

Section 3

Local Planning and Mitigation

When analyzing the future growth of Wayne County, it is important to note its overall characteristics. Wayne County is largely rural in nature and possesses a rich agricultural heritage. However, current growth is taking place in the cities and villages and growth within these urban centers is likely to continue on into the future. This projected growth is made easily apparent by the Land Use Map located at the end of this section. The existing transportation and utility infrastructure makes growth near incorporated areas more practical than in the rural areas of the County. Thus, it is important for Wayne County to find a balance between preserving its agricultural roots and the need for urban economic growth. To make this balance possible, the County created a Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan is used as the framework for making decisions on future development. It provides recommendations and goals for maintaining Wayne County's agricultural base while, at the same time, increasing industrial, residential, and economic growth around the cities and incorporated areas.

The goals of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan are:

- Expand and improve Community facilities and services
- Protect cultural and historical resources
- Economic development
- Expand housing opportunities
- Manage growth and development of land use
- Conserve natural resources
- Match population growth with economic and land use goals
- Improve the transportation system
- Provide quality utility services

The expansion and improvement of existing Community facilities and services is necessary for growth to occur around the edges of existing municipalities, subdivisions, and major lines of transportation. If this expansion and improvement is done with the recommendations of the Hazard Mitigation Plan in mind, much can be done toward making these services facilities more disaster resistant. Additionally, by reducing the risk to these services and facilities, such as Public Health services, educational facilities, and communications systems, Wayne County can better ensure that those resources will be available in times of crisis.

Cultural and historical resources are part of what make up the character of a community and must be protected so that they may be enjoyed by those in the community now and those that will come in the future. One of the best ways to protect these assets is to reduce their vulnerability to disaster. By incorporating the goals of the Hazard Mitigation Plan with those of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the goal of protecting the County's cultural and historical assets could easily be achieved.

Economic development is perhaps one of the most crucial ingredients for the growth of a community. Making Wayne County a more disaster resistant community helps to foster economic development by providing a safe, attractive environment to businesses. Through the use of mitigation, Wayne County can offer a community that is readily prepared for potential disasters and has the ability to bounce back quickly should disaster strike. Reduced risk, better

preparedness, and faster recovery mean shorter downtime and less economic impact, both for the individual companies and Wayne County as whole.

Providing safe and affordable housing options is another critical part of the growth of the County. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan plays a key role in determining where new construction can be build, which is a form of mitigation on its own. The Land Use Plan, especially when coupled with other regulations, such as those for floodplains, subdivisions, public health, and building codes, go a long way in creating a safer, more disaster resistant Community.

Another overall goal is to use the land in Wayne County both efficiently and productively. Careful considerations must be made in order to avoid creating sprawl, which is something that the Comprehensive Land Use Plan works to avoid. Keeping in mind the tenets of mitigation while centering growth around certain areas allows planners to strengthen the community while also preserving farmland. Avoiding sprawl can help to shorten travel times, which in turn can shorten the response times of first responders.

It is important to mitigate the risk of disaster on Wayne County's natural resources, as it is these resources which allow the Community to expand and grow. Perhaps the biggest concern in this regard is that of floodplain management. Simply understanding the risks associated with different areas can help foster a more disaster resistant community, as limits on development can be placed on those areas. For example, regulating building within floodplains, marshland, and bogs can help to prevent unnecessary losses during times of flood.

Population growth within the County should be guided to be consistent with land use and the goals of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The goal of the Wayne County is not to prevent the influx of people, but to control the unnecessary spread of development by encouraging smart and safe land use and creating a stronger community.

The transportation system of Wayne County is a key component of ensuring quick and efficient emergency response. The County's network of roads and highways are of monumental importance to emergency operations during times of crisis, as well as providing a critical service to Wayne County citizens on a daily basis. Their maintenance, upkeep, and improvement are a mitigation practice in their own right.

The provision of quality utilities to the people of Wayne County is the last Land Use Plan goal on the list. Services such as water, electricity, gas, and sewer are critical to the quality of life of citizen within the Community. By incorporating the goals of the Hazard Mitigation Plan into Land Use Planning activities, the Utility Services infrastructure of Wayne County can be hardened against the effects of disaster.

The goals of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan are the goals that will drive the changes within Wayne County over the coming years. All forms of mitigation should help further these goals whenever possible. Tying the Hazard Mitigation Plan to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan allows better cooperation to be achieved between agencies. It also allows the principals and tenets of disaster mitigation to become a foundation from which planning for Wayne County can occur. By linking the Hazard Mitigation Plan with other plans, such as the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the Mitigation Plan can become less of a reference book and more of a real plan with real world applications.