

## **6. PUBLIC FACILITIES PLAN**

The availability of adequate public facilities and services is necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of County residents. As growth occurs in unincorporated areas, the County will be faced with residential expectations for urban and suburban level amenities and services. Due to the high costs of public services, the County simply cannot accommodate low-density residential development in all parts of the County. The Public Facilities Plan makes provision for continued rural services at adequate levels. Because the Land Use Plan seeks to limit indiscriminate rural development, emphasis for facilities and services is placed on those areas expected to receive new development in the future.

### **A. Existing Conditions Summary**

Kankakee County contains 19 municipalities and 17 townships. The majority of public services are provided through municipal systems, volunteer organizations, or private service providers. Most municipalities provide police protection and receive fire protection through volunteer fire protection districts. The townships also are served by volunteer fire protection, but receive police protection by the Kankakee County Sheriff. Many municipalities provide public water and sewer. Unincorporated areas and rural municipalities and townships utilize well and septic systems. The majority of public schools are also located within municipalities with a few exceptions, such as Limestone Township.

The following information highlights public facilities in each municipality, as documented by the Kankakee County Planning Department's 2003 *Community Profiles* or updated through municipal review. Specific township issues relating to public services are noted separately.

#### **Water Service**

The majority of the County's population receives public water service through Aqua Illinois. The company's services date back to 1886 when a public water supply corporation was authorized by the Kankakee City Council. The Kankakee Water Company was formed in 1910, and constructed one of the first water filtration systems in the Midwest. Public water service is one of the most important infrastructure projects necessary for sustainable



development. Aqua Illinois' provides water service to the City of Kankakee, Bourbonnais, Bradley, Aroma Park, Grant Park, and the Illinois Diversatech Campus in Manteno Township. Expansion capacity will need to be studied by Aqua Illinois as Kankakee County grows over the next 25 years.

For the remainder of the County, most municipalities provide public water service through a municipal well system. As growth occurs in these municipalities, the capacity of future water service needs to be carefully evaluated and studied.

For rural municipalities and unincorporated areas, individual private wells are used on a lot by lot basis. The major issue with private wells is potential groundwater contamination from failed septic systems or environmental hazards. For instance, a Shell Oil spill in Limestone Township in the mid-1990s contaminated ground water supplies, and public water lines were extended from the City of Kankakee to the Limestone spill area. Although these public water lines provide an incentive for additional development, Limestone Township is well known for its poor soils and low depth to bedrock, which are conditions that may lead to septic system failure. As discussed in the Land Use Plan, Limestone Township has responded to this issue by carefully examining and limiting future residential growth areas. Table 6-1 highlights near-term water service planning issues within the County's municipalities.

**Table 6-1. Municipal Water Service Issues in Kankakee County**

MUNICIPALITY	Water Service	Service & Long-Range Planning Issues.
Buckingham	Municipal well	Capacity is 3 xs larger than current demand.
Grant Park	Aqua Illinois	Good situation: at 50% of its capacity with land set aside for future expansion
Herscher	Municipal well	Good situation: In 2004, capacity was expanded to 300,000 gallons per day.
Hopkins Park	Municipal well & private on-site wells	Poor situation; overall system upgrade and maintenance are needed; state agencies are assessing the problem and potential solutions.
Manteno	Municipal well	Considering water extensions along 9000 N. Road, west of I-57, to facilitate development.



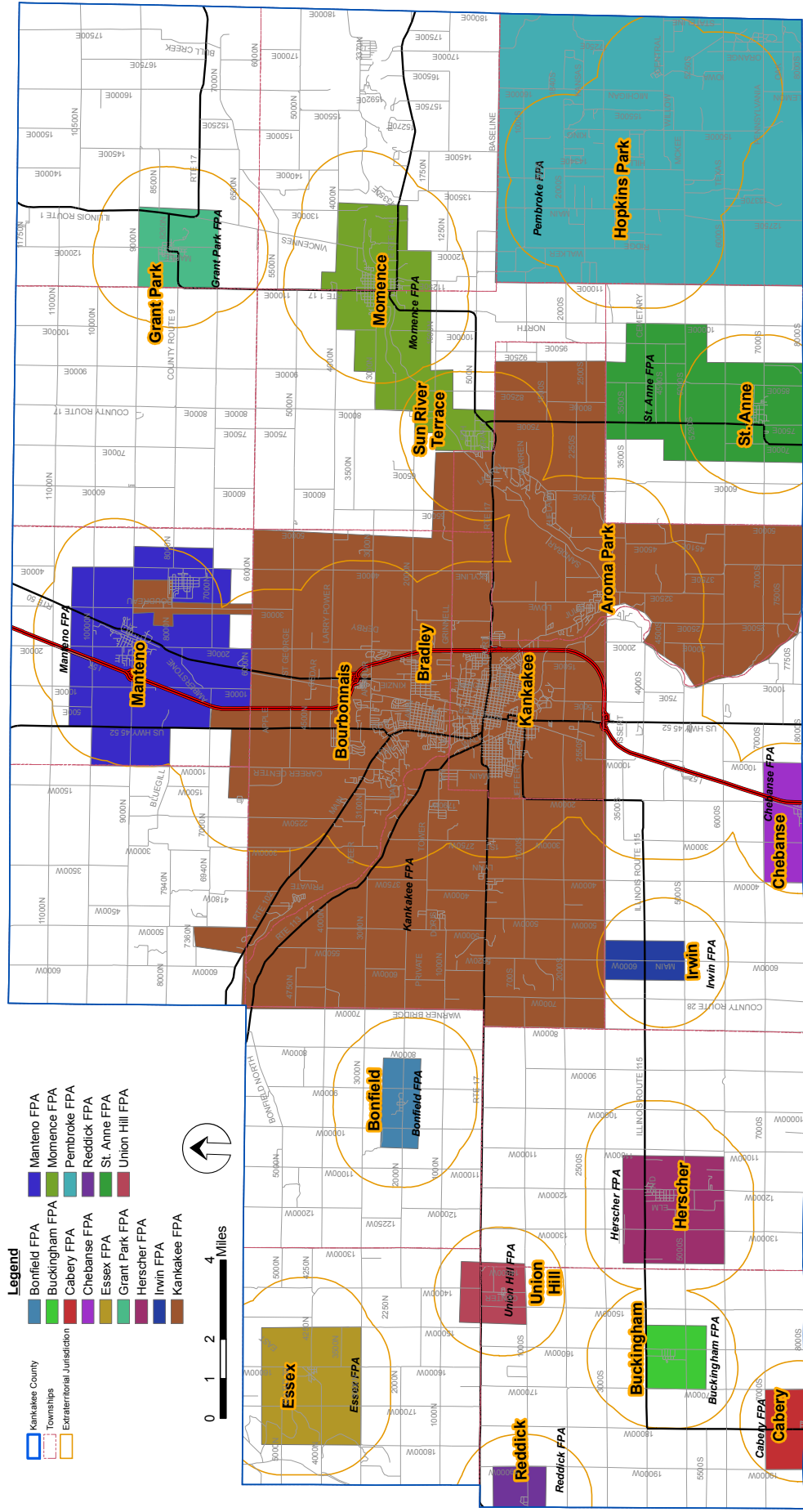
## Wastewater Treatment Services

Figure 6-1 on the following page highlights facility planning areas, where communities have extended or may extend wastewater treatment service. Significantly, the facility planning area for the “Kankakee Urbanized Area” of Kankakee, Bourbonnais, Bradley, and Aroma Park extend well beyond these communities’ 1.5-mile extraterritorial jurisdictions. This area is serviced by the Kankakee River Metropolitan Agency (KRMA), which is a public wastewater treatment authority that operates under a local intergovernmental agreement. While KRMA’s facility planning area recognizes the capacity of its treatment facilities for future service, how service is extended over time is most important to County residents. Currently, KRMA requires annexation of new development to a local municipality prior to extending wastewater treatment service. This policy is essential to maintaining compact, planned, and coordinated growth in the urbanized area.

According to the Kankakee County Health Department, over 30% of all homes in Kankakee County rely on on-site sewage treatment systems. These systems consist of two components: the septic tank that receives household wastewater and the subsurface seepage system. Partially treated waste goes from the septic tank to the seepage system and is absorbed into the soil. Seepage systems are installed at specific distances above the water table and bedrock formations to protect ground water supplies. However, if the system is neglected, it may fail and lead to a potential public health hazards. In areas where conventional systems are unsuitable, it may be possible to use other systems or modify site conditions. Limestone Township is dependent on private sewage treatment systems, which are often problematic due to the township’s soil conditions. Township officials and residents often complain about system failures, especially during wet weather periods. The County should work with rural townships and municipalities to determine local soil conditions and appropriate residential growth areas and lot sizes for homes with private sewage systems. Table 6-2 highlights planning issues associated with wastewater treatment facilities in Kankakee County.



**Figure 6-1: Facility Planning Areas**



Source:  
Kankakee County  
GIS Data Resources  
TIGER Line Files



**Table 6-2. Municipal Sewer Service Issues in Kankakee County**

MUNICIPALITY	Sewer Service	Service & Long-Range Planning Issues
Bonfield	Private on-site systems	Requires a 1-acre minimum for new homes w/septic
Chebance	Private on-site systems	Working on sewer expansion agreement with City of Kankakee
Grant Park	Municipal system	Good situation: at 50% of its capacity with land set aside for future expansion
Herscher	Municipal system	Expanded sewer capacity in 1997
Hopkins Park	Municipal system	Poor situation: emergency maintenance repairs funded by state; current study being conducted for overall system upgrade and maintenance
Kankakee	KRMA	Considered sewer extensions into Limestone Twp. over 20 years ago, but dismissed concept due to high costs estimated at \$25 million
Manteno	Municipal system	Needs to study current capacity and future demands based on development and growth projections; state turned down request to extend FPA

### Fire Service

With the exception of the City of Kankakee, all of Kankakee County is serviced by volunteer fire districts. Municipalities are generally satisfied with the amount of services provided. However, developing unincorporated areas, such as Limestone Township, may have service demand issues in the near future. Kankakee County should consider any known local fire service issues when evaluating development proposals for unincorporated residential subdivisions.



*Public fire service in the City of Kankakee*

## **Police Service**

Many of the County's municipalities each have their own police force. The municipalities that do not are served by the County Sheriff, and include the following villages: Hopkins Park, Sun River Terrace, Irwin, Cabery, Reddick, Bonfield, and Buckingham. The unincorporated areas are also patrolled by the County Sheriff's Office. While current service levels are deemed adequate, if new development continues within unincorporated areas, the County Sheriff's Office may need to expand its services. Therefore, Kankakee County should consider any known local police service issue when evaluating development proposals for unincorporated residential subdivisions.

## **Solid Waste Management**

Kankakee County has a solid waste management plan, which is updated every five years, to coordinate trash collection and recycling efforts within the unincorporated areas. Solid waste disposal and recycling are handled by the private sector, and will likely continue for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, the County has invested in a full-time solid waste coordinator, who focuses on residential waste reduction and recycling efforts. Each of the incorporated communities manages their own solid waste collection and disposal, but the County manages the landfill. A key issue for solid waste collection and disposal is that the County's landfill has reached full capacity. Therefore, Kankakee County is considering three possible alternatives: landfill expansion; a new landfill; or, hauling waste out of the County.

## **Public Schools**

Kankakee County's projected population increase of 24,000 - 40,000 by the year 2030 will inherently create new demands on the public school system in the County, such as the need for additional facilities, teachers, and bus services. In addition, new residential development in unincorporated Kankakee County will create additional bus and traffic demands. There are 12 public school districts in Kankakee County, containing 40 grade schools, six junior grade schools, and eight high schools. Each school district accommodates educational needs from both municipalities and unincorporated Kankakee County. All of the school districts are managed within the Iroquois-Kankakee Regional Office of Education and provided oversight by a regional superintendent of schools.



The municipalities of “county west”—Bonfield, Union Hill, Reddick, Buckingham, Irwin, and Herscher—and the unincorporated townships are facing a minor service crisis. This geographic area is serviced by the Herscher School District. Due to cost-effectiveness considerations in obtaining full classrooms, Herscher School District now buses students around county west: pre-4<sup>th</sup> graders go to Limestone Township; 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders go to Bonfield or Reddick; and, all high school students go to Herscher. Some communities feel that if local student populations do not attend local schools the fabric and social cohesion of their community may diminish.



*Limestone Elementary School serves “county west”*

A critical issue facing the public school system for Kankakee County, and the entire State of Illinois, is the school funding crisis. Although the state’s constitution calls for “an efficient system of high-quality public educational institutions and services,” the state only pays about 36% of total public school expenses. The majority of school funds, about 53%, come from local property taxes. This funding formula inherently creates unequal levels of funding for students, with those living in wealthy communities receiving more funds per student. The expenditure level per pupil in Kankakee County is about \$6,300, whereas some wealthy communities in the state allocate up to \$15,000 per pupil. Illinois consistently ranks as one of the worst nationally in education funding. The state legislature is now considering a bill that would increase the sales tax and income tax to help solve the school funding crisis.



## B. Goals and Objectives

Planning goals and objectives are intended to provide general policy direction when facilities and services initiatives in the future. Goals describe a desired end state toward which planning efforts should be directed, while objectives describe actions that should be undertaken in order to advance toward the overall goals. The subsequent goals for public facilities and services are followed by individual objectives, which were considered in the implementation and recommendations section.

### Public Facilities and Services

**Goal 1:** *In support of the land use and development goals, new urban and rural development should be supported with adequate water and wastewater facilities.*

Objective 1.1: For municipalities that provide water or wastewater facilities, require new developments to connect to those facilities.

Objective 1.2: Review current County guidelines for on-site waste disposal systems in unincorporated areas of the County for effectiveness in ground water aquifer protection, and provide adequate code enforcement and performance monitoring.

Objective 1.3: Consider possible use of alternative rural waste water disposal systems such as land treatment technologies.

**Goal 2:** *Support managing County solid waste in accordance with the following action hierarchy: prevent, reduce, reuse, recycle, waste to energy, incinerate, and landfill.*

Objective 2.1: Continue to be responsible for updating solid waste management plan.

Objective 2.2: Continue to seek grants to further the County's recycling, conservation, and education efforts.

Objective 2.3: Identify and establish County programs which provide education and identify agencies, services and vendors which support the action hierarchy for solid waste handling and disposal.

Objective 2.4: Support/enhance the existing pollution inspection and enforcement program delegated to Kankakee County by the Illinois EPA.

**Goal 3:** *Ensure a supply of high-quality water, including conservation measures, to support the county's population, economy and natural systems.*

Objective 3.1: Utilize design solutions that reduce the amount of impervious surfaces.





Objective 3.2: Support programs that raise public awareness about county-wide water supply and storm water issues.

Objective 3.3: Develop standards and incentives which encourage increased use of native landscaping through demonstration projects.

Objective 3.4: Work with institutions and organizations to better communicate the importance of water and other natural resources to the public through a media campaign sponsored by the County.

Objective 3.5: Encourage cooperation between communities and water companies to ensure adequacy of intake, treatment, and distribution of the public water supply.

**Goal 4:** *Support a system of public safety, justice and law enforcement that provides equal and fair treatment to all.*

Objective 4.1: Support development of the proposed County office complex in downtown Kankakee, incorporating the existing historic Courthouse.

**Goal 5:** *Support funding the County's educational system to ensure the equitable distribution of quality education.*

Objective 5.1: Support local efforts to change school funding sources to relieve the burden on individual property owners and work to resolve the state educational funding crisis.

Objective 5.2: Consider developing a county-wide school impact fee ordinance consistent with state enabling legislation.

Objective 5.3: Support small elementary and neighborhood in-town schools or the renovation of existing ones, instead of building new schools on remote sites that induce sprawl development.

Objective 5.4: Encourage the school districts to coordinate their facilities planning program with the county's and municipalities' planning and development process.



## C. Recommendations and Implementation

The Public Facilities Plan provides a flexible approach to providing adequate infrastructure and services within the unincorporated areas of the County. Through the planning process, Kankakee County recognizes the need to consider policies that encourage new development in areas that are adequately served by existing or planned facilities. Although the Comprehensive Plan makes land use recommendations through 2030, it must be recognized that additional infrastructure will be required to support future land use.

Kankakee County plays an important role in the provision of rural County services. The County should continue to encourage intergovernmental cooperation in the provision of basic public services. The County can also continue to serve as a technical resource to villages and townships.

### Public Facilities and Services

Based on plan goals and objectives, and County preferences for future public facilities and services, several recommendations and implementation strategies are provided below.

*Recommendation 1: All non-farm residential development will be serviced by public water and sewer or community systems. While it is preferred that agricultural commercial areas be served by public water and wastewater, infill development may be allowed in locations which have traditionally provided these services.*

#### *Implementation Actions:*

- A. Work with County Health Department on innovative sewer system models. State regulations allow for a variety of standard sewer systems, which is selected based on a proposed development's use, size, and site conditions. However, wastewater regulations do not provide any guidance for more environmentally-sound approaches when it comes to difficult site conditions, such as high-water tables, poor soil conditions, or low depth-to-bedrock. Current regulations allow modifications to a site's natural conditions, such as adding soil to install a standard sewer system. In order



to improve long-term sewer system viability, the County should develop environmentally-sound approaches for waste water treatment, such as lagoon treatment ponds and spray irrigation or man-made wetland systems. Although these systems may be more expensive, new homeowners' should bear the cost of environmentally responsive solutions if they are to develop in unincorporated portion of the County.

***Recommendation 2: Unless connected to approved public or other facilities, all major developments will be required to pay a public facilities assessment fee to provide funds for the construction of new public facilities.***

***Implementation Actions:***

- A. Update subdivision regulations to require a public school impact fee.

Given school funding issues, the County should establish a public school impact fee for residential development. The Villages of Bourbonnais, Bradley, and Manteno currently have school impact fee programs based on their overall projected levels of growth. Working with local interests, including schools, builders, and residents, an appropriate impact fee program should be developed for the County. It is important to note that impact fees may only be used for facility development, and not school operations.

***Recommendation 3: The Kankakee County Planning Department will assist municipalities with their public facility planning needs.***

***Implementation Actions:***

- A. Create a GIS-based computer repository of county-wide public facilities.

The County should create a GIS database of all public facilities and capacities—including schools, fire and police service, and water and sewer—that may be used to evaluate and determine service requirements for proposed developments. The County could offer the use of this GIS program to municipalities and assist them in land use and facilities planning efforts.



B. Create a county-wide facilities consortium to lobby service providers.

Due to rural character and relative low population densities, some of the County's municipalities do not have modern utilities infrastructure, such as telecommunications, natural gas, and electricity. Since each municipality requesting service upgrades may not be the most effective in getting a positive response, the County should help create an area-wide facilities consortium to lobby service providers for appropriate services or improvements.

