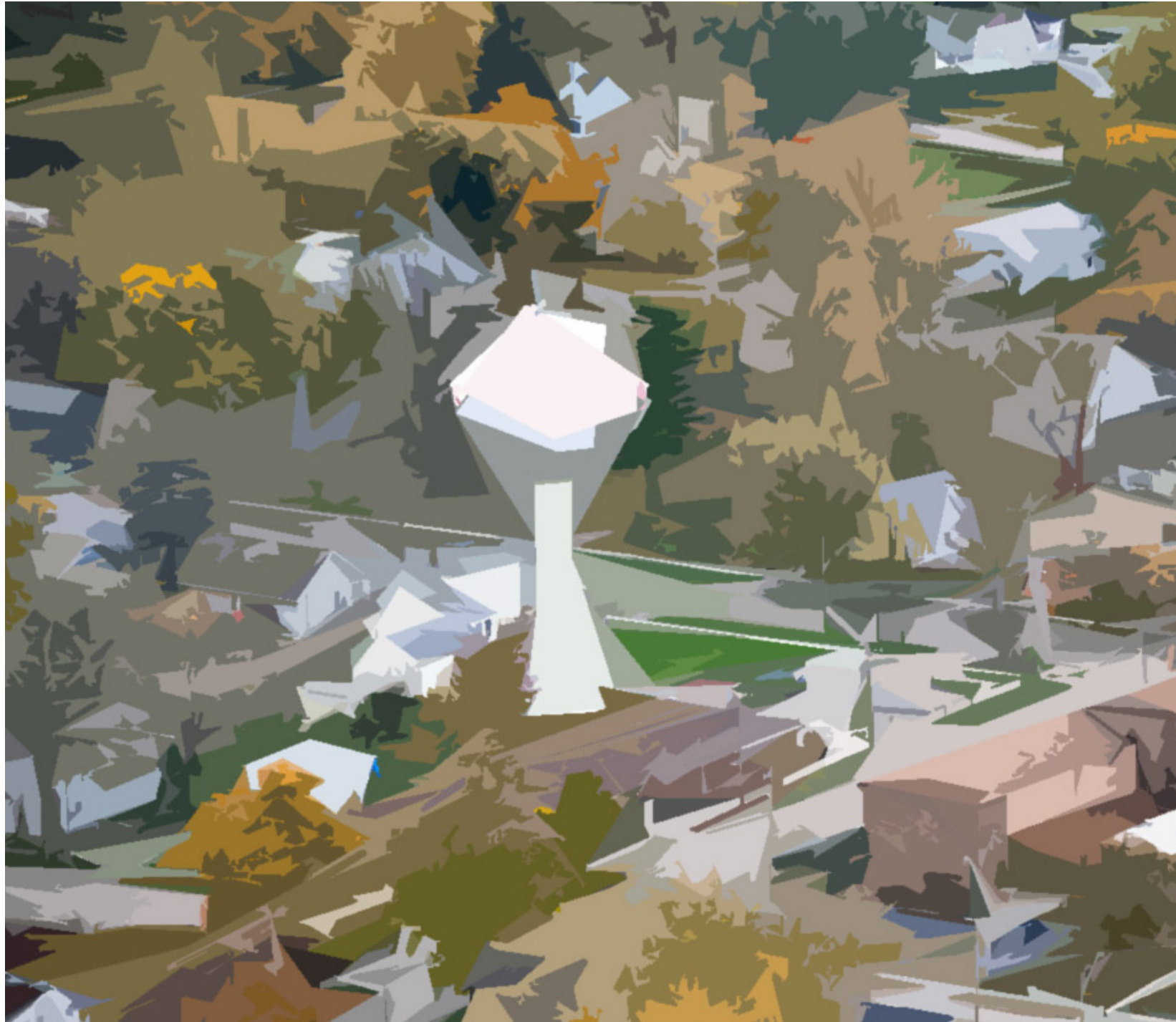




MM 2035

Comprehensive Plan Update





Photos and illustrations, unless specified, created by the Village of Mount Morris or BHRC

Adoption

Mount Morris Planning Commission adopted: 7/10/2017

Mount Morris Village Board adopted: 9/12/2017

Acknowledgements

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Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons, Andy McMurray

Executive Summary

Economic Development & Quality of Life

While generally positive, locals largely understand that Mount Morris is no longer the community it once was. Unsurprisingly, job attraction, creation, and retail/service establishments were cited as top priorities throughout the *MM2035* planning process. When referencing this plan (and others that arise from it), officials should remember that all kinds of growth may not be equally valuable and that implementers should focus on established priorities, such as developing existing and/or underdeveloped industry clusters, regional branding/partnerships, and non-traditional economic development. As concerns quality of life, pursuing low-hanging fruit and maintenance strategies (for parks and other community facilities) will go a long way towards maintaining livability.

20 ILCS 662

In general, *MM2035* is developed with consideration given to the Illinois Local Planning Technical Assistance Act. Although not a requirement (because of how the plan was developed), the following is still apt: “land development regulations, including amendments

to a zoning map, and any land use actions should be consistent with the new or revised comprehensive plan” (20 ILCS 662).

Future Planning

The village might consider future appendixes to this document that address the layout, design, and preservation of various designated places and corridors. These include the well-known Campus and along IL-64. In addition, any hazard mitigation planning should be tied to *MM2035* (as well as the county’s plan).

Document Organization

- Priorities: some are broad, others specific;

priorities may connect or relate to various elements and can be used to prioritize actions.

- Elements: *MM2035* is organized by elements; under each follows various objectives and actions.
- Objectives: establish a shell or framework for categorizing actions.
- Actions: taken together, actions represent a checklist of sorts; they are concrete projects, programs, and policies that stakeholders can implement. Those implementing will not be able to complete all *MM2035* actions within the completion period suggested; referencing community priorities (p. 6) and visions (p. 11) may help with prioritization.



Priorities

***) Plan for/recruit commercial and industrial companies based on the region's existing and/or underdeveloped industry clusters**

Element(s): Economic Development

***) Support existing businesses, especially second-stage growth companies**

Element(s): Economic Development

***) Consider workforce needs from employer and worker perspectives**

Element(s): Economic Development

***) Attract retail and services**

Element(s): Economic Development

***) Balance bedroom community reality with growth ambitions**

Element(s): Economic Development, Housing

***) Prioritize infrastructure and community facilities maintenance**

Element(s): Community Facilities, Recreation/Natural Resources, Land Use/Transportation

***) Invest in and recruit leadership; cultivate expertise**

Element(s): All

***) Use contemporary social media/communications platforms to serve residents**

Element(s): All

***) Modernize (including digitizing, when possible) village documents and processes**

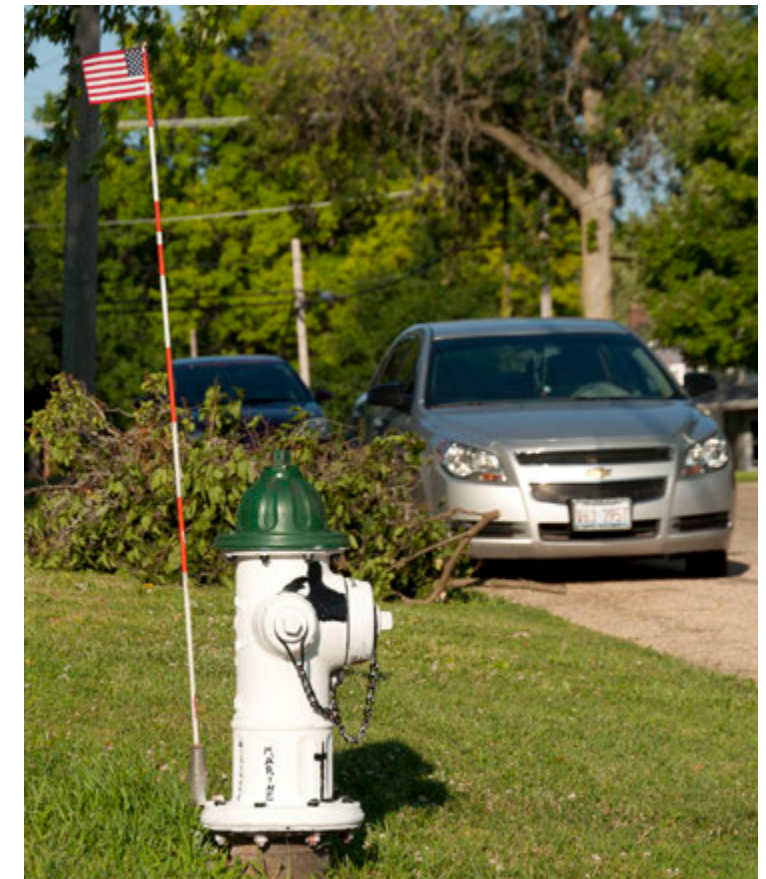
Element(s): All

***) Revitalize the Campus/continue special event programming**

Element(s): Community Facilities, Economic Development

***) Capitalize on neighboring assets and establish regional position**

Element(s): Community Facilities, Economic Development, Natural Resources



Priorities, cont'd.

***) Develop a community brand that incorporates Mount Morris's unique heritage**

Element(s): Community Facilities, Economic Development, Natural Resources

***) Piggyback on and support regional initiatives**

Element(s): Economic Development, Housing, Natural Resources

***) Work closely with White Pines State Park and other natural areas**

Element(s): Economic Development, Natural Resources

***) Develop homegrown, state, federal, and non-profit sources of funding**

Element(s): All




Community Profile

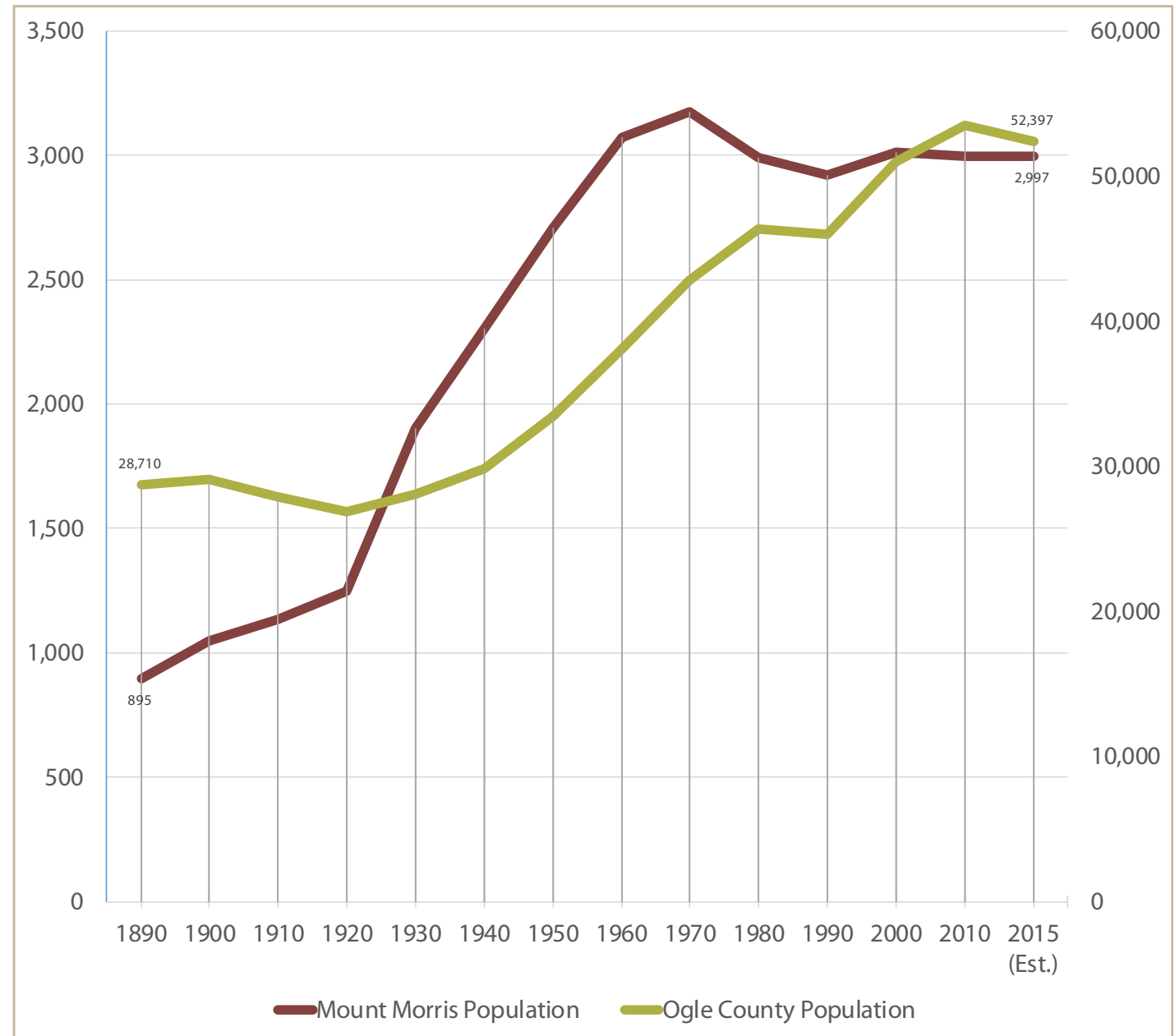
Population Characteristics

From 1890 to 1970, Mount Morris's population grew by 2,278 people (from 895 in 1890 to the village's peak population of 3,173 in 1970). Significant growth from 1920 to 1960 may be explained by the availability of jobs in the then robust local printing industry at sites like Kable Brothers Printings.

Since 1970, the number of people living in the village declined or remained relatively stagnant (excepting for a slight uptick between 1990 and 2000). It is perhaps surprising that, given the exodus of its major employers, Mount Morris has been able to avoid even greater population losses. The 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) estimated Mount Morris's 2015 population at 2,997, or 176 inhabitants fewer than the total of 3,173 counted in 1970.

In comparison, the 2015 ACS estimates a leveling of growth in Ogle County after fairly consistent growth starting after 1920.

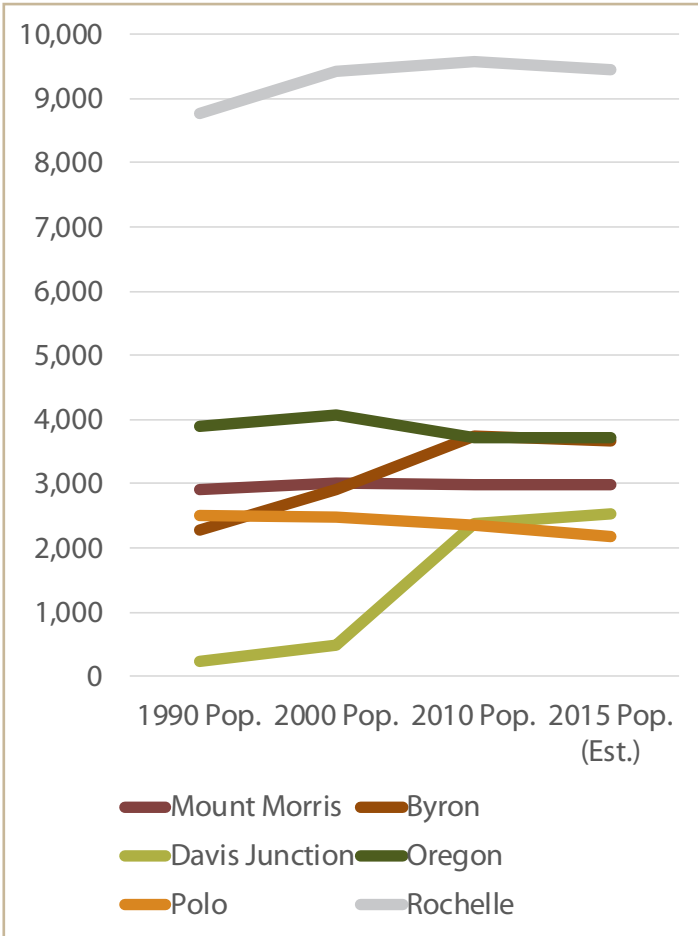
 5-year ACS estimates from the US Census Bureau are one of the few readily available and frequently updated sources of population data. While calculated with care, the Census's estimates of rural America often contain large margins of error. Discretion as concerns drawing strong conclusions from the data is advised.



Includes data from US decennial censuses and the 2011-2015 ACS

Community Profile, cont'd.

Countywide, downward or stagnant population trends are typical, with the exception of Davis Junction (perhaps impacted by Rockford out-migration). Byron also experienced notable growth between 1990 and 2010.



Includes data from US decennial censuses and the 2011-2015 ACS

Other population information is as follows:

43.8
Median Age

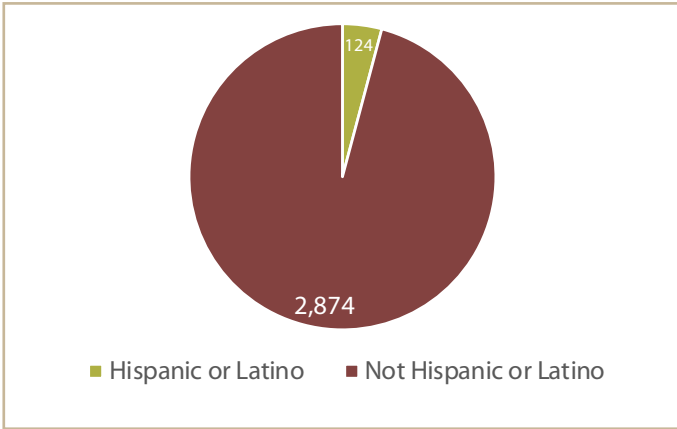
21.91%
Percent 65 years and over

24.15%
Percent under 20 Years

2010 Census

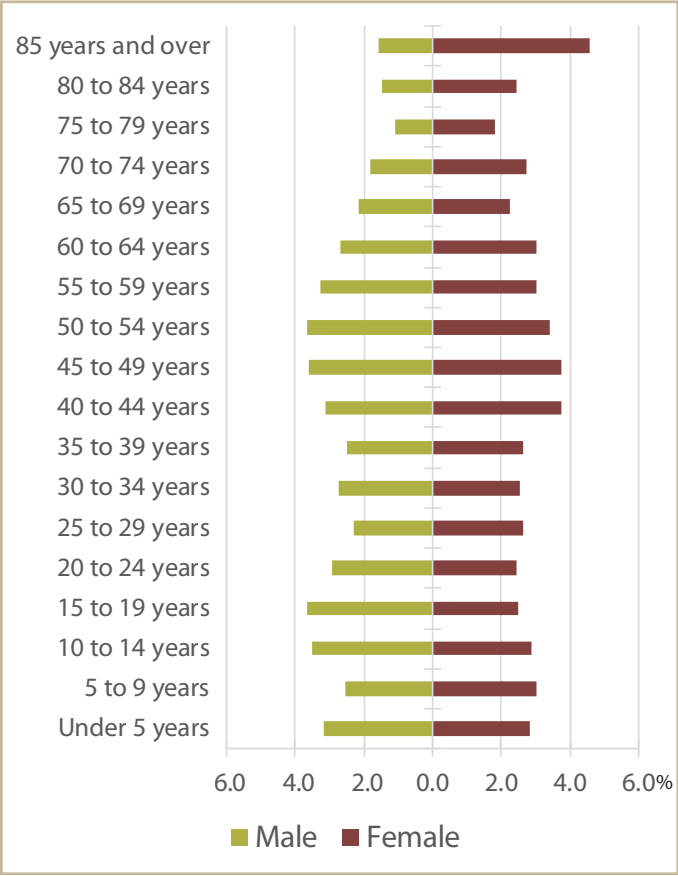
Far from dying, as suggested by some residents, the Mount Morris population counted in 2010 under the age of 18 outnumbered those 65 years and over.

Hispanics or Latinos accounted for about 4% of the village's population.



2010 Census

The following table displays Mount Morris's 2010 population cohorts. The relatively large percentage of women 85 years and older may be explained by the presence of Pinecrest facilities.



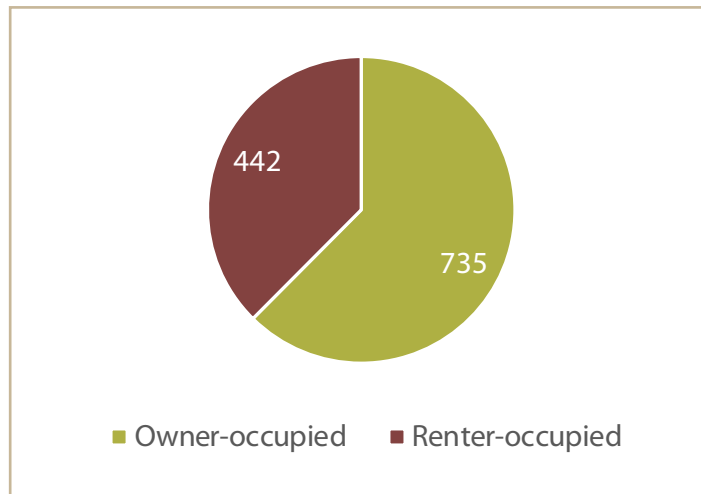
2010 Census

With respect to race, only a few persons (under 5% of the population) living in Mount Morris identified as non-white (e.g., black, mixed race, etc.).

Community Profile, cont'd.

Housing Characteristics

The 2011-2015 ACS estimates a greater number of owner occupied housing units (compared to renter-occupied housing units) in Mount Morris (total housing units = 1,177).



2011-2015 ACS

Other notable housing characteristics referenced from ACS estimates are as follows:

1,387
Est. Housing Units

62.4%
Est. Owner-Occupied
Housing Units

2011-2015 ACS

2.55
Est. Avg. Household Size of
Owner-Occupied
Housing Units

210
Est. Vacant Housing Units

2011-2015 ACS

Housing/Income Characteristics

There are striking differences in median household income in Mount Morris when ownership is taken into account.

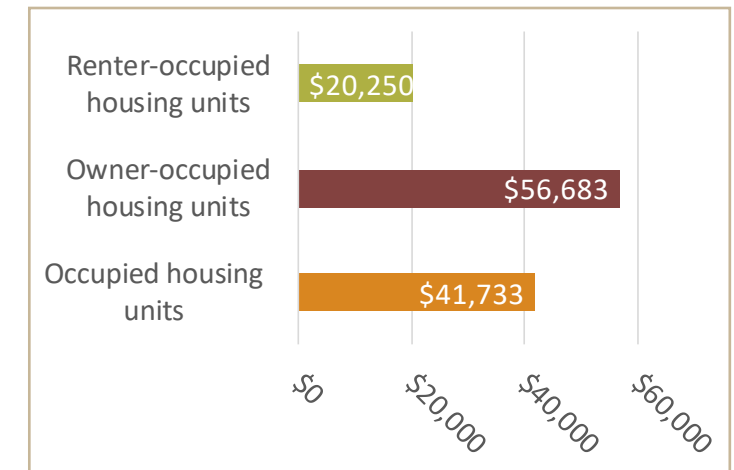
\$20,250
Est. Median Household Income
Renter-Occupied Units

\$56,683
Est. Median Household Income
Owner-Occupied Units

\$41,733
Est. Median Household Income
of Occupied Housing Units

2011-2015 ACS

Note the considerable gap between the median household income of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units.



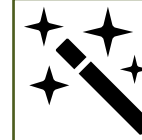
2011-2015 ACS

With a median rent of \$554 in Mount Morris, as estimated by the ACS, renters may see a large proportion of their income going into monthly rent payments, leaving less disposable income for other necessities. Renters may also have fewer chances to get involved with civic opportunities given apparent economic pressures.

Business Characteristics

Top Ogle County industry clusters by employment include manufacturing (1,453), agribusiness/food processing/technology (1,330), transportation/logistics (1,290), and biomedical/biotechnical (1,051).*

Community Vision



APPLICATION NOTES

“The truth about a city’s aspirations isn’t found in its vision. It’s found in its budget”
-TODERIAN UrbanWORKS

Master Vision

Mount Morris is regarded and marketed as safe, comfortable, and affordable. Many young families and seniors, as well as retirees from Rockford and western Chicagoland, call the village home. The community has developed a forward-looking brand that references the community’s unique spiritual, industrial, and musical heritage. Its revitalized central Campus, historic buildings, parks, and nearby natural areas are viewed as assets. They are protected and maintained. Locals young and old value multi-generational relationships. They learn from one another, including through interactions at popular venues like Pinecrest Grove, the library, and the bandshell. Residents are proud to live in Mount Morris.

Economic

At least six hundred jobs are found within one mile of Mount Morris. The Economic Development Group (EDG) and local officials emphasize business attraction but also identify the needs of existing businesses. The community has capitalized on regional industry clusters – such as senior/elder care, fabricated metal products manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, value-added agriculture, and transportation and logistics – while diversifying through businesses that cater to residents, day trippers, and bicyclists. Resources are invested in co-programming/marketing that emphasizes White Pines and the village as one. Such investments support lodging, eating and drinking, and boutique (e.g., outdoor enthusiast and local foods) establishments. With respect to business attraction and tourism, Mount Morris markets itself as part of a larger region. The central business district (CBD) enjoys a greater than 50% occupancy rate. Development opportunities are judged with respect to the comprehensive plan, and officials consider the long-term fiscal impacts of providing incentives, new infrastructure, and deferred maintenance.

Quality of Life (Cultural, Environmental, & Social)

The environmental and financial sustainability of programs and infrastructure projects are considered before planning new projects. Recreational opportunities at well-maintained parks and sheltered venues are accessible and available within a short walk. Those living in Mount Morris have access to amenities like medical care and senior housing without leaving town. Furthermore, residents - particularly older ones - use the Mount Morris Senior Center for fellowship and support. Individuals receive training through entities like the Rural Community Pavilion. Volunteer groups, in conjunction with the village, have expanded the *Let Freedom Ring Festival* and *Wednesday and Friday Night Concerts* into a broader music and festival scene. Community art – public displays, community theatre, etc. – is valued for its aesthetic, entertainment, and economic merits. Natural features (e.g., the established tree canopy) are nurtured and amenities like shared-use paths allow users to experience nature. In addition, the built environment, in the form of affordable and historic residences, former academic buildings, CBD properties, and houses of worship, is recognized as an important selling point to outsiders and points of local delight.



Chapter 1

Planning Process

- Process
- Public participation
- Community attitudes
- Community SWOC (issues & opportunities)

Planning Process

Starting Out

The village adopted its previous comprehensive plan (prepared by the engineering firm MSA) in 2007. Following the Economic Development Group-led Encore! process, Mount Morris's planning commission (PC) reached out to Blackhawk Hills Regional Council (BHRC) to update the decade-old document. The process and plan was named *MM2035*.

Data Foundations

BHRC sought data from traditional sources, including data sets from the US Census. Rather than engaging citizens in a second community-wide survey within the 2016 year (Encore! commissioned one during its planning process), BHRC (following discussion with the PC) decided to mine recently collected survey data for relevant information. GIS information was primarily acquired from Ogle County GIS, Willett, Hofmann, & Associates, and the MSA comprehensive plan.

Interviews

Interviews were completed with nine Mount Morris stakeholders, representing government, public works, economic development, public safety, and arts/tourism.



Posters

Six easel-sized posters were placed at commission-set locations throughout the town. The displays asked viewers to respond to:

The displays asked viewers to respond to:

- What I do like...
- What I don't like...
- The most unique spot in town...

Display placement locations included Mount Morris Public Library, Mount Morris Senior Citizens's Center, Mount Morris Village Hall, Pinecrest Grove, Sullivan's, and the Union Savings Bank. The poster located at Sullivan's received the most engagement.

Website

A *MM2035* website was created, mostly as a

clearing house for press releases and documents. The site also included contact information and a *MM2035* process overview.

Community Meetings

Six community meetings (including the kick-off in 10.2016), were held; each featured topics related to specific elements of the plan, including housing (10.2016), community facilities/leisure/recreation (11.2016), community and creative resources (12.2016), economic development (12.2016), and land use/transportation (1.2017). Participants in attendance contributed to the overall vision statement and provided feedback on existing and proposed goals, objectives, and actions.

Planning Process, cont'd.

Community Attitudes Overview

A good amount of the input provided by Mount Morris survey takers during the Encore! planning process could be categorized as positive. When asked to describe the community, respondents used words like “quiet,” “friendly,” “safe,” and “small” (notably, these characteristics were on occasion paired with the word “boring”). Persons taking the survey seemed to think highly of fire, EMS, and police services. Parks and the Campus were valued, but upkeep was a concern.

On the other end of the spectrum, respondents described Mount Morris as a “typical dying Midwest town” with “many empty and decaying homes and structures.” The word “dying” surfaced frequently, although far less than other words with positive connotations.

Survey takers expressed specific concerns about water/sewer rates, presumed blight, and supposed lack of enforcement with respect to ordinance violations (and, of course, the lack of jobs and businesses, which is now well-known by community stakeholders). Some worried about the town’s deterioration “at a rapid rate.” One referred to Mount Morris as a “retirement village with only entertainment geared to older people.”

In addition, many individual preferences - to varying degrees of specificity - were noted.

Perhaps one of the hardest things for community groups to do - even successful ones - is to attract and support future leadership to ensure organizational (and ultimately, community) longevity. One survey respondent commented that Mount Morris residents had “skills, talent, and willingness to help” but that “help just needs to be recruited.” Others were positive about the good works of volunteers within the community.

Beyond the Encore! Survey, one of the universal sentiments expressed by those participating in the *MM2035* planning process (including 1-on-1 interviews and the planning process in general) was that people liked living in Mount Morris quite a lot. Some, when pressed, did question whether they would remain in Mount Morris, including those native to the village. Still, relative newcomers saw opportunity, including in making a home in the village after retirement.

Participants also recognized the need to address changing tastes, even as the community worked to preserve its history. New, but relatively low cost/effective ideas were floated (i.e., shared-use paths and designated sledding runs were touted).



Many expressed an affinity for the Campus, bandshell/music events, educational/cultural programming, and houses of worship.

Community Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths - Internal

- Access to gigabit broadband
- Affordable housing & historic housing (sometimes one & the same)
- Arts, music, & plays
- Campus & buildings
- Community garden
- Community spirit
- Economic Development Group (EDG)
- Encore!
- Established tree canopy
- Excess water & sewer capacity
- Food pantry
- Great community to retire in/to
- Hometown atmosphere
- Local foods belt
- Located on major route to Mississippi River
- New retail (Casey's General Store, Dollar General, & Sullivan's Foods)
- Part of the state/surrounding landscape
- Presence of shortline railroad
- Rural Community Pavilion
- The Eternal Indian (Chief Black Hawk)
- Unique history (e.g., four-year college, printing industry, etc.)
- Village website
- Wednesday & Friday night concerts
- White Pines State Park/proximity to other state parks
- World-class nursing & adult living facilities

Weaknesses - Internal

- Access to jobs & employers, especially to employers with 20 or more employees
- Condition of water/wastewater/stormwater systems
- Declining/stagnant housing values
- Diminished printing industry
- Distance from interstate
- Downtown/central business district (CBD) buildings need to be rehabbed & remodeled
- Downtown/CBD not adjacent to major highway
- Few businesses or lacking in variety
- Few or lacking in variety of restaurants, pharmacy, & other services
- High water & sewer rates
- Lack of local retail, services, shopping
- Long work commutes (1/2 hour or more)
- Loss of printing & other major industry
- No dedicated bicycle trails/no connections to outside trails
- No shared goals
- No tree management or planting plan/storm damage to trees
- Old zoning ordinances
- Small local labor pool

Community Opportunities & Challenges

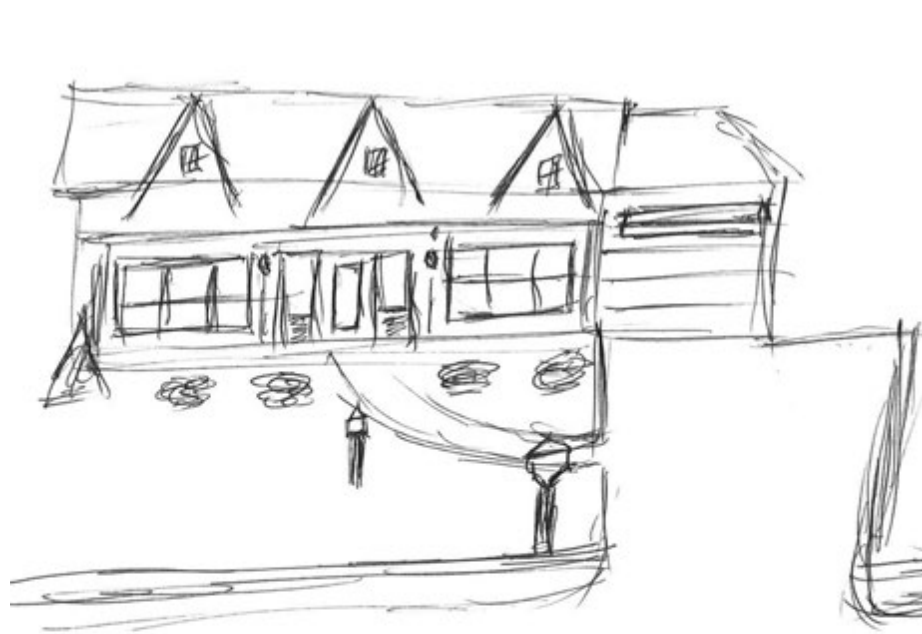
Opportunities - External

- Chicagoland retirees with expertise
- Emerging agribusiness, alternative energy, and manufacturing industries
- Greenfield/open space development preference
- Incorporating sustainability practices into community and economic development
- Internet-based cottage/craft industries
- Interest in storytelling (especially for drink and food)
- Local foods/organic eating trends
- Hobbies/sports, including niche (e.g., jogging, extreme marathoning, bicycling, hot air balloon racing, etc.)
- Neighboring commercial/industrial clusters (e.g., aerospace, etc.)
- Shared-use (bike) paths/connections to Bike Ogle routes

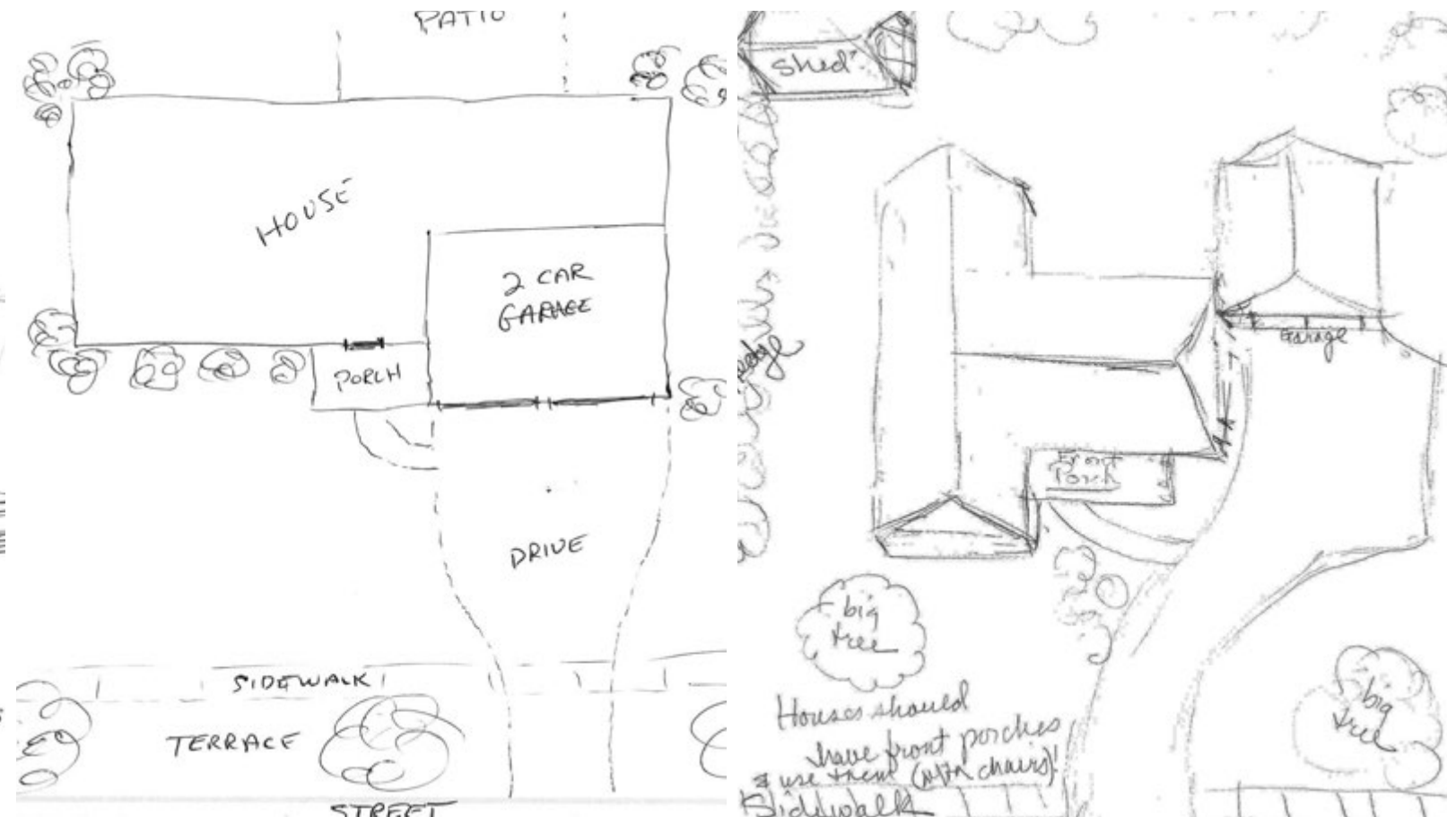
Challenges - External

- Climate stresses on vegetation
- Decay of community and fraternal organizations
- Less than convenient public transportation
- Population decline/stagnation
- Rapid technological changes
- School board may close Mount Morris facility
- State reputation (earned or unearned)
- State of Illinois/federal budgets
- Workforce availability and re-training/stagnant wages/automation





Simple design, basic price
Average 3 bedroom, 1.5-2 baths



Housing community meeting participant illustrations

Chapter 2

Housing Element

- Overview
- Objectives
- Maps

Housing

Overview

Amidst the opining about a lack-of-jobs and lack-of-businesses, one of the oft-discussed topics was housing - its costs, its conditions, and its character. Residents often equated the state of their community with the appearance of houses, garages, decks, porches, landscaping, lawns, and any number of built structures on personal and commercial land.

During the *MM2035* community meeting on housing, attendees spent a portion of the evening sketching ideal home layouts and orientations on residential lots. Many of the illustrations contributed by participants featured the following:

- Typically one story
- Between one to three garage doors
- Front-forward yards
- Functional front porches
- Trees or other well-planned vegetation

Invest in walkable & people-centered neighborhoods

Porches, sidewalks, and terraces are seen as a way of encouraging neighborhood cohesiveness and facilitating community interactions.

Encourage single & multi-family housing upkeep

Mount Morris's village board has established a position within the village and a relationship with the Ogle County State's Attorney to address ordinance enforcement and property maintenance issues. Support and evaluation of these positions/programs are a must.

Modernize housing-related ordinances & regulations

Some of the village's ordinances may lack clarity or present contradictions. If the village board is to expect compliance, it must present a document that is accessible, easy to read, and illustrated effectively. All sections and language should be cross-referenced throughout the document and portions that are contradictory should be taken up by the village board.

Address abandoned or blighted housing

Comments illustrative of concern called attention to the state of disrepair of residential and commercial housing. The village board should conduct an inventory of abandoned and/or blighted housing, which would help the

community apply for IHDA's grant programs.



Single family residences in mount Morris (obtained from Zillow)

Housing, cont'd.

Protect housing from man-made & natural disasters

While prudence may be paramount, a municipality's building code can be a useful tool for encouraging property owners to build with better materials in better locations. Incentives - including those that encourage low-lying and other vulnerable homeowners to install backflow prevention systems - may also encourage resiliency throughout the community.



Photo credit: Pinecrest

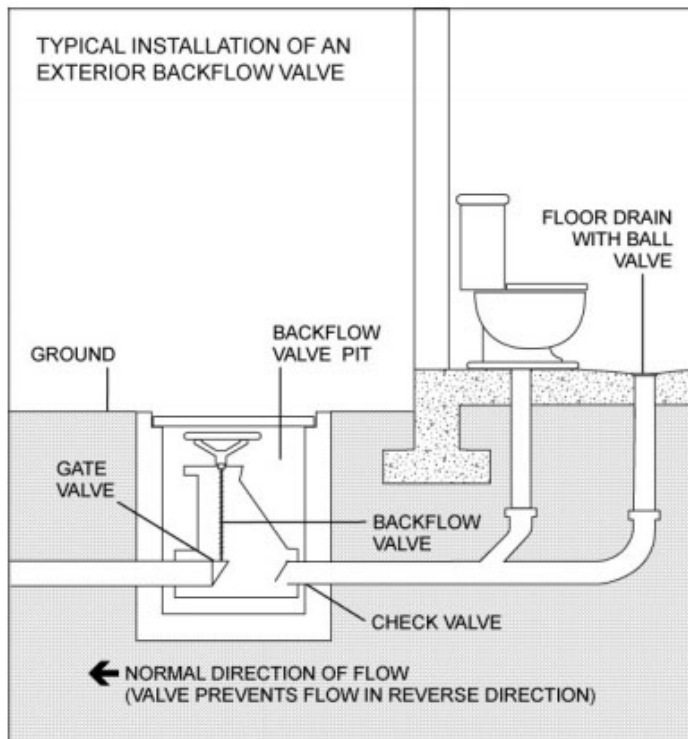
Pinecrest, through its multiple facilities, provides housing opportunities for older adults. Maintaining a relationship with Pinecrest leadership and continuing quality public services/facilities will be critical.

Improve terrace appearance

Ragged sidewalks. Overgrown vegetation. Overbuilt pavements. Improving the appearance of the space from the public sidewalk to the street would be a boon to aesthetics. This includes removing unhealthy trees, planting new ones, ensuring accessibility, removing extraneous impervious surfaces, and planting for the season.

Grow relationships with key housing stakeholders


To adequately address the affordability and condition of housing within the community and Ogle County, it would be useful to meet with housing stakeholders on regular (yearly) basis.



FEMA illustration of backflow prevention

Support aging-in-place design

“Aging at home” may prove difficult for residents, especially at older houses and apartments. As the United States’s population of 75 million Baby Boomers grows older and the Silent Generation (28 million) continues to age (Pew, 2015), consideration should be given to accessibility and mobility within/outside of residences. At some point in their lives, the soon-to-be retired and currently retired will need to consider whether it is best to stay or leave a home - or Mount Morris entirely. Arguably, efforts should be made to encourage small investments in homes over time, to ensure livability or improve resale value. Small investments might include addressing concerns like trip and fall hazards, laundry room access, installing ADA-friendly door knobs and cabinet pulls, and so on.



SUSTAINABILITY NOTES
Housing orientation can have a great impact on various energy efficiency matters, including heating and cooling efficiencies and solar roof deployments.

Housing, cont'd.

A group meeting on some semi-regular basis could also identify opportunities for multi-family housing and financing through the Illinois Housing Development Authority.

Support code/zoning enforcement

The effectiveness of any regulatory tool will depend on implementation and follow-through. The village has already committed resources to code and zoning enforcement. However, if the designated staffer and officials tasked with helping residents and landlords comply with ordinances fail to receive long-term support (via policies, budgeting, etc.), this initial commitment may not pay dividends.

Moreover, the village board should continue to monitor the results of its agreement with the Ogle County State's Attorney with respect to the prosecution of ordinance violations. Officials should also review the cost effectiveness of the approach and its success in achieving desired results (i.e., remedying the original ordinance violations and reducing ordinance violations overall), revamping the agreement as needed. Furthermore, officials should note whether any equity and ability-to-pay issues arise from the now-in-place approach.



Determine whether code/zoning enforcement is working

As further emphasis: in order to assess “Support code/zoning enforcement,” the village should gather data to determine whether enforcement is working. If it is not, the village board must determine whether the issue is administrative, personnel-related or something else entirely.

Review permitting process

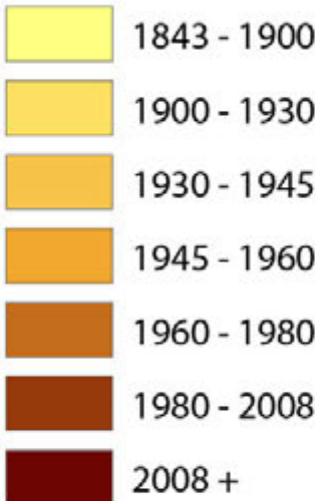
Mount Morris's newest website is a logical destination for many of the village's essential forms, including building and construction permits. It is time for the village to dedicate resources to migrating to a fully digital platform that is hosted on the www.mtmorrisil.net website. Making services easily available

to residents online has at least two significant benefits. First, it can increase individual satisfaction with local government by expediting various processes and reducing resident and/or business-owner trips to village hall. Second, it can reduce the time staff may need to resolve a particular issue and free up village staff time overall.

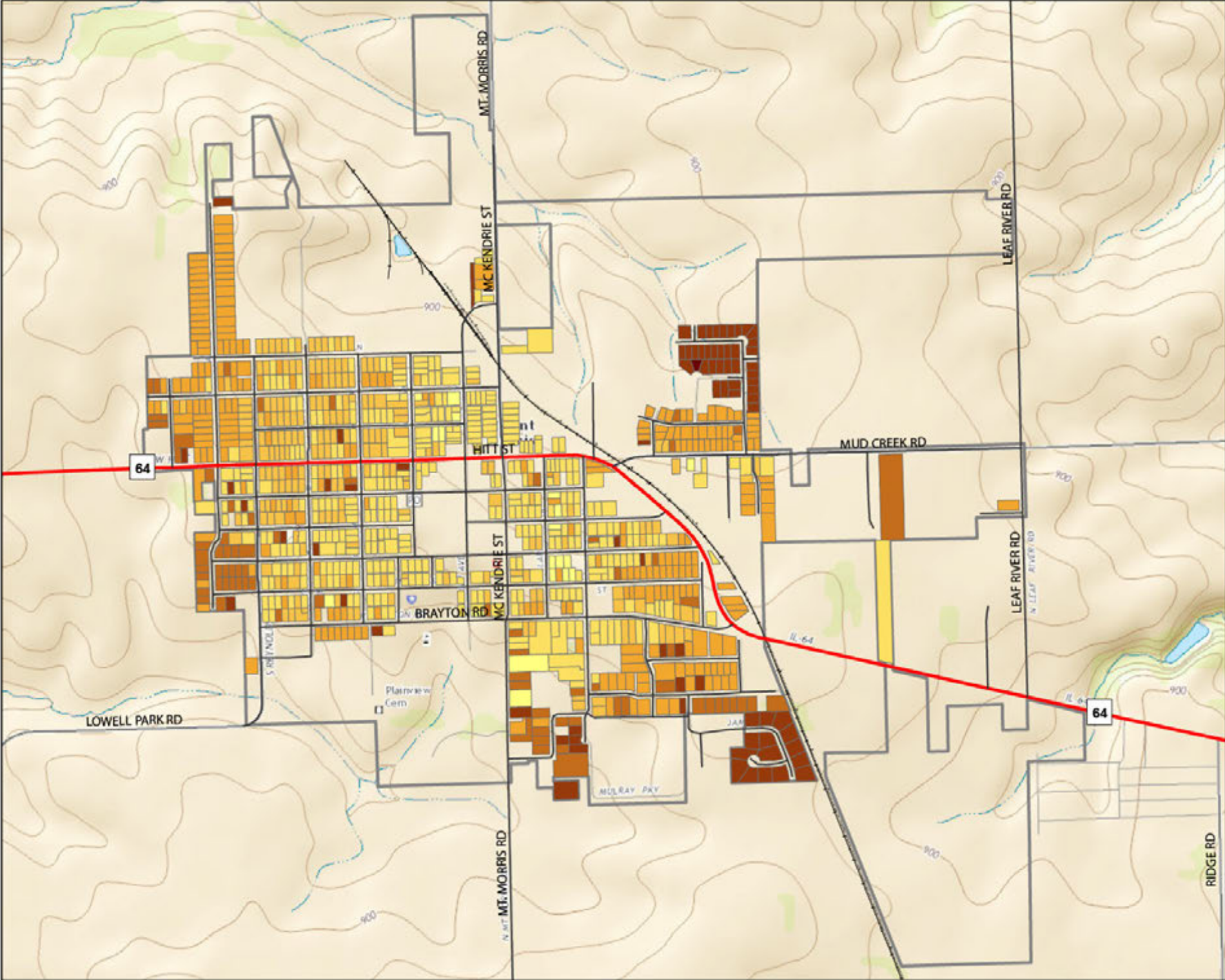
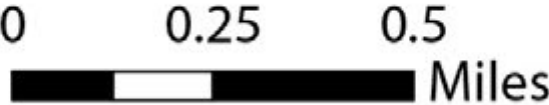
Finally, having important information available online increases the chance that users will find other important information, see the website as valuable, and continue to increase use of the medium.

Mount Morris Single Family Housing Age

Construction Age Range



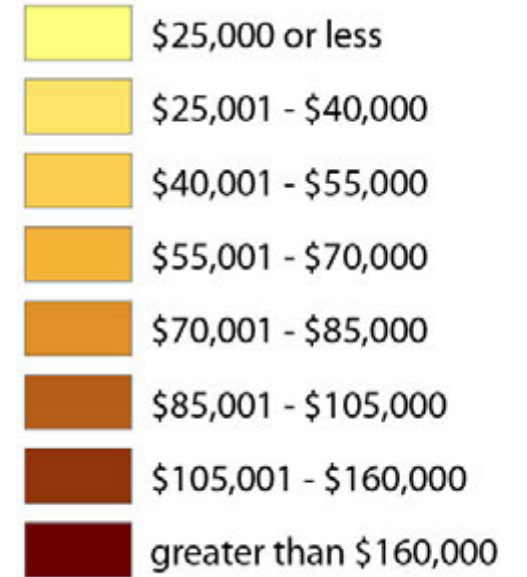
Boundary Features



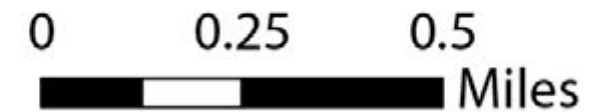
Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
with data from Ogle County GIS, IL DOT T2, and
ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap

Mount Morris Single Family Housing Value

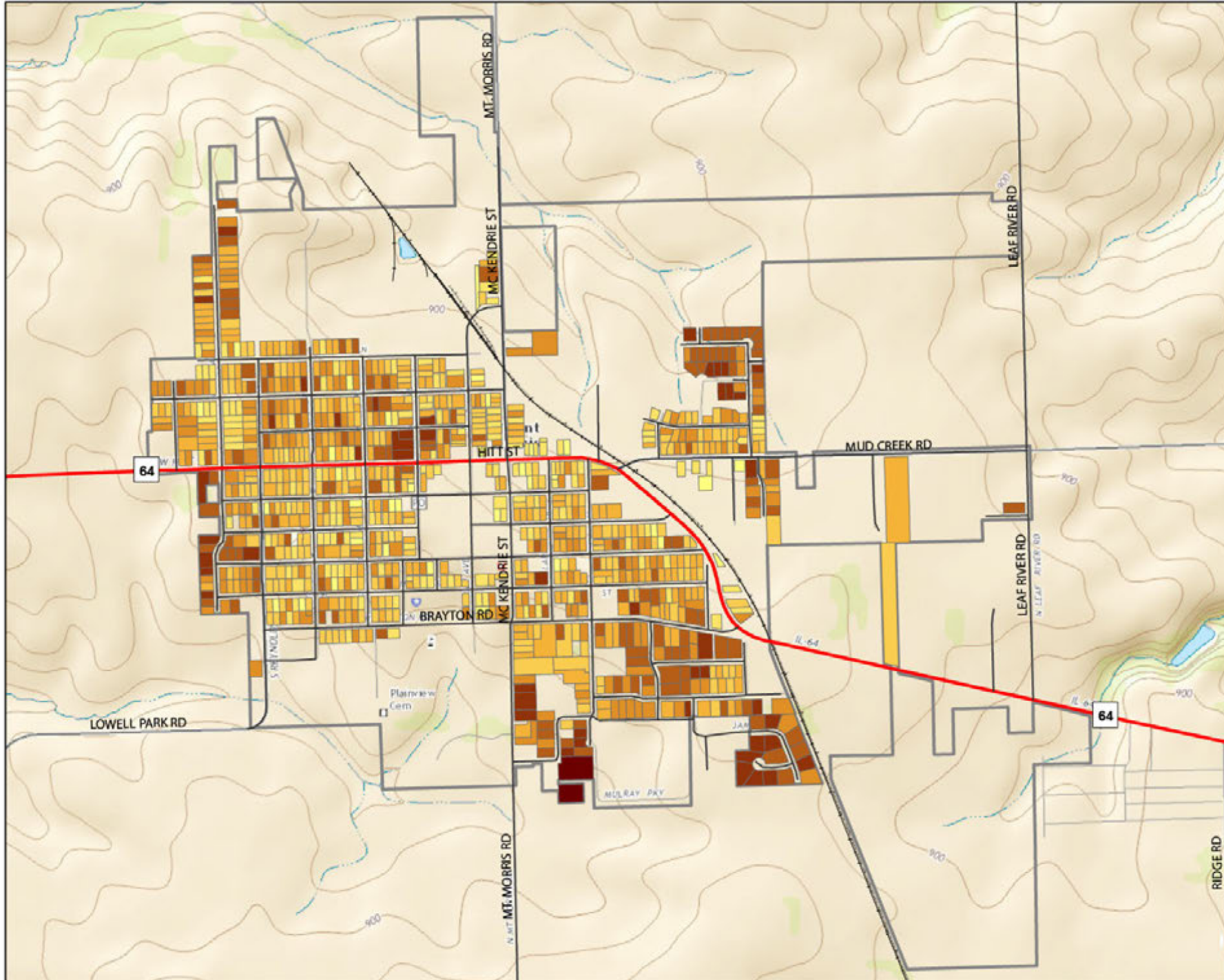
Value of Improvements

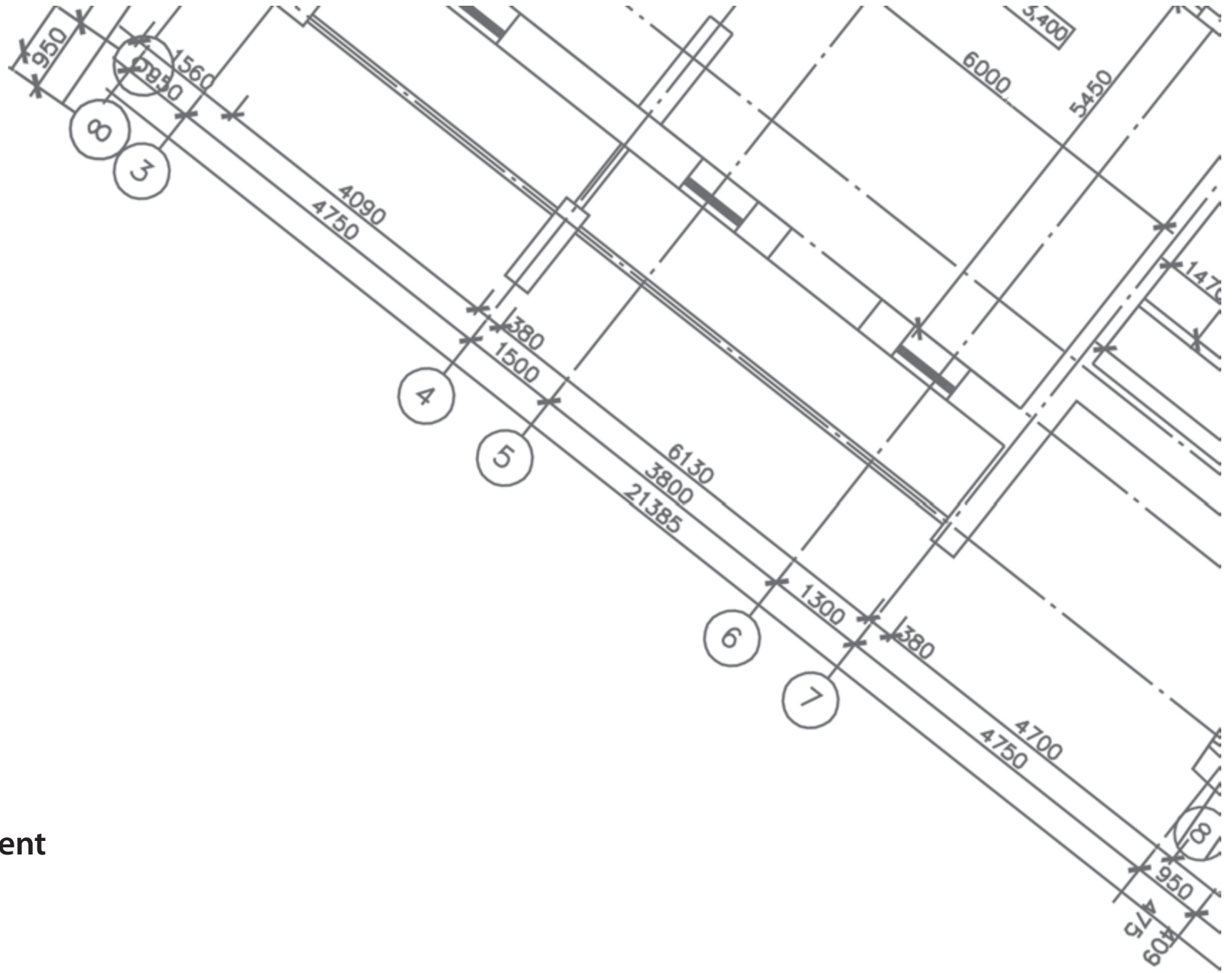


Boundary Features



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
with data from Ogle County GIS, IL DOT T2, and
ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap





Chapter 3

Community Facilities, Infrastructure, & Telecom Element

- Overview
- Objectives
- Maps

Community Facilities, Infrastructure, & Telecom

Overview

USDA Rural Development describes “essential community facilities” as “[facilities that provide essential services] to the local community for the orderly development of the community.” An umbrella term, a community facility may be mission critical to village operations (e.g., water and sewer systems) or designed to support livability and quality of life (e.g., parks and gymnasiums). They can also support public health and safety (e.g., police, fire, EMS, and health clinics). Community facilities may be made up of smaller components (e.g., benches, bike pavilions, and public restrooms). They may also include privately-owned buildings, such as houses of worship and nursing homes.

Set facility & infrastructure investment priorities (capital improvement plan)

Village officials, in consultation with public works staff and residents, should continue to publish a capital improvement plan (CIP) that covers at least three years of infrastructure improvements. The vision of a community will live or die based on the CIP and village budget

Invest in pedestrian & bicycling facilities

It is important to recognize that whether a new development may be judged as high-quality or merely adequate is dependent - at least partially - on access. As noted in the Housing chapter, accessible sidewalks in good repair that go to places should be constructed as roads are repaired and new subdivisions developed.

Providing other facilities, such as bicycle racks and multi-tool stations (those that offer wrenches, air pumps, and so on) would be a cost effective way to develop Mount Morris’s reputation as a bike-friendly place. Beyond village or public resources, however, implementers should reach out to the private sector. This includes to establishments like bars and restaurants that would benefit from having passers-by refresh and refuel. Encouraging proprietors to make small investments (in facilities described above) may go a long way towards serving both village and entrepreneurial interests.

Improve water/wastewater/stormwater systems

Complaints and concerns about the condition of municipal waters/wastewater/stormwater systems are common and not vastly different in Mount Morris than in any other typically rural, northwest Illinois community. As end of life and ongoing maintenance issues are addressed, it may make sense to pool resources with neighboring communities or statewide associations/mutual aid networks.

Consider that it will be difficult to maintain performance levels as the system expands. As noted in the economic development chapter, no new development should be undertaken without a study of long-term maintenance costs and fiscal impacts.



SUSTAINABILITY NOTES

Pay special attention to whether new community facilities are designed to be adapted for different uses in anticipation of ever-changing community and individual tastes.

Community Facilities, Infrastructure, & Telecom, cont'd.

Invest in publicly-owned facilities & structures

The village should plan to further reduce its energy costs. Given land availability, as well as incentives through ComEd, Nicor Gas, the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, and state/federal granting agencies, the village should review the possibility of a solar or wind farm deployment on public-owned property. For structures that will continue to be in use over a long period, geothermal - though also expensive - may be an option. In the meantime, more mundane improvements (say, to T12 lamps and 80% efficiency furnances) may be pursued.

Volunteers should continue to examine reuse concepts for the Coliseum/Community Gym, perhaps exploring partnerships with private fitness owners, area park districts, and not-for-profit organizations such as the YMCA and the United Way, even if such organizations do not currently have an interest in the village.

Furthermore, restoring now inactive features, such as the Memorial Fountain, would be ideal. Water features are highly desirable, and a functional fountain would improve the atmosphere during concerts and other events near the bandshell and on the Campus.

Build on existing human & financial resources

Anyone seriously interested in encouraging commitment to civic engagement must take steps to engage, train, and impart knowledge to newcomers. Local officials must recruit volunteers, especially from a variety of age groups. Some of the volunteers recruited may represent the next generation of leadership; others - such as retirees to Mount Morris - may represent much needed technical expertise and skill sets.

The community should also categorize all the sources of funding (including existing foundations) and determine how such funds can be leveraged with non-local sources of funding. An ultimate goal may be to establish a community foundation. Existing organizations, such as the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, may be able to assist.

Develop community brand/deploy signage

To ensure consistency community-wide, guidelines should be developed for items like beautification, buildings, and signage. Key portions of town (such as the Campus

or IL-64) would be appropriate targets of additional attention. These guidelines should direct all public (and public-private) investments.



Mount Morris Water Supply System

Supply Main Diameter

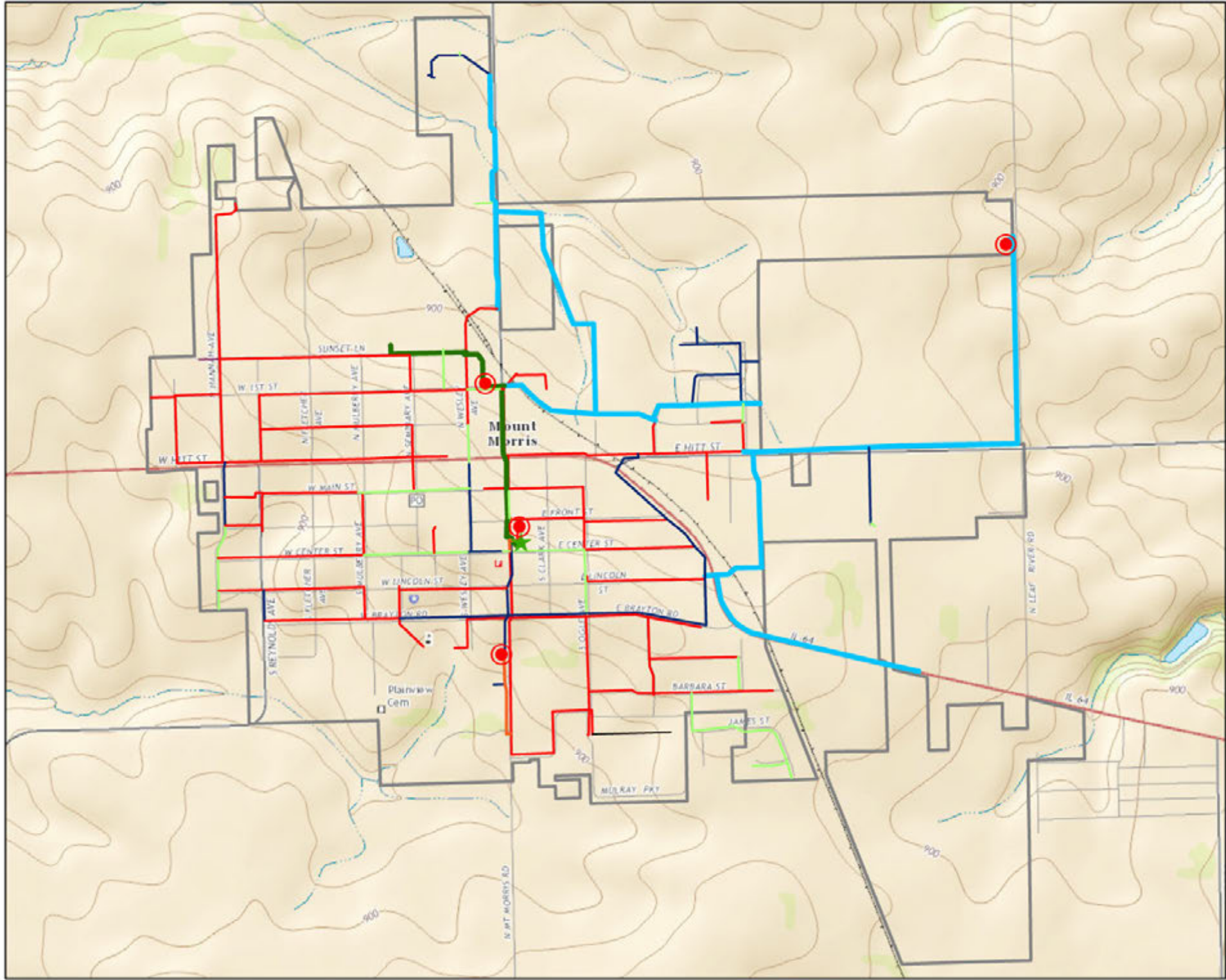
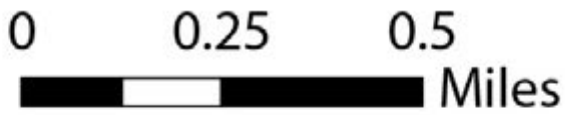
- 1 inch
- 2 inch
- 4 inch
- 6 inch
- 8 inch
- 10 inch
- 12 inch
- 16 inch

Point Features

- Water Tower
- Well

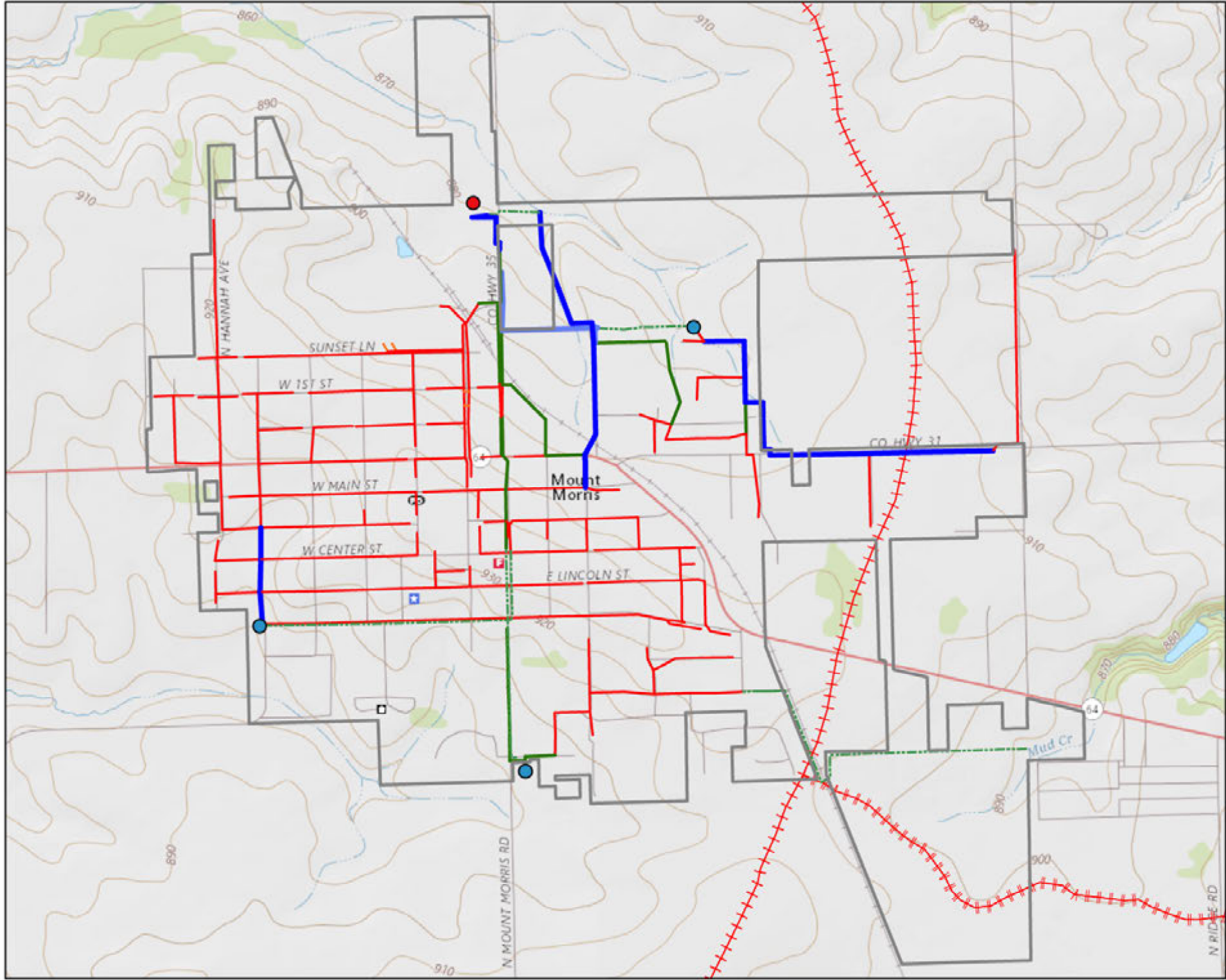
Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
with data from Willett Hofmann & Associates,
US Geological Survey, Ogle County GIS, and
ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap

Mount Morris Sanitary Sewer System



Sanitary Sewer

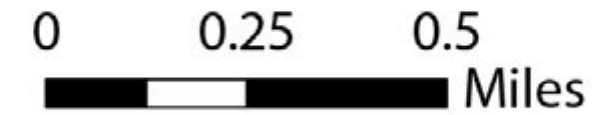
- ⋯ 5 inch forcemain
- 6 inch
- 8 inch
- 10 inch
- 12 inch
- 15 inch

Point Features

- Lift Station
- Sewer Treatment Plant

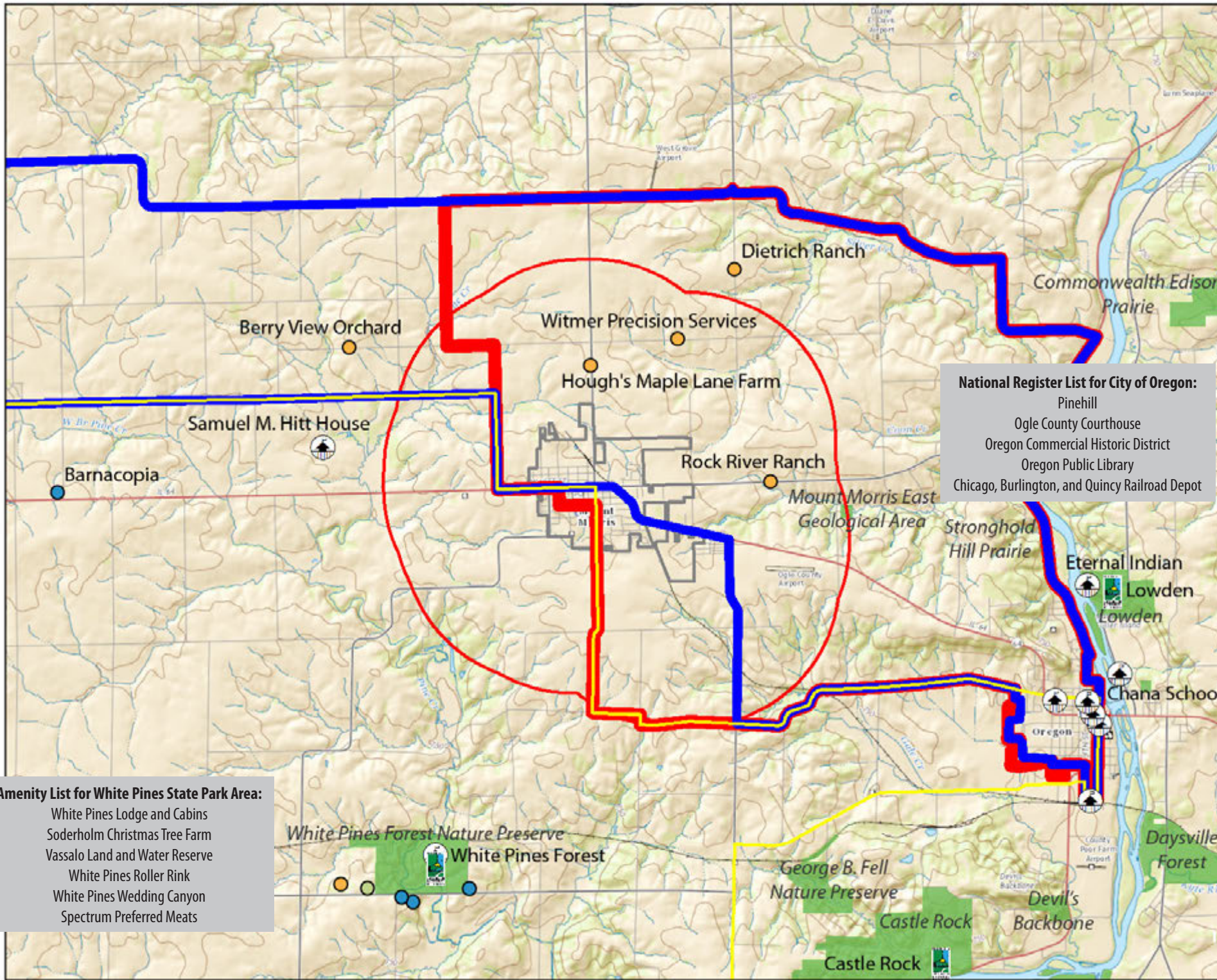
Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary
- Watershed Divide



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw with data from Willett Hofmann & Associates, US Geological Survey, Ogle County GIS, and ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap

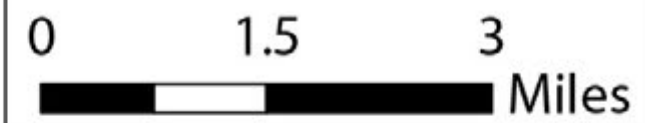
Mount Morris Area Amenities and Bike Routes



National Register List for City of Oregon:
 Pinehill
 Ogle County Courthouse
 Oregon Commercial Historic District
 Oregon Public Library
 Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad Depot

Amenity List for White Pines State Park Area:
 White Pines Lodge and Cabins
 Soderholm Christmas Tree Farm
 Vassalo Land and Water Reserve
 White Pines Roller Rink
 White Pines Wedding Canyon
 Spectrum Preferred Meats

- Boundary Features**
- Municipal Boundary
 - 1.5 Mile Planning Area
 - Protected Natural Areas
- Amenities**
- Agribusiness
 - Business
 - Natural Area
 - Illinois DNR Sites
 - Natl. Register Historic Places
- BikeOgle.org Bike Routes**
- Polo-Mount Morris Loop
 - Forreston Loop
 - West Grove-Rock River Loop



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw with data from Ogle County GIS, BikeOgle.org, National Park Service, Illinois DNR, USGS, and ESRI-USGS Basemap

Mount Morris Critical Facilities

Point Features

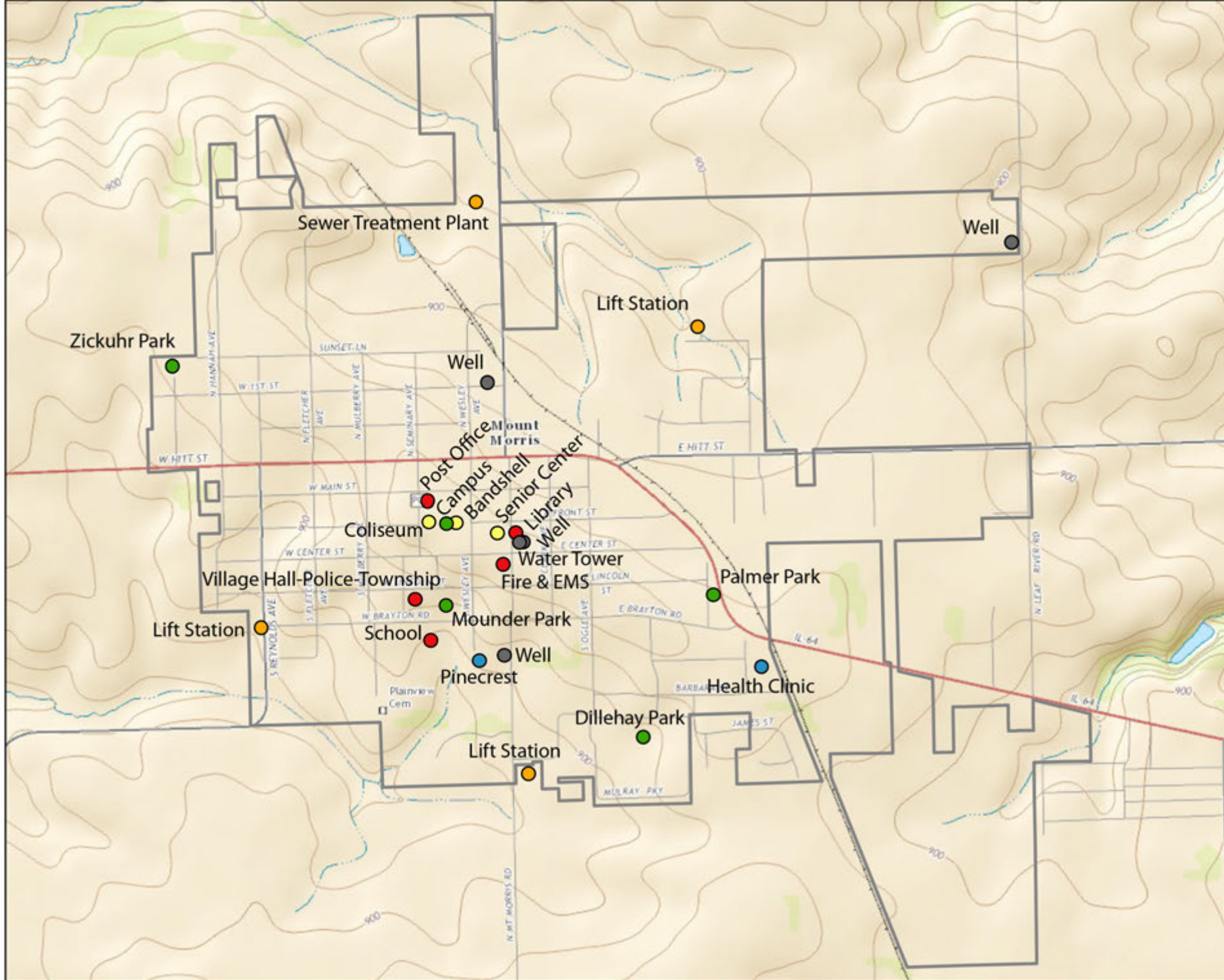
- Sewer System
- Water Supply
- Parks
- Government
- Business
- Other Facilities

Boundary Features

- Municipal Boundary



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw with data from Ogle County GIS, MSA, and ESRI-USGS Basemap

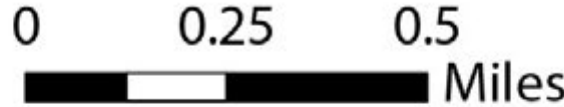


Mount Morris Walkability

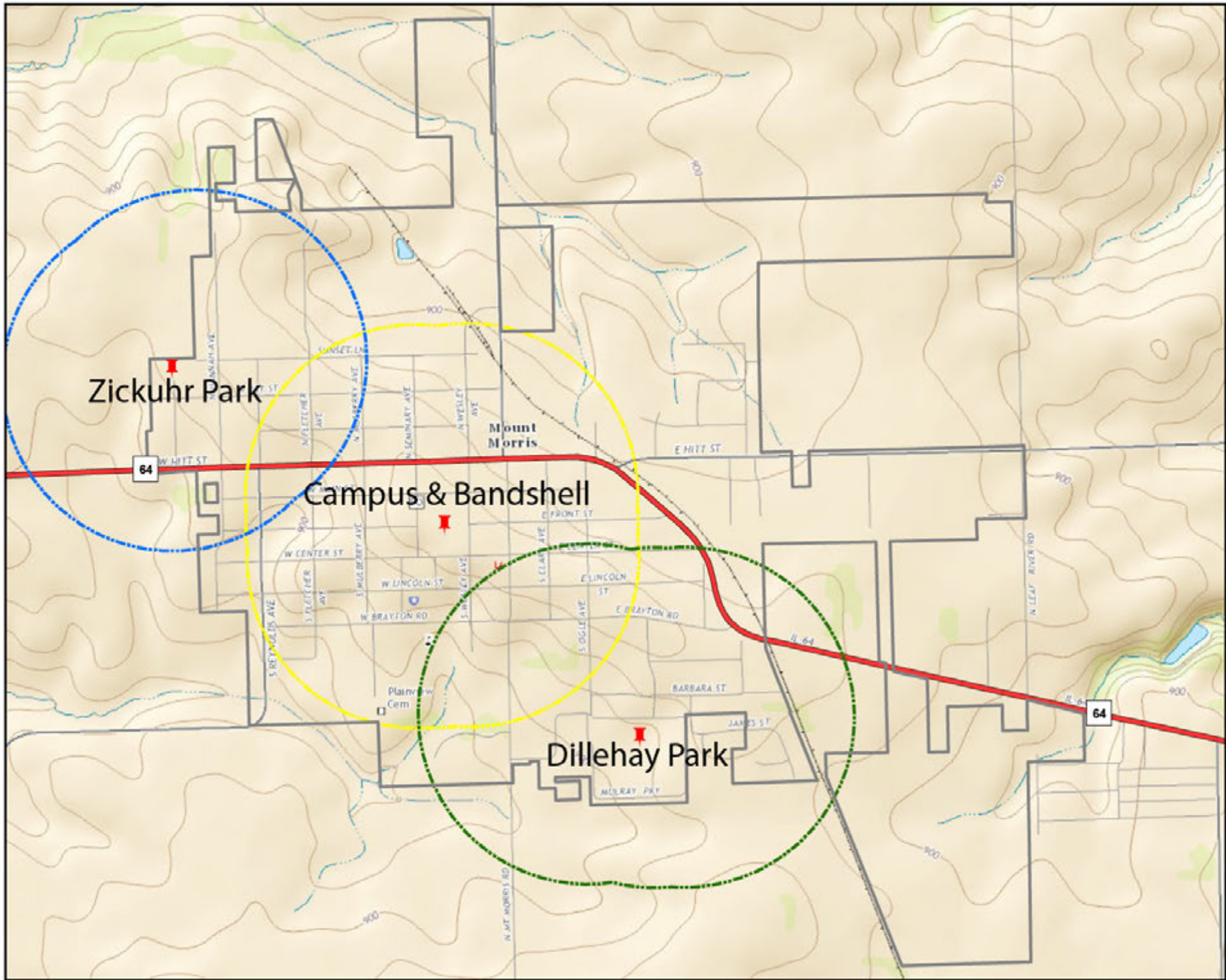
Boundary Features

-  Mount Morris Boundary
-  Dillehay 1/3 mile radius
-  Zickuhr 1/3 mile radius
-  Campus 1/3 mile radius

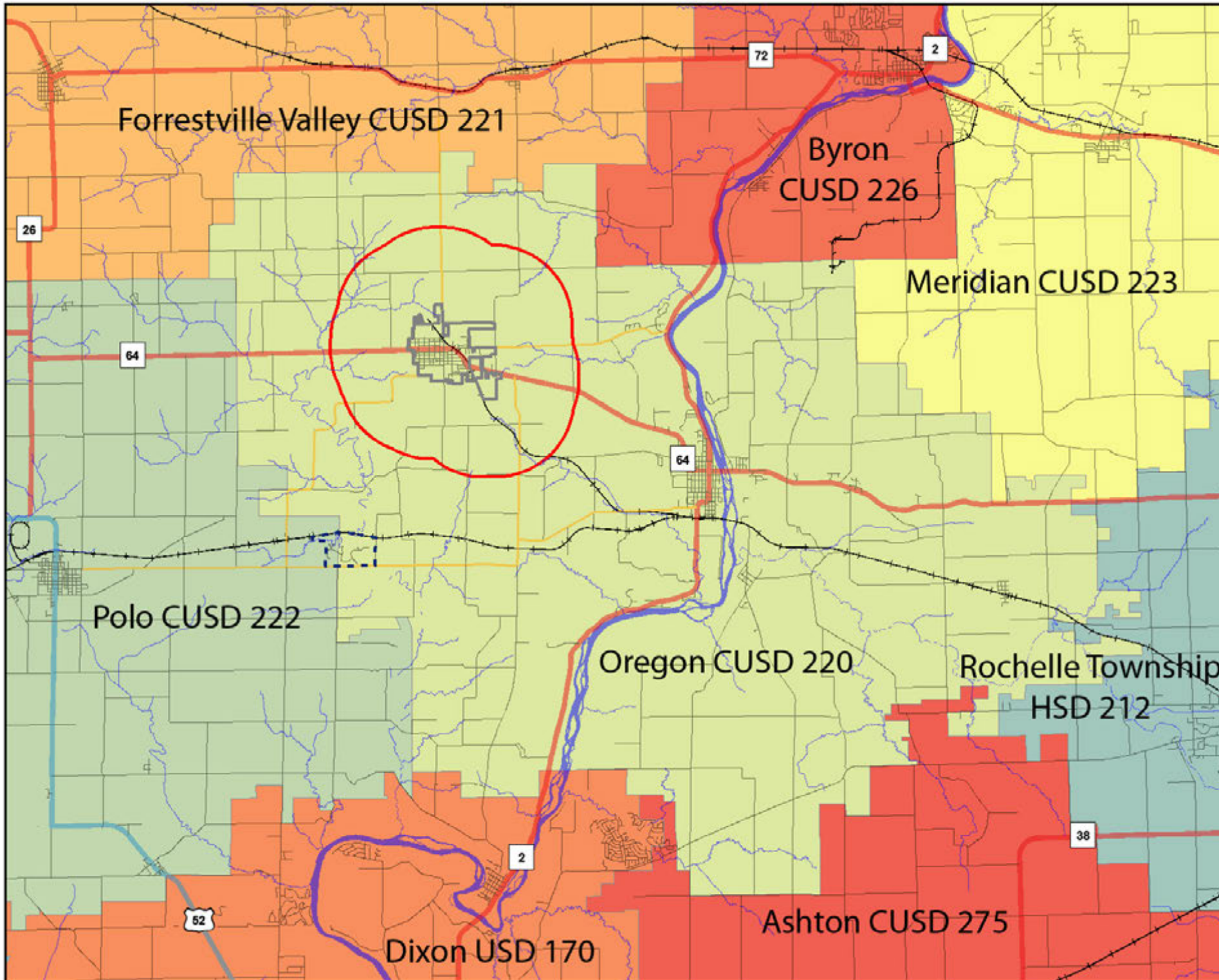
"The average person is willing to walk up to 1/3 mile or about 5 minutes (before driving instead)."



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw with data from Blackhawk Hills, IL DOT T2, Ogle County GIS, and ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap



Mount Morris Area School Districts



Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area
- White Pines State Park

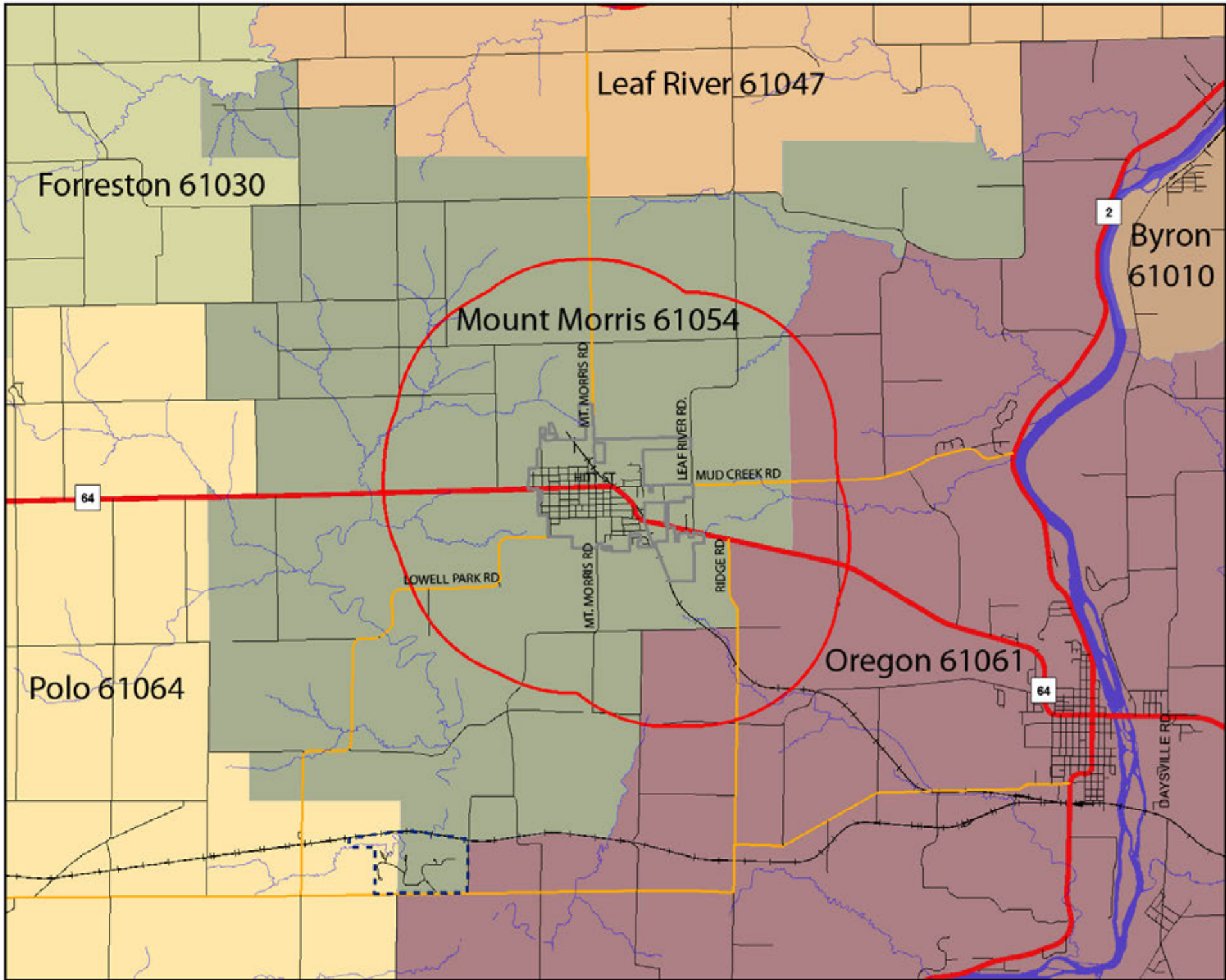
Line Features

- US Highway
- State Highway
- County Roads
- Other Roads
- Railroads
- Rivers and Streams



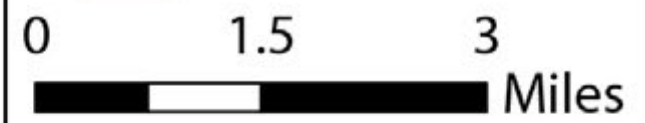
Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
with data from US Census Bureau,
IL DOT2, and Ogle County GIS

Mount Morris Area Zip Codes



- Boundary Features**
- Mount Morris Boundary
 - 1.5 Mile Planning Area
 - White Pines State Park

- Line Features**
- US Highway
 - State Highway
 - County Roads
 - Other Roads
 - Railroads
 - Rivers and Streams



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
with data from US Census Bureau,
IL DOT2, and Ogle County GIS



Chapter 4

Recreation & Natural Resources

Element

- Overview
- Objectives
- Maps

Recreation & Natural Resources

Overview

There are significant recreational and natural resources within a half-hour drive of Mount Morris and a number of amenities within the community itself. Parks include: Dillehay, Hal Palmer Memorial, Mounder, and Zickuhr. Other within or nearby village limits include the Coliseum (public), the Campus, and the Sunset Hill Golf Club (private). Also within or nearby are a handful of cemeteries, including Oakwood and Plainview.



Photo credit: Sunset Golf Club

Make natural assets work

As is discussed elsewhere in *MM2035*, Mount Morris should take advantage of its proximity to natural assets like White Pines State park and commit to co-marketing and co-programming

initiatives. For the village's parks, an inventory of assets may be useful. Such inventory - maintained by village staff and collected by volunteers - would allow for the inclusion of park infrastructure in the community's overall capital improvement plan.



Photo credit: IDNR

Invest in recreational infrastructure

High quality shared-use paths are an attraction and can funnel travelers to a community. Neighboring governments, including Ogle County and the City of Oregon, have invested in efforts to map bicycling routes within the county. Some of these so-called "loops" extend into the village (notably, the Mount Morris Loop). Online resources are available through a county GIS-created website hosted with ESRI ArcGIS. Assembling land for shared-use paths within the village, as well establishing in-village and village


-to-White Pines routes may supplement Bike Ogle and bring more travelers to the village.

Maintain open space

Although conceptualized in the future land use plan, the village should officially designate future parkland. Furthermore, to avoid runoff issues and to preserve aesthetics, the village may consider reviewing best practices (including those established by US Green Building Council and other communities) to ensure that a proper ratio of green/open space to development footprint is maintained on residential lots and throughout Mount Morris as a whole.

Re-invest in village tree canopy

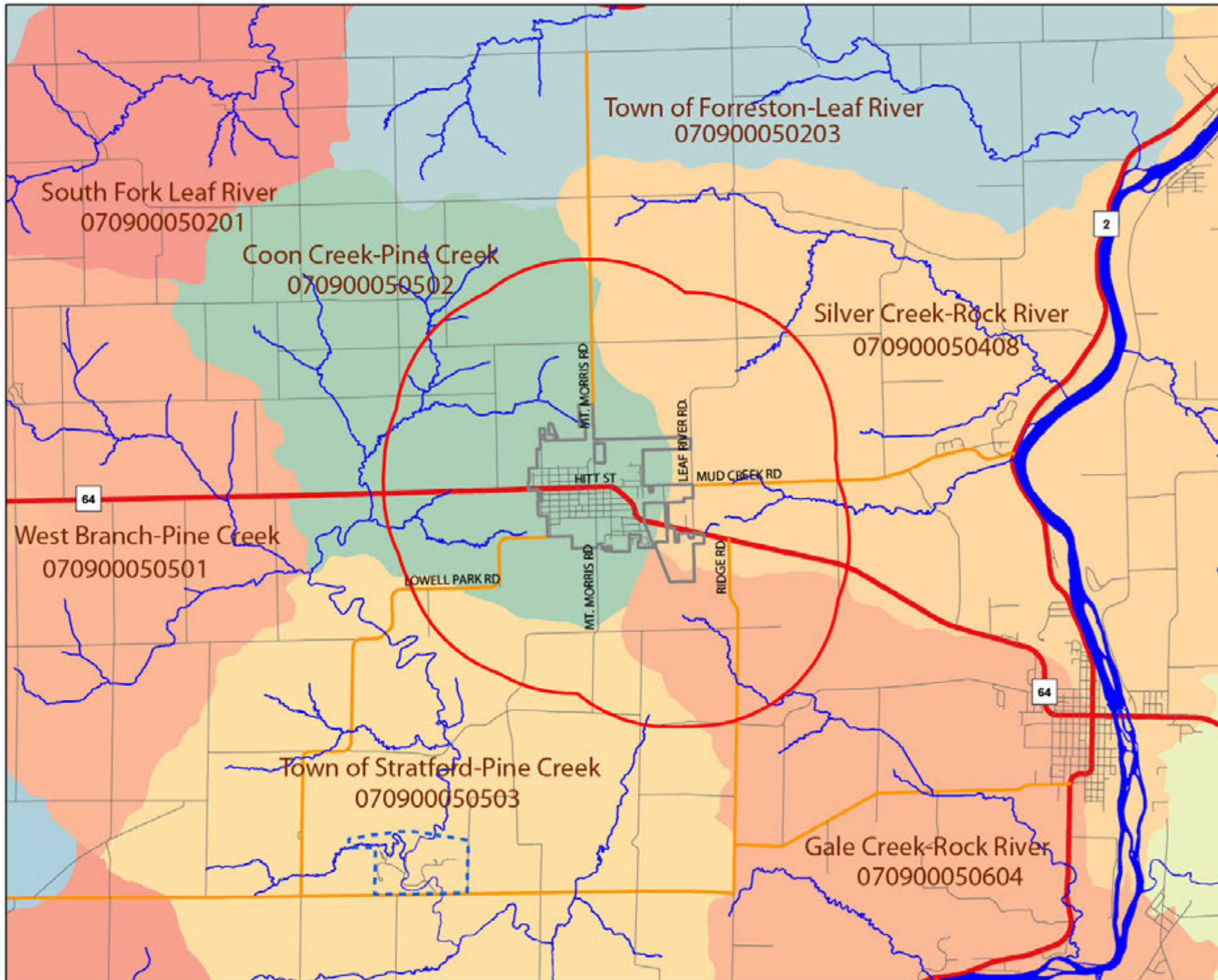
Removed trees are not necessarily being replaced. For example, IDOT's IL-64 reconstruction vastly improved the corridor, but Mount Morris' main thoroughfare is now sorely lacking landscaping/vegetation interest.



SUSTAINABILITY NOTES

Preserving ample open space for active and passive recreational uses within the village and nearby new developments may increase housing desirability and reduce runoff within neighborhoods.

Mount Morris Area Watersheds and Drainage



Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area
- White Pines State Park
- HUC-12 Watersheds

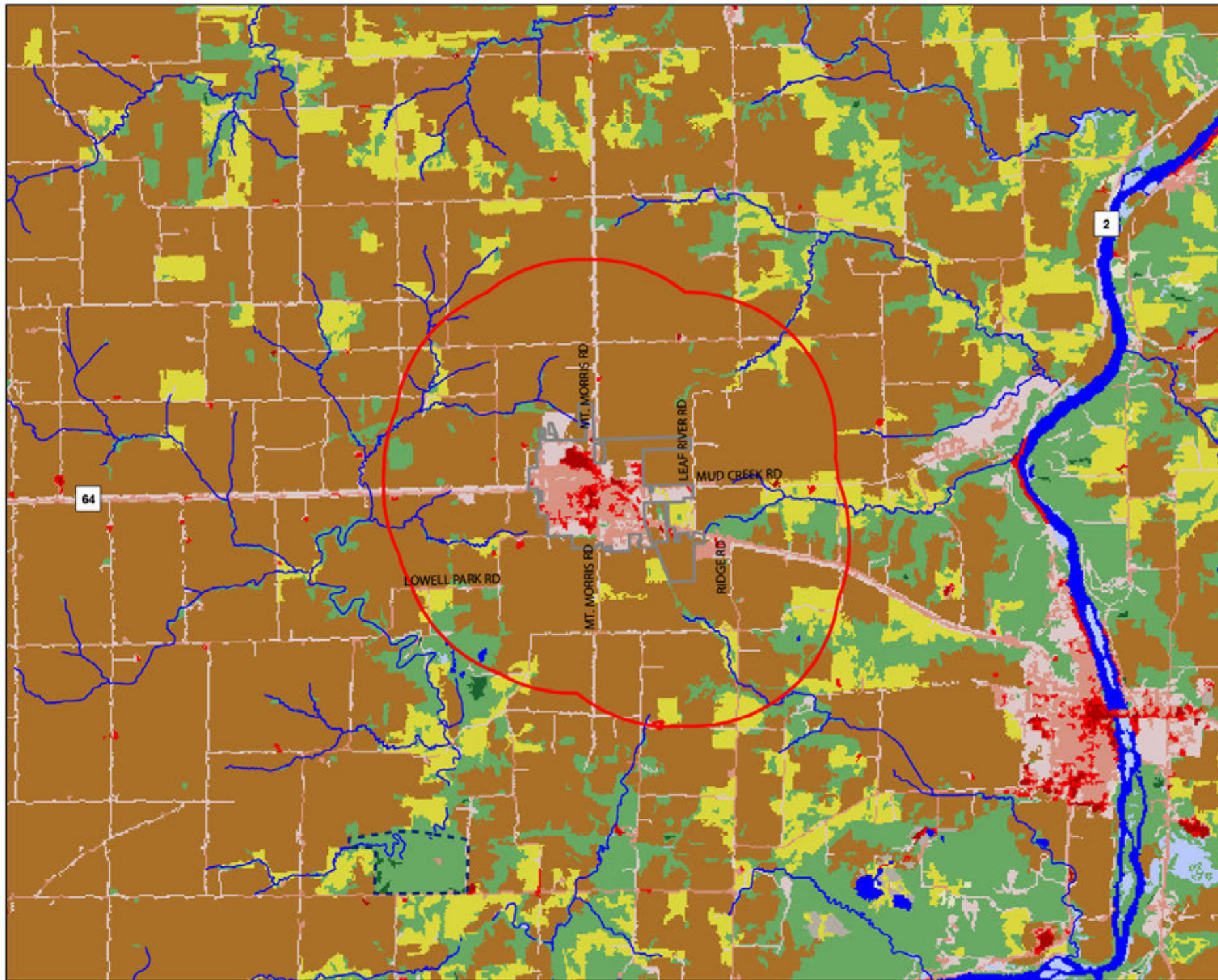
Line Features

- US Highway
- State Highway
- County Roads
- Other Roads
- Rivers and Streams



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
with data from US Geological Survey, IL DOT T2,
and Ogle County GIS

Mount Morris Area Land Cover

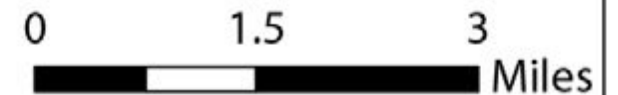


Land Cover Class

- Open Water
- Developed, Open Space
- Developed, Low Intensity
- Developed, Med Intensity
- Developed, High Intensity
- Barren Land
- Deciduous Forest
- Evergreen Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Shrub/Scrub
- Grassland
- Pasture/Hay
- Cultivated Crops
- Woody Wetlands

Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area
- White Pines State Park



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
from data from National Land Cover Database (2011)
US Geological Survey, IDOT T2, and Ogle County GIS



Chapter 5

Economic Development Element

- Overview
- Objectives
- Maps

Economic Development, the Arts, & Tourism

Overview

MM2035 discussions related to economic development often gravitated towards job creation. The community's Economic Vision conceives of a future where at least six hundred jobs exist within one mile of the village. Many thought service and retail jobs that addressed the needs of residents were desirable. Furthermore, jobs connected to commercial and industrial vitality, property reinvestment, and tax base support were valued.

Emphasize business attraction

The most vocal *MM2035* participants emphasized that business attraction should be directed primarily towards bringing new businesses into Mount Morris. They especially preferred that these types of businesses locate in now vacant industrial and downtown/Campus properties. Specific mentions of hardware stores and pharmacies topped discussions, even more so than the reuse of old printing facilities by advanced manufacturing or value-added agriculture.

With respect to attraction, perhaps the single most important thing that the community's economic development stakeholders can do is

be prepared for inquiries from site selectors. With its limited resources, Mount Morris's ability to attract business may, in fact, be limited. However, it can ready its sites and its people to respond to DCEO RFIs in a way that is knowledgeable and persuasive. Networking is also critical. Maintaining relationships with other communities and neighboring economic development organizations will ensure that Mount Morris is both "in-the-know" and able to combine resources to secure investments in the region.


Business attraction should not be free-for-all acceptance of any company. The community must know what it wants and avoid what it does not. Mount Morris must be prepared to pass on proposals or opportunities that do not align with community goals or land use designation, lest it adopt an exhausting scatter-shot approach that disregards the work of previous decision-making. Some also pointed to the possibilities of developing green fields within and adjacent to the southeastern portion of the community (between the shortline railroad and IL-64, which has been incorporated into the village). Some development - including near the airport - may be warranted, assuming long-term fiscal and maintenance impacts are addressed properly.



Scan of postcard: Kable Printing Company in Mount Morris

Collaborate with existing businesses to support BR&E

Other participants wished to see investments made in existing enterprises. BR&E interviews can help locals understand the number and scope of existing businesses. Generally speaking, supporting industry already present in the community is the most cost effective with respect to use of incentives. Moreover, home/region-grown businesses (i.e., Sullivan's) may be more inclined to stay if they continue to be supported.



SUSTAINABILITY NOTES

Compact development patterns served Mount Morris well in the past. It typically costs more over time to serve development outside of a municipality's footprint.

Economic Development, the Arts, & Tourism, cont'd.

Maximize existing assets

Assets may take many forms: infrastructure, human resources, natural resources, specialization, and so on. It is much easier to work with what one has rather than what one anticipates or wishes he or she had, so identifying what is available today - and keeping such inventory current - is crucial.

Economic development relies in part on functioning infrastructure with excess capacity. Deferred maintenance on such infrastructure must be monitored closely so that infrastructure does not reach a point of no return (i.e., where it will need to be rebuilt entirely or abandoned). Syncing individual desires with an overall capital improvement plan is critical. The plan, however, must not be decided in a vacuum. Staff, elected officials, residents, and other key stakeholder must participate in its drafting.

Build economic development capacity

Capacity building requires patience, resources, and focus. The existing, now independent non-profit Economic Development Group (EDG) would should maintain a working relationship with local officials as it develops plans for

commercial and industrial development and small business support. Continued participation with county officials is a must. Local leaders should also continue to consult with economic development officials at the regional and state level to ensure a measure of complementarity between business retention & expansion (BR&E), business attraction, and site development, and related efforts. For example, as long as the State of Illinois's Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity supports the Synchronist platform, supported by ComEd, Mount Morris officials should invest whatever resources they have directed towards BR&E efforts in scheduling interviews with local businesses using the Blane Canada-created system.

Evaluate use of incentives

Like any tool, incentives can be used well to support sustainable community and economic development. They can also be misused. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board publishes information, often in the form of statements, "designed to provide taxpayers, legislators... and others with information that is useful to their decision-making process regarding governmental entities."

Statement 77 covers abatements. The village should also examine the long-term costs of maintaining assets, such as water, sewer, roadways, and sidewalks to reach new residential, commercial, and industrial developments.

Evaluating past and present decisions made in the name of economic development or growth should also be evaluated. Did the city achieve the returns it was expecting? Were assumptions made that proved not to be true? These are important questions. These questions may require measurements, which is why metrics should be considered and measured over time if one truly wants to capture the impacts (positive or negative) of a particular development initiative.

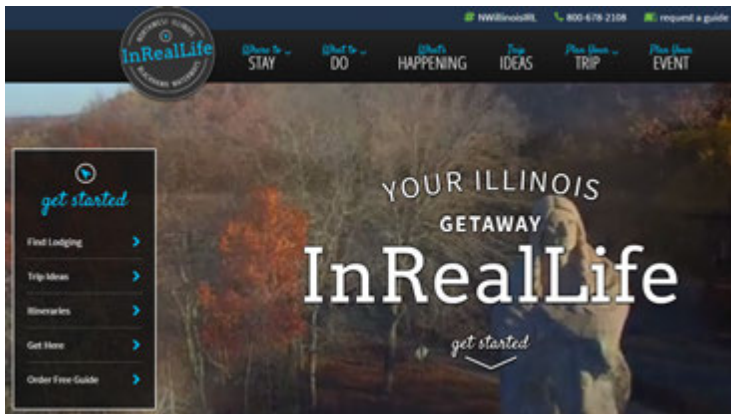
When considering the merits of a development proposal, the village and EDG would be well-served to employ fiscal impact analysis (FIA). FIA is defined as "a tool that compares... local government costs against local government revenues associated with development policies and projects." FIA can be used to better understand the complexities of new land use policies, re-zonings, annexations, redevelopments, capital improvement programming, revenue forecasting, fiscal planning, and level of service changes.

Economic Development, the Arts, & Tourism, cont'd.

Support non-traditional economic development activities

Community stakeholders have identified a number of businesses that produce locally grown foods within a short distance of the village.

These sometimes informal establishments can be a way to diversify the local economy and cater to the tastes of travelers and tourists. Efforts to support and expand these businesses, as well as add additional types of local foods - like wine and beer - are in keeping with national trends to “buy local” and cater to changing generational tastes.



Screen capture: Blackhawk Waterways's website, a local example of pursuing non-traditional economic development and regional branding.

One should not over emphasize the market share or interest in these types of establishments, but they do represent a real portion, if small one, of

the economic development pie. Accordingly, economic development officials might consider the types of assistance they can provide to existing operations with prospects for further product development and expanding operations.

Develop a community brand

Amenities within a half-hour drive of Mount Morris include White Pines State Park, the Lorado Taft Campus, local foods, and multiple historic landmarks. These are, of course, not Mount Morris's assets. However, they are not Oregon's assets either. They should be viewed as of the region, with benefits accruing regionally.

Perhaps more difficult to acknowledge, but nonetheless important to do so - Mount Morris lacks recognizability and is not sufficiently interesting in and of itself to attract more than a handful of passers-by. Thus, it must be sold as one of multiple unique destinations within an overall region that is within a short drive or bicycle trip to other cool and out-of-the ordinary places.

To do this, the community must better brand itself, giving thought to its immediate

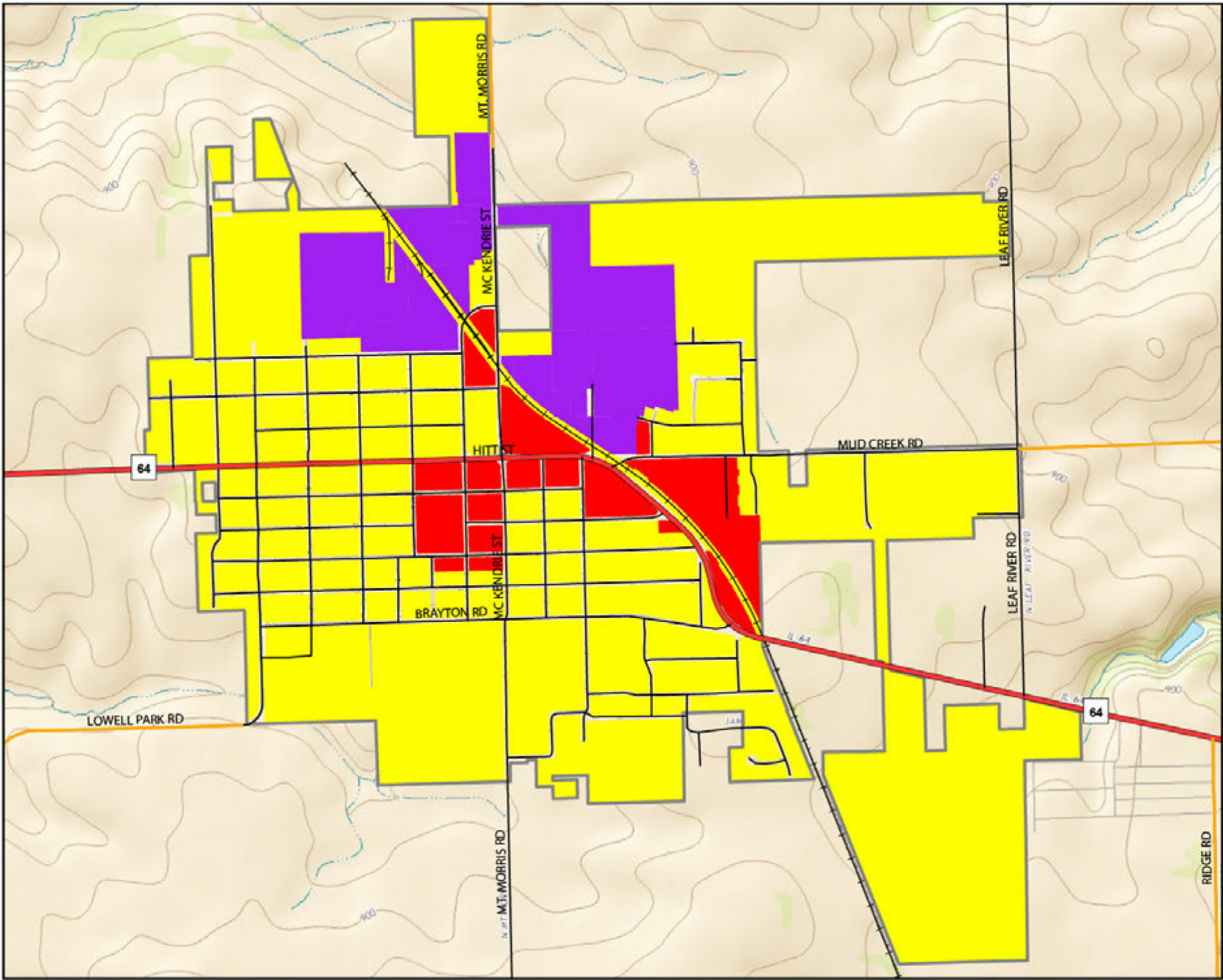
surroundings. This brand should must not exclusively encourage traditional economic development and should be developed in partnership with arts, education, local foods, recreation, and tourism leaders. And it should include some reference or connection to at least some of the important sites mentioned (notably, White Pines State Park).

Provide or pay for training and/or networking opportunities

A municipality that does not support its staff in training current and future leaders lacks the will to make real progress locally. Some of the best ideas for a community will be found outside of it, and unless staff and local officials have the opportunity to attend these events, decision-making may remain close-minded and dated.



Support organizations related to community and economic development.



Mount Morris TIF Districts

TIF Districts

- Industrial TIF
- Downtown TIF
- Remainder of Mt Morris

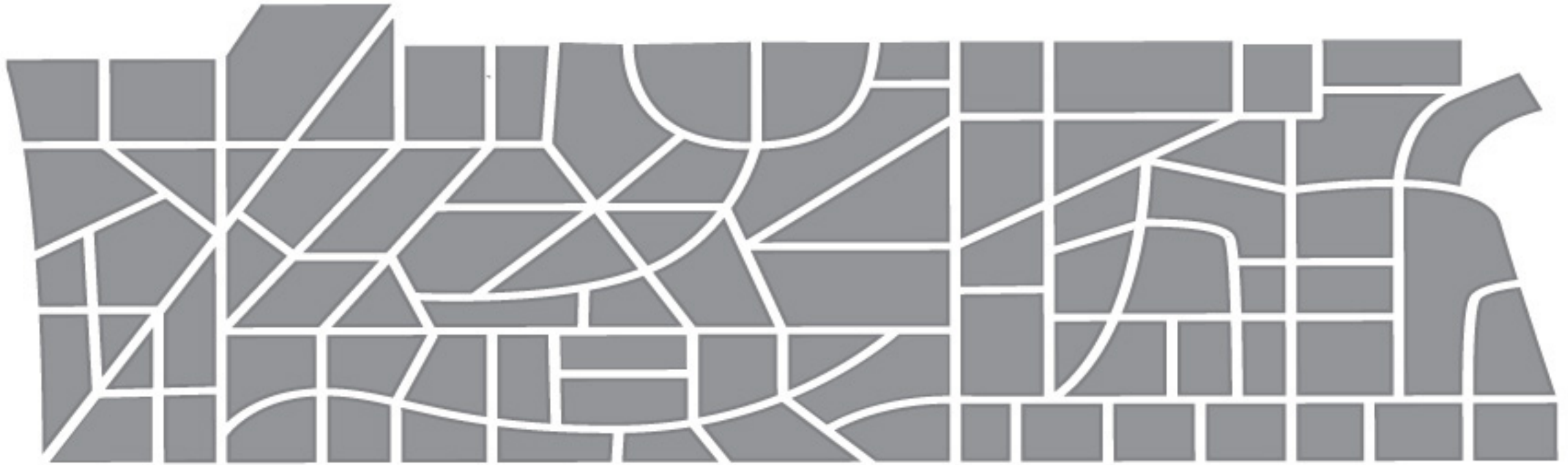
Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary

0 0.25 0.5
 Miles

Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
 with data from Ogle County GIS,
 IL DOT T2, and ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap





Chapter 6

Land Use & Transportation Element

- Overview
- Objectives
- Maps

Land Use & Transportation

Overview

Decisions with respect to land use and transportation will do the most to shape the character of a community over the long-term. It is difficult to undo land use mistakes or poor planning because the investments made are often fairly significant (e.g., roads, water/sewer, new private and public sector buildings).

Gather information on transportation systems

IDOT keeps counts of certain roadways, but not all. Gathering traffic counts throughout Mount Morris will help village officials better set investment priorities in the capital improvement plan and address questions that may be asked about use patterns and public safety.



Device for recording traffic counts.

Furthermore, noting the age of improvements and geo-locating all infrastructure with GPS through local staff, consultants, regional planning organizations, and/or the county would be an ideal practice. Too little is known otherwise about the location of amenities and systems, and too much emphasis in the past has been put on individual recollection of the built environment and its many infrastructures.



Device for mapping infrastructure points

In support of geo-locating efforts, the Village of Mount Morris should continue to participate in the countywide consortium (the Ogle County GIS Partnership) and other pertinent GIS (geographic information systems).



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons, WayneRay

Address fiscal impacts of development & infrastructure investments

Infrastructure can be expensive to build and a significant burden to maintain. That which is not maintained can be even more costly to replace. Arguably, any significant enhancements or extensions of infrastructure should be done only after the community has considered the lifetime cost of keeping a particular asset in usable condition (life-cycle analysis)



SUSTAINABILITY NOTES

Bringing non-traditional stakeholders and partners together from other communities can guide land use and transportation decisions more wholly. However, strong leadership and sense of vision is a must.

Land Use & Transportation, cont'd.

Address the impacts of land use decisions outside of Mount Morris

Although the village is unlikely to experience any significant development pressures from outside of its municipal boundaries, there is still the potential for land use conflicts, especially if the county were to designate a portion of adjacent or nearby land for a use that is in contrast to the *MM2035* plan. Communication and reconciliation between various stakeholders like the county is key. This is also true with respect to the Village of Mount Morris and the City of Oregon.

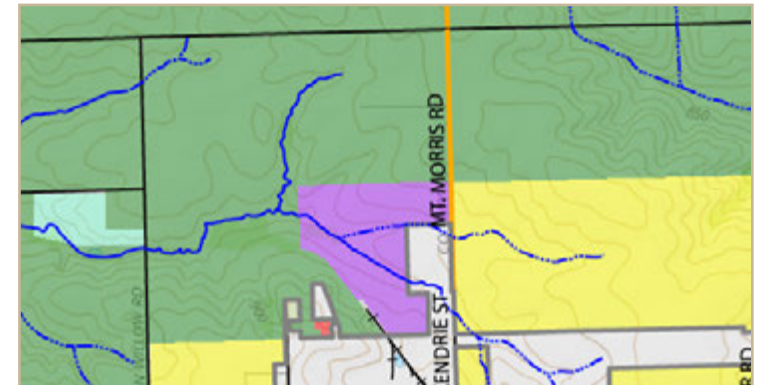
Review/maintain key documents

As noted earlier in the Community Facilities element, Mount Morris should establish/maintain a capital improvement plan (CIP) that is updated regularly. Beyond updating and referencing the CIP, the community must from time-to-time review the future land use plan contained within *MM2035*. In addition, updates to zoning maps should be included in a timely fashion, although any irregularities in the zoning ordinances should be reconciled first before re-classifying a parcel of land and modifying existing maps.

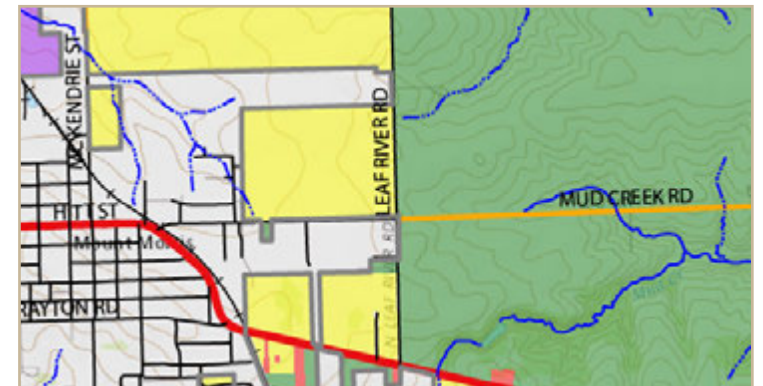
Consider annexation decisions

Here and there, Mount Morris's municipal boundaries exhibit what one might refer to as "blips" (please note the real-world illustrations to the right). It is worth debating whether land that is excluded from village limits should be incorporated. Incorporation can be done for the sake of visual uniformity; more importantly, perhaps, is that the annexation of blips ensures that land uses are consistent with surrounding/near-surrounding village land uses. Before proceeding with any kind of annexation, officials should develop a plan for converting residential and other well and septic systems to municipal infrastructure, as well as other contingencies that are likely to arise.

Annexation is a tool that must be used with caution, as not all land incorporations will benefit a community. The village should do what it can to discourage scattered and/or leapfrog development (i.e., the situation where parcels develop far away from village limits and are separated by large undeveloped areas) to avoid investing in infrastructure that may be costly to maintain and serve only a small proportion of Mount Morris's total population. Other functions impacted by the above include snow plowing, street cleaning, and hydrant flushing.



Blips in north-central Mount Morris

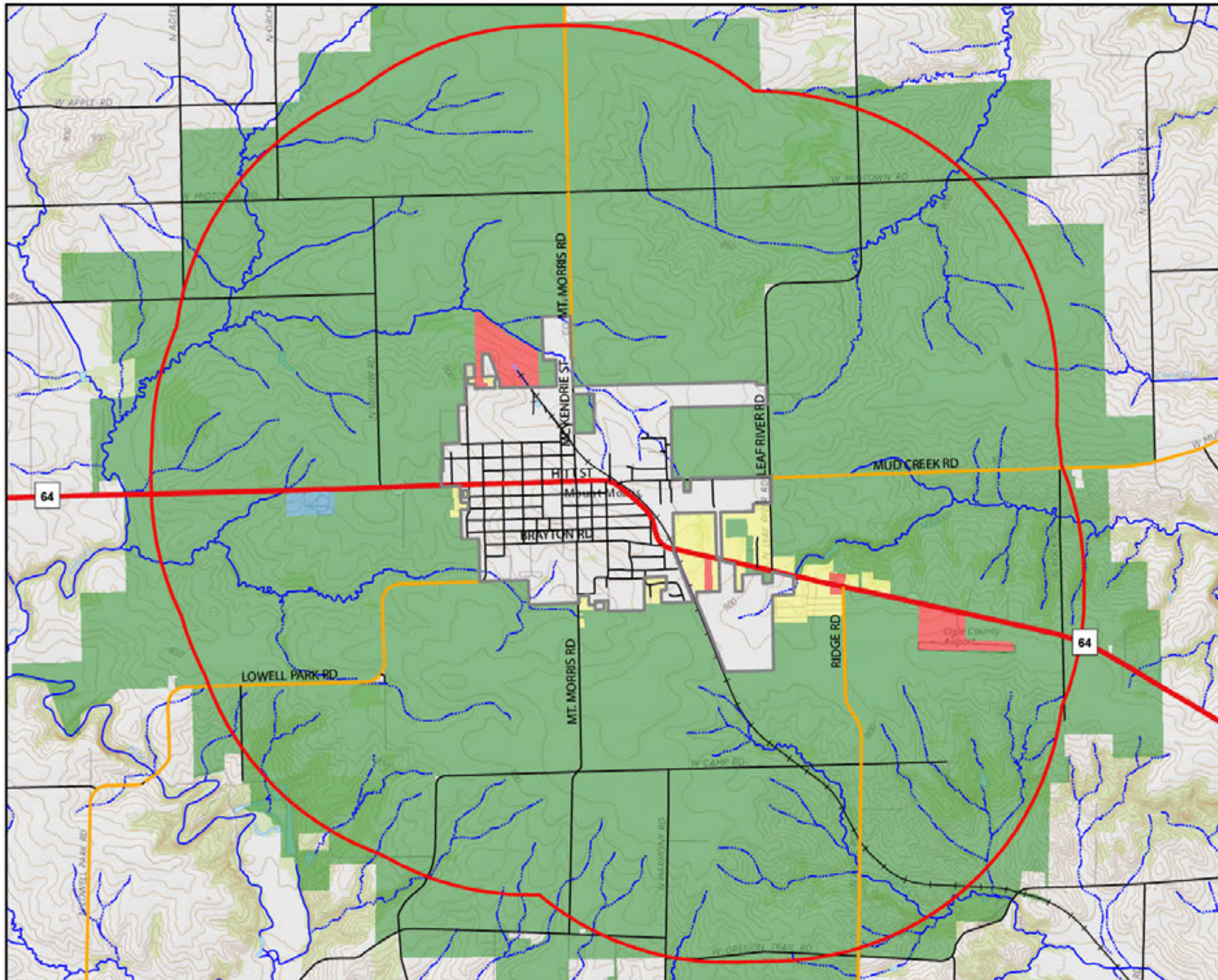


Blips in northeast Mount Morris



Blips in west-central Mount Morris

Mount Morris Area Current Land Use



Current Land Use

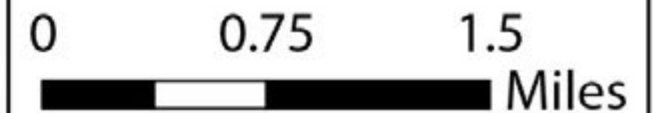
- Business
- Civic-Cemetery
- Farm-Farmstead
- Industrial
- Residential

Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area

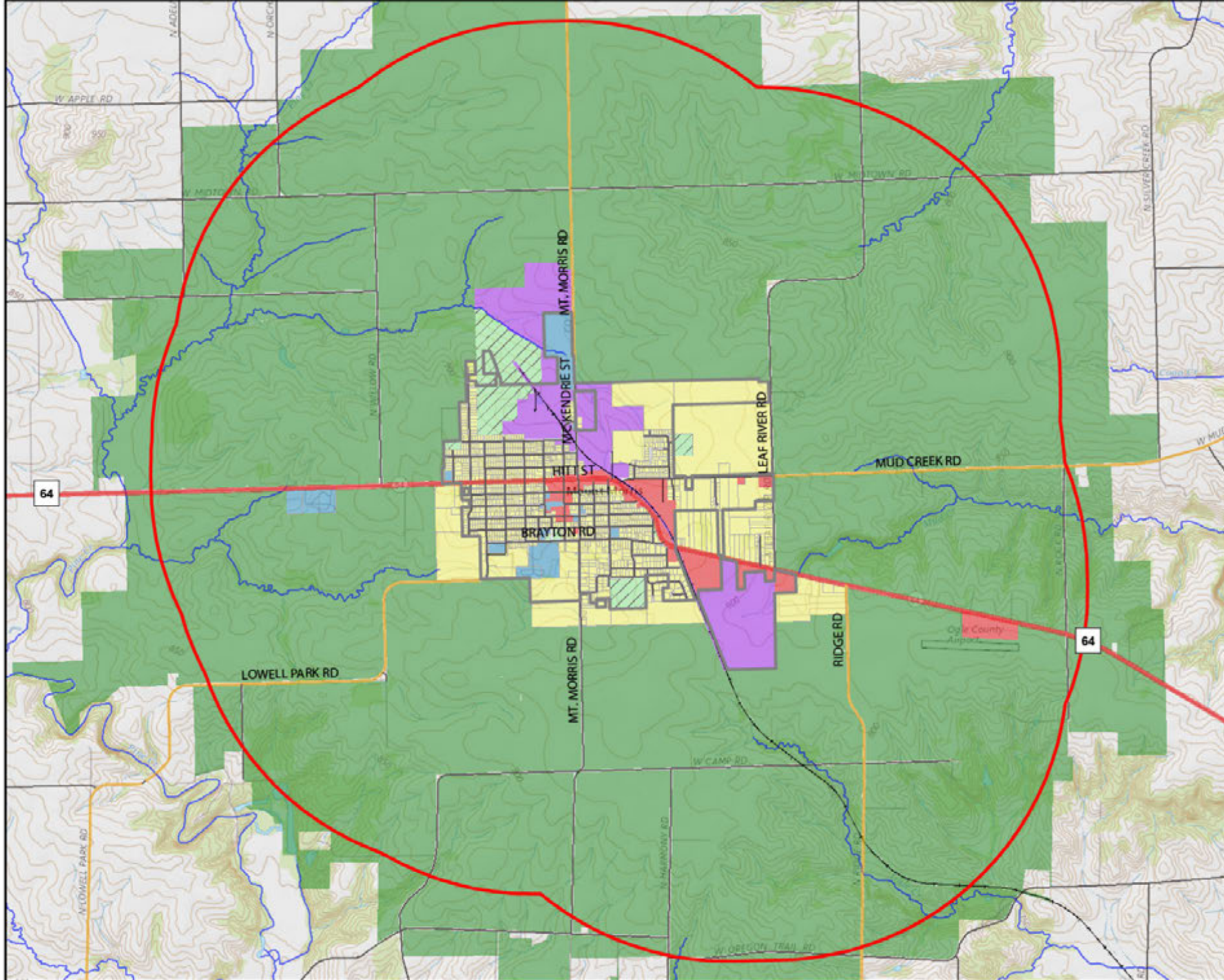
Line Features

- US Highway
- State Highway
- County
- Other
- Railroads
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittant Stream



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
Data from US Census, IL DOT T2, Ogle County
GIS, and ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap

Mount Morris Area Future Land Use



Future Land Use

- Business
- Civic
- Farm
- Industrial
- Parks/Reserve/Open Space
- Residential

Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area

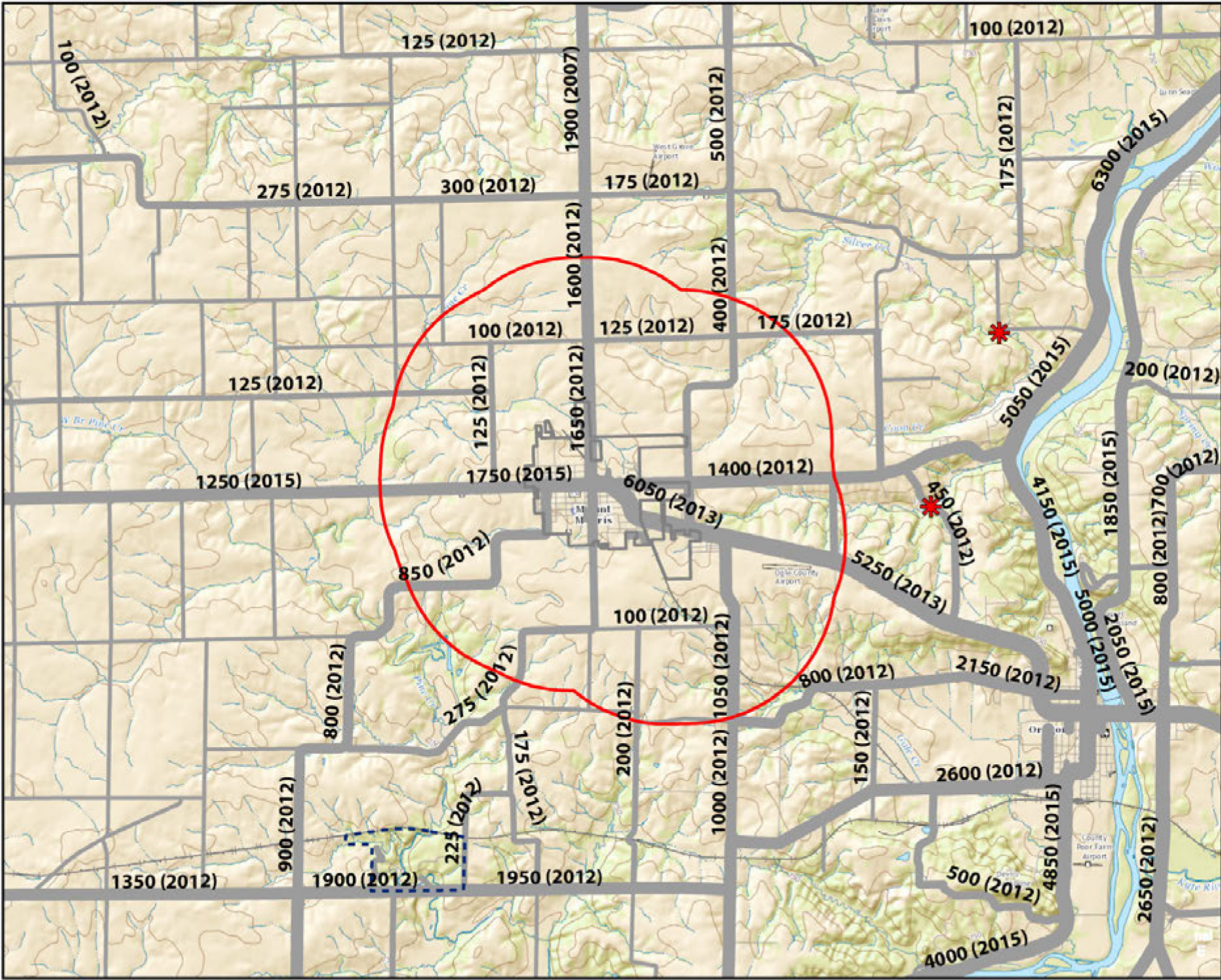
Line Features

- US Highway
- State Highway
- County
- Other Roads
- Railroads
- Perennial Stream



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
Data from US Census,
IL DOT T2, and Ogle County GIS

Mount Morris Area Traffic Counts and Structurally Deficient Bridges



Average Annual Daily Traffic

- less than 100
- 100 - 250
- 250 - 500
- 500 - 1,000
- 1,000 - 2,500
- 2,500 - 5,000
- greater than 5,000
- Railroad - no data

Point Features

- * Structurally Deficient Bridges

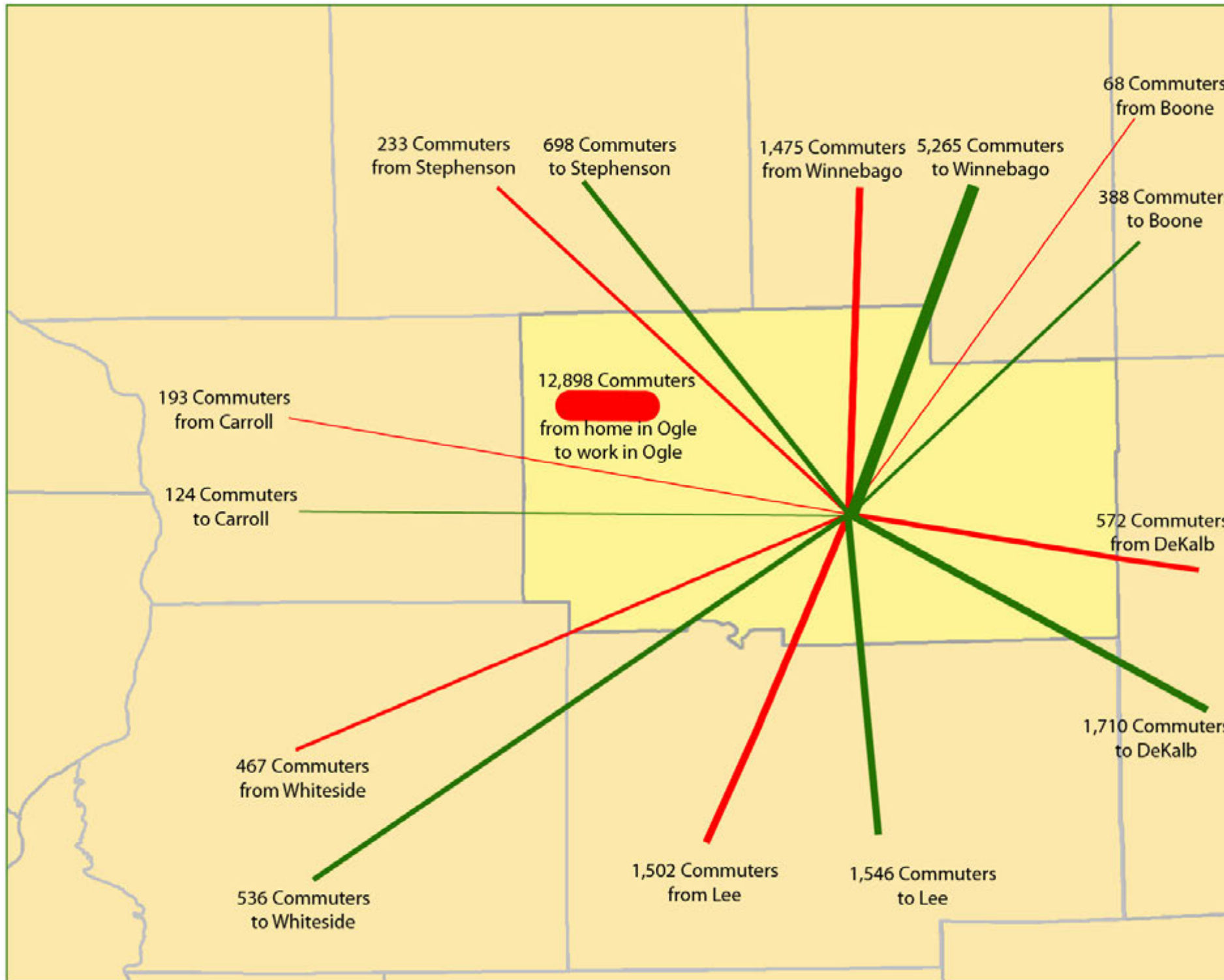
Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area
- White Pines State Park

0 1.5 3 Miles

Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw with data from IL DOT T2, Ogle County GIS, and ESRI Topographic Basemap
Traffic Counts Stated as "# Vehicles (Year of Study)"

Commuting To & From Ogle Adjacent Counties



Red Lines = Inbound Journey to Work
Green Lines = Outbound Journey to Work

Inbound Journey to Work	Outbound Journey to Work
up to 200	up to 200
201 - 500	201 - 500
501 - 1,000	501 - 1,000
1,001 - 2,500	1,001 - 2,500
2,501 - 6,000	2,501 - 6,000

Top Outbound County: 5,265 to Winnebago
Top Inbound County: 1,502 to Lee
Internal Daily Commuters 12,898

Line Ends Represent Entire County's Destinations



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
 with data from 2009-13 American Community Survey

Mount Morris Municipal Zoning

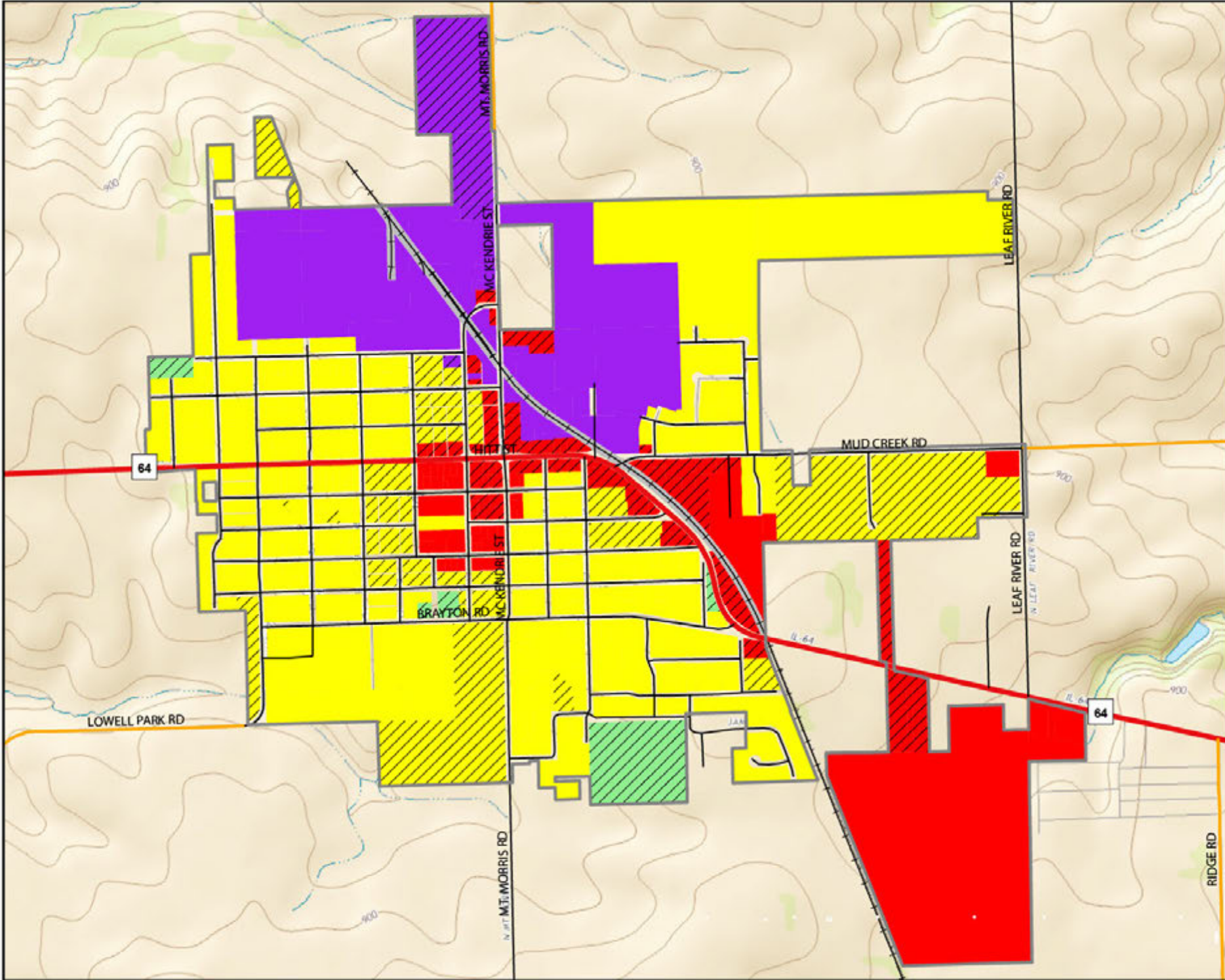
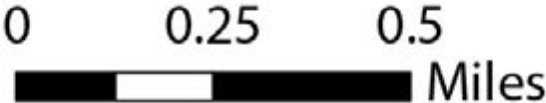
Municipal Zoning

- Municipal C-1
- Municipal C-2
- Municipal I-1
- Municipal I-2
- Municipal R-1
- Municipal R-2
- Park

Railroad

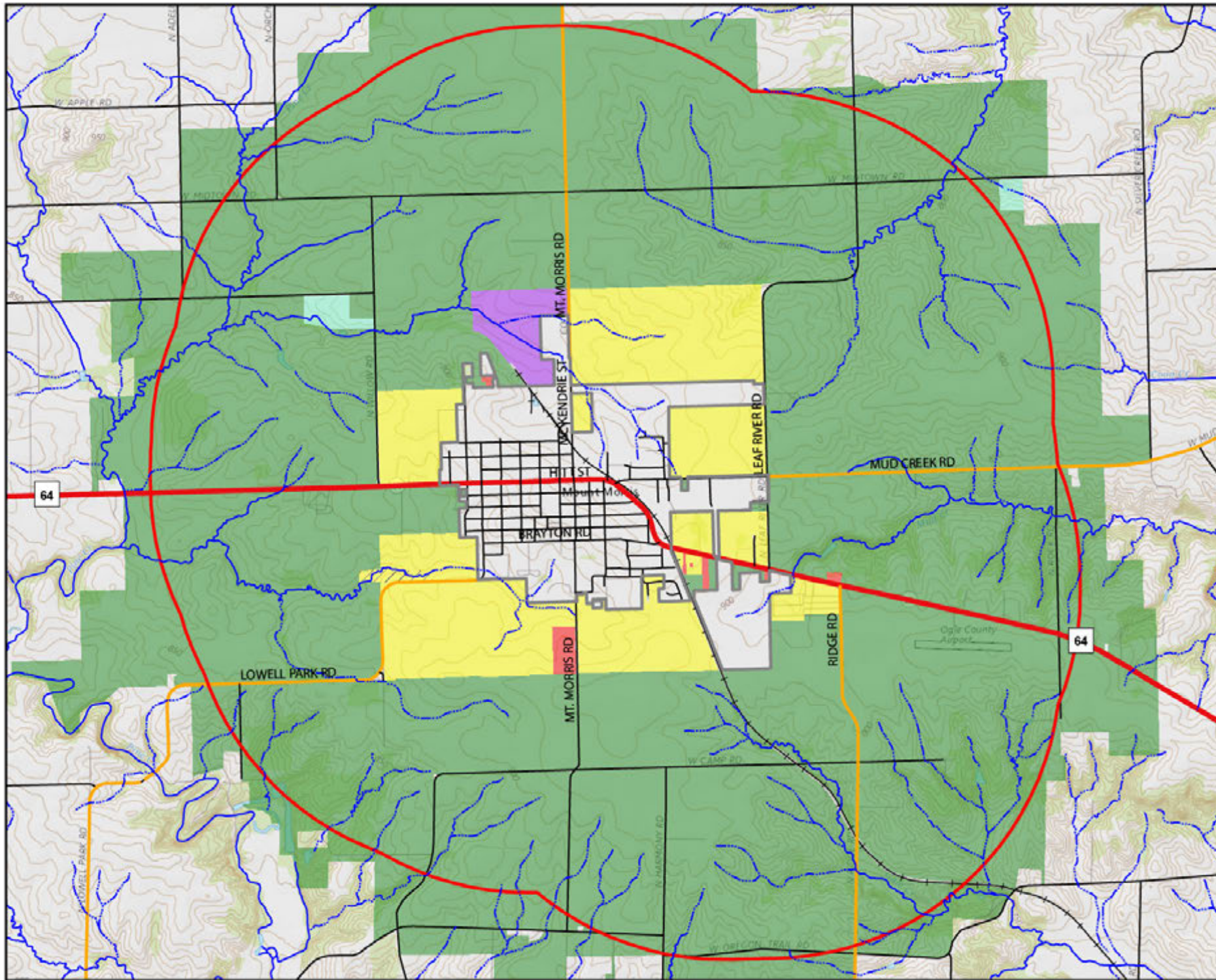
Boundary Features

Mount Morris Boundary



Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
with data from Ogle County GIS,
IL DOT T2, and ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap

Mount Morris Area County Zoning



Surrounding Area Zoning

- County AG-1
- County B-1
- County I-1
- County IA
- County R-1
- County R-2
- Railroad

Boundary Features

- Mount Morris Boundary
- 1.5 Mile Planning Area

Line Features

- US Highway
- State Highway
- County Roads
- Other Roads
- Railroads
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittant Stream



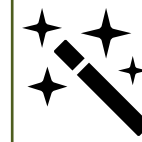
Produced by GIS Mapping Specialist Andy Shaw
with data from Ogle County GIS, IL DOT T2, and
ESRI-USGS Topographic Basemap





Objectives & Actions

Housing Objectives & Actions



APPLICATION NOTES

Stakeholders will not be able to implement all of the actions described in the following sections. Prioritize based on community priorities/vision. Benefit estimates are not scientifically derived.

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
2.1	Invest in walkable & people-centered neighborhoods			
2.1.1	Encourage single and multi-family development on infill sites	0 - 2 years	++	EDG, PC, Public Property & Ordinance
2.1.2	Encourage street-facing porches in new residential construction	0 - 2 years	+	EDG, PC, Public Property & Ordinance
2.1.3	Invest in ADA-compliant sidewalks (including the construction of curb cuts) that lead to destinations, such as parks and other amenities	5+ years	++++	CUSD 220, Parks & Recreation, PC, Streets
2.1.4	Prohibit cul-de-sac construction where opportunities exist to provide through or stub-streets	0 - 2 years	+++	Public Property & Ordinance, PC, Streets
2.2	Encourage single & multi-family housing upkeep			
2.2.1	Provide the code enforcement/zoning officer with sufficient authority and resources to do his or her job effectively	0 - 2 years	+++	Police, Public Property & Ordinance
2.2.2	Maintain code enforcement/zoning inter-governmental agreement (IGA) with Ogle County	0 - 2 years	+++	Police, Public Property & Ordinance
2.3	Modernize housing-related ordinances & regulations			
2.3.1	Address unclear and/or inconsistent language; remedy language that is not content-neutral	3 - 5 years	++++	Public Property & Ordinance
2.4	Address abandoned or blighted housing			
2.4.1	Identify abandoned and blighted residential properties	0 - 2 years	+	EDG, PC
2.4.2	Apply for IHDA abandoned property and/or blight reduction program funds	0 - 2 years	++++	EDG, PC, Village Clerk
2.5	Protect housing from man-made & natural disasters			
2.5.1	Establish 25 (municipal) / 75 (homeowner) sewer backflow prevention incentive by encouraging the installation of combined gate/flaps (\$1,400) or standalone flaps (\$600)	3 - 5 years	++	Water & Sewer
2.6	Support aging-in-place design			
2.6.1	Disseminate information about homeowner assistance programs	Regularly	+	KSB, Pincrest
2.6.2	Establish a 25 (municipal) / 75 (homeowner) sidewalk improvement incentive, up to a set amount, for public terraces adjacent to existing residential properties	3 - 5 years	++	EDG, PC, Streets

Housing, cont'd.

Objectives & Actions

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
2.7	Improve terrace appearance			
2.7.1	Establish a removal/planting plan for trees and other vegetation to replace diseased and deteriorating trees/other vegetation	3 - 5 years	++	Parks & Recreation, Public Property & Ordinance, UI-Extension
2.7.2	Establish a 25 (municipal) / 75 (homeowner) vegetation improvement incentive, up to a set amount, for public terraces adjacent to existing residential properties, in keeping with an established municipal planting plan/tree guide	3 - 5 years	++	Parks & Recreation, Public Property & Ordinance, UI-Extension
2.8	Grow relationships with key housing stakeholders			
2.8.1	Schedule a standing meeting with the real estate community, the Ogle County Housing Authority, and housing advocacy/support organizations to discuss the state of housing in the municipality	Regularly	+	EDG, Realtors, OCHA, TCOC
2.9	Support code/zoning enforcement			
2.9.1	Provide regular training to employees or contractors responsible for enforcing the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code and zoning ordinances	0 - 2 years	+++	Public Property & Ordinance
2.9.2	Consider sharing resources, including staff, with other governmental entities that use the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code	3 - 5 years	+++	Public Property & Ordinance
2.10	Determine whether code/zoning enforcement is working			
2.10.1	Review the effectiveness of the Ogle County-Mount Morris IGA; establish measurement and judgement criteria	3 - 5 years	++	EDG, Public Property & Ordinance
2.11	Review permitting process			
2.11.1	Review the overall permitting process, including permitting forms, to ensure consistent application and accessibility	0 - 2 years	++	Public Property & Ordinance, Village Clerk
2.11.2	Launch a digital permitting service on www.mtmorrisil.net	3 - 5 years	++	Public Property & Ordinance, Village Clerk
2.11.3	Assist applicants with permits to reduce submission errors	Regularly	++	Code/Zoning Officer, Public Property & Ordinance, Village Clerk

Community Facilities, Infrastructure, & Telecom

Objectives & Actions

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
3.1	Set facility & infrastructure investment priorities (CIP)			
3.1.1	Develop and maintain a 3 to 5 year comprehensive CIP that includes all aspects of public investments	0 - 2 years	++++	Businesses, EDG, Public Works Staff, Residents, VB
3.2	Invest in pedestrian & bicycling facilities			
3.2.1	Install or encourage businesses to install pedestrian/bicycling facilities (e.g., benches, bike racks, etc.)	0 - 2 years	+++	Bars, EDG, Houses of Worship, Restaurants, VB
3.2.2	Establish a bicyclist rest stop at Main and Wesley (vacant lot) or another suitable location	0 - 2 years	++	City of Oregon, EDG, Ogle County, RPOs
3.2.3	Work with "Bike Ogle" to create a "Bike Mount Morris" sub-map that includes facilities, amenities, and points of interest; promote special events on the sub-map; establish a Mount Morris to White Pines State Park route	0 - 2 years	++	City of Oregon, EDG, Ogle County, RPOs
3.3	Improve water/wastewater/stormwater systems			
3.3.1	Establish a planting suitability guide (especially for terraces)	0 - 2 years	++	Public Works Staff, UIExt, Water & Sewer
3.3.2	Identify hydrants, manhole covers, and other system facilities for replacement	0 - 2 years	++	Public Works Staff, Water & Sewer
3.3.3	Establish IGAs with other entities (e.g., IPWMAN, etc.) for public works support	0 - 2 years	++	Public Works Staff, Streets, VB, Water & Sewer
3.3.4	Map properties that have experienced wastewater/stormwater backflow issues	0 - 2 years	++	Public Works Staff, Village Clerk, Water & Sewer
3.3.5	Identify areas of substandard water pressure (with respect to fire fighting)	5+ years	+	Public Works Staff, Fire Department
3.3.6	Digitize historical records of various systems; incorporate into existing GIS; include age and condition	3 - 5 years	++	Ogle County, Public Works Staff, RPOs, Water & Sewer
3.4	Invest in publicly-owned facilities & structures			
3.4.1	Review solar/wind/alternative energy opportunities for public facilities	5+ years	++	EDG, Public Works Staff, Water & Sewer, RPOs
3.4.2	Pursue energy efficiency incentives (covering streetlighting, HVAC systems, etc.) through ComEd and Nicor Gas	Regularly	++++	RPOs
3.4.3	Re-purpose Coliseum/Community Gym into a fitness and recreational venue	5+ years	++	EDG, VB
3.4.4	Direct funds to restoring the Memorial Fountain	3 - 5 years	++	EDG, VB

Community Facilities, Infrastructure, & Telecom, cont'd.

Objectives & Actions

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
3.5	Build on existing human & financial resources			
3.5.1	Recruit and train personnel, including officials and volunteers; assign specific tasks to volunteers	Regularly	++	Arts/Education Groups, EDG, Fraternal Organizations, Houses of Worship, Village Clerk
3.5.2	Establish a local community foundation; link existing community funds	5+ years	+++	EDG, Financial Institutions, , Library
3.6	Develop community brand/deploy signage			
3.6.1	Establish uniform beautification and public signage guidelines (should be part of overall branding process)	0 - 2 years	+++	Residents, EDG, PC
3.6.2	Decide locations for way-finding signage and order/install permanent signs (should be part of overall branding process)	0 - 2 years	+++	EDG, PC
3.6.3	Create public and private design guidelines, including sub-manuals for the Campus and IL-64 (should be part of overall branding process)	0 - 2 years	+++	Residents, EDG, PC
3.6.4	Install LED signage at a specified point along IL-64 (for community and visitor announcements)	3 - 5 years	+	EDG, PC

Recreation & Natural Resources

Objectives & Actions

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
4.1	Make natural assets work			
4.1.1	Consider natural assets (such as White Pines State Park) when branding/regional positioning	Regularly	+	EDG, Tourism, VB
4.1.2	Establish meaningful relationships and co-program with park officials/IDNR and businesses near White Pines State Park	Regularly	+++	EDG, Tourism
4.1.3	Establish volunteer corps and/or cleanup dates for natural assets (in particular, White Pines State Park) and roadway clean-ups (in particular, IL-64)	0 - 2 Years	+++	EDG, Residents, Tourism
4.1.4	Inventory amenities and features at various locations, including village-owned parks	0 - 2 Years	+	Parks & Recreation, Tourism
4.2	Invest in recreational infrastructure			
4.2.1	Identify corridors (pursue shared-use path development grants)	0 - 2 Years	+	EDG, Tourism
4.2.2	Acquire land with and construct shared-use paths (pursue land acquisition grants)	5+ Years	+++	EDG, Tourism
4.2.3	Establish a splash pad within village limits and consider placement at sites - like the Campus - for centrality and visibility	3 - 5 years	++	
4.3	Maintain open space			
4.3.1	Designate future parkland (especially in relation to residential developments)	0 - 2 Years	+++	Parks & Recreation, PC
4.3.2	Review and revise, if necessary, limits on lot coverage to maintain an acceptable proportion of green space and/or permeable land	0 - 2 Years	+++	PC, VB
4.4	Re-invest in village tree canopy			
4.4.1	Plant in areas previously impacted by construction, including along IL-64, following guidelines set by village officials (use "Trees for 2050" from the Chicago Botanic Garden to assist in guideline creation)	5+ Years	+++	EDG, Parks & Recreation, Tourism

Economic Development, the Arts, & Tourism

Objectives & Actions

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
5.1	Emphasize business attraction			
5.1.1	Update LOIS	Regularly	++	Businesses, DCEO, EDG, Village Clerk
5.1.2	Schedule Synchronist interviews	0 - 2 Years	++	Businesses, DCEO, EDG, Village Clerk
5.1.3	Participate in regional commercial/industrial site certification program	3 - 5 Years	+++	Businesses, EDG
5.1.4	Pursue enterprises that compliment or are similar to existing clusters;	Regularly	+++	Businesses, EDG
5.1.5	Pursue alternative energy enterprises; diversify through non-traditional economic development	3 - 5 Years	++	EDG
5.1.6	When considering retail/services, prioritize hardware store and pharmacy search	Regularly	++	EDG
5.2	Collaborate with existing businesses to support BR&E			
5.2.1	Work with Union Savings Bank to establish a development redevelopment/reuse plan that is mutually beneficial to all parties	0 - 2 Years	++++	Businesses, EDG, VB
5.2.2	Identify second-stage growth companies and connect them to incentives/resources, such as the enterprise zone, BEST, SBDC, or USDA Rural Development	0 - 2 Years	++++	BEST, Businesses, EDG, SBDC
5.2.3	Provide information about workforce training and small business grants	Regularly	+	BEST, Businesses, EDG, SBDC, RPOs
5.3	Maximize existing assets			
5.3.1	Continue to work with municipal and county partners on Ogle County EDO feasibility research	Regularly	+++	EDG, VB, Village Clerk
5.3.2	Review infrastructure upgrade costs at industrial park sites	3 - 5 Years	+++	EDG
5.3.3	Upgrade industrial park sites to third part specifications	5+ Years	+++	Businesses, EDG, VB
5.3.4	Identify and develop reuse strategies for key corridors and areas, such as the Campus and IL-64	0 - 2 years	+++	EDG, VB
5.3.5	Establish right of first refusal agreement with shortline railroad owner	0 - 2 Years	++++	EDG
5.3.6	Identify expansion areas for 1Gbps fiber optic access	0 - 2 Years	+	Leaf River Telephone, iFiber
5.4	Build economic development capacity			
5.4.1	Establish a revolving loan fund for project development and facade improvements	3 - 5 Years	++	EDG, VB

Economic Development, the Arts, & Tourism, cont'd.

Objectives & Actions

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
5.4.2	Develop land assembly strategies, especially along IL-64	3 - 5 Years	+++	Businesses, EDG, VB
5.4.3	Budget for land assembly	3 - 5 Years	+++	
5.4.4	Assemble (purchase) land following established strategies	5 + Years	+++	EDG, VB
5.5	Evaluate use of incentives			
5.5.1	Establish metrics for measuring the impact (positive and negative) of incentives	0 - 2 Years	+++	EDG, PC, VB, RPOs
5.5.2	Use established tools to determine whether incentives should be applied, such as fiscal impact and life-cycle (cradle-to-grave) analysis of proposed projects	0 - 2 Years	++++	EDG, Consultants, Regional Planning Organizations
5.6	Support non-traditional economic development activities			
5.6.1	Develop arts scene through boutiques and Sandstone Building gallery	5 + Years	++	EDG, Local Artists, Tourism
5.6.2	Encourage cottage industries and local foods activities	5 + Years	++	EDG, Local Artists, Tourism
5.6.3	Develop music scene through bandshell and other venues	0 - 2 Years	++	EDG, Local Artists, Tourism
5.6.4	Encourage cottage industries and local foods activities	3 - 5 Years	++	EDG, Local Artists, Tourism
5.6.5	Acquire former township hall to use as local foods/tourism/vendor center/ interactive history exhibit	0 - 2 Years	++++	EDG, VB
5.7	Develop a community brand			
5.7.1	Begin community branding process; incorporate non-traditional economic development and natural/regional assets; establish regional position	0 - 2 Years	++++	Consultants, CVB, EDG, Residents, VB
5.8	Provide or pay for training and/or networking opportunities			
5.8.1	Allocate funding for staff training and conferences	Regularly	++++	VB

Land Use & Transportation

Objectives & Actions

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
6.1	Gather information on transportation systems			
6.1.1	Observe and judge the long-term effectiveness of seal-coating on local roadways	5+ years	+	Public Works Staff, Streets
6.1.2	Take traffic counts on local streets; identify roadways with heavy traffic	3 - 5 years	+	EDG, IDOT, Public Works Staff, Streets
6.1.3	Digitize historical records of roadways and railways; incorporate into existing GIS; include age and condition	3 - 5 years	++	Ogle County, Public Works Staff, RPOs, Streets
6.1.4	Use GIS to mark the locations of various transportation assets (extend to community facilities and recreation & natural resources assets)	3 - 5 years	++++	Parks & Recreation, Public Works Staff, Streets, Water & Sewer
6.1.5	Review parking and congestion concerns near various businesses and along key streets while assessing impacts on pedestrian safety, walkability, and aesthetics	0 - 2 years	+	Streets
6.1.6	Designate intersections or sidewalks near retail for future bulb-outs	0 - 2 years	+	EDG, Parks & Recreation, Streets
6.2	Address fiscal impacts of development & infrastructure investments			
6.2.1	Prohibit incentives that are not policy-oriented (i.e., not focused on a priority or particular need) or broadly defined (i.e., "Support growth.")	0 - 2 years	+	EDG, VB
6.2.2	Review applying impact fees to all types of development	3 - 5 years	+	PC
6.2.3	Require access to a public park within 1,000 feet of new developments that exceed 4 housing units/acre	0 - 2 years	+++	PC, VB
6.2.4	Require screening for certain types of developments to minimize visual impacts	0 - 2 years	++	PC
6.3	Address the impacts of land use decisions outside of Mount Morris			
6.3.1	Review and revise the communication tower ordinance to minimize visual impacts	0 - 2 years	++	PC, Legal Counsel
6.3.2	Establish a boundary agreement and/or joint planning area with various jurisdictions, including the City of Oregon	0 - 2 years	++++	PC, VB
6.3.3	Communicate land use decisions to Ogle County; reconcile differences	Regularly	++++	PC

Land Use & Transportation, cont'd.

Objectives & Actions

#	Objectives & Actions	TTC	Benefit Estimate	Stakeholders
6.4	Review/maintain key documents			
6.4.1	Review the Capital Improvement Plan and Future Land Use Map each year	Regularly	+	PC
6.4.2	Clean up zoning ordinances and eliminate any contradictions; ensure regulations are content-neutral	3 - 5 years	++++	Consultants, PC, Legal Counsel, RPOs, VB
6.4.3	Update zoning maps after the review of zoning ordinances	3 - 5 years	++++	Consultants, PC, Legal Counsel, RPOs, VB
6.5	Consider annexation decisions			
6.5.1	Review annexation suitability for land that is surrounded/near-surrounded by the village but not included within municipal boundaries	3 - 5 years	++	Legal Counsel, PC
6.5.2	Discourage annexation that leads to leap-frog development	Regularly	++++	EDG, PC



Appendix A

Historic Preservation

- Residential
- The Campus
- Printing Sites
- National Historic Landmarks

Appendix B

Unique places

Appendix A: Historic Preservation, cont'd.

The Campus

In a Mount Morris that values its past as an essential element of its future - both as a nod to tradition and part of its brand going forward - the Campus must be preserved for use by future generations. Further efforts to maintain the iconic structures, styles, and properties would ideally take root in a newly formed campus historic district. Excepting for the IL-64 corridor, the Campus is arguably the most notable piece of real estate in the entire community, because of the associated stories, unique buildings, formal lawns, and high visibility. Installing universal village wayfinding to direct day-trippers to the Campus, central business district, and key village sites will be important. However, signage alone will not draw significant tourists to the campus (and neither will a now trendy LED display). Having a slate of events planned, things to do, and sites well-kept will always be critical. Travelers and residents need a reason to visit a site besides the fact that it is there. The continuation of food/musical festivals, arts displays, and storytelling is and will be crucial if the Campus is to remain a vital destination.

Printing Sites

While it is desirable to return former printing sites to economic use, the community may still highlight landmarks with signage and interpretative information, even if it is not possible to preserve the cores of buildings/sites. Local history and tourism champions may also consider creating a “Printer’s Row Trail” for residents and tourists seeking stories with links to history.

National Historic Landmarks

There are a handful of national historic landmarks and other significant historic sites within a half-hour drive of Mount Morris. These sites must be considered when developing a community brand or regional position.



Appendix B: Unique Places

Identified during *MM2035*...

- Bandshell
- The Campus
- Downtown
- Early 20th-Century houses
- Freedom Bell
- Golf course
- Library
- McKendrie Ave pump house
- Memorial Fountain
- Mid-century houses
- Mounder Park statue
- Mount Morris welcome signs
- Oakview Cemetery
- Painted hydrants
- Parks
- Post office
- Sandstone Building
- Skate park
- Whites Pines State Park

MM 2035

Comprehensive Plan Update