

2030 Kankakee County Comprehensive Plan



PLANNING PURPOSE AND VISION

Kankakee County faces a bright and exciting future. Growth pressures from the greater Chicago Metropolitan area have begun to spur a new cycle of residential and nonresidential investment. The County understands that this change could have positive or negative consequences depending on how it is directed and managed in the future. The 2030 Kankakee County Comprehensive Plan has carefully examined patterns of influence and change, and has defined a road map which will preserve the County's rural traditions while continuing to improve county-wide economic conditions.

The Comprehensive Plan is Kankakee County's official policy guide to future land use, development and conservation over the next twenty-five years. The Plan addresses county needs and opportunities, while placing an emphasis on physical development, transportation, and services and facilities for the County and its municipalities. It is long-range in orientation, and intended to express general goals, policies, and implementation actions. Nevertheless, the Comprehensive Plan is also specific enough to guide day-to-day land use and development activities in the County.

The 2030 Kankakee County Comprehensive Plan has been developed based on input and support of citizens, business interests, County communities, townships, schools, and many other people sharing an interest in the bright future of Kankakee County. The Plan looks to the year 2030, and seeks to understand those critical long-range issues and opportunities the County and its communities must effectively manage to realize its vision.

a vision for kankakee county

The County of Kankakee is committed to preserving, protecting, and enhancing our community's quality of life through responsible growth and sound fiscal management. As we build closer relationships to Chicago, downstate Illinois, and the "Global Regions," we also will protect our natural, cultural, and societal resources that define our heritage and legacy. We will continue to streamline all facets of county government, eliminate redundancy, consolidate public services, and establish quality of life indicators to measure our progress. Twenty-five years from now, we will celebrate our successes, rural and urban lifestyles, cultural diversity, agricultural resources, educational attainment, and exceptional quality of life.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Transportation Plan builds on and complements the Land Use Plan. Given its consistency with the Land Use Plan, the County will support KATS 2004 Long-Range Transportation Plan in order to invest transportation funds where future growth is planned. In particular, the County is focused on improvements along the I-57 corridor, such as upgrading interchanges at exits 322, 315, 312, and 308 and building a new interchange at 6000 N. Road. In addition, the County desires to improve freight rail access and the Greater Kankakee Airport to support projected industrial growth. These I-57 corridor improvements would encourage more growth to occur in the County's urbanized area, instead of its rural areas. The County also seeks to improve east-west access and north-south access through its Corridor Preservation Program, which would preserve "clear corridors" for future highway improvements. Particularly, the 6000 N. Road corridor is significant for both east-west and north-south access in the County. Ultimately, Kankakee County is committed to making the appropriate transportation improvements that will induce growth, but not negatively impact the County's rural areas. Due to costs, major projects have been prioritized for implementation and are highlighted on the Major Transportation Recommendations Plan Map.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Recommendation # 1: The County will support transportation improvements along the I-57 corridor to facilitate and concentrate growth in the urbanized area.

- Provide support for I-57 interchange improvements
- Facilitate construction of the I-57/6000 N. Road interchange
- Facilitate engineering studies for U.S. 45 and Route 50 improvements
- Develop a local roadways assessment plan for the North I-57 Corridor
- Support the expansion of the Greater Kankakee Airport

Recommendation # 2: The County will support, and the MPO will implement, the KATS 2004 Long-Range Transportation Plan as the basis for transportation improvements in the Kankakee Urbanized Area.

- Discuss potential expansion of Kankakee Urbanized Area with the Village of Manteno
- Pursue expansion of METRA service to Kankakee with IDOT

Recommendation # 3: The County will refine the Corridor Preservation Program by prioritizing growth corridors in urban areas and reducing rural area improvements.

- Preserve "clear corridors" for the County's total tier system
- Facilitate preliminary engineering study for 9000 N. Road widening
- Develop joint land use plans to reduce Tier 1 improvements in rural areas

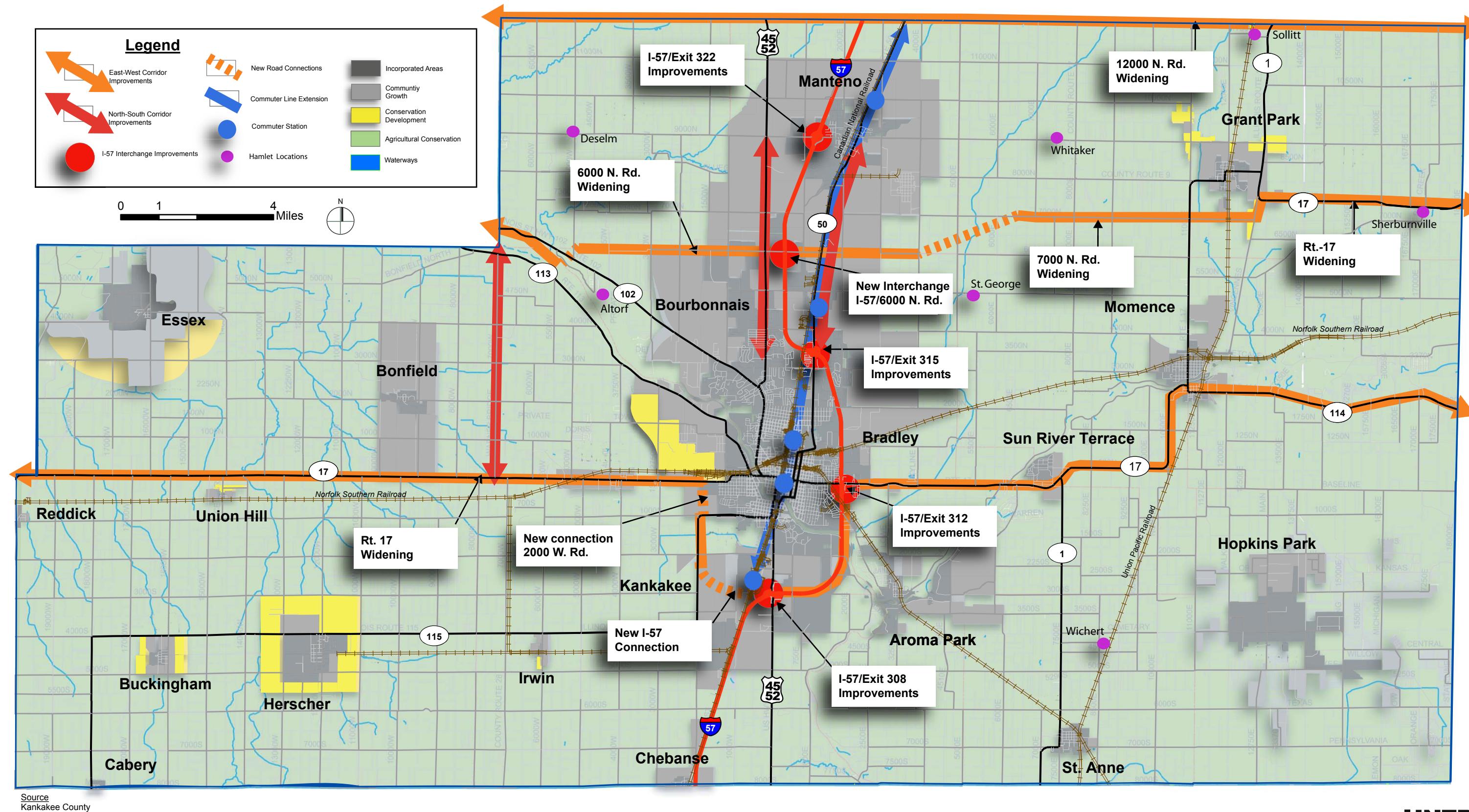
Recommendation # 4: The County will support agricultural productivity by preserving the rights of farmers to use rural roadways.

- Consider developing a rural roadways program for farm vehicle usage
- Discourage residential developments along gravel roads

Recommendation # 5: The County will work to solve regional and local east-west access issues.

- Work with Will County to persuade IDOT to study regional east-west access
- Facilitate preliminary engineering studies for the 6000 N. Road Corridor
- Facilitate joint feasibility study for the 12000 N. Road Corridor

MAJOR TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS



LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan embraces the County's aspirations for growth and development, and provides meaningful recommendations to accomplish its objectives. The Plan focuses on the unincorporated areas of Kankakee County, and includes a number of intergovernmental strategies through which the County and its municipalities can manage and direct future growth. An understanding of population and land use projections is necessary before understanding the land use and development strategies. It is important to note that these projections are based on an extrapolation of past trends to predict future conditions. Changes in the market and land use planning policy itself can change the validity of these estimates in the future. However, it is important to develop an "order of magnitude" understanding of the potential for growth, and how the County and its municipalities might shape that pattern of growth in the future.

POPULATION AND LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Based on past and present housing start data, residential growth may range from 9,000 to 15,300 housing units by 2030. Based on these housing projections, the County's population may witness a population increase between 23,490 to 39,933 people. Thus, Kankakee County's total population may range from 127,323 to 143,766 by 2030.

2030 Housing and Population Projections

Jurisdictions	2030 Low Housing Total	2030 High Housing Total	2030 Low Population Total	2030 High Population Total
Unincorporated	2,400	4,500	6,264	11,745
Incorporated	6,600	10,800	17,226	28,188
Total	9,000	15,300	23,490	39,933

2030 Land Use Development Projections

Land Use Category	2030 Acreage
Incorporated Residential	2,475 - 4,050
Unincorporated Residential	3,671 - 6,872
County-Wide Industrial	1,292 - 2,585
County-Wide Office	104
County-Wide Retail	190-348

Based on housing projections and existing density patterns, county-wide residential development may consume approximately 6,000 to 11,000 total acres by 2030. Based on 2030 employment projections and market factors, industrial development may consume 1,292 to 2,585 acres. Likewise, office development may consume 104 acres. Retail acreage is based on population, and may consume 190-348 acres.

Existing Land Use Inventory, 2004

GENERAL CATEGORY	Existing Zoning	Existing Land Use	Available Acreage
Residential, Total Acres	45,248	10,542	34,706
Inside ETJ's	33,747	5,252	28,495
Outside ETJ's	11,501	5,290	6,211
Industrial, Total Acres	7,533	1,553	5,980
Inside ETJ's	5,675	1,333	4,342
Outside ETJ's	1,858	220	1,638
Commercial, Total Acres	781	493	288
Inside ETJ's	748	363	385
Outside ETJ's	33	130	n/a

FUTURE GROWTH AND CONSERVATION AREAS

The Land Use Plan builds upon current major land use patterns of the County. Because the County is vastly agricultural in character (87% of its land mass), a key element of the plan is agricultural conservation and protection. While the planning program will allow limited development to support agricultural services, it will seek to direct new development to the County's communities. 71% of the County's population currently resides in County municipalities. Further, the Plan emphasizes the need to provide adequate services and facilities with new development, and encourages community annexation and infill development. The Land Use Plan Map (see opposite side) illustrates the following land use patterns for future growth:

- Incorporated Areas represent opportunities for infill development & redevelopment
- Community Growth represents future contiguous development areas
- Conservation Development is a residential transition between urban & rural areas
- Hamlets are rural centers with residential and some civic or commercial uses
- Agricultural Conservation Area represents farmland and farm-related development
- Greenway Corridors are future open space recommendations per the 1999 Greenways Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Recommendation # 1: The County will encourage joint land use planning and implementation within municipal extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJ's), which is the 1.5 mile planning jurisdiction beyond municipal boundaries.

- Provide comprehensive planning assistance to municipalities
- Seek adoption of supportive municipal resolutions for the Land Use Plan
- Promote adoption of Joint Land Resource Management Plans
- Provide best practice models for land use planning and development

Recommendation # 2: The County will promote and encourage annexation or pre-annexation agreements for any developments within municipal extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJ's).

- Encourage annexation of development within ETJs
- Help determine annexation incentives for existing developments

Recommendation # 3: The County will continue to support agri-business and farming.

- Consider increasing minimum lot size for farm homes in agricultural areas
- Consider a purchase-of-development rights (PDR) program

Recommendation # 4: The County will revise its development regulations to promote orderly growth and cost-efficient services.

- Update zoning regulations consistent with the Land Use Plan
- Reduce the over-supply of unincorporated R-1 residential zoned land
- Reduce the over-supply of unincorporated industrial zoned land
- Reduce the over-supply of unincorporated commercial zoned land

Recommendation # 5: The County will actively promote and encourage development and re-development efforts within its municipalities.

- Encourage and support traditional "Main Street" commercial districts
- Encourage and support existing industrial districts within municipalities
- Encourage and support urban infill incentive programs

NATURAL RESOURCES, OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLAN

The Natural Resources, Open Space and Recreation Plan provides a framework for continued preservation of existing resources, as well as the development of new recreational opportunities in the future. Today, farmland and the Kankakee River watershed serve as the County's key natural resources and open space. Many other resources such as the savanna oak trees in Pembroke Township, the County's historic structures, and State Parks all provide important contributions to the County's system of cultural, open space and recreational uses. The Plan includes the following recommendations:

- Protect and enhance the Kankakee River for its natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and potential for nearby economic development.
- Utilize the 1999 Kankakee County Greenways and Trails Plan to create a comprehensive trail network and protect critical natural resources.
- Preserve the Momence Wetlands for its hydrologic value, natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and economic development potential.
- Protect and preserve the ecologically significant savanna prairies in Pembroke Township as an open space amenity.
- Promote an open space strategy for the former strip mines in Essex Township.
- Protect Prime 1 agricultural soils due to their high productivity levels for farming.

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 is placed on those areas expected to receive new development in the future. Key recommendations include the following:

- All non-farm residential development will be serviced by public water and sewer or community systems.
- All major developments will be required to pay a public facilities assessment fee to provide funds for the construction of new public facilities.
- The Kankakee County Planning Department will assist municipalities with their public facility needs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Economic Development Plan establishes a policy framework to guide strategic public investments in the County, and to direct private initiatives to capitalize on the County's economic strengths. The focus of the plan is to increase household wealth, business investment and capital access, and job growth opportunities. This will be accomplished through organizing and coordinating economic development efforts county-wide, setting in place proper economic development programs, and implementation of the Land Use Plan. Key recommendations include the following:

- The County will become the lead coordinator for economic development initiatives and inquiries in order to facilitate orderly growth and infrastructure planning.
- As a key implementation step of the Plan, the County will promote transportation-related employment opportunities.
- The County will help improve the educational training of local residents in order to keep and attract major employers.

