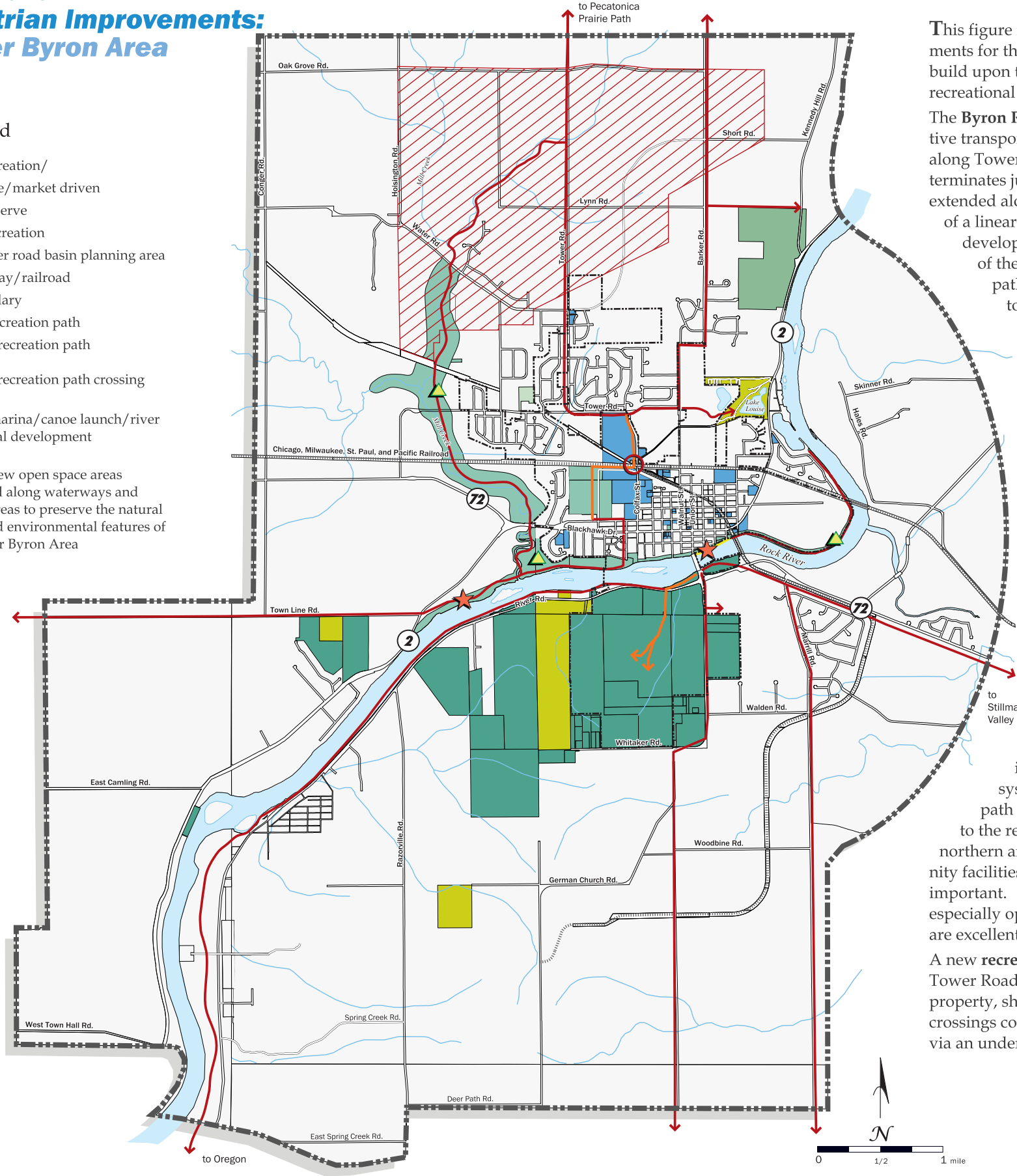
Unimproved roads near developing areas should be resurfaced to accommodate increasing vehicular traffic. Walden and Lynn Roads, given their proximity to existing and planned residential areas, are key to ensuring and limiting development preference to areas near and along these streets.

Residents have cited the lack of **Public Transportation** as a major concern. Most commonly expressed needs are service to Rockford as well as local shuttle-type service, especially for senior citizens. The City, working with other agencies and organizations, may want to explore a fare-based shuttle to Rockford on a daily or weekly basis.

figure twelve
**Pedestrian Improvements:
Greater Byron Area**

map legend

- parks/recreation/
- open space/market driven
- forest preserve
- private recreation
- ▨ north tower road basin planning area
- right-of-way/railroad
- city boundary
- existing recreation path
- proposed recreation path
- proposed recreation path crossing
- ★ possible marina/canoe launch/ river commercial development
- ▲ possible new open space areas designated along waterways and riparian areas to preserve the natural setting and environmental features of the Greater Byron Area



This figure illustrates pedestrian oriented improvements for the Greater Byron Area. These improvements build upon the City’s existing sidewalk system and recreational paths.

The **Byron Recreation Path** is currently a viable alternative transportation route for residents near the river and along Tower Road. The path, which currently terminates just east of the IL 72 bridge should be extended along the north side of the Rock River as part of a linear park and natural buffer between the developing Kysor Road industrial area. This stretch of the path would connect areas east of IL 2 to the path system and provide a safe link to downtown and the riverfront. The path should also continue west of the current route along Merchant Street into a new riverfront park south of River Drive. The path could extend downriver as funds permit. To provide a buffer against any industrial development near Kysor Road, the current path near the Public Works facility should be expanded along the Rock River. This route would link areas to the north while retaining and taking advantage of the scenic quality of the riverfront.

In the northern sector of the community, the recreation path should extend north on Tower Road to reach existing and future residential and new growth areas. The path should continue east of the future Byron Middle School, along Mill Road to Fawn Ridge and Rose Meadows subdivisions connecting to the existing subdivision sidewalk system. As new development continues, the path should extend north to provide connectivity to the recreation path. Opportunities to connect the northern area of Byron to other regional trails, community facilities, schools, the downtown, and the river are important. New open space/parks in the northern area, especially open space buffers along creeks and streams are excellent locations for recreation paths.

A new **recreational path crossing** across the rail line at Tower Road and Colfax Road, adjacent to the School property, should be constructed. Potential path crossings could be at-grade, or preferably underground via an underpass. An underpass would improve the

safety of the recreation path crossing for pedestrian/cyclists and students. As the recreation path continues to expand north the need for an improved rail crossing will continue to increase.

Any new recreation path development should be consistent with the existing design while maintaining a comfortable environment for its users. One of the goals of the Byron Recreation Path is to tie into the Grand Illinois Trail. This goal is important to work towards a larger, interconnected regional trail system.

Section 7: North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan

This section presents the *North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan*. The limits of this area were set by City Council. The boundaries for the area are Oak Grove Road to the north, Hoisington Road to the west, Kennedy Hill Road to the east, and the City limits/drainage divide to the south. The area does not include any parcels south or east of the Rock River and it extends north of the current facility planning area (FPA).

The City has identified this area as the sector of the community that is best suited to handle future growth. The areas to the east, west and south sides of the City have very limited development potential due to topographic issues and/or a lack of developable property. Due to increased development pressures, the City is in need of future growth areas. Currently, the built-up area of the City within the tributary of the existing waste water treatment plant is nearing capacity and therefore, a plan for this growth area is needed.

Although the area has been identified as the location to handle future growth, issues still exist to developing the property including: topographic issues such as steep slopes, a lack of municipal services such as water and sewer, transportation improvements, and the costs associated with providing these municipal services. Future development must be cognizant of the existing topographic changes, creeks and water bodies, vegetation and soils that create the character of the area. Proposed new land uses should be appropriate for the area and should strive to create the community's overall vision for the area and the City as a whole.

The North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan is comprised of five figures; a *Location and Suitability Analysis* (Figure 13), *Suitability Factors* (Figure 14 and 15), *Development Potential* (Figure 16), and a *Land Use Plan* (Figure 17). Together, these figures form the North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan.

The Plan addresses several important components of the area including: transportation and circulation improvements; utility improvements; proposed land uses; community facilities; and parks, open space and recreation paths.

figure thirteen

North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan Introduction & Approach

Purpose - The City continues to grow and developers have continued to encourage the City to expand services that would open additional land for development. The City Council has concluded that in order to control growth and the expansion of the City’s infrastructure system, the Comprehensive Plan should be updated to include a land use plan for the North Tower Road Drainage Basin Area. The North Tower Road Drainage Basin has been identified as the most appropriate growth area for the City.

The City contracted with Arc Design Resources in 2006 to develop an infrastructure plan for the community to aid with future growth. The 2006 Facility Report has been adopted by City Council. The Facility Report includes population projections based upon a conceptual land use plan. The City determined that a more detailed conceptual plan be created for the North Tower Road Drainage Basin area in order to aid in future land use decisions for the infrastructure improvements.

New developments are occurring in this area, and additional residential development proposals continue to be presented to the City. As development continues, the City is being asked to provide sanitary sewer and water service to these new developments even though it is difficult to accurately answer capacity questions or expansion costs. The capacity of the existing City water and wastewater facility is already committed to the land within the City limits. With the continued development pressure on the City from potential developers, the City has identified the area north of Water Road along Tower Road (see location figure on this page), as the most logical direction for growth.

This North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan builds upon the City’s existing reports, studies, and plans to expand the analysis of the area.

Approach to Suitability - In addition to studying existing City plans, reports, and studies, and dialogue with City Staff, elected officials, government agencies, and the public, a Suitability Analysis has been completed to assist with the planning of this area.

The suitability analysis process involves taking an inventory of the various attributes of the North Tower Road Drainage Basin. These attributes fall into three main categories; physical, biological, and cultural. The Plan illustrates the analysis and review for each of these attribute categories. As shown in the following figures, specific attributes for this area, such as soils, topography, water, municipal infrastructure, and existing land uses have been analyzed.

Once these attributes are collected and mapped, the information can be overlaid and relationships between the different attributes can begin to establish both opportunities and constraints within the planning area. The extent of these opportunities and constraints will be measured based on the scope of the project.

At the conclusion of the suitability analysis, a map of the area is provided that classifies the areas into three development categories ranging from areas

with no development limitations, to areas with development limitations, and to areas with severe development limitations.

Establishing the three development suitability types identify which areas of the North Tower Road Drainage Basin are optimal for future development. Based upon the suitability analysis, as well as the previous steps of the planning process, two concept plans for the planning area are presented.

Location - The North Tower Road Drainage Basin Planning Area is defined by the existing roadway system and the unique topography of the area. Two ridgelines running along the edge of the study area help define the southern boundary, along with sections of Water Road and abandoned sections of the Chicago & Milwaukee Railroad right-of-way. The eastern boundary is Barker Road and the northern boundary is Oak Grove Road. The western boundary is defined by Hoisington Road and continues south until reaching the abandoned railroad right-of-way. These boundaries contain approximately 120 parcels making up roughly 2,300 acres of land.

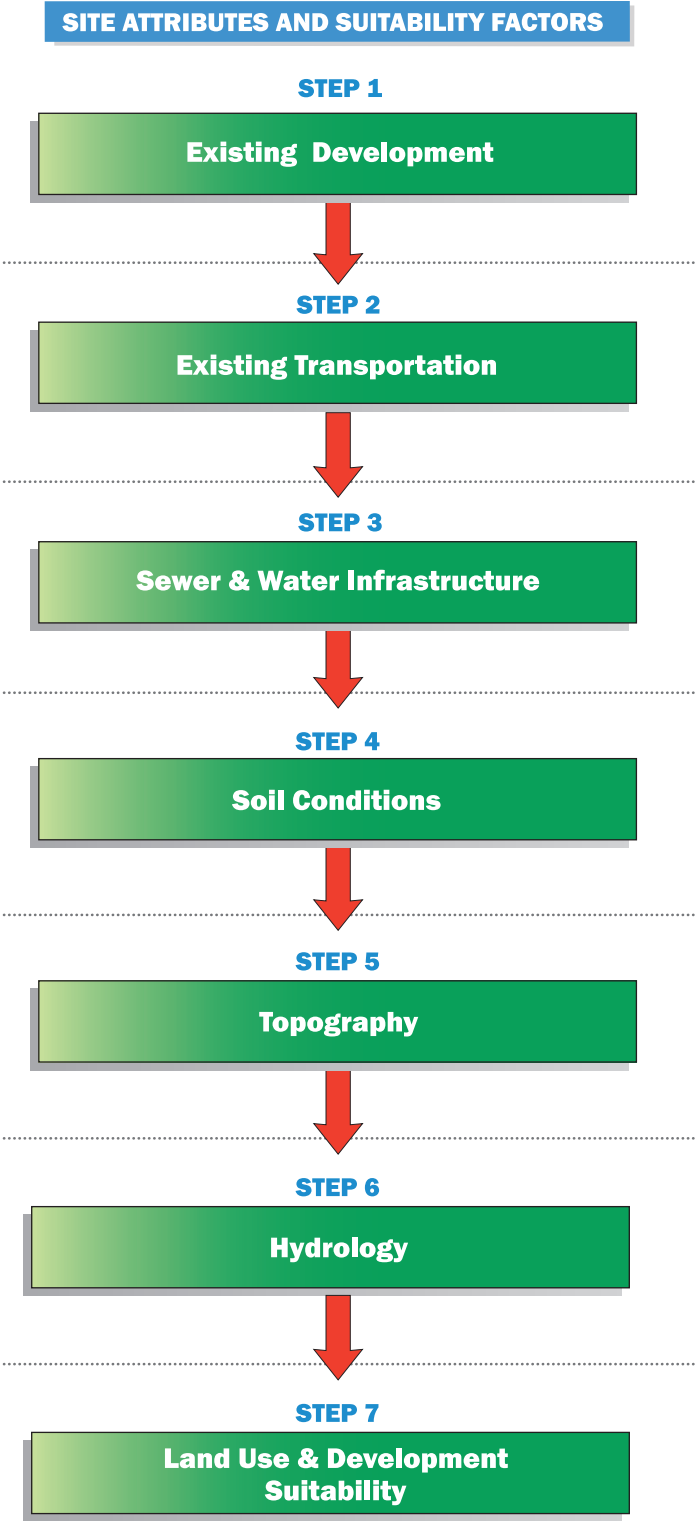
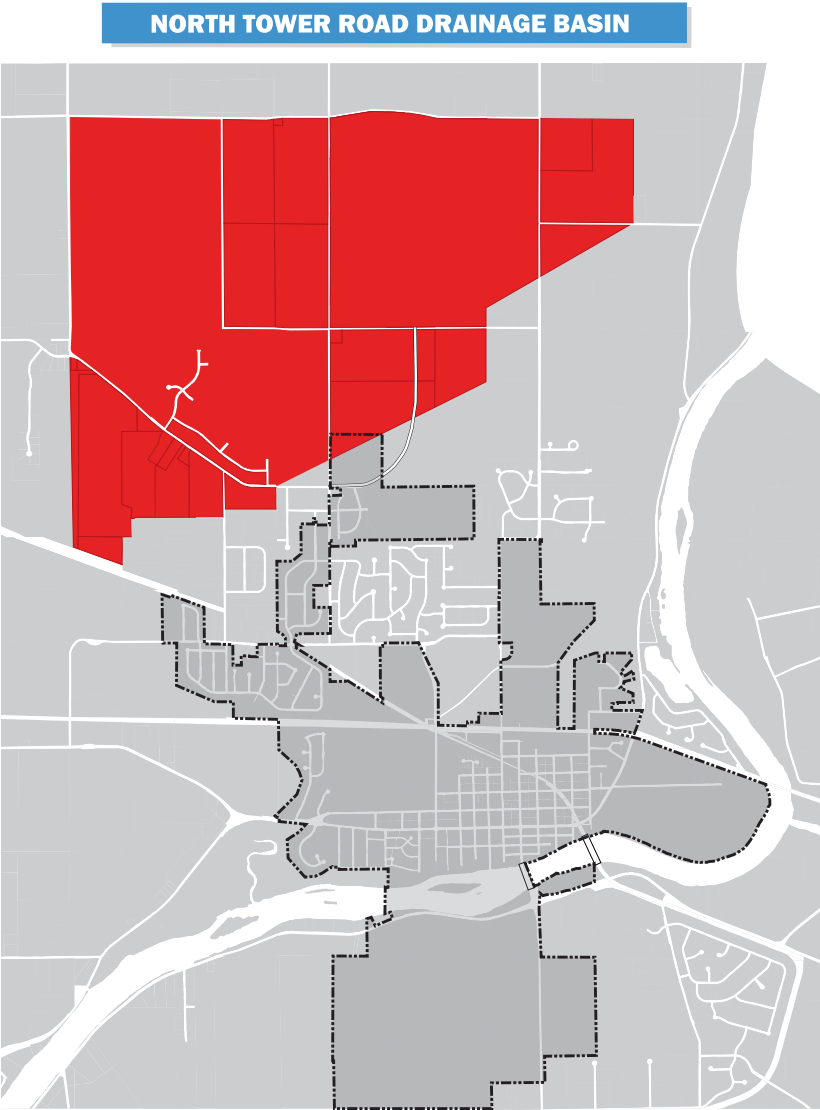
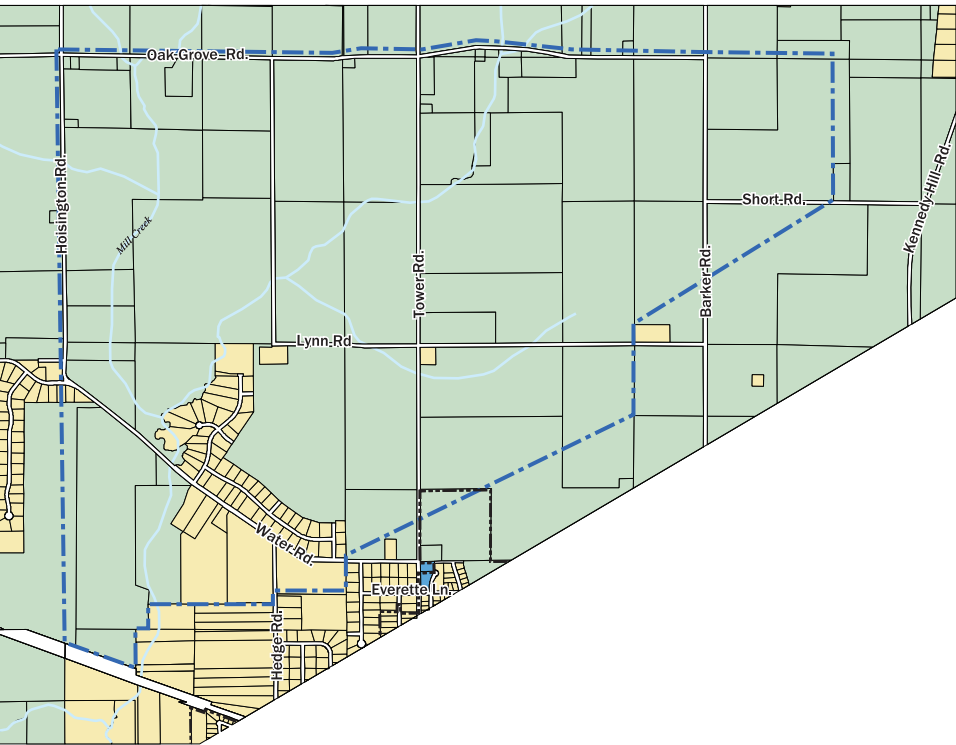


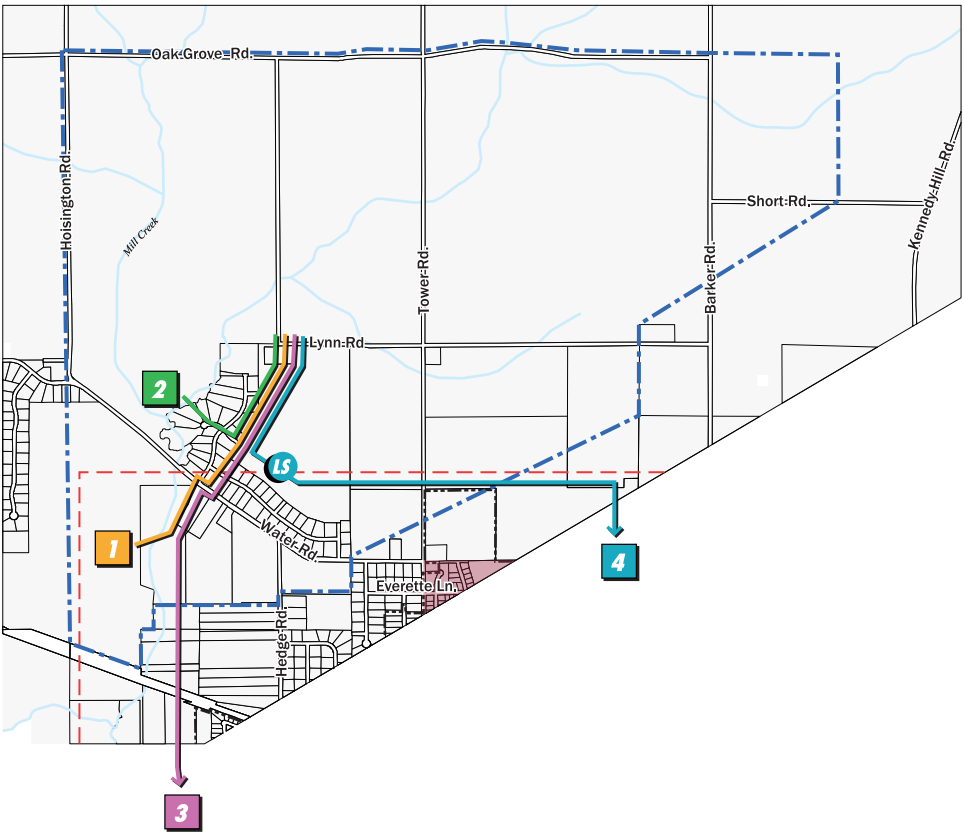
figure fourteen

North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan
Suitability Attributes: Existing Land Use, Transportation, Sewer and Water



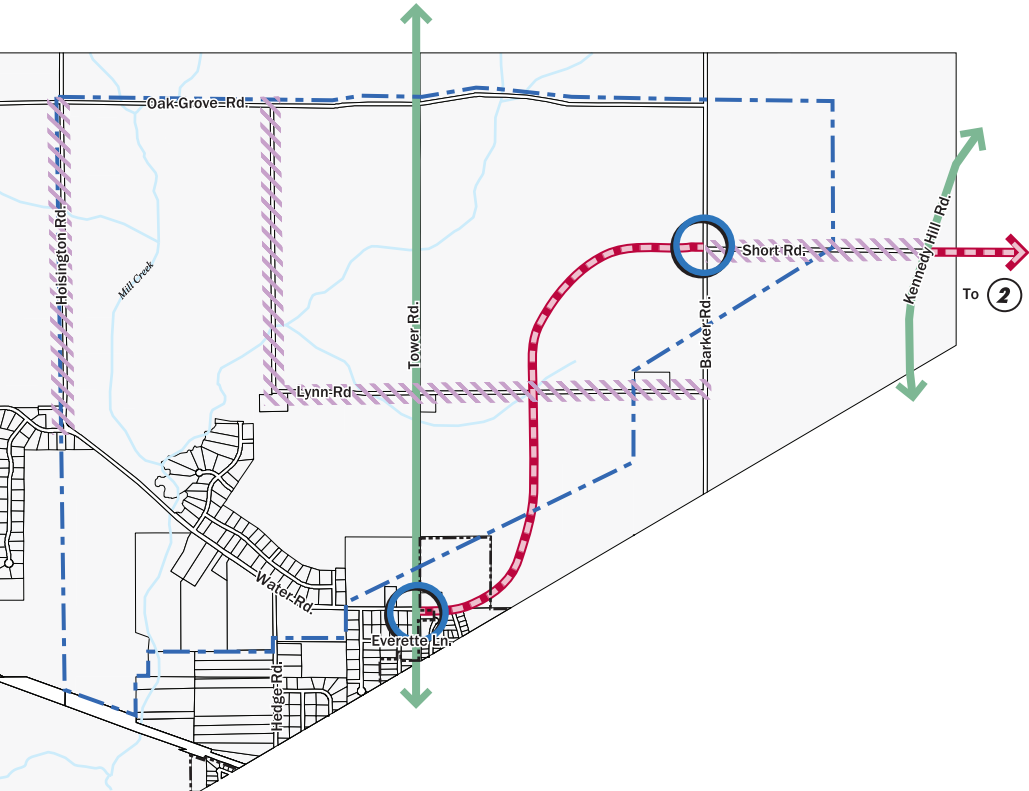
Existing Land Uses within the basin are dominated by two types, single family detached residential and agricultural/open space. With the anticipated growth in the City, focused in this area, the North Tower Road Drainage Basin provides a large acreage of undeveloped lands to accommodate future development.

The existing residential development within the Study Area is located just outside the incorporated city limits and comprises homesites ranging from half acre lots to eight acre lots. Given the future growth of the city with new residential development, a development pattern should be encouraged which connects to existing residential areas and maintains growth close to existing developed areas. Where feasible, new development should minimize any negative effects on existing residential areas.



Sewer and Water Infrastructure does not currently service the North Tower Road Drainage Basin. The area is currently outside the existing service areas of the current water and wastewater treatment plant. The capacity of the current wastewater treatment plant is spoken for.

This figure illustrates four potential infrastructure options that have been presented to the City in the 2006 Facility Report. Options for providing the adequate capacity required for future development in this area will require implementing one of these four options.



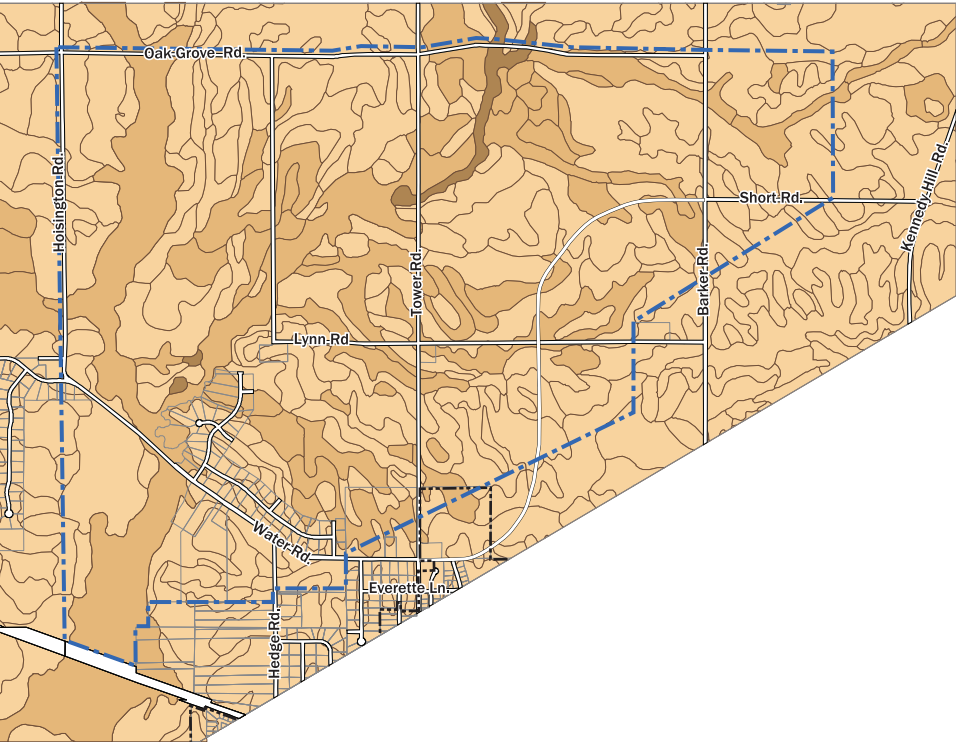
Transportation & Circulation within the basin area currently consists of a combination of two-way asphalt paved streets, and gravel roads. Many of the intersections in the areas consist of four-way stop signs governing movement at intersections. The street pattern follows a one-mile grid consistent with surrounding agricultural areas typical for the region. Only a few streets bisect this grid providing access to existing homes and agricultural areas. Future improvements should include providing additional access into the basin area through road extensions to main roads such as Tower Road and Illinois Route 2.

Additionally, the City should plan on improving intersections of main roads with new stop signs, potential traffic signals, pedestrian crossings, and lighting. Road improvements should be prioritized for Short Road, Lynn Road, and Hoisington Road in anticipation of increased development and traffic in the basin area.

map legend

existing detached single family	existing FPA service boundary
public/institutional	mill road basin area
agricultural/open space	creek/drainage ditches
county road	north tower drainage basin boundary
new road	city boundary
intersection improvements	
areas for street reconstruction	
sewer plant location option 1	
new sewer line option 1	
sewer plant location option 2	
new sewer line option 2	
sewer plant location option 3	
new sewer line option 3	
sewer plant location option 4	
new sewer line option 4	
proposed lift station option 4	

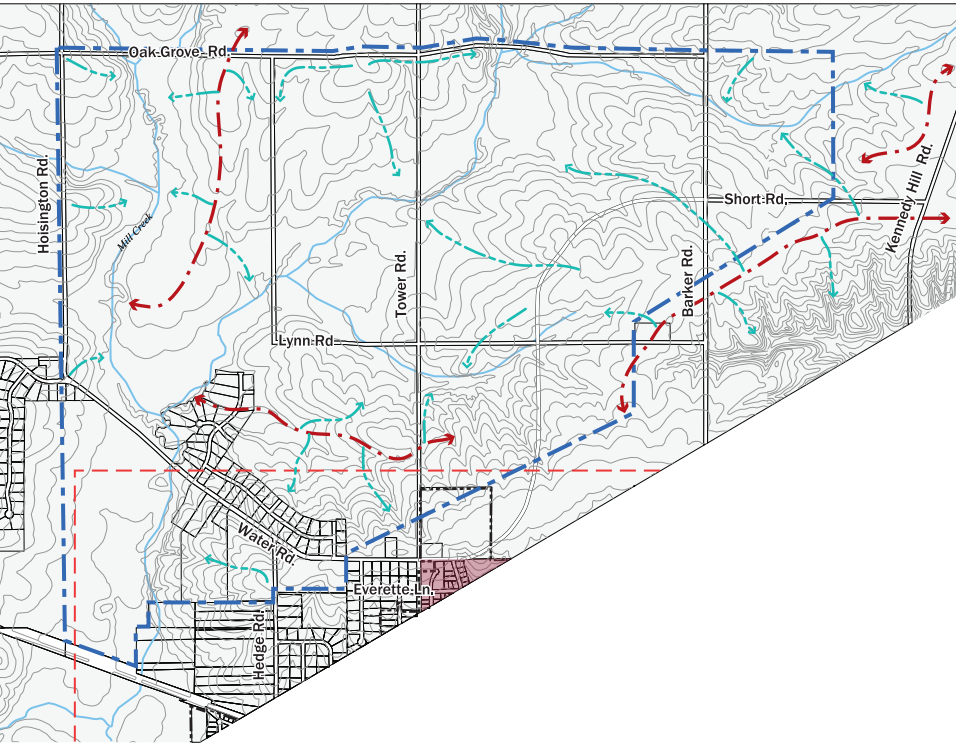
figure fifteen
North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan
Suitability Attributes: Soils, Topography, Hydrology



Soils are classified into three categories within the North Tower Road Drainage Basin; non-hydric/aerobic, partially-hydric, and hydric/anaerobic. Of the three, hydric soils presents the most constraints to future development.

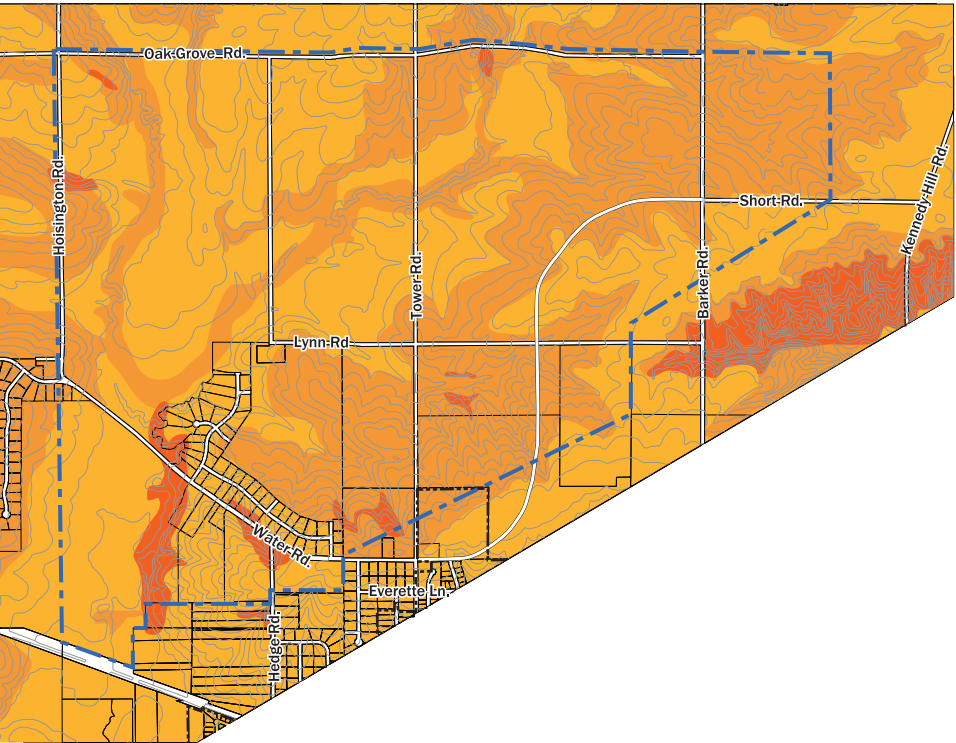
Hydric soils form under conditions of prolonged flooding, saturation, or ponding creating a soil with settling and high expansion and contraction characteristics. Additionally, many hydric soil areas are classified as high quality habitat areas which may be protected by local, state, or federal jurisdictions.

Therefore, areas without hydric soils or limited hydric soils are typically found outside flood prone areas. Areas with all hydric soils are usually found in low lying drainage areas, similar to those within the basin along Mill Creek.



Hydrology across the basin area is defined by the topography and multiple high points within the site. Additionally, seven creeks and agricultural drainage areas bisect the site creating multiple collection points for overland water flow. Ultimately, all precipitation flows into Mill Creek located on the far western side of the site. Mill Creek flows south where it empties into the Rock River.

The North Tower Road Drainage Basin’s hydrology will become an important factor in future engineering studies when weighing options for new infrastructure, especially sanitary sewer and water utilities.



Topography has a strong relationship with development opportunities and constraints. Areas with slight grades, less than 1% to 10%, and moderate grades, 15% to 20%, usually allow for unrestricted development. Areas with severe grades, greater than 20%, usually require home construction with more structural and foundation elements.

Additionally, other environmental factors such as soil conditions, precipitation, vegetation, and low points can compound constraints within severely sloped areas.

The North Tower Road Drainage Basin area has several steep slope areas between Barker Road and Kennedy Hill Road, and areas along Tower Road and Water Road. Consideration should be given to views and established habitats at these locations, especially along Kennedy Hill Road, which may limit future development in these areas.

- maps legend
- non-hydric soils
 - partially hydric soils
 - hydric soils
 - slight slope
 - moderate slope
 - severe slope
 - ridgeline/drainage divide
 - overland flow drainage route
 - mill road basin area
 - 10' contours
 - creek/drainage ditches
 - north tower drainage basin boundary
 - city boundary

figure sixteen
**North Tower Road Drainage Basin Plan
 Development Potential**

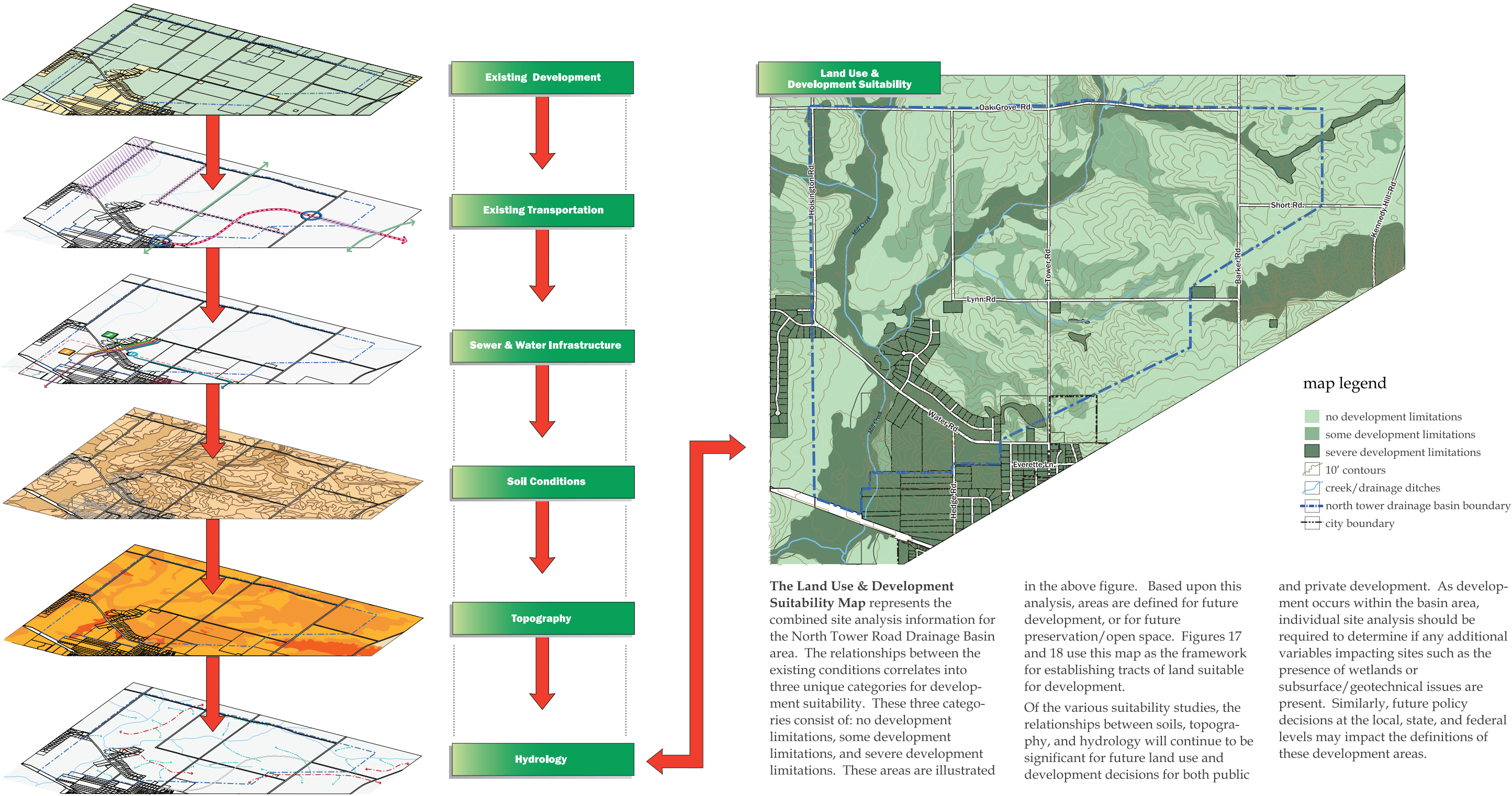
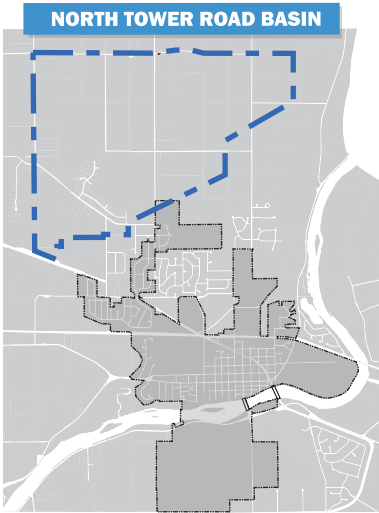
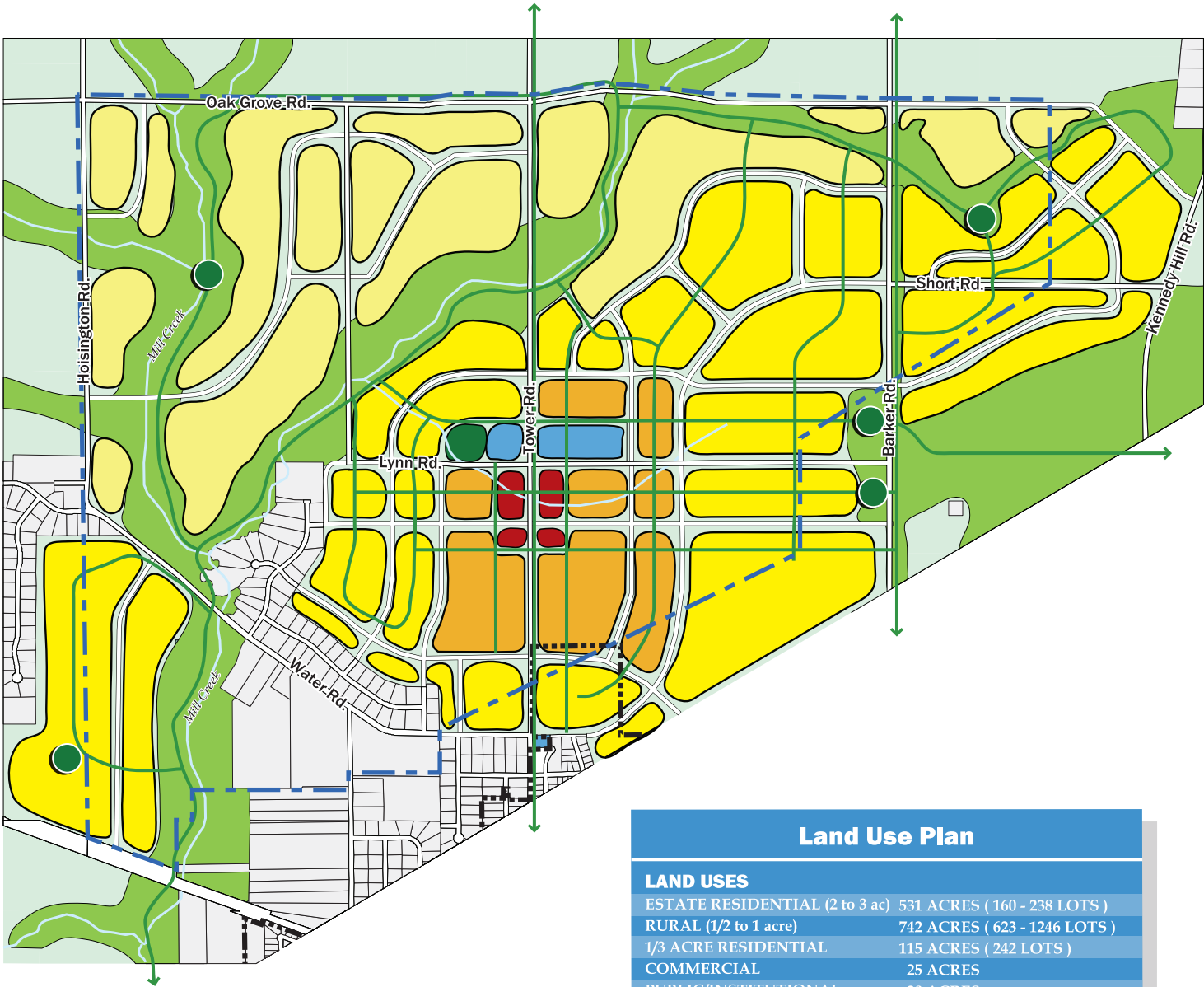


figure seventeen
North Tower Road Drainage Basin Area Land Use Plan

map legend

- existing detached single family
- proposed 1/3 acre single-family
- proposed rural residential (1/2 to 1 acre)
- proposed estate residential (2 to 3 acres)
- commercial
- public/institutional
- agricultural/open space
- planned open space
- proposed neighborhood park
- pedestrian/bike paths
- right-of-way/railroad
- creek/drainage ditches
- north tower drainage basin boundary
- city boundary



Land Use Plan	
LAND USES	
ESTATE RESIDENTIAL (2 to 3 ac)	531 ACRES (160 - 238 LOTS)
RURAL (1/2 to 1 acre)	742 ACRES (623 - 1246 LOTS)
1/3 ACRE RESIDENTIAL	115 ACRES (242 LOTS)
COMMERCIAL	25 ACRES
PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL	30 ACRES
OPEN SPACE	650 ACRES
COMMUNITY PARK	10 ACRES
RIGHT-OF-WAY	200 ACRES
WATER & SEWER PLANT	0 ACRES
INFRASTRUCTURE	
WATER AND SEWER	NEW PLANT NEEDED
CITY COSTS	
	MEDIUM TO MAXIMUM
CHARACTER	
	DIVERSE, NODAL DEVELOPMENT

Diverse Development

This figure illustrates a potential land use plan that is comprised of a variety of residential types, ranging from 1/3 acre, to ½ to 1 acre, to 2 to 3 acre lots. The central sector of the study area is the most dense, including commercial and institutional uses, however, moving outwards the residential density lessens. In the northwest sector of the area, north of Mill Creek, estate residential uses area shown.

Open Space

In this land use plan the creeks and low-lying areas are preserved. Approximately 650 acres of planned open space is shown. General locations for neighborhood park locations are shown in the residential subdivisions, and a larger community park of 10 acres is shown near the intersection of Tower Road and Lynn Road. Multi-purpose trails running through the open space areas, providing connectivity to residents. The open space could also play a role in future stormwater management needs.

Residential

This land use plan shows a diverse residential mix. Near the main arterials through the area, and adjacent to the proposed commercial areas, 1/3 acre residential lots are shown. Within this residential area, single-family detached, single-family attached, and multi-family residential uses are appropriate. Adjacent to the preserved open space and riparian corridors, less dense residential developments are proposed.

Commercial

Based upon the potential number of lots, and expected traffic, this concept shows 25 acres of commercial property in a central node at the intersection of Tower and Lynn Roads. Future commercial uses in this area may include convenient stores, gas stations, dry-cleaning, pharmacies, and a grocery store, etc...

Community Facilities

In addition to the 10-acre community park, other potential community facilities shown on this land use plan include a 10-acre elementary school, a 20-acre church and a future satellite fire station are located near Tower and Lynn Roads. In this land use plan the existing 3-acre fire station property is planned to be residential.

City Infrastructure

Based upon the diverse residential density, and the policy decision to require all properties within the North Tower Road Drainage Basin to connect to City Services, all properties are serviced by City water and septic. In this concept, the extension of Short Road is recommended, as is, the widening of Tower Road. Sidewalks may also be considered along all streets, except for streets through the estate residential areas.

Land Use Plan Overview

After reviewing several concepts of the area, this land use plan is the most diverse and creates a blend of typical suburban, rural, and estate development. This plan combines a mix of residential densities, which in turn requires, a mix of community facilities, such as schools, parks, roads, and infrastructure.

Section 8: Implementation

The planning process in Byron has just begun. In many ways, formal adoption of the *Comprehensive Plan* is only the first step, not the last. Without continuing action to implement and update the Plan, efforts up to this point will have little lasting impact.

The *Comprehensive Plan* sets forth an agreed-upon "road map" for the next ten to fifteen years. It is the product of considerable effort on the part of the Plan Commission, Township and District representatives, City staff, City Council, the Byron Community Revitalization Planning Group, community residents, and others. The final Plan represents the consensus of all involved.

There are several requirements for effective implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan*. These four basic components are highlighted below:

1. **Administrative.** The community should be guided by a suggested agenda of administrative actions which will help establish a policy framework aligned with the recommendations of the *Comprehensive Plan*.
2. **Regulatory.** The community should review and revise its regulatory measures, primarily the zoning ordinance, which can enforce the Plan's policies and recommendations.
3. **Capital Improvements.** The community should utilize project scheduling devices, such as the Capital Improvements Program, which allow implementation of the most important public improvements on a priority system, while staying within budgetary constraints.
4. **Review and Update.** The Plan itself should be subjected to a monitoring process and be updated periodically to continually reflect local aspirations and opportunities.

Each of these implementation components are discussed below.

A. Administrative Actions

These are all high-priority, early-action projects which largely represent public policy or administrative decisions. They do not require a significant new allocation of funds, and they should all be undertaken within a relatively short time frame. These actions relate to revising and updating local codes and ordinances, follow-up studies and related administrative actions.

Economic Development

- A critically important implementation recommendation of the *Comprehensive Plan* is that the community form a strong organizational framework for undertaking the recommendations of the Plan. This should include a close working relationship between the City of Byron, and the various governments within the area.
- The community should also consider appropriate development and developer incentive programs as necessary to initiate a high level of investment in the development and improvement of the City's commercial and employment areas. The use of tax increment financing (TIF) is encouraged as a strong economic development tool.

- The community should continue to create organizational capacity to undertake and direct economic and community development. The community should work closely with the Rock River Economic Development Council to bring additional technical resources to assist the community in its efforts.
- The community should consider the initiation of a facade improvement program to assist property owners in updating the appearance and image of commercial buildings. This should include some level of design review on behalf of the City of Byron and the program should be initially targeted for the Downtown (Second Street) business district and then possibly expanded to other areas of the community.
- The community must make a high priority of working with the development community, businesses and land owners to realize economic change and physical improvement, as recommended under the Plan.
- The Greater Byron Area should continue to support and develop tourism as a means of economic development and community image.

Annexation Plan/Development Agreement Policy

- It is important the City develop and implement an annexation/development agreement policy that better enables the City to plan and provide for the future growth of the area and to accommodate the infrastructure needs of new development. Such a policy would enable the City to work more closely with developers to ensure: 1) appropriate subdivision design, 2) the installation and connection of needed infrastructure improvements, 3) the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, and 4) proper planning and coordination to help new development become a more integral part of the City's overall growth and character.

Housing and Residential Areas

- Closely monitor building conditions in all neighborhoods of the community and strictly enforce all zoning, building, fire safety, and occupancy codes as they apply to all structures.
- Utilize the Land-Use Plan to guide the location, type, and amount of multi-family housing and single-family residential development.
- Revise existing zoning regulations to ensure the protection of sound existing development, to reduce adverse influences, and to establish setback and buffering requirements for new non-residential development.
- Develop a clearinghouse for collecting and disseminating information about funding sources and assistance available to homeowners for home improvements.

Commercial Development

- Utilize the Land-Use Plan to establish basic functional roles for the community's various commercial areas – Downtown and Blackhawk Drive Corridor.
- Update the City zoning map to reflect new commercial area designations.
- Consider the development of access control policies and standards to be integrated into an updated Zoning Ordinance which facilitates the community's desire to reduce

the number of individual curb cuts along Blackhawk Drive in favor of shared or common access ways.

- Introduce standards and guidelines for appearance through the establishment of a commercial improvement policy.
- Continue to participate in economic development programs aimed at attracting attention to business and development opportunities within the Greater Byron Area.
- Hold regular meetings with the business, real estate, and development communities to apprise them of active changes and improvements being undertaken in the community and the part they can play to help stimulate positive change.

Industrial Land-Use Areas

- Review and revise the zoning classification to reflect the appropriate types of employment land-uses proposed as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Establish policies for improving the appearance, landscaping and screening of industrial land-use areas.

Transportation and Community Facilities

- Adopt the Comprehensive Plan Land-Use Plan Map as the community's "Official Map" giving more significant status to the location of future facilities.
- Identify all areas of the community that are in need of sidewalks. A contiguous sidewalk system should be a goal of the community.
- Inventory and identify all on-street and off-street parking facilities that are in need of improvement, restriping, or resurfacing.
- Establish access control standards for Blackhawk Drive.

B. Regulatory

Adoption of the new *Comprehensive Plan* should be followed by a review and update of the City's various development controls including zoning, subdivision regulations, and other related codes and ordinances. It is essential that all development controls be consistent with and complement the new *Comprehensive Plan*.

The City's zoning regulations have not been comprehensively reviewed within the last several years. Among other zoning recommendations included in the Plan, the City should consider the following:

- Conduct an overall review and update of the City's Zoning Ordinance to ensure it adequately addresses the overall recommendations of the Plan.
- Create the appropriate commercial and industrial use zoning classifications as called for in the Plan.
- Update/revise the City's Sign Ordinance to improve the appearance, character, and consistency of signage in the commercial areas of the community.

C. Capital Improvements Program

Another tool for implementing the *Comprehensive Plan* is the Capital Improvements Program. It establishes schedules and priorities for all public improvement projects within a five-year period. The City first prepares a list of all public improvements that will be required in the next five years. Then all projects are reviewed, priorities assigned, cost estimates prepared, and potential funding sources identified. Capital Improvement Districts should also be used by all area governments.

The Capital Improvements Program typically schedules the implementation of a range of specific projects related to the *Comprehensive Plan*, particularly the restoration and upgrading of existing utilities and infrastructure facilities, including the water system, sanitary sewers, storm water facilities, and the street system. Expansion or improvement of City facilities would also be included in the Capital Improvements Program.

Byron's financial resources will be limited and public dollars must be spent wisely. The Capital Improvements Program would allow the City and area governments to provide the most desirable public improvements, yet stay within budget constraints.

D. Review and Revision

The *Comprehensive Plan* is not a static document; the planning process must be continuous. The Plan should be monitored and updated on a regular basis. The need for Plan amendments are the result of many community influences. Most frequently these are brought about by changes in attitudes or emerging needs not foreseen at the time of Plan adoption. The following paragraphs describe the procedures which apply to any amendment of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Day-to-Day Monitoring and Administration

In order for the Plan to be "maintained" and updated in a timely manner, the designation of an agency responsible for coordinating planning activities, receiving community input and comments, and providing and disseminating information regarding the Comprehensive Plan is required. While the City Council is ultimately responsible for implementing the Plan within the city limits, the Plan Commission may be the most appropriate group to update the Plan. The City should, however, carry out the day-to-day activities of Plan administration. The City will:

1. *Make available copies of the Plan document for public purchase.*
2. *Provide assistance to the public in explaining the Plan and its relationship to private and public development projects and other proposals, as appropriate.*
3. *Assist the in the day-to-day administration, interpretation and application of the Plan.*
4. *Maintain a list of current possible amendments, issues or needs which may be a subject of change, addition or deletion from the Comprehensive Plan.*
5. *Coordinate with, and assist in the Plan amendment process.*

Plan Review and Progress Report

Although a proposal to amend the Plan can be brought forth by petition at any time, the City should regularly undertake a systematic review of the Plan. Although an annual re-

view is desirable, the City should initiate review of the Plan at least every two to three years. Ideally, this review should coincide with the preparation of the annual budget and capital improvement program. In this manner, recommendations or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs can be considered as part of the upcoming commitments for the fiscal year. Routine examination of the Plan will help ensure that the planning program remains relevant to community needs and aspirations.