

# VILLAGE OF SWANSEA, ILLINOIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



October 16, 2017



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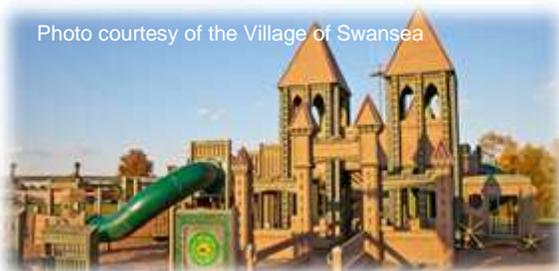


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## CHAPTER 1: EXISTING CONDITIONS



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## Section 1.1 Introduction and Purpose

A Comprehensive Plan is the official document adopted by the Planning Commission and the Village of Swansea Board of Trustees to serve as the legal and conceptual foundation of the Village's zoning code and all other land use regulations. The primary purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the community by preserving and protecting four (4) key interrelated quality of life factors which include; the social, economic, physical and natural environment. The intent of the comprehensive plan is to serve as a rational land use guide to help direct future land use, zoning, subdivisions of land and the quality, timing and intensity of future land use and development. According to Illinois Municipal Code (65 ILCS):

*“Such plan may be adopted in whole or in separate geographical or functional parts, each of which, when adopted, shall be the official comprehensive plan, or part thereof, of that municipality. This plan may include reasonable requirements with reference to streets, alleys, public grounds and other improvements hereinafter specified. The plan, as recommended by the plan commission and as thereafter adopted in any municipality in this state, may be made applicable, by the terms thereof, to land situated within the corporate limits and contiguous territory not more than one and one-half miles beyond the corporate limits and not included in any municipality. Such plan may be implemented by ordinances (a) establishing reasonable standards of design for subdivisions and for resubdivisions of unimproved land and of areas subject to redevelopment in respect to public improvements as herein defined; (b) establishing reasonable requirements governing the location, width, course and surfacing of public streets and highways, alleys, ways for public service facilities, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, street lights, parks, playgrounds, school grounds, size of lots to be used for residential purposes, storm water drainage, water supply and distribution, sanitary sewers and sewage collection and treatment; and (c) may designate land suitable for annexation to the municipality and the recommended zoning classification for such land upon annexation”.*

## Section 1.2 Zoning Ordinance

Zoning is the legal tool the Village uses to carry out the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The Village is granted this regulatory authority by Chapter 65 of the State's Statutes. Zoning ordinances regulate buildings and the use of land. This may include, but is not limited to, height and the size of buildings, lot dimensions, building setbacks, parking and authorized uses. Zoning codes also include definitions of the various land uses and zoning terms and standards and procedures for reviewing and approving zoning changes, regulatory and the future development and redevelopment plans. The Zoning Map is a critical component of the Zoning Code. The Official Zoning Map depicts the actual zoning designation for each parcel and should be updated each time a parcel is rezoned or whenever additional territory is annexed. Zoning ordinances are supplemented by other laws, regulations and guidelines. These may include the municipal code, subdivision regulations, sign ordinance, building codes and additional local, state and federal regulations. According to Illinois State Statutes, the purpose of the zoning ordinance is to provide:



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*“ . . . adequate light, pure air and safety from fire and other dangers may be secured, that the taxable value of land and buildings throughout the municipality may be conserved, that congestion in the public streets may be lessened or avoided, that the hazards to persons and damage to property resulting from the accumulation or runoff of storm or flood waters may be lessened or avoided and that the public health, safety, comfort, morals and welfare may otherwise be promoted and to insure and facilitate the preservation of sites, areas and structures of historical, architectural and aesthetic importance”.*

To increase the legal defensibility of the Village’s land use and zoning decisions, the Village’s Zoning Code and Comprehensive Plan should be consistent. Therefore, this Plan recommends the Village review the Zoning Code for consistency with this Plan as formally adopted to make the necessary regulatory amendments and correct any deficiencies in the Code.

## **Section 1.3 Subdivision Regulations**

Subdivision regulations are another legislative tool used to implement the comprehensive plan by guiding the subdivision and development of land. Subdivision regulations provide coordination of the design of individual sites and otherwise unrelated plans. The continuity of a municipality’s streets, streetscapes, public spaces and private lots are the result of subdivision regulations. Subdivision regulations should be continually reviewed for needed amendments to be drafted and adopted in response to policy and development changes. The general purposes of the subdivision regulations, according to Illinois State Statutes are to;

- *protect and promote the public health, safety, convenience, comfort and general welfare;*
- *guide future growth and development;*
- *provide for the proper location and width of streets, roads, building lines, open space and recreation and to avoid congestion of population;*
- *protect and conserve the value of land, buildings and improvements and to minimize conflicts among the uses of land, buildings and improvements;*
- *establish reasonable standards for subdivisions to further the orderly layout and use of land; and*
- *ensure that public facilities (such as roads, water, sewer and drainage facilities) are adequate to serve the needs of proposed subdivisions.*

To ensure the Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Code are consistent with this Plan, the Village should initiate a thorough review and update of Swansea’s Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Section 1.4 Planning Process**

The first Comprehensive Plan developed for the Village of Swansea was completed in 1977 and updated in 1993. The 1993 Comprehensive Plan has served Swansea well. However, significant changes in our national and regional economy and shifting market demand for goods and services, housing and community facilities all pointed to the need to take a fresh look at the Comprehensive Plan and more specifically, the community’s goals and expectations for the



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future of Swansea. Village leaders view the new Comprehensive Plan as an opportunity to galvanize community support for future Village initiatives.

A “values-driven” managerial approach was utilized to facilitate the preparation of this Plan. A key component of this approach was a customized public participation program designed to build consensus and identify community-defined values. The public engagement activities provided the Steering Committee, which was made up of members of the Planning Commission and City Staff, with first-hand knowledge of the citizens’ perspective of Swansea’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The “values-driven” approach incorporated both the traditional “data-driven” and “vision-planning” approaches to long range planning resulting in a data-rich plan that will serve Swansea for many years.

The first phase of the Comprehensive Plan Update involved the analysis of the project area’s existing conditions and the preparation of the *Existing Conditions Chapter*. This Chapter summarizes the purpose and intent of the Plan, the planning process, history of the project area, socioeconomic characteristics, environmental framework and development constraints of the study area. This Chapter serves as the foundation upon of the Plan. The second phase of the planning process was public engagement. The public engagement program, mentioned earlier, included a citizen survey, town hall meetings, stakeholder interviews and on-going meetings with the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. A summary of the public participation process is provided in *Chapter 2 Critical Issues*.

During the third and final phase of the planning process, the project team developed the Plan’s vision, goals, objectives and implementation strategies-which were based on the community’s input. Once the vision, goals, objectives and implementation strategies were accepted in concept by the Steering Committee, the first draft of the Comprehensive Plan was prepared and submitted to the Steering Committee for review and comment. Revisions were made as needed and the final draft was subsequently presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission and Board in the summer of 2017. Following a public hearing, the 2017 Swansea Comprehensive Plan was presented for adoption by the Planning and Zoning Commission and Village Board.

## **Section 1.5 Comprehensive Plan Abstract**

The development of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan was led by members of Swansea’s Planning Commission, Village Staff, and input provided by members of the Board of Trustees. The objective was to formulate a Plan that accurately reflects the needs of the community, is supported by the community and serves as a predictable guide for future land use and development activity. The resulting 2017 Comprehensive Plan includes chapters summarizing the Village’s existing conditions, critical issues, vision, goals, objectives, future land use and implementation recommendations. The following is a brief summary of the key Comprehensive Plan components:

- 1) Chapter 1 “Existing Conditions” includes the Plan introduction, an overview of the comprehensive planning process, socio-economic analysis, primary and secondary trade area characteristics, baseline report of the existing public services, utilities, and parks and identification of potential developmental constraints.
- 2) Chapter 2 “Critical Issues” provides a summary of the information gathered during the public engagement program and includes the citizen-defined vision statements, goals and strategies developed for this Plan. Feedback from the town planning meetings, citizen



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survey and stakeholder interviews provided the basis for the critical issues identified in this Plan and influenced the vision, goals, objectives and recommendations contained herein.

- 3) Chapter 3 “Vision, Goals and Objectives” contains policy statements and recommendations that emerged during the public engagement program and general research for the plan. This Chapter is organized into thematic planning elements that reflect the critical issues identified in Chapter 2 and serves as the framework for the Plan. Goals, objectives and implementation strategies were developed for each thematic planning element or critical issue. To help measure and monitor the implementation efforts, performance measures were provided for each planning element. Village Officials should refer to this Chapter when reviewing future development and capital expenditures to ensure development and growth decisions reflect the community’s values and sense of what constitutes a reasonable quality of life.
- 4) Chapter 4 “Future Land Use & Transportation” includes recommendations for future land use, growth, and vehicular, bike, and pedestrian transportation improvements. The Future Land Use & Transportation Map and Future Land Use Matrix are included in this Chapter to physically and graphically depict Future Land Use recommendations. The Future Land Use Map depicts the recommended locations for future land use development opportunities and designates recommended future land use designations for the entire planning area. The Future Land Use categories include residential, commercial/mixed-use, industrial, recreation and agriculture. The Future Land Use Matrix provides a summary of the recommendations and implementation strategies for each future land use designation. The intent of the Future Land Use & Transportation Plan, Map and Matrix is to provide the focus and direction needed to make well informed future land use and zoning decisions.

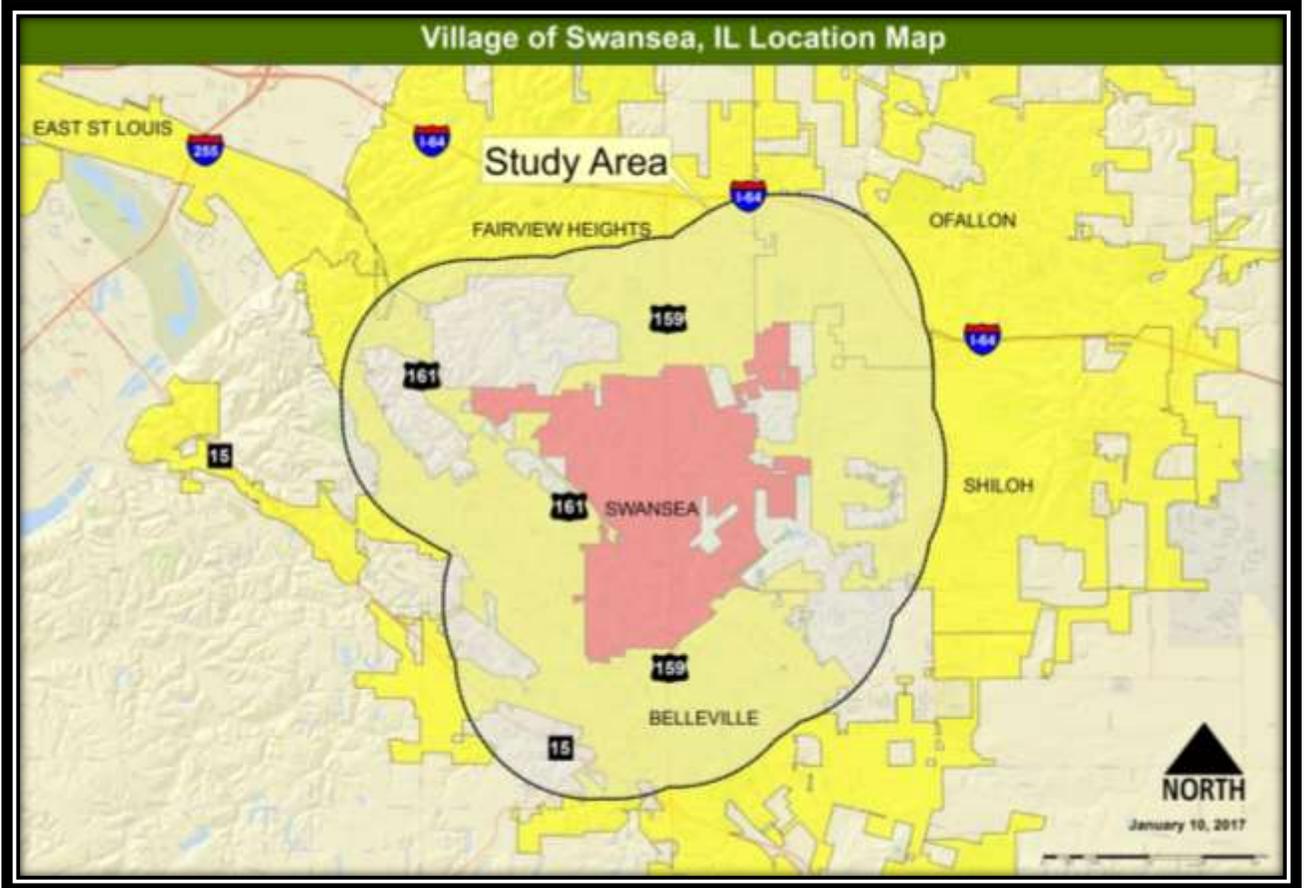
### Section 1.6 Study Area

The Village of Swansea is located in St. Clair County in an area known as the “Metro East” which has an estimated population of 500,000. Swansea has excellent highway access. Interstate 64 passes by the northern portion of the Village and Interstate 255 by the northwestern side, placing Swansea in close proximity to Interstates 55 and 70. Swansea offers the calm serenity of a bedroom community while also providing urban conveniences such as its own MetroLink Station with Metro bus connections, a Schnucks Supermarket, excellent access to major highways and close proximity to the cities of St. Louis, Belleville and Fairview Heights. Scott Air Force Base, one of the largest employers in the region, is located just east of Swansea. Downtown St. Louis is less than twenty (20) minutes from Swansea via Interstate 64. Chicago is located just over 258 miles northeast of Swansea.

According to the 2010 census, the Village has a total area of 6.43 square miles, of which 6.26 square miles is land and 0.17 square miles is water. Illinois Route 159 is located atop a ridge that runs north and south down the middle of the Village. The Village limits are bordered by Belleville to the south and west, Fairview Heights to the north and Shiloh to the east. Swansea is gifted with an educated workforce, family-friendly neighborhoods, quality local schools, highway access and visibility. Swansea is located in the 62226 area code. The Study Area Map shows the current Village limits (in red) and the 1.5 mile extraterritorial planning area.



## STUDY AREA MAP



### Section 1.7 History & Stages of Occupancy

The following section describes the various stages of human occupancy and socio-economic conditions the Village of Swansea experienced throughout its history.

**(900 – 1500) Native American Culture Stage:** From 700-1,400 AD the area just outside present day Swansea was home to the most sophisticated prehistoric native civilization north of Mexico. Best known for large, man-made earthen structures, this Native American Mississippian culture built “Cahokia Mounds” which reached heights of over 100 feet. However, these mound builders were not the first Native American culture to live in the area. There is archaeological evidence of Native American cultures that lived over a period of at least 12,000 years in the general study area spanning four (4) principal periods of prehistory: Paleo-Indian, Archaic, Woodland and Mississippian. However, it was the later Mississippian cultures that flourished by abandoning their tribal, nomadic lifeways to an increasingly complex, sedentary culture with a focus on centralization and agriculture. The production of surplus corn, trade with other cultures



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and popularity of regional chiefdoms led to rapid population concentrations. One of the largest, most notable Native American settlements was located around Cahokia Mounds. At its peak from 1,100 to 1,200 A.D., the Cahokia settlement covered nearly six (6) square miles and supported a population of as many as 100,000. The Cahokians were known to have traded with other tribes as far away as Minnesota. The original name of the village is unknown and no written artifacts were ever discovered, suggesting to some historians that the inhabitants did not utilize writing skills. The name “Cahokia” comes from an unrelated tribe that was living in the area when the first French explorers arrived in the late 17th century.

The Late Mississippian Period (1400–1540) was characterized by increasing warfare, political turmoil and population movement. The population of Cahokia dispersed early in this period (1350–1400), perhaps migrating to other rising political centers. More defensive structures were found at more recent sites, corresponding with a decline in mound-building and large scale, public ceremonialism. Although some areas continued an essentially Middle Mississippian culture until the first significant contact with Europeans, the population of most areas had dispersed or were experiencing severe social stress by 1500. This cultural collapse also coincided with the global climate change of the Little Ice Age. Scholars theorize drought and the reduction of maize agriculture, together with possible deforestation and overhunting by the concentrated populations, forced them to move away from major settlements. This period ended with European and African contact in the 16th century.

**(1800-1898) Mining & Commercialization Stage:** The area today known as Swansea once contained a mix of farming, mines, foundries and brickyards in the late 19th century. It was also home to Gundlach Drill Works. Gundlach Drill Works manufactured the most efficient grain drills of the era, see image below.



Image of a horse-drawn Gundlach (pronounced “gun-lock”) grain drill which were manufactured in Swansea, Ill in the late 1800s. Source: [yesterdaystractors.com](http://yesterdaystractors.com)

The early residents were independent and preferred to conduct their own affairs. When the Village of Belleville reached out to annex their lands and businesses they decided to start their own community. The residents believed that establishing their own independent community was the most effective method of avoiding annexation. On November 27, 1886, a group of 35 area residents petitioned the county government by proclaiming: *“.....they are desirous of having said territory organized as a village...That the name of the proposed village shall be New Swansea.”* On December 16, 1886 the residents voted to successfully incorporate “New Swansea” and on December 20, 1886 the new municipality was officially incorporated. The Village was named after the seaport town of Swansea, Wales, which like Swansea, Illinois, also had an economy dominated by the coal mining industry. In 1898, the future site of the first



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Village Hall was purchased for \$300. The site was located on the corner of Brackett and Illinois Streets. New Swansea Village Hall was completed shortly thereafter at a cost of \$619.50.

**(1900-Present) Suburban Development Stage:** In 1917 Scott Air Force Base (SAFB) was opened just nine (9) miles east of Swansea. It was one of the first air bases in the Country developed in preparation for World War I. 100 years later, Scott Air Force Base continues to operate as one of the largest employers in the Greater St. Louis Metropolitan area. Today, SAFB houses three (3) global command headquarters for the military. Many active and retired military make their homes in or near Swansea. Mid-America St. Louis Airport is located adjacent to Scott Air Force Base, approximately fourteen (14) miles east of Swansea. It was built to relieve St. Louis-Lambert International Airport from future air traffic congestion and to better serve the needs of the over 500,000 residents of the metro east area.

Swansea experienced a spike in growth and development during the three (3) decades spanning 1950-1980 increasing from a modest population of 1,156 in 1940 to a very robust, growing and prospering population of almost 5,500 by 1980. This growth was a result of immigration and aggressive annexation by Village officials. Over the last three (3) decades the Village's population has stabilized while experiencing modest growth as Swansea continues to attract residents seeking a quiet, family-friendly bedroom community.

### Section 1.8 Swansea Today

Swansea has a Village form of government led by the Mayor and Board of Trustees. The Board consists of six (6) Trustees and the Mayor; together they form the governing body of the Village of Swansea. All legislation and ordinances must be adopted by the governing body before they become law. Each trustee serves a four-year term. The Mayor serves a four (4) year term and may appoint Board members to head one or more committees. Committee's may include; Finance, Public Works, Personnel, Community & Economic Development, Judiciary, Public Safety, Cultural, or other committees as determined by the Mayor. The Government Offices were moved to 1444 Boul Avenue in the fall of 2016. The new Government Center houses Administrative Staff, Building and Zoning offices, Sewer Billing Staff and meeting space including the chambers for Board Meetings. Swansea residents enjoy a high quality of life, stable residential neighborhoods, parks, an in-town MetroLink Station and superior public services. Family, faith, school and community are important in Swansea. Active congregations of Baptist, Catholic, Christian, Lutheran and Methodist are represented. Swansea offers several public schools that offer quality education, balanced with an emphasis on academics, sports and social activities.

### Section 1.9 Fire Protection

The Swansea Fire Protection Department's jurisdiction encompasses the Village of Swansea. The Department operates out of two (2) engine houses and provides fire suppression and rescue services including technical rescues and manages incidents to save lives and property while mitigating incidents safely. The department has a multi-story training facility at engine house 2 where firefighters train on various topics including structural fires. This facility is also available to other area fire departments upon request. The department offers fire prevention and safety programs that are delivered to local schools annually and to local business and civic groups upon request. These programs include important information on preventing fires, escaping fires and how and when to appropriately extinguishing fires. The Fire Department consists of two (2) fulltime firefighters and 35 paid per call firefighters. The Fire Chief and



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Deputy Chief hold the two (2) fulltime positions and are responsible for the day to day operations of the Department, as well as ensuring compliance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations. The paid-on-call firefighters carry pagers and are alerted for all incidents 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Department has earned an I.S.O. rating of 4 from the Insurance Service Office. The fire department oversees the contract with the villages' private ambulance provider that provides EMS service within the village and serves as the point of contact. The fire department is the liaison and contact point within the village for emergency planning and operations during disaster or other emergencies. The mission of the Swansea Fire Department is to provide efficient fire and rescue services and to protect life and property from fire and disasters within the corporate limits of the Village, and to the surrounding area through numerous mutual aid agreements. These services are provided to all residents, businesses and visitors of Swansea.



**Engine House #1** Engine House #1 is located at 1350 North Illinois Street and was constructed in 1983 to replace the original engine house located on Brackett Street that was attached to the original Village Hall.



**Engine House #2:** Engine House #2 is located at 144 Huntwood Road and was constructed in 2005 to serve the northern, eastern and westward expansion of the Village limits. The Fire Chief and Deputy Chief's offices are located at this engine house. Photo credit: Village of Swansea.



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## Section 1.10 Police Department

The Swansea Police Department is a full service police department which currently consists of 21 full-time employees, including thirteen (13) Officers, two (2) Detectives, four (4) Sergeants, one (1) Deputy Chief and the Chief. K-9 Leo was certified for service in June of 2016 and has been a welcome addition to the Department. In the summer of 2017, dispatch responsibilities were transferred to the City of Belleville, IL. In addition to being crime fighting officers who understand the importance of proactive law, Swansea's Officers are also tasked with being community officers with foot patrols spending non-enforcement periods of time speaking to community members and helping with neighborhood concerns. In 2015 the Department initiated several community-oriented programs and continues providing the following proactive neighborhood policing services: Citizens Academy, Police and Fire Youth Academy, Explorer Post, Bicycle Patrol, Sex Offender and Parole Compliance Checks, participation in the Drug Tactical Unit, and many more quality of life activities and services. In 2016 the Department added a School Resource Officer to team up with Wolf Branch and High Mount Schools. The Department strives to provide increased compliance and enforcement of Village Ordinances related to derelict/abandoned vehicles.



**Swansea Police Department:** The Swansea Police Department is located at 1400 N Illinois St. The building was shared with the Village's Administrative Personnel until the Administrative Offices were moved to Boul Avenue. The Police Department is now the sole occupant of the former Government Center building. Photo source: Village of Swansea.

## Section 1.11 Education

Education has always been a vital part of community life in Swansea. Students have access to the best schools the region has to offer, including multiple schools and school districts all of which offer excellent classroom environments, smaller class sizes and a choice of numerous extracurricular activities that promote physical and educational growth both inside and outside of the classroom. Swansea's schools offer high quality educational experiences and test scores



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that exceed national education standards. Swansea is home to five (5) school districts and two (2) parochial schools, including:

- **District 113 - Wolf Branch School District.** This district includes Wolf Branch Elementary School and Wolf Branch Middle School. The mascots for both schools are the Wolverines.
- **District 104 – Central School District (O’Fallon):** Central Elementary is located at 160 St. Ellen Mine Road and includes portions of the northernmost portions of Swansea.
- **District 118 - Belleville:** District 118 consists of three (3) elementary schools, however, The Abraham Lincoln Elementary School (K-6<sup>th</sup> Grade) is the only school with boundaries that fall within the Village of Swansea’s official limits.
- **District 115 – Whiteside:** Whiteside School of Belleville consists of an Elementary School (Pre-K- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade) on 2028 Lebanon Ave and a Middle School (Grades 7-8) located on 111 Warrior Way. The original Whiteside School was a one-room log structure built in 1850. The Whiteside School has operated continuously since the Civil War to the present.
- **District 116 - High Mount School District.** This district includes High Mount School which was established in 1880 and is home of the Trojans.
- **District 201- Belleville East & Belleville West High Schools:** High school aged students in Swansea attend school in Belleville Township District 201, which includes two (2) high Schools: Belleville East High School and Belleville West High School.
- **District 203- O’Fallon High School District:** O’Fallon Township High School serves students in a fifty (50) square mile radius and is home of the Panthers.
- **Parochial Schools:** Private high schools include Althoff Catholic High School, St. Teresa, Zion Lutheran and The Governor French Academy.
- **Higher Education:** There are eight (8) colleges within 20 miles of Swansea, two (2) located minutes from Swansea.

**Table 1.01 Swansea Area Educational Institutions- Source startclass.com**

Name	Grades	Teachers	Est. Enrollment	Student/Teacher Ratio
Wolf Branch Elementary School	Pre K - 6	27	440	16:1
Wolf Branch Middle School	7-8	22	398	18:1
High Mount School	K-8	29	468	16:1
Belleville East High School	9-12	155	2,653	16:1
Belleville West High School	9-12	131	2,305	16:1
O’Fallon Township High School	9-12	200+	2,500	13:1
Althoff Catholic High School	9-12	31	564	18:1
Governor French Academy	Pre K - 12	13	172	13:1
Lindenwood University- Belleville	College	63	2,300	36:1
SWIC- Belleville	College	700	16,245	23:1



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## Section 1.12 Taxes

Real estate tax rates can vary widely because they are set and administered by the state, county and municipality of where the subject property is located. The amount and manner in which the assessed valuation of property is determined varies significantly by state. In Illinois, there is no statewide property tax. Property is taxed on the local level only and limited to real property such as land, buildings, or permanent facilities. Real property is assessed at 33.33% of market value. Personal property such as cars, motorcycles, RV's, boats, etc. is not taxed in Illinois.

The Village of Swansea has one of the lowest tax rates in the region. According to the January 2017 Swansea Report, the amount of taxes paid on a home with an assessed value of \$162,300 would be \$348.89/year based on the current tax rate of 0.21%. A home of the same value in Belleville would be taxed at a rate of approximately 0.68% and cost the homeowner over \$1,100/year in taxes; over three (3) times higher than Swansea. Cahokia had the highest comparable tax rate locally - almost 10 times Swansea's tax rate. Table 1.02 provides a breakdown of the specific taxing districts and corresponding rates for the Village of Swansea. Swansea's real estate tax rate is 7.8%. By way of comparison, the real estate tax in the City of Belleville is 8.4%. Generally, the majority of property tax paid by homeowners goes to the local school district(s), such as the case for Swansea as illustrated in Table 1.02.

Taxing District	Rate
Belleville HS #201	1.9712
Northwest SCC Bonds	0.0994
St. Clair Co Other	0.9080
St. Clair Road	0.2475
St. Clair TWP	0.0514
SWIC Dist. #522	0.4106
Village of Swansea	0.4427
Wolf Branch #113	3.6999
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.8307</b>

*Source: Swansea Economic Development Plan*

Table 1.03 provides the sales tax rates for Swansea, IL, Belleville, IL and Fairview Heights. As shown in the Table, Swansea's sales tax rate is substantially lower than Belleville and Fairview Heights.

Taxing District	Swansea, IL	Belleville, IL	Fairview Hts. IL
Illinois State	6.250%	6.250%	6.250%
Saint Clair County	0.350%	0.350%	0.350%
Municipal (Local)	1.250%	1.500%	1.750%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.850%</b>	<b>8.100%</b>	<b>8.350%</b>

*Source: Sale-tax.com*



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## Section 1.13 Transportation

The Village sponsors a senior van-pooling program for Swansea residents over the age of 55. The service is free and offers van-pooling services two (2) days a week. The program is made possible by three (3) volunteer drivers. This is the only program of its kind in the area. Swansea is also served by MetroLink and is one of the few suburbs to have its own MetroLink Station. Approximately 1,000 MetroLink riders pass through the Swansea Station daily, many of which use the MetroLink and Swansea Station for their daily commute.

Swansea area airports include St. Louis-Lambert International Airport, the St. Louis Regional Airport in Madison County, the Downtown St. Louis Parks Airport in St. Clair County and the Mid-America Airport at Scott Air Force Base.

## SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

### Section 1.14 Existing Socio-Economic Conditions

Swansea's current and past socio-economic trends help understand and identify the types and level of services required of the community. The socio-economic data evaluated for this Plan includes statewide population trends, age, housing, workforce, income, employment and educational attainment. This analysis compares selected Swansea demographic data with peer cities to provide a more meaningful socio-economic analysis and help differentiate between local, isolated events and regional trends. For the purposes of this Plan, the cities of Glen Carbon, Godfrey and Highland were selected as "peer" cities. National, State and St. Clair County socio-economic comparisons are also provided. An understanding of the regional socio-economic trends and local issues will help Village Officials plan for the future and meet the needs of its resident population and business community. The data for this analysis was provided by the US Census Bureau's Decennial Census and the American Community Survey (ACS).

### Section 1.15 Nationwide Population Trends

The percentage of Americans moving between counties dropped to historic lows between 2006 and 2009. This trend resulted in the reduction of population growth of many suburban and rural counties across America. The last two (2) Great National Recessions and the recovery that followed further slowed population growth by decreasing mobility and one's ability to relocate. The social and economic conditions resulting from the latest recessions and responsible for reducing population growth and decreasing the ability to relocate include;

1. A decline in wealth as home values and stock market values fell;
2. An increase in Federal regulations making it more difficult to finance home purchases in the wake of the mortgage crisis;
3. A decline in speculative real estate construction; and
4. Falling incomes and declining job stability.

Counties that experienced the highest population losses were suburbanizing counties adjacent to metro areas. Another nationwide trend contributing to population decline is the reduction in birth rates, which is evidenced by the declining average household and family sizes. The overall slowdown in U.S. population mobility contributed directly to a decline in non-metro



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population growth causing the first break in suburbanization since World War II. The 2010 Census also revealed some major population changes in Illinois, including declining population rates in Chicago and other major urban areas, growing population rates in the fringe counties and changes to racial demographics. During the decade following 1990, the State of Illinois grew by 8.6%. However, from 2000-2010 the State of Illinois grew by only 3.3%, meanwhile, the Nation grew by 9.7%. By way of comparison, St Clair County grew by 5.5% in the 2000s after losing 2.6% of its population in the 1990s.

### **Section 1.16 Southwestern Illinois Demographics**

According to the 2010 Census, St. Clair County had a population of 270,056, making it the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) most populous county in Illinois and the most populous in the southern portion of the state. Madison and St. Clair counties remain the second most populous region in the State of Illinois with an estimated combined population of 539,338 in 2010. The two counties represent approximately 19% of the population of the total St. Louis Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). Median household income continues to rise for area residents, jumping 24.6 percent in the last decade. Per capita income is also on the rise, up 29 percent since 2000. Southwestern Illinois also continues to make gains in educational attainment. The percentage of individuals earning a high school diploma or higher has increased from 82.6 percent in 2000 to 88.4 percent in 2010 and the percentage earning a bachelor's degree or higher is 23.5 percent for 2010. In summary, Southwestern Illinois, including, the Village of Swansea is growing, prospering and becoming better educated than ever.

From 2000 to 2010, St. Clair County's overall population increased by 5.5%. Monroe County, the third-most-populated county in Southwestern Illinois, experienced a sharp population increase of 19.3% over the same time period. Much of this growth is coming in the form of in-migration from older, first-tier cities located along the east banks of the Mississippi River and moving to communities that offer desirable residential neighborhoods, modern housing and quality schools. The O'Fallon/Shiloh, Edwardsville/Glen Carbon and Belleville/Swansea areas have been the target for much of this in-migration.

From 2000 through 2010, Swansea experienced a population increase of 27 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Meanwhile, during that same period, St. Clair County's population only grew by 5.5%. This validates the assumption that much of Swansea's growth stems from in-migration from aging cities along the Mississippi and areas within St. Clair County. The Swansea/Belleville, O'Fallon/Shiloh and Edwardsville/Glen Carbon areas are also attracting new residents from local Missouri & Illinois communities, regionally from across the Midwest and nationally from coast to coast. While it was commonplace for Swansea residents to live next to folks from East St. Louis, Cahokia or Granite City twenty (20) years ago; today new neighbors in Swansea's residential areas could be from anywhere in the US or abroad.

In summary, the latest population characteristics of Southwestern Illinois and more specifically Swansea, are highly desired to young families, CEO's and site selection experts hired to find new locations for businesses. Table 1.04 includes the historic population estimates and percentage of change for the last 55 years for Swansea and St. Clair County.



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	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015
<b>Swansea</b>	3,018	5,432	5,529	8,201	10,579	13,430	13,651
<b>% Change</b>	66%	80%	1.8%	48%	29%	27%	1.6%
<b>St. Clair Cnty</b>	262K	285K	267K	262K	256K	270K	264K
<b>% Change</b>	27%	8.6%	(6.2)	(1.7%)	(2.6%)	5.5%	(2.2)

## Section 1.17 Swansea Population Characteristics

The estimated 2015 population of Swansea is 13,651, an increase of 1.6% from 2010. The population projection for 2020 is 13,842 assuming the Village follow the same 1.6% growth rate from 2010-2015. While Swansea has experienced significant growth (66.5%) since 1990, the State of Illinois only grew by 11.9% and St. Clair County only grew by 1.2% during that same period. According to the latest population estimate, St. Clair County lost 2.2% of its population between 2010 and 2015.

Swansea's location, quality schools and stable neighborhoods have greatly influenced the population growth the Village has enjoyed over the past several decades. In the next 10-20 years, the population of Swansea is expected to stabilize. Swansea's population is not expected to experience the growth spurts it did in the 1990's and 2000's unless large areas are annexed. However, the growth of the Millennial and Baby Boom Generations will create new public service and infrastructure demands especially in the medical, housing, transportation, technology and entertainment industries that will lead to changes in all real estate segments. The Village of Swansea must be prepared to address these changes and shifts in demand to ensure future needs are met. Table 1.05 provides a comparison between the Village of Swansea's population and housing stock and the peer cities of St. Clair County and Illinois.

	Swansea	Glen Carbon	Godfrey	Highland	St. Clair	Illinois
Population	13,870	13,095	17,911	9,738	268K	12.8 m
Households	5,367	4,992	7,319	4,033	117K	5.3 m

## Section 1.18 Age & Gender Characteristics

According to the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), Swansea's population is spread out with 24.1% under the age of 18 and 75.9% over the age of 18. Empty Nesters (age 50-64) are the largest age cohort in Swansea followed by middle aged adults age 35-49. Swansea's population has a high concentration (39.5%) of young adults age 25-54. Compared to the peer



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cities, Swansea had the highest percentage of persons age 20-65 and the second lowest percentage of children age 0-5. Godfrey had the lowest percentage of children under 5, children under 18 and the lowest percentage of young adults age 20-64. Meanwhile, Godfrey had the highest percentage of seniors over 65 (21.1%). As a result, the median age of Godfrey's population was the highest (43.8). Swansea had the second highest median age at 40.6. Glen Carbon had the youngest median age at only 33.8.

Swansea had the second highest percentage of females and second lowest percentage of males. The Village of Swansea's female population is 6.6% higher than the male population. Nationally and statewide there is only 1.6% and 2.0% more females than males respectively. The fact that Swansea has 6.6% more females than males is a noteworthy finding. This may indicate that Swansea has more female head of households and/or more single mothers than the state and national averages and therefore, the demand for certain social, domestic and financial needs is higher in Swansea. **Overall, the population and gender characteristics for Swansea indicate that females, middle aged adults and seniors find Swansea a desirable place to live.** Therefore, it is important for the Village of Swansea to offer the services and amenities required of a middle aged and senior adult population, which is slightly dominated by females. Table 1.06 provides a comparison of age and gender for Swansea, the peer cities, Illinois, and the National averages.

Subject	Swansea	Glen Carbon	Godfrey	Highland	St. Clair	Ill.	US
Under 5 years	6.4%	6.9%	5.2%	6.8%	6.6%	6.3%	6.4%
Under 18 years	24.1%	26.1%	22.0%	23.4%	24.7%	23.7%	23.5%
Over 18 years	75.9%	73.9%	78%	76.6%	75.3%	76.3%	76.5
20-64 years	58.7%	57.5%	55.8%	57.4%	59.6%	60.3%	60%
65 and older	15.6%	14.5%	20.1%	18.4%	18.2%	12.5%	13.3%
Median Age	40.6	33.8	43.8	38.2	37.5	37.0	37.3
Male	46.7%	48.6%	47.8%	46.3%	48.2%	49.1%	49.2%
Female	53.3%	51.4%	52.2%	53.7%	51.8%	50.9%	50.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau- American Community Profile 2010-2014



## Section 1.19 Racial Composition

According to a report by the National League of Cities, the Hispanic population in small cities at least doubled, growing over 100% in the Midwest. The Asian population is also on the rise, growing by 60 percent in the Midwest. Similarly, the African American population in small cities also increased across all regions, particularly in the Midwest.

The Village of Swansea’s population continues to show some diversification with the highest concentrations of minorities being African American. The percentage of African American’s in Swansea (16.3%) was comparable with the state of Illinois (14.2%) and much higher than each of the peer cities and nationally. The percentage of Swansea’s population who were Hispanic (4.7%) was higher than St. Clair County as well as each of the peer cities. However, the percentage of Hispanics in Illinois (16.3%) and nationally (16.9%) is much higher than Swansea. The Asian population in each of the peer cities and St Clair County is well behind that of the state of Illinois and the US. The percentage of minorities who choose to live in Swansea is higher than all the peer cities, Illinois and the US, but well below that of St. Clair County. Table 1.07 provides a comparison of the racial composition for Swansea, the peer communities, Illinois and the US.

Race	Swansea	Glen Carbon	Godfrey	Highland	St. Clair	Ill.	US
<b>African American</b>	16.3%	11.7%	5.7%	0.3%	29.9%	14.2%	12.2%
<b>White</b>	71.5%	80.6%	90.8%	93.9%	62.7%	62.9%	62.8%
<b>Hispanic</b>	4.7%	3.3%	1.4%	2.8%	3.6%	16.3%	16.9%
<b>Asian</b>	1.4%	2.1%	0.4%	0.5%	1.2%	4.8%	4.9%
<b>Other</b>	6.1%	2.3%	1.7%	2.5%	2.6%	1.8%	3.2%

## Section 1.20 Income

According to the 2000 US Census, the average household income for Swansea was \$49,851 and the average family income was \$58,032. Between the 2000 US Census and the latest ACS, Swansea’s household income increased by 65% from \$49,851 to \$82,670. Swansea’s family income increased from \$58,032 to \$97,157; an increase of approximately 67%. During that some period, Swansea’s per capita income increased by 28% from \$25,634 to \$32,843, according to the latest 2014 American Community Survey (ACS).

Swansea’s average household income, average family income and per capita income were higher than the US, Illinois, St. Clair County and all peer cities with the exception of Glen Carbon. Glen Carbon has the highest average incomes in all measured categories. Glen Carbon also had the lowest percentage of people living in poverty and the lowest unemployment rate. Swansea has the second lowest poverty rate with just over 9% of individuals and 8.4% of families living below the poverty level.



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**Table 1.08: Income & Poverty  
(2010-2014 ACS Census)**

Income	Swansea	Glen Carbon	Godfrey	Highland	St. Clair	Ill.	US
Average household income	\$82,670	\$87,180	\$75,398	\$67,365	\$66,745	\$78,521	\$74,596
Average family income	\$97,157	\$106,148	\$89,860	\$82,858	\$79,747	\$92,664	\$86,963
Per capita income	\$32,843	\$33,291	\$31,427	\$28,646	\$26,459	\$30,019	\$28,555
Unemployment	6.2%	6.1%	7.3%	6.5%	9%	10%	9.2%
Persons below poverty	9.1%	9.8%	9%	10.5%	17.8%	14.4%	15.6%

**Definitions:** \**Household:* A household consists of all people who occupy a housing unit regardless of relationship. A household may consist of a person living alone or multiple unrelated individuals or families living together

\*\* *Family:* a householder and one or more other people related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

## Section 1.21 Housing

Swansea has 5,367 occupied housing units and 3,793 family households according to the 2014 ACS. Of the 5,367 households, 31.2% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 55.8% were married couples living together, 13.6% had a female householder with no husband present, and 29.3% were non-families. Compared to the peer cities, Swansea had the highest percentage of family households and married couple households. However, Swansea also had the highest percentage of female householders with no husband present as well as the second highest percentage of single female householders with children under the age of 18. Nine percent (9%) of all Swansea households consisted of a female householder with children under 18, and no husband present. By way of comparison, St. Clair County had the highest percentage (10%) of households consisting of a female head of household with children under 18 and no husband present and Godfrey had the lowest percentage with only 5.6%.

A look at the senior citizens of Swansea revealed that 26.5% of all households had one or more individuals over the age of 65 and 39.8% of Swansea's households had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. These numbers are consistent with all the peer entities surveyed and are expected to rise as the youngest of baby boomers will reach age 65 in the next 10-15 years. The average household size for Swansea was 2.53 and the average family size was 3.07. Again, these numbers are consistent with the peer entities surveyed. The family size and household size are anticipated to decrease slightly in the future. The reduction in household size has been a nationwide trend as more and more baby boomers reach retirement age. The fact the average household size in Swansea (2.53) is slightly smaller than that of St. Clair County (2.58) and Illinois (2.63), demonstrates that individuals without children (singles, seniors and baby boomers) are comfortable living in Swansea.

The average home value in Swansea, according to the 2014 ACS, was \$178,913. This is significantly higher than St. Clair County, Highland, and Godfrey but well below Glen Carbon, the State and National averages. On the basis of this data, one might argue that Swansea offers more affordable housing than available nationally or statewide, which in turn provides more



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income for other lifestyle expenditures for Swansea residents as well as the ability to get more housing for the money.

The percentage of renter-occupied housing in Swansea (26.2%) is significantly lower than all peer entities, with the exception of Godfrey (17.5%). The United States, Highland and St. Clair County had the highest percentages of rental housing with 35.6%, 33.9% and 33.5% respectively. The percentage of vacant housing in Swansea was only 7.7%, which was the third lowest of all peer entities. St. Clair County had the highest vacancy rate with 12.8% and Highland had the lowest vacancy rate with only 4.9%. The vacancy rates in Swansea and Glen Carbon are significantly lower than the County, State and National levels, but slightly higher than Highland and Godfrey. Swansea Officials should continue to monitor vacancy rates and employing strict code enforcement efforts to ensure vacant structures do not become a nuisance. The rationale for this recommendation is that there is a positive correlation between crime rates and vacancy rates. Table 1.09 provides a summary of the Village's housing tenure and value.

<b>Housing Tenure and Value</b>	<b>Swansea</b>	<b>Glen Carbon</b>	<b>Godfrey</b>	<b>Highland</b>	<b>St. Clair</b>	<b>Ill.</b>	<b>US</b>
Family Households	70.3%	67.4%	67.5%	64.3%	66.5%	65.5%	66.2%
Married Couples	55.8%	52.9%	53.6%	50.5%	44.8%	48.2%	48.4%
Female Householder, no husband present	13.6%	11.5%	10.2%	9.1%	17.3%	12.7%	13.0%
Female Householder, no husband present w/ children under 18	9.0%	7.6%	5.6%	5.8%	10.0%	7.0%	7.3%
Owner-Occupied	73.8%	67.1%	82.5%	66.1%	66.5%	66.9%	64.4%
Renter-Occupied	26.2%	32.9%	17.5%	33.9%	33.5%	33.1%	35.6%
Total Vacant Housing	7.7%	7.2%	5.2%	4.9%	12.8%	9.8%	12.5%
Average Home Value	\$178,913	\$216,362	\$163,137	\$154,443	\$145,619	\$228,377	\$249,373
Average Family Size	3.07	3.05	2.96	2.97	2.21	3.28	3.23
Average HH Size	2.53	2.6	2.4	2.37	2.58	2.63	2.63

## **Section 1.22 Housing Affordability**

Housing affordability is a key component of the long-term vitality of a community. Housing affordability is not simply the price one pays for rent or mortgage; it is a function of household income or wealth relative to the cost of living, regardless of owning or renting. A standard method of measuring housing affordability is to look at how much a household spends on housing costs as a percentage of their total household income. Affordable housing is defined as housing that costs occupants less than 30% of their gross income for gross housing costs, including utility costs. Planners and lenders consider a household that spends over 30% of its income on housing costs to be financially burdened. For example, if a family's income was \$50,000, they would be considered financially burdened if they spent more than \$1,250/month on housing. In other words, "affordable housing" would be housing that cost less than \$1,250/month in this particular example.



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The average monthly homeowner’s cost was \$1,460 for Swansea, which is higher than the peer communities of Godfrey and Highland and St. Clair County and less than Illinois and the United States. The monthly homeowner costs were the highest for the Village of Glen Carbon and the lowest in the Village of Godfrey. The percentage of Swansea’s homeowners who spend 30% or more of their income on housing was only 19.4%, which is lower than all peer entities, St. Clair County, Illinois and the United States. Monthly homeowner costs are directly related to the cost of housing. For example, the Village of Glen Carbon had the highest home values and the highest monthly home costs. Highland had the lowest home values and one of the lowest average homeownership costs (\$1,278). Since Swansea has a relatively low percentage of homeowners who are financially burdened with regard to housing, Village Officials should make sure the housing stock provides opportunities for homeowners to move into newer or larger homes as their incomes and housing needs increase.

The median rent in the Village of Swansea, according to the 2014 American Community Survey, was the highest among all the peer entities, St. Clair County, Illinois and the United States. Highland had the lowest median monthly rent rate at \$753/month. The State and National median monthly rents are higher than all the peer cities and slightly less than Swansea. This suggests that Swansea has an abundance of affordable places to live for renters and reflects the presence of a sustaining rental population due to the proximity to MetroLink, SAFB and excellent highway access. Table 1.10 provides a summary of housing costs and affordability.

**Table 1.10 Housing Cost & Affordability (2010- 2014 ACS)**

Housing Cost	Swansea	Glen Carbon	Godfrey	Highland	St. Clair	Ill.	US
Average Monthly Homeowner Costs (w/ mortgage)	\$1,460	\$1,728	\$1,249	\$1,278	\$1,355	\$1,676	\$1,522
% of Homeowners who spend 30% or more of income on housing	19.4%	23.8%	27.2%	19.9%	28.7%	35.4%	34%
Average Monthly Rent	\$1,048	\$955	\$919	\$753	\$848	\$993	\$1,032
% of Renters who spend 30% or more of income on housing	52.8%	49.3%	44.4%	34.8%	47.5%	47.4%	48.3%

## Section 1.23 Cost of Living Index

Cost of living is another factor considered by commercial site selectors and families when evaluating future locations for prospective businesses and homes. Cost of living and its rate of change strongly influences labor cost, inflation, labor retention and the willingness of employees to relocate if the company is moving from another city. The ACCRA (American Chamber of Commerce Research Association) Cost of Living Index is a measure of various living costs among urban areas in the United States. The data required to determine the Cost of Living Index is compiled by the Council for Community and Economic Research. First published in 1968, the Index compares the price of goods and services among areas that participate in their surveys. The index is widely used by economists, researchers and corporations to measure relative cost of living. Cities across the nation participate in ACCRA's survey on a volunteer basis. Price information in the survey is governed by ACCRA collection guidelines which strive



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for uniformity. The ACCRA derives the Cost of Living Index for each state by averaging the indices of participating cities and metropolitan areas in that state.

The Cost of Living Index in Illinois is lower than National and Statewide averages. Illinois had the 21st lowest Cost of Living Index in the United States with a composite Cost of Living Index of 96 (US = 100). This means, on average, prices in the State are 4% less than prices at the national level. It is estimated the Cost of Living Index for the Village of Swansea is 93.4%. By way of comparison, the Cost of Living Index is higher in Glen Carbon (98%), Godfrey (98%), Illinois (96%) and the United States (100) and lower in the City of Highland (89.7%). With the cost of housing, utilities, transportation, gas, groceries and healthcare below the State and National averages, the economic advantages in Swansea bountiful and should be promoted to attract new residents and businesses.

<b>Cost of Living</b>	<b>Swansea</b>	<b>Glen Carbon</b>	<b>Godfrey</b>	<b>Highland</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>United States</b>
Overall	<b>93.4</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>89.7</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>100</b>
Grocery	97.3	96.4	96.4	96.4	97.1	100
Health	97	98	98	97.5	100	100
Housing	84	100	100	72.7	87	100
Utilities	109	109	109	108.9	101	100
Transportation	97	97	96	95.9	104	100
Miscellaneous	97	98	98	102.4	98	100

*Source: Sterling's Best Places (www.bestplaces.net)*

## **Section 1.24 Educational Attainment (Age 25 and over)**

Table 1.11 shows the educational attainment of individuals over 25 years of age. According to the latest American Community Survey for the years 2010– 2014, 93.9% of persons 25 and older in the Village of Swansea had a high school diploma or higher and 36.5% had a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. With the exception of Glen Carbon, Swansea led all peer cities, St. Clair County, Illinois and the United States in both educational attainment categories. St. Clair County had the lowest percentage of high school graduates and college degrees. Glen Carbon had the highest percentage of high school graduates (94.1%) and college graduates with a Bachelor’s degree or higher (49.4%). Swansea should continue to promote quality education and support local school districts in the procurement of funding, technical assistance and resources needed to make sure Swansea’s current and future students have access to the best educational resources available.



**Table 1.12: Educational Attainment (2010-2015 ACS)**

Educational Attainment	Swansea	Glen Carbon	Godfrey	Highland	St. Clair	Ill.	US
High School Grad. or higher	93.9%	94.1%	94.5%	92%	89.7%	87.6%	86.3%
Bachelors or Advanced Degree	36.2%	49.4%	27%	25.9%	25.6%	31.9%	29.3%

Source: 2010-2014 ACS

## Section 1.25 Employment Characteristics

The most common occupational category in Swansea is “management, business, science and arts occupations educational services and health care and social assistance”. Forty-five percent (45%) of Swansea’s workforce have occupations in the aforementioned fields. The second most common occupation is “Sales and Office Occupations”, which included 25.4% of the Village’s workforce, followed by “Service Occupations” with 14.2%. The top five (5) Occupations among Swansea’s Workforce are also the top occupations among St. Clair County’s Workforce.

The top five (5) **Occupations** in Swansea, in order of percentage of workforce are;

1. Management, business, science and arts occupations educational services and health care and social assistance (45%);
2. Sales and Office Occupations (25.4%)
3. Service Occupations (14.2%) and:
4. Construction, extraction, installation, maintenance and repair occupations Public administration (8%)
5. Production, transportation and material moving occupations (7.5%)

The top five **Industries** in Swansea are as follows:

1. Educational services and health care and social assistance (26%)
2. Professional, scientific, management and administrative (15.6%)
3. Public administration (9.2%)
4. Finance and insurance and real estate and rental and leasing (8.2%)
5. Retail trade (7.4%)

Table 1.13 provides a comprehensive list of Swansea’s workforce occupation characteristics alongside St. Clair County’s.



**Table 1.13 Occupation Characteristics (2010-14 ACS)**

OCCUPATION	Swansea	St. Clair County
1. Management, business, science, edu. and arts occupations	48.5%	34.1%
2. Sales and office occupations	24.9%	25.7%
3. Service occupations	15.0%	19.6%
4. Production, transportation and material moving occupations	7.4%	12.06%
5. Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations	4.0%	7.7%
<b>INDUSTRY</b>		
1. Educational services and health care and social assistance	26.0%	25.5%
2. Professional, scientific, management and administrative	15.6%	10.6%
3. Public administration	9.2%	7.7%
4. Finance and insurance and real estate and rental and leasing	8.2%	6.7%
5. Retail trade	7.4%	11.3%
6. Transportation and warehousing and utilities	7.3%	6.7%
7. Manufacturing	6.6%	8.5%
8. Arts, ent. and rec. and accommodation and food services	6.1%	9.1%
9. Construction	5.1%	5.2%
10. Other services, except public administration	4.3%	4.7%
11. Wholesale trade	3.5%	2.3%
12. Information	0.7%	1.3%
13. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting and mining	0.1%	0.7%

Source: 2014 ACS

## Section 1.26 Occupation & Commuting

Approximately 20.4% of the Village’s workforce work for the government and 5.2% are self-employed. Swansea has a higher percentage of both government employees and self-employed individuals than St. Clair County. The majority (74.3%) of Swansea’s workforce is engaged in civilian/private sector jobs.

The median commute time for Swansea’s workforce was 24.2 minutes, meaning half the workers in the area have a longer travel time and half spend less time commuting. The median commute time for US and Illinois workers was 25.7 minutes and 28.2 minutes respectively. The average commute time in Swansea is 6% faster than the national average and 16.5% faster than Illinois. St. Clair County’s median commute time (24.0) was slightly faster than Swansea’s. According to the 2014 ACS, the number of people who take public transportation (4.8%) in Swansea is 6.25% lower than the national average (5.1%) and 85% lower than Illinois (8.9%). The percentage of Swansea’s workforce who work from home is 3.6%, which is just above the percentage of people who work from home in St. Clair County (3.2%) and just below the State (4.1%) and National averages (4%).

As a bedroom community, Swansea will continue to have a longer commute resulting in more vehicle miles traveled (VMT), more carbon emissions and more fuel consumption. However, if gas and other automobile related costs increase, the percentage of people willing to carpool,



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use public transportation and work from home is likely to increase. The Village should encourage telecommuting, home occupations, carpooling and the use of public transportation. Table 1.14 provides a summary of the Village’s workforce characteristics.

<b>Table 1.14 Workforce Characteristics (2010-14 ACS)</b>		
<b>OCCUPATION</b>	<b>Swansea’s Workforce</b>	<b>St. Clair County’s Workforce</b>
Population 16 years and over	10,858	118,398
Civilian labor force	7,354	117,313
Not in labor force	31.7%	37.1%
Employed	93.8%	91%
Unemployed	6.2%	9%
Government Workers	20.4%	16.4%
Self-employed	5.2%	4.1%
<b>COMMUTING TO WORK</b>		
Drove alone	86.4%	81.7%
Carpooled	3.9%	7.8%
Public Transportation	4.8%	4.3%
Walked	0.7%	1.9%
Worked at Home	3.6%	3.2%
Mean travel time to work	24.2 minutes	24 minutes
<i>Source: 2010-2014 ACS Profile Report</i>		

## Section 1.27 Daytime Population

Bedroom communities such as Swansea experience a significant percentage of its population leaving the area in the morning to travel to their jobs, with no corresponding inflow of workers. According to ACS and City-Data.com, Swansea loses 18.6% of its population during the day as 2,549 individuals leave Swansea for employment. Only 9% or 970 of Swansea’s workforce live and work in Swansea. However, within a 5 minute drive of the center of the Village, there are 957 businesses that employ 11,120 people. The Economic Development Study prepared for Swansea indicates that a high volume of professional and healthcare workers travel to the general Swansea area daily to work. The Study goes on to say this volume has increased over the past 10 years and continues to increase, which should reduce retail seepage and foster business development.

The average commute for Swansea’s workforce is only 24 minutes, which is well below the average commute time for Illinois’ workforce (28 minutes). Swansea’s relatively short commute could be attributed to the fact that many of its residents work in nearby Belleville, Fairview Heights, downtown St. Louis and unincorporated St. Clair County. Therefore, while the immediate “daytime” population may shrink, Swansea’s 5-mile and 10-mile primary and secondary trade areas remain robust and prosperous as shown in the following Sections. Table 1.15 shows the ten (10) largest area employers that provide a wide range of job opportunities for Swansea residents.



**Table 1.15 Largest Local Employers**

Employer	Employees	Type of Industry	Location
1. Scott AFB (3 Miles away)	13,000	National Defense	Base
2. Memorial Hospital	2,800	Health Care	Belleville
3. Schnucks Markets Inc.	1,734	Grocery	Swansea
4. Southwestern Illinois College	1,403	College	Belleville
5. St. Elizabeth Hospital	1,300	Health Care	Belleville
6. Jet Aviation (General Dynamics)	900	Aircraft repair/modifications	Cahokia
7. Southern IL Healthcare Foundation	631	Health Care	Belleville
8. Belleville School District 118	575	Education	Belleville
9. Allsup	510	Disability Claims Services	Belleville
10. Belleville School District 201	500	Education	Belleville

## Section 1.28 Trade Area Profile

Knowledge of the localized demographic characteristics is important in determining the level of public & private services and housing needs. However, a much larger area is typically analyzed by planners and retail experts when looking for new locations for development; one such area is the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The Village of Swansea is part of the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). The SMSA area includes seven (7) counties in Missouri and eight (8) in Illinois, with a total of 15 counties. The SMSA includes the City of St. Louis and the surrounding counties in Missouri (Lincoln, St. Charles, St. Louis, Jefferson, Franklin and Warren) and Illinois (Bond, Calhoun, Clinton, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison, Monroe and St. Clair). The Illinois portion of the St. Louis Metropolitan MSA is known as the “Metro East”. According to the 2014 ACS, the St. Louis MSA had a total population of 2.9 million people with 25% residing in Illinois and 75% residing in Missouri. The St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area is the 20<sup>th</sup> largest in the United States. The estimated household income for the St. Louis, MO-IL MSA was \$55,535 according to the 2014 ACS. By way of comparison, the average household income for Swansea is \$82,670 and \$66,745 for St. Clair County. According to the Leadership Council of Southwestern Illinois, the Metro East consumers have an estimated \$7 billion a year spending power and make up 19% of the region’s workforce. The defining characteristic of the St. Louis region over the last several decades has been a period of population stability coupled with geographic sprawl. As the population continues to age and transportation costs increase, in-migration from the suburbs to the more urban areas and inner-tier cities is anticipated to increase, reversing over five (5) decades of sprawl. This is especially true in neighborhoods and cities where housing and utilities are affordable and land is available for future development, such as the case in the Village of Swansea.

Planners and retail experts also consider various locational factors such as accessibility, commute, income levels, education and the density and intensity of population (i.e. rooftops). Table 1.16 goes beyond the Village limits to provide a summary of the 1, 5 and 10 mile trade area profiles for the Village of Swansea. The control point or axis for the 1, 5 and 10 mile circular profiles was Swansea’s Administrative Building. The data shows that the Village’s commercial districts have access to a significant population with a solid income base and relatively inexpensive housing. Swansea’s trade demographics support a wide range of retail and commercial service offerings, provided the Village’s commercial districts are promoted to this greater trade market area and positioned to accommodate a wide range of market driven, destination-type uses that would attract consumers from a greater regional trade area.



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<b>Table 1.16: Swansea Trade Area Demographics (2010 Census-CARTS)</b>			
<b>Control Point: Administrative Offices</b>	<b>1 Mile</b>	<b>5 Miles</b>	<b>10 Miles</b>
Population- 2010 Census	5,661	108,062	225,133
<b>Age (2010)</b>			
Under 18 years of age	23.2%	22.0%	24.5%
20 to 24 years	7.1%	6.8%	6.4%
25 to 44 years	26.8%	26.6%	26.5%
45 to 64 years	27.0%	28.4%	27.0%
65 and over	14.6%	14.0%	13.2%
Median Age	38.6	39.4	38.4
<b>Trade Area Housing Statistics (2010)</b>			
Total Households	2,440	44,078	86,683
Total housing units	2,817	50,067	98,685
Family households	61.8%	62.2%	65.9%
Owner occupied housing	60.5%	66.4%	66.9%
Renter occupied housing	39.5%	33.6%	33.1%
Average home value	\$89,854	\$140,523	\$149,940
Average household income	\$49,485	\$69,403	\$68,889
Average family income	\$55,501	\$84,949	\$82,727
High school graduate or higher	88.9%	92.7%	90.7%
Bachelor degree or higher	12.8%	27.8%	27.5%

## Section 1.29 Community Tapestry – The Fabric of Our Neighborhoods

The Community Tapestry™ system is a proven segmentation methodology that utilizes 65 segments called “Tapestry Lifestyles” to classify communities based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition. These segments are broken down to the U.S. Census Block Group level throughout the United States. The system is used by planners and national retail experts to identify localized purchasing patterns and select future development locations.

The following paragraphs detail the top “Lifestyle Tapestry Segments” representative of the Swansea Planning Area. It is included in this Plan to provide a better understanding of the spending habits and lifestyles of the consumers within the Swansea trade area. This information provides retailers a profile of the local trade area and provides some quality of life indicators the Village should be prepared to address in the future. These include, but are not limited to, the following;

- ✓ Providing continuing education and training to the areas workforce;
- ✓ Providing access to quality, salaried jobs;
- ✓ Providing healthy meals to a culture “on-the-run”; and
- ✓ Diversifying the housing stock to provide more choices, especially in the affordable housing/1st time homebuyer market segment.



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### Section 1.30 Top Tapestry Segments

**Exurbanites:** Fifteen percent (15%) of Swansea's population falls into the 'Exurbanites' Lifestyle Tapestry Segment. The Exurbanites Segment consists primarily of married couples living in single family homes and characterized as follows:

*Married couples who are empty nesters or who have no children, we're approaching retirement, but not slowing down. We're sociable and hard-working. Even though we live farther out from large metros, our lifestyle is cultural and urbane; we support the arts and public radio/TV. We rely on advice from our financial planners and hold a wide range of investments in our healthy portfolios. We still carry mortgages on our large valuable single family homes. Gardening and home improvement projects are priorities; however, we'll also hire home care, maintenance and personal care services. We go online for everything. Quality instead of price governs our shopping choices.*

**Old and Newcomers:** Fifteen percent (15%) of Swansea falls into the 'Old & Newcomers' Lifestyle Tapestry Segment. The Old and Newcomers Segment consists primarily of singles living in single family homes and multi-family units and characterized as follows:

*Our neighborhoods are in transition; most of us are single on a budget and renting because we're beginning our careers or we're retiring. The differences in our ages somewhat dictates our tastes: the younger residents are comfortable with technology, may still be in college, or would support environmental causes. Older residents may take adult education classes or prefer to keep their landline. We focus on convenience and economy. We're just as likely to bank online as in person. Some will go online to play games and visit dating sites; other entertainment includes watching movies at home, listening to country music and reading newspapers. Food tends to be convenient and fast food.*

**Set to Impress:** Twelve percent (12%) of Swansea falls into the 'Set to Impress' Lifestyle Tapestry Segment. The Set to Impress Segment consists primarily of singles living in multifamily units and a wide range of rentals and characterized as follows:

*We're young, either still in college or working and renting apartments in large multi-unit buildings in the Village or the suburbs. Many of us can walk or bike to work; some drive a used, imported vehicle. Many of us live alone. Even though we're on our own, we still keep in close touch with family. Most have a cell phone; no landlines for us! We go online to manage our finances and check social media. We're very image-conscious and often buy clothes impulsively to look good. We shop for deals, stocking up on bargains. We're brand-conscious, but will buy generic if the price is right. We're really into music, listening to and downloading a variety of the latest music and knowing about the local music scene. We also go clubbing and attend rock concerts.*

**Midlife Constants:** Twelve percent (12%) of Swansea falls into the 'Midlife Constants' Lifestyle Tapestry Segment. The Midlife Constants Segment consists primarily of married couples with no kids living in single family homes and characterized as follows:

*Our slow-changing neighborhoods are settled in small communities outside metro areas; many of us have lived in the same house for years. Retired or looking forward to retirement, most of us are married couples with a growing number of singles. We're homebodies, happy to work on our houses and gardens, do scrapbooking, read, go fishing, play golf and watch movies at home. Price doesn't trump quality; we shop for American and natural*



products. Information comes from TV, radio and newspapers. We're sociable, outgoing seniors who belong to fraternal orders, veterans' clubs and charitable organizations; attend church; volunteer; contribute to political, educational, arts/cultural and social services organizations.

## DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

### Section 1.31 Historic sites

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect our historic and archeological resources. Buildings or properties must be at least 50 years old to be eligible for consideration. There are additional requirements that must also be addressed prior to inclusion on the National Register. At the time of this writing, there were no properties on the National Register of Historic Places in the Village of Swansea. However, there are many existing structures well over 50 years old that may be eligible for placement on the National Register.

### Section 1.32 Environmental Framework

The environment provides the natural and physical context within which land use activities take place. The intent of this plan is to minimize the negative impacts on the environment. The following sections provide a brief overview of the environmental framework and development constraints that must be considered in future development and land use decisions.

### Section 1.33 Floodplains

The riparian zone of a river, stream or other body of water is the land adjacent to the centerline of the channel and includes the stream banks and floodplain. Riparian zones can be broad alluvial valleys or narrow strips of stream bank. Riparian zones help control the intensity and frequency of flooding and contain very sensitive ecosystems that support a diverse range of species and vegetation. Riparian areas are prone to periodic flooding, which helps support and maintain these fragile ecosystems. For these reasons and the fact Swansea's riparian areas along the Wolf Branch and Richland Creek are very scenic and pristine, this plan recommends preserving riparian areas in the form of a greenway system.

Riparian areas are classified into "zones" which refer to the probability of annual flooding. The "100 Year Floodplain" is an area that is expected to flood at least once in a 100-year period. The 100-year floodplain can be further divided into two areas based on flood hazard potential. The **floodway** is the area within and adjacent to the stream banks required to discharge the 100-year flood without raising the water surface elevation more than one foot above base flood level at any point. Obstacles in the floodway can disrupt this function, increasing both the frequency and severity of flood damage. Therefore, no structure, fence or other permanent, manmade obstruction should be constructed in the floodway. The **floodway fringe** is the area bordering the floodway. This area provides storage during a flood event and functionally reduces the frequency and intensity of downstream flooding by holding floodwaters until they are carried away in the floodway channel. While the floodway fringe's capacity decreases with the presence of obstacles, such as a fence or building, their presence is generally acceptable when regulated properly.



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The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prepared Flood Insurance Relief Maps (FIRM) for the Swansea region that show the 100-year floodplains. Any future development proposed near a flood prone area should be identified on the FIRM maps to verify their location within the floodplain.

### **Section 1.34 Wetlands**

The State of Illinois defines a wetland as, *"land that has a predominance of hydric soils and that is inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions"*. Wetlands perform many valuable functions including decreasing the frequency and severity of flooding, water purification, provide feeding and breeding grounds for aquatic habitat and support vegetation that absorb harmful greenhouse gasses. They also offer diverse recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing and wildlife observation. However, Illinois has lost over 90 percent of its wetlands. Southern Illinois currently contains 49 percent (approximately 612,300 acres) of the State's total wetland resources.

This plan recommends preserving and enhancing wetlands in accordance with the Federal and state regulations that mandate "no net loss" of wetlands. If a wetland or portion of a wetland is disturbed or eliminated, replacement of that wetland with a wetland of equal quality and quantity is required. Development should be prohibited from encroaching upon wetland areas. The designation of wetlands in itself does not necessarily prevent development, but is an indicator that development will need to be approached in a more sensitive manner. The appropriate state agencies should be contacted prior to any alteration of any wetland area.

### **Section 1.35 Topography**

Topography is the natural terrain of an area; its slopes, valleys, hills and similar landscape features. Topography can be a critical element to development. When severe slopes are developed, they frequently become unstable resulting in erosion. Erosion further destabilizes steep slopes and all of the soil that washes off the slope ends up in creeks, streams and rivers in the form of siltation. Siltation degrades the quality of the water body and can increase the frequency and severity of local flooding. Phase II Stormwater regulations by the State are an attempt to control these sorts of impacts through the use of Best Management Practices (BMP). This plan recommends adhering to BMP to minimize flooding, erosion and siltation and to protect water quality.

### **Section 1.36 Soils**

Soil develops as a result of the weathering of water, wind and ice on the geology of a location. We tend to think of them as something that just "exists" but they are ever changing bodies of organic matter, sand, silt and clay. Soils are often identified by what their capability, limiting attribute, or best use is, such as Prime Farmland Soils or Expansive Clay Soils. This latter group of soils can be problematic for development as they tend to shrink and swell causing failures in foundations, structures, roads and other infrastructure.



## **CHAPTER 2: CRITICAL ISSUES**



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## Section 2.1 Public Engagement Process

The public engagement process kicked-off with a series of Stakeholder Interviews with Swansea's elected and appointed officials, business leaders, developers and residents. The interviews lasted at least 1 hour each and provided first-hand information from Swansea's well informed residents and leaders.



The Stakeholder Interviews were followed by the Town Planning Workshop which was held on October 27, 2016. The Workshop included participants ranging from elected and appointed officials, business owners and concerned citizens. During the workshop, participants were divided into teams consisting of a secretary, cartographer and at least one (1) presenter. Teams were provided a workbook which included the discussion topics, land use planning exercises and a project area map. The Teams spent approximately two (2) hours discussing the past, present and future vision of Swansea. At the end of the Workshop, representatives from each team presented the team's findings. Teams recorded their findings on maps of the study area and in the workbooks developed for the Workshop. At the end of the Workshop, each team presented their findings and recommendations. The Consultant recorded notes throughout the workshop. There were many issues, concerns and recommendations repeated by all teams, implying there was a consensus among many of topics discussed at the Workshop.



Another important component of the Public Engagement process was the Citizen Survey which was mailed to all Swansea residents. The survey included 100 questions covering a wide variety of quality of life issues. Most questions asked survey respondents to rate items from 1 to 5. This provided a method to quantitatively rate and rank issues based on the opinions of survey respondents. In all, there were over 150 surveys collected.



The discussion topics and questions used in the aforementioned public engagement activities were developed with the intent of identifying citizen-defined values and critical issues as they relate to the future of Swansea. The responses to these questions, more specifically, helped identify Swansea's **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats**. The following is a summary of the findings of the Village of Swansea's Town Planning Workshop, Citizen Survey, Stakeholder Interviews and meetings with the Steering Committee. The complete findings of the public engagement program can be found in Appendix A.





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## Section 2.2 Strengths

Participants of the public participation process were asked to identify positive community elements. The strengths identified fall within the following general planning elements; quality of life, public services, housing & neighborhood stability, transportation and top assets. Swansea's strengths, as defined by the community, include:

**A. Quality of Life:** There is a consensus that Swansea's "good schools, good police and excellent public services" make Swansea an excellent place to live. The following quality of life related strengths were ranked highest during the public engagement process:

- 1) *Swansea is a great place to live:* The statement "Swansea is a great place to live" was the highest ranked quality of life statement with a rating of 4.25 out of 5 according to the Citizen Survey.
- 2) *Swansea is a great place to raise a family:* The statement "Swansea is a great place to raise children" was the second highest ranked quality of life characteristics of Swansea.
- 3) *Swansea should remain a quiet bedroom community:* The statement "Swansea should remain a quiet bedroom community" rounded out the top three (3) quality of life characteristics of Swansea. Table 2.1 provides a complete listing of the Quality of Life statements and ratings.

Table 2.1: Quality of Life Questions					
Agree/Disagree Statements (in order of rating)	Disagree ←————→ Agree				5
	1	2	3	4	
Rating					
1. Swansea is a great place to live.	4.25				
2. Swansea is a great place to raise children.	4.19				
3. Swansea should remain a quiet bedroom community.	3.70				
4. Swansea is a great place to retire.	3.70				
5. Swansea offers great value for the services provided.	3.69				
6. Swansea is a great place to own/operate a business.	3.62				
7. Swansea is a great place to visit.	3.18				
Source: 2016 Swansea Citizen Survey					

- 4) *Swansea's small town feel and atmosphere:* Swansea's small town feel and atmosphere are highly regarded and a major reason many residents are attracted to Swansea and continue to call Swansea home.
- 5) *Low crime.* Swansea's Police Department was the highest rated public service with regard to both level of importance and quality of services according to survey respondents.

**B. Public Services:** The following public service related strengths and community assets were noted during the public engagement process:

- 1) *Public Services:* Public services are one of Swansea's top strengths. According to the Citizen Survey, 88% of survey respondents are pleased with the Village's public services.



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- 2) *Parks*: Residents are very pleased with the area's parks and agree that the parks serve as nice areas for kids to play and people to gather. Only 19% of survey respondents believed Swansea needed more parks or recreational areas.
- 3) *Sidewalks and Trails*: According to community engagement participants, the recent sidewalk and trail improvements are a good investment in Swansea's future and should be located along main roads and connected to all existing parks.

**C. Housing & Neighborhood Stability:** The following specific housing and neighborhood stability strengths were noted during the public engagement process.

- 1) *Neighborhoods*: Swansea has excellent neighborhoods, which are described as friendly and safe.
- 2) *Housing Stock*: Swansea's housing stock provides a nice variety of housing types and price ranges. According to the Citizen Survey, 89% of survey respondents believe Swansea has sufficient housing options.
- 3) *Affordable housing*. According to community engagement participants, Swansea provides a variety of affordable housing ranging from apartments, mobile homes, duplexes and small older single-family homes.

**D. Transportation:** The following specific transportation related strengths and assets were identified during the public engagement process.

- 1) *Traffic Circulation & Access*: Access to local roads, interstates and public transportation is also one of Swansea's top strengths. According to the Citizen Survey only 27% of survey respondents believe traffic congestion is a problem.
- 2) *Sidewalks and Trails*: According to community engagement participants, the recent sidewalk and trail improvements are a good investment in Swansea's future and should be located along main roads and connecting all parks.

**E. Top Community assets:** The Citizen Survey asked to rate a wide variety of community assets or strengths. Table 2.2 provides a complete list of the community assets surveyed along with the overall rating for each. The assets are ranked in order from highest to lowest rating:

<b>Table 2.2: Swansea's Top 10 Strengths &amp; Assets</b>		
<i>Top Community Assets (in order of rating)</i>	Least Valuable	Most Valuable
	← →	
	Rating from 1 to 5	
1) Police / fire protection & crime prevention	4.46	
2) Easy access to major highways	4.29	
3) Geographic location	4.25	
4) Medical offices & access to hospitals	4.20	
5) Schools (public & parochial)	4.09	
6) A safe community	3.97	
7) Close proximity to culture, arts & entertainment	3.97	
8) Municipal services in general	3.88	
9) Small town, family-friendly atmosphere	3.80	
10) Affordable housing	3.79	
<i>Source: 2016 Swansea Citizen Survey</i>		



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## Section 2.3 Weaknesses

Throughout the planning process, participants were asked to identify weaknesses or challenges facing Swansea over the next decade. The identified weaknesses fall within four (4) general planning elements; 1) economic development, 2) housing & neighborhood stability, 3) public services and 4) transportation. Swansea's weaknesses, as defined by the community, include:

**A. Economic Development:** The following economic development issues received the lowest ratings therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, are considered weaknesses and summarized below.

- 1) *Tourism:* The statement "Swansea is a great place to visit" was the lowest rated quality of life statement with a rating of 3.2 out of 5 according to the Citizen Survey.
- 2) *Entrepreneurial Climate:* The statement "Swansea is a great place to own/operate a business" was the second lowest rated quality of life statement with a rating of 3.6 out of 5 according to the Citizen Survey.
- 3) *Limited Retail:* residents (young and old) travel outside the Village to shop, eat and for entertainment resulting in loss of valuable revenues.
- 4) *Lack of Town Identity.* A town-center and branding is needed.

**B. Housing & Neighborhood Stability:** Many participants opined that there are limited housing choices in Swansea and would like to see more homes in the \$100,000 - \$200,000 price range to provide a better selection of homes for first-time home buyers and seniors.

**C. Public Services/Transportation:** There is a consensus that Swansea should be more pedestrian and bike friendly. Village officials are urged to make walkability a priority. More specifically, the participants of the public engagement process want sidewalks along all main roads (starting with Route 159) and connecting to parks, schools and neighborhoods.

## Section 2.4 Opportunities

During the public participation process, individuals were asked to identify opportunities that Swansea should leverage over the next decade. The economic development, quality of life, public service and housing & neighborhood stability related opportunities, as described by participants of the public engagement process, are as follows:

**A. Economic Development:** The following economic development related strengths were identified during the public engagement process:

- 1) *MetroLink / TOD Plan:* The area adjacent to the Metro-Link station and towards 159 and Boul Avenue are excellent development opportunity areas. They provide an ideal setting for mixed use and/or transit-oriented development (TOD).
- 2) *Consumer Seepage:* There are voids in the retail and commercial services available in Swansea. As result of these voids, residents have to travel outside the Village limits for certain consumer needs. Consumer seepage hurts Swansea's businesses and the overall financial stability of the Village. Swansea officials should strive to attract businesses to fill retail and commercial service voids and reduce seepage.
- 3) *Retail Niches:* Swansea officials should encourage the creation of new retail niches. According to the public engagement participants, Swansea would be a great fit for a Starbucks, movie theatre, bakery, recreation center/water park, walkable shops/boutiques and uses that offer daytime, family friendly entertainment and services.



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- 4) *Small Business Recruitment & Retention:* There are opportunities for the expansion and recruitment of small shops, restaurants and offices in Swansea. One community stakeholder suggested: "Small locally owned businesses are our strength; build from their success and encourage future reinvestment in our existing businesses."(i.e. Medical Shop, Thompson Gas, etc.)
- 5) *Incubator:* Establish a "business incubator" to attract and nurture local entrepreneurs and small business start-ups.
- 6) *Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District:* Swansea's TIF Districts expire in 2020; therefore Swansea's public and private leaders should aggressively pursue future development opportunities to facilitate reinvestment in Swansea's blighted areas contained within the defined TIF Districts.
- 7) *Trade Area:* Swansea has access to a vast and prosperous trade area; which includes a population over 250,000.
- 8) *Vacant, Underutilized Sites:* Identify, market and redevelop vacant and underutilized sites, such as the old car lots across from Outback.
- 9) *Create Synergies:* Expand upon the success of area commercial districts by offering new businesses, retailers and seasonal activities. Encourage the revitalization of property south of the police station towards Belleville along both sides of 159. This is our original downtown and needs to be preserved and redeveloped.

**B. Quality of Life:** The following quality of life related strengths were noted during the public engagement process:

- 1) *Make sure Swansea remains Swansea.* The community should capitalize on the qualities that make Swansea a great bedroom community such as established neighborhoods, low crime, good transportation access, excellent schools, nice trails and its own MetroLink Station.
- 2) *Retention of Swansea's Youth:* Retaining Swansea's young adults after they graduate offers opportunities to grow the Village's population, bring the community together and pass along the Village's small town, family-friendly values.

**C. Public Services:** The following public service related opportunities were noted during the public engagement process:

- 1) *Better Property Maintenance & Code Enforcement:* Launch a property maintenance campaign to raise awareness of local property maintenance ordinances and to make landowners accountable for their property.
- 2) *Pedestrian/Bike Connections:* Connect parks to neighborhoods, MetroLink, schools and businesses districts via sidewalks, bike trails and walking paths/greenbelts. There is a consensus that walking trails, hiking areas and bike trails are needed to support healthy, active lifestyles and provide much needed family entertainment.
- 3) *Design Guidelines:* Better urban design and attention to detail is needed Village-wide.
- 4) *Annexation:* Annexation was identified throughout the public engagement process as a means to expand and diversify the housing stock and create economic development opportunities.

**D. Housing & Neighborhood Stability:** The following additional future residential development opportunities were noted during the public engagement process:



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- 1) *New Mid-Range Housing*: There is a shortage of newly built or renovated medium priced single-family homes and therefore, moderate growth potential for medium priced housing in the \$100,000 - \$200,000 price range.
- 2) *Alternative Owner-Occupied Housing Options*: The development of condos and other alternative owner-occupied housing types, such as villas would do well in Swansea.
- 3) *Garden Apartments*: Garden apartments for Millennials and Baby Boomers would do well. However, they should be well-constructed, articulately designed and provide amenities that make them resort-like.
- 4) *Estate Homes*: The development of large-lot, estate style homes would sell very well in Swansea or on property annexed into Swansea.
- 5) *Dilapidated or Outmoded Housing*: Replace housing, including mobile homes, that have fallen into disrepair or no longer meet the latest building codes with market-driven, stick-built single family homes.

## Section 2.5 Threats

During the public participation process, individuals were asked to identify threats facing Swansea over the next decade. The threats were organized into five (5) general planning elements; quality of life, public services, housing & neighborhood stability, transportation and economic development as follows:

### A. Quality of Life:

- 1) *Public Safety – Police and Fire Protection / Crime Prevention*. The Police and fire Department do a great job addressing crime and public safety issues.
- 2) *Crime or the perception of crime*. There is a perception that crime is present due in part to MetroLink and crime in nearby communities. In reality, crime rates are very low in Swansea. If crimes do occur, they typically occur in southern portions of Swansea which boarder Belleville.

### B. Public Services:

- 1) The continued provision of effective, efficient and economical public services.
- 2) The provision of sufficient revenue to financially support the needs of the community.
- 3) Property maintenance & adherence to codes.
- 4) Southern portions of Swansea look tired and dilapidated. It makes for a poor transition into Swansea from Bellville. We need to elevate the quality and aesthetics of this area. This area would benefit from restorative development and revitalization.
- 5) Speeding along Route 159 needs to be patrolled.

**C. Housing & Neighborhood Stability:** We need to eliminate vacant, dilapidated buildings and homes (especially mobile homes). Too many structures need paint and other maintenance. Yards need to be cleaned up and the storage of RV, boats and placement/appearance of sheds need to be regulated.

### D. Transportation:

- 1) *Continued maintenance of public infrastructure (roads and sewers) needed.*
- 2) *Frank Scott is becoming more and more dangerous- it needs to be widened.*



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## E. Economic Development:

- 1) *State of Illinois is broke:* The State's financial instability and the disproportionately high percentage of our taxes that go to pensions is a threat to all Illinois residents.
- 2) *Too many payday loan establishments.* Do not allow anymore payday loans, gaming machines, or pawn shops.
- 3) *Taxes are too high.* A high percentage of taxes paid by Swansea residents go towards schools, meanwhile many residents don't have school age children.
- 4) *TIFs are going to expire soon, with not much development to show.*
- 5) *Revitalization of existing commercial areas.*
- 6) *Trying to attract regional retail and restaurant chains in an economy in recovery.*
- 7) *Retail Seepage.* Big box stores capture the majority of local spending, making it very difficult for smaller scale, specialty shops, or locally owned businesses. Many residents shop outside of Swansea where price and selection are better.
- 8) *Competition:* The adjacent cities where Swansea residents spend all their money (Fairview Heights, Belleville and St. Louis) are Swansea's biggest economic threat.

<b>Top Community Concerns (in order of rating)</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1. Public Safety – Police and Fire protection / Crime prevention	<b>4.86</b>
2. Maintenance of public infrastructure (roads and sewers)	<b>4.47</b>
3. Stability of neighborhoods	<b>4.41</b>
4. Effective, efficient and economical public services	<b>4.39</b>
5. Property maintenance & adherence to codes	<b>4.22</b>
6. Preservation and revitalization of existing commercial areas	<b>3.96</b>
7. Provision of Sidewalks, bike lanes, & trails	<b>3.87</b>
8. Growth in revenue to financially support needs of the community	<b>3.87</b>
9. Access to quality technology such as Wi-Fi & cell service	<b>3.79</b>
10. Quality parks and recreation facilities	<b>3.74</b>

*Source: 2016 Swansea Citizen Survey*

## Section 2.6: Critical Issues Summary

The comprehensive planning process helped identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Swansea and the community's vision for the future. The vision for the future calls for balanced and carefully considered growth, neighborhood preservation and commercial revitalization. The intent of the Plan is to preserve the health, safety and welfare of the community and promote economic development initiatives that create jobs, improve the image of Swansea and ensure the Village's revenues remain reliable for the long-term. The following Chapter provides the Vision for the future of Swansea and the recommended goals, objectives and implementation strategies for the 2017 Swansea Comprehensive Plan.



## **CHAPTER 3: VISION GOALS & OBJECTIVES**



## Section 3.1 Introduction

### What the Swansea community wants:

*"Let's not get bigger, just better."*

*"We raised our kids here and love it"*

*"Public service is outstanding."*

*"Swansea is more than a bedroom community; it should be a destination".*

*"Our property taxes are high! No new taxes."*

*"Take care of what we already have."*

Source- Town Planning Workshop 10/27/2016

The critical issues facing the Village of Swansea fall within the following general planning categories:

1. Economic Development
2. Housing and Neighborhood Stabilization
3. Quality of Life
4. Transportation
5. Public Services & Facilities
6. Future Growth & Annexation

Goals, objectives and implementation strategies have been developed for each of the aforementioned critical issues. They respond to and build upon the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified by the community and summarized in Chapter 2. The goals prepared for this Plan consist of general statements that address the Village's long-range plans and desired outcomes. They provide the framework upon which the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan are based. The recommended implementation strategies provide specific actions or steps necessary in turning the Plan's vision and goals into reality.

The stability and future growth of Swansea depends directly on the elected and appointed official's ability to coordinate and manage the necessary public services, facilities, administrative duties and future land use and development. These and other factors that influence the growth of Swansea, including input from the public engagement process, have been considered in the development of the following vision, goals and objectives.

### Section 3.2 Vision

The purpose of the public engagement process was to gather information from Swansea residents, Village Officials and stakeholders to identify the values of the community and create a citizen-defined vision statement that reflected these values. The intent of the vision statement is to help direct future growth, development, capital improvements and public service decisions. After reviewing hundreds of comments and survey results, the following "vision statement" was determined to best represent the community's values and expectations for the future of Swansea:



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**VISION:** *Make Swansea a great place to live, work and play by preserving Swansea's family-friendly atmosphere, providing efficient public services and increasing the confidence to invest in the Village's commercial areas, neighborhoods and the qualities that make Swansea a desirable bedroom community.*

## Section 3.3 Goals & Objectives Overview

The goals adopted for the Swansea Comprehensive Plan represent measurable conditions that Swansea should strive to achieve in the next decade. Goals that are unattainable or unrealistic have been avoided. Objectives and recommended implementation strategies are included for each goal. They form a work program the Village should follow to transform the Plan's vision, goals and objectives into reality. Some strategies are clear actions the Village should take; others are recommendations for additional planning, more study or further public input. Implementation performance measures are also provided for each planning element to help track implementation efforts. Much of the recommended tracking information is already collected by the Village. The intent of including the performance measures is to encourage the Village to continue tracking this information to quantify implementation efforts and aid in obtaining grants and other sources of outside funding.

Village Officials should clearly communicate future development plans with the Planning Commission and the community. Part of the decision-making process should include educating the community regarding future land use development and closely monitoring and managing expectations when it comes to major development proposals or capital improvement commitments. The overall strategy for implementing the vision and goals of this Plan is threefold; it includes:

1. Empowering private residents and developers to assist with and successfully implement the vision, goals and objectives of this Plan:
2. Providing transparency with regard to future capital spending and future development by fostering a professional environment that results in well-informed decision-making that is focused on keeping the community informed; and
3. Ensuring Swansea's revenues are dependable for the long-term by adhering to the triple-bottom-line accounting framework that considers people, profit and planet.

The following sections include the goals, objectives and implementation strategies developed for each of the six (6) aforementioned planning categories.

## Section 3.4 Economic Development

Economic Development is a top concern according to feedback from the community. The purpose of economic development is job creation, job retention, tax base diversification and preserving the quality of life for all Swansea residents. A leading economic development concern expressed by residents and business leaders is that Swansea's commercial areas are not being utilized to their fullest potential. Furthermore, the lack of retail diversity and restaurant variety result in residents spending their money outside of Swansea. These factors contribute to "seepage" or "leakage" which is the loss of retail spending and/or the generation of sale tax



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revenues that would otherwise be invested back into the community if money was spent and invested locally. To minimize seepage, this Plan recommends supporting and expanding Swansea businesses; this should be a top priority. The momentum generated from recent public and private development and improvements are signs that the market is improving. Additionally, there are several opportunities highlighted in this Plan that places Swansea in a position of prominence to build upon this momentum. Village officials should seize these opportunities and support the following economic development goal and recommended implementation strategies.

**Economic Development Goal:** *Expand, diversify and strengthen the Village's economic base by supporting local businesses and recruiting family-friendly businesses that reflect market-based demands while also catering to the current and future needs of Swansea's residents.*

### Economic Development Objectives & Implementation Strategies

The following objectives and implementation strategies create an actionable program explicitly directed at improving Swansea's business climate. The economic development recommendations advocate promotion, collaboration and other place-based strategies. Unlike traditional approaches that relied on outdated market data and a shotgun approach to economic development, this Plan targets Swansea's locational strengths and the vision for the future by recommending the following economic development objectives and implementation strategies.

**1. Promote Swansea & its Businesses.** Develop an integrated approach towards promoting Swansea's businesses, neighborhoods and services. Consider adapting Apple's 3-prong Marketing Philosophy to the Village's promotional efforts. Apple's philosophy consists of;

- *Empathy*- making a personal connection.
- *Focus*- listening and commanding an understanding of the problem.
- *Impute*- casting an aura over your product or service (i.e. brand, celebrate, mark).

According to the Apple Marketing Philosophy, **empathy** is an intimate connection with the feelings of the customer. Based on this model, Swansea leaders are urged to listen intentionally to the needs of business leaders and residents to better understand their needs. **Focus** is the second principle and calls for the appointment of an advocate or a dedicated professional (Planner, Economic Development Specialist, etc.) to closely work with the business community to address their specific needs. The third and equally important principle, **impute** is based on the belief that people form an opinion about a place, company, or product based on the signals that it conveys. People are judgmental. Therefore, first impressions are very important. This Plan recommends Swansea officials work with business leaders in imputing beauty into the places and spaces that define Swansea. Key attention should be placed on the main entryways into town, highly visible areas and destinations that serve as first impressions of Swansea. Keeping buildings maintained, picking up litter, cleaning windows, making storefronts aesthetically pleasing and keeping inventory well-organized are place-based strategies that can create vitality and increase the frequency and duration of customer visits.

- 2. Develop Strategic Partnerships.** Continue to support and encourage the development of organizations and partnerships that promote economic development and professional relationship building by implementing the following strategies:
  - a. The Village should take the lead on economic development responsibilities by appointing someone to serve as ambassador for the Village and coordinating the funding and implementation of the recommendations contained in this Section.
  - b. Continue forging partnerships with the Metro East Regional Chamber, the Greater Belleville Chamber and local businesses to obtain grants, grow the local tax base and build the confidence to invest in opportunities that sustain and support a healthy local economy.
  - c. Conduct listening sessions with existing Swansea businesses and prospective businesses to identify needs, future business plans, mutual strengths, shared goals and challenges.
- 3. Promote economic diversification that facilitates long term economic stability and reduces the Village's economic dependence on a few industries and/or revenue sources.** Prospective businesses the Village should target in future economic development efforts include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Businesses that support other local businesses by sharing their customer base (cross selling), providing jobs well-suited to the local work force (cross training) and creating synergies that strengthen the local economy.
  - b. Housing, medical, retail and commercial service providers who cater to the needs of Swansea's seniors. As the population ages, the percentage of income spent on housing related costs and medical expenses will increase. The housing, medical (eye doctor, dentists, etc.) and retail industries that provide the aforementioned services will benefit from the increased demand created by the Baby Boom Generation. The Village should encourage the development of these markets and service delivery sectors.
  - c. Businesses and uses supported by the Swansea community. Participants of the public engagement activities expressed support for the following businesses; an internet café, craft food/beverage restaurants, craft food and beverage suppliers, boutique shops, quality clothing, a bakery, art studio/gallery, sit-down restaurants and other establishments that provide a place for people to gather, shop, work and linger.
  - d. Continue to evaluate current market demands and the latest retail, commercial and real estate trends to identify businesses that fill a unique niche and/or cater to the future needs and lifestyles of the Village's resident population. Prospective businesses of tomorrow may not exist today, so continued research and evaluation is recommended.
- 4. Hype up the Vibe.** Encourage the creation of interesting and appealing shopping areas, workplaces, neighborhoods, housing options and recreational environments that promote vitality, diversity and active lifestyles. The objective is to create and promote the qualities that attract talented professionals, high-income earners, savvy consumers and quality salaried jobs. The following implementation strategies are recommended to help shine a positive light on Swansea.
  - a. Selling Swansea as a fun, convenient and affordable place to live.
  - b. Beautifying major transportation corridors.



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- c. Planning for and providing safe, fun and beautiful trails, open space and public gathering areas.
  - d. Encouraging the use of innovative architecture, sustainable site designs and compact, walkable mixed use developments.
  - e. Improving upon the public transportation experience to increase the safety, utilization and desirability of Swansea's MetroLink Station, bus stops and supporting facilities.
  - f. Using the internet and social media as a tool to promote Swansea, leverage economic development opportunities and making a connection with existing and future residents.
  - g. Promote the Village's low taxes, educated workforce, central location and multi-modal accessibility to help attract new industry and encourage the expansion of existing industry.
- 5. Promote and restore the economic health and vitality of Swansea's commercial districts by taking an active role in improving the local business climate.** The Village cannot do this on its own. Ultimately, it will take a coordinated effort between the public and private sectors in order to achieve the desired community results and implement the following recommendations:
- a. Identify any potential zoning regulations, procedures or other permitting obstacles that may hinder prospective development or other economic opportunities. If regulations are not serving their intended purpose or required by law, consider eliminating them or replacing them with regulations that better align with the vision, goals and objectives of this Plan.
  - b. Facilitate future reinvestment efforts that promote economically sustainable and locally supportable businesses and industry.
  - c. Create a brochure promoting Swansea's strengths. Include the brochure with a personalized cover letter in strategic mailings to prospective businesses and distribute the brochure during economic development meetings, conferences, and roundtable discussions.
  - d. Advertise vacant buildings and underutilized sites in industry publications and on the Village's website. Make sure local commercial realtors are knowledgeable of the land and buildings available in Swansea by forging relationships with local brokers and developers.
  - e. Utilize the State's Certified Site's Program to help promote "shovel-ready" industrial sites (10 acres or larger with connections to sewer, water, electric and wireless).
- 6. Incentivize Development:** The use of financial incentives is necessary to continue to grow and broaden Swansea's economic base. Therefore, Village officials should seek out and identify useful development incentives and create an incentive "Tool Box" to attract new businesses and industry to Swansea. The Tool Box should include criteria and policy guidelines for when incentives should be used and to what extent. This Plan recommends the Village consider the following incentives:
- a. Waiving or discounting permit fees.
  - b. Assisting with infrastructure costs.
  - c. Property exchanges.



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- d. Establishing non-profit development corporations to help companies with the cost of land; and/or property tax abatement.
  - e. Utilizing Swansea's two (2) Businesses Districts, two (2) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts and the use of Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NIDs), Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDs) and/or other place-based economic development tools, such as economic development sales tax, to help pay for public improvements and infrastructure and spur economic growth.
  - f. Assisting with the planning, funding and permitting of local business expansions and the relocation of businesses to Swansea.
  - g. Promoting and raising awareness of the State's Enhanced Enterprises Zone Tax Benefit Program and how it can benefit businesses interested in relocating to the area or existing businesses interested in expansion.
  - h. The use of incentives and the level of support provided to each should be based on the amount of new private investment and/or the number of new jobs created in Swansea.
- 7. Development Nodes & Opportunity Clusters:** Promote the development of key development nodes and properties within Swansea's existing TIF Districts to leverage innovative development proposals. Specific sites that offer development opportunities are identified on the Future Land Use Map. Among the top priorities are Swansea's existing TIF Districts located along Boul Avenue and around the Swansea MetroLink Station. See Chapter 4 Future Land Use Plan for more information regarding the recommended opportunity clusters and development nodes.
- 8. Strengthen Swansea's Work Force.** Continue to maintain a workforce of skilled, well-trained residents that command top wages in their chosen industries. It is important that the Village's workforce is prepared for the new economy and that the Village's economic climate nurtures small business and entrepreneurs.
- a. **Promote Local Employment.** Increase local jobs for Swansea's workforce to maximize the number of Swansea residents who work in Swansea. Providing jobs within the Village helps reduce spending outside the Village, thereby increasing revenue within the Village.
  - b. **Prepare Students for the Workplace.** Work with local school districts and economic development agencies to develop programs providing school-to-career readiness to better prepare Swansea's students for future employment.
  - c. **Create a Business Incubator:** Work with East West Gateway, local school districts, SIUE and business experts to assist in creating an incubator facility to assist small business development and workforce training.
- 9. Promote the following State Department of Economic Development Programs:**
- a. **Illinois Angel Investment Credit Program-** helps launch innovative start-ups.
  - b. **Illinois Small Business Job Creation Tax Credit-** gives small business owners an extra boost to grow their business. After creating one or more new, full-time positions that meet the eligibility requirements, small businesses can register to receive a \$2,500 per job tax credit.
  - c. **LocationOne Information System (LOIS):** Village officials should encourage property owners to use The Illinois Department of Commerce LocationOne Information System



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(LOIS) for listing and promoting properties to prospective buyers and end-users. LOIS provides a database of available commercial and industrial sites and building locations throughout Illinois.

- d. **Pursue Grants:** Work with East-West Gateway and St. Clair County to keep up on the latest local, state and federal programs, low interest loans, grants, technical assistance, and cost-sharing opportunities.

**10. Promote a “Buy Swansea First” Campaign:** Seepage/Leakage is a serious problem for the local economy. Local businesses cannot survive if residents do not support them. This Plan recommends creating a “Buy Swansea First” program that offers incentives for supporting local businesses.

### IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following performance measures are recommended to help track the progress of the recommended economic development goals, objectives and implementation strategies.

1. Track private, semi-private and public investments made to local businesses, public spaces and corridors that promote economic development.
2. Track any amendments made to Swansea’s ordinances, procedures, licenses, or fees that were adopted for the purpose of promoting businesses development.
3. Track the number of meetings with prospective businesses where economic development or the promotion of Swansea was discussed.
4. Identify the square footage of vacant commercial space and track the percentage of vacant spaces occupied annually to compare pre-Plan and post-Plan occupancy rates.
5. Track the amount of money and/or service hours (volunteer, billable, or in-kind) devoted to promoting Swansea’s commercial sites or businesses.
6. Track the success (i.e. number of employees and other accessible financial indicators) of Swansea’s businesses to demonstrate the annual performance and compare to pre-Plan data, if available.

### Section 3.5 Housing & Neighborhood Stability

Residents believe Swansea has a decent housing stock and excellent public services, schools and parks. Neighborhood stability and code enforcement efforts that make Swansea’s neighborhoods safe, clean and connected are top priorities according to the community stakeholders. There is also a consensus that Swansea needs more housing for seniors, first time home buyers and estate-style homes. The following goal, objectives and implementation strategies are recommended to promote housing and neighborhood stability.

**Housing & Neighborhood Stability Goal:** *Provide safe and quality housing for all residents of Swansea by promoting reinvestment in existing neighborhoods and encouraging well-planned new residential development opportunities to accommodate future growth and create a diverse, self-renewing housing stock.*



## Housing & Neighborhood Stability Objectives & Implementation Strategies

- 1. Develop & Nurture Neighborhood Groups:** Provide meeting space, technical assistance and access to information for neighborhood groups and trustees. Promote the development of neighborhood groups where they currently do not exist and provide them with the aforementioned information and services. Empower neighborhood groups to conduct quarterly block parties, such as National Night Out, with police officers, elected officials, Swansea staff and other neighborhoods. The intent of these gatherings is to share information about community policing (such as neighborhood watch programs), property maintenance, neighborhood beautification and to get to know each other.
- 2. Promote Healthy, Active and Connected Neighborhoods:** Promote and support the installation of street lights, sidewalks, and bike paths connecting Swansea's neighborhoods, parks, schools and other destinations.
- 3. Preserve Neighborhood Character:** Prevent blight and preserve the character and stability of existing neighborhoods through appropriate zoning, code enforcement and redevelopment projects.
  - a. Continue code enforcement efforts to prevent property deterioration and to protect property values. Develop and initiate effective code enforcement procedures, as needed, to improve the safety and appearance of properties.
  - b. Create procedures, such as "Hot Docket", to expedite the prosecution of repeat offenders or any properties or structures that present a danger to any Swansea resident.
  - c. Relate the size (height and bulk) and proportions of new structures to the scale of adjacent buildings. Avoid buildings that violate the existing scale of adjacent structures with regard to height, width, or massing.
- 4. Ramp-up Housing Inspections:** There is support for enhanced code enforcement, including higher standards for maintenance, inspections and compliance for income producing rental properties. This Plan recommends implementing voluntary housing code inspections to minimize life-safety hazards and require mandatory inspections for rental homes.
- 5. Address Absentee Landlord Issues:** Address absentee landlord issues by deploying immediate and on-going code enforcement efforts and updating the Municipal Code, as needed, to regulate problem rental properties to the extent permitted by law.
- 6. Promote the Concept of Aging-in-Place:** Promote the development of a variety of housing types that serve each stage of the life-cycle and offer housing opportunities to a wide variety of socioeconomic groups. Swansea's housing stock should provide a good supply of housing types ranging from small starter homes for those just entering the workforce to large custom homes for corporate executives. This plan recommends diversifying the Village's housing stock as follows:
  - a. Promote new residential development that fulfills unmet market demands for entry-level home/first time home buyers in the \$100,000-\$200,000 range and the latest housing types including villas, senior housing, and garden apartments.
  - b. Promote the development of condos and villas which provide alternative home ownership options without burdening homeowners with maintenance and yard work.



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- c. Promote the development of market-driven estate-style homes on large lots.
  - d. Promote the development of high-end garden apartments specifically targeting renter-by-choice tenants who could afford a mortgage, but due to lifestyle and/or career/military choices choose to rent. Employees and military who report to Scott Air Force Base, Millennials and Baby Boomers should be targeted tenants. Future apartments should provide professional landscaped areas, private and public outdoor areas, quality, low maintenance exterior building materials and buffering/screening to separate from any adjacent single family uses or land zoned for single family use.
  - e. Promote the removal and redevelopment of isolated mobile home clusters in poor condition with market-rate single family homes.
- 7. Regulate Mobile Homes:** Develop procedures and standards for the removal of dilapidated mobile homes as well as procedures for bringing legally non-conforming mobile homes into compliance with Swansea's latest building codes. The recommended procedures and regulations should include incentives to replace outmoded mobile homes with new quality built homes.
- 8. Preserve Swansea's Bedroom Community Qualities:** Promote efforts to preserve the qualities that have made Swansea an attractive bedroom community and encourage future development and preservation that makes the Village more attractive to those who desire to live in a family-friendly, active bedroom community. These qualities include tree-lined streets, sidewalks, trails, quality neighborhood parks and clusters of commercial development that provide for the comfort and convenience of Swansea's residents.
- 9. Seek Out Programs and Funding for Neighborhood Beautification and Stabilization.** Pursue grants and financing assistance, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, to preserve and enhance local parks, open space and other public spaces as well as home repairs and maintenance. Target the needs of elderly and lower-income homeowners as they need assistance the most.
- 10. Identify Housing Solutions for Low Income Households:** Help connect low income households with groups and resources that provide affordable housing assistance, including but not limited to:
- a. *Rebuilding Together*- Rebuilding Together is the nation's leading nonprofit organization working to promote affordable homeownership and revitalize neighborhoods by providing home repair and renovation services free of charge to those in need. The program strives to ensure low income homeowners are safe, comfortable and dry.
  - b. *Habitat for Humanity Illinois*- Habitat for Humanity of Illinois is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing locally and worldwide through its affiliates in constructing, rehabilitating and preserving homes.
  - c. Community Action Agencies (CAA)- Through the *Community Services Block Grant Program (CSBG)* program, Community Action Agencies (CAA) offer a variety of services to assist individuals and families in moving towards self-sufficiency, including rental assistance for income eligible families seeking housing. *Contact: Office of Community Assistance Illinois Department of Commerce*
  - d. *Housing Rehabilitation Program* - Low-to-moderate income communities can apply for grants to improve housing and rehabilitate and retrofit properties. A non-entitlement unit of local government can apply for a maximum of \$450,000 in grant funds to improve the homes of its low-to-moderate income residents of owner occupied single family housing



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units. Grants provide residents with safe and sanitary living conditions and help to stabilize low to moderate income neighborhoods and affordable housing in the community. *Contact: Office of Community Assistance Illinois Department of Commerce*

## IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following performance measures are recommended to help monitor the progress of the recommended housing & neighborhood stability goals, objectives and implementation strategies.

1. Track the number of housing units constructed annually and compare with pre-plan annual new housing starts.
2. Track major private investments made to homes (remodels, room additions, etc.) completed after the adoption of this Plan and compare with pre-plan redevelopment investments.
3. Track the number of code violations corrected, estimated investment in dollars and number of dilapidated homes renovated and/or mobile homes removed.
4. Track the number of citations written and other crime statistics in Swansea's neighborhoods and compare with pre-plan citations and statistics.
5. Track the number of residents and families moving into Swansea.
6. Track the number of neighborhood events, number of participants and number of community organizations/neighborhood groups formed.

## Section 3.6 Quality of Life

There is a consensus among the participants of the public engagement process that maintaining Swansea's single-family neighborhoods, schools and the affordability of public services would have the most positive impact on the quality of life in Swansea. The following goal, objectives and implementation strategies are recommended to preserve the quality of life for Swansea residents.

**Quality of Life Goal:** *Develop programs that promote healthy, active lifestyles, neighborhood stability, community beautification and preserve Swansea's quiet, family friendly atmosphere.*

## Quality of Life Objectives & Implementation Strategies

1. *Keep the Cost of Living Affordable:* Continue to maintain the Village's low cost of living through the provision of quality, competitively priced public services and reasonable tax rates. Police, fire, water, sewer, parks and other public services are currently very good, the intent of this Plan is to maintain the current level of service and expand only as needed to accommodate growth. The cost of expanding said public services should be passed onto the newly annexed areas and developers rather than paid for by existing residents.
2. *Raise Awareness of Swansea's Affordable Tax Rates:* As discussed in Chapter 1, Swansea's tax rates are lower than other communities in the area, and offer the best public services in area according to Swansea residents. The Village should launch a public



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awareness effort to educate tax payers how their taxes are used and how Swansea's tax rates compare with other local communities.

3. *Parks:* Continue to maintain and enhance the Village's parks and recreation system to promote healthy, active lifestyles. This includes making improvements, as needed, to keep pace with the latest trends in parks and recreational services and facilitates, acquiring additional parkland, preserving open space and the establishment of trails and recreational areas as needed to serve the Village's growing resident population- with the costs passed onto the residents and/or developers of the newly developed areas.
4. *Create a Comprehensive Trail System:* This Plan recommends working with East West Gateway, Metro Parks, St Clair County, Trailnet and other local, state and federal agencies to assist with the creation of a comprehensive trail system in accordance with the Explore Swansea Plan and shown on the Future Land Use & Transportation Map. Village officials should start by meeting with local land owners to determine the best locations for future trail sections and initiate the acquisition of land, right of way, or easements needed to support the trail system. The proposed trail system should be carefully planned to generally follow the routes designated on the Future Land Use Map. All trail improvements should meet ADA guidelines, promote the objectives of Complete Streets and address other requirements necessary to make the project eligible for public funding.
5. *Branding:* Promote and restore Swansea's economic health, community pride and quality of life by "branding" the Village. This Plan recommends highlighting branding efforts on the Village's website, gateway entry signage, events and marketing campaigns. Build from the lifestyles, strengths, school spirit and heritage of the community. Revisit past branding efforts to provide ideas for future motto's or logos as well as the recommendations contained in Section 3.3 "Economic Development".
6. *Education:* Continue to partner with the school districts to improve the utilization of existing facilities, create more programs for adult learning and expand upon options available to graduates. This can be accomplished by establishing a mentoring program to encourage young professionals to return home to Swansea after they go off to college, in addition to attracting young professionals throughout the region.

### IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following performance measures are recommended to help track the implementation of the recommended quality of life goals, objectives and strategies.

1. Track the amount of money and/or service hours (volunteer, billable or in-kind) devoted to promoting the quality of life in Swansea.
2. Track major private and semi-private investments made to businesses, churches, schools and neighborhoods that promote the quality of life in Swansea.
3. Track the linear feet of sidewalks, paths, or bike lanes installed or improved and estimated dollar amount invested on said improvements.
4. Track any adjustments in the cost of utilities and document any rate increases as well as any improvements made to public services available to Swansea residents and business owners. Provide comparisons to rates of surrounding and/or comparable communities.
5. Document the results of any branding efforts and the estimated number of individuals who view the information daily, annually, etc.



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## Section 3.7 Transportation

Connecting residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, neighborhoods, MetroLink and other key destinations is important to the Swansea community and a major focus of this Plan. Village officials are urged to work closely with IDOT, East West Gateway and St. Clair County to identify deficiencies, provide solutions and obtain funding for future transportation enhancements. This Plan recommends taking a holistic approach to future transportation planning by considering land use, transportation, economic development, environmental quality and community aesthetics in all transportation decisions to ensure planned improvements meet today's needs without compromising the ability to address the needs of future generations. The following goal, objectives and implementation strategies are recommended to provide for the current and future transportation needs.

**Transportation Goal:** *Maintain a safe and efficient transportation system that provides the necessary improvements to accommodate future traffic volumes and the latest "Complete Streets" infrastructure for pedestrians, bikes and transit.*

### Transportation Objectives and Implementation Strategies

- 1. Ensure the existing transportation network is properly maintained and upgraded to functionally provide safe, fluid traffic flow, improve development potential and reduce congestion on existing crowded intersections.**
  - a. *Huntwood Road:* Extend Huntwood Road easterly from Route 159 to Smelting Works Road and then to Old Collinsville Road.
  - b. *Fullerton Road:* Extend Fullerton Road easterly from Route 159 to Smelting Works Road and then to Old Collinsville Road.
  - c. *Highway 159 & Franks Scott Parkway:* This area needs to be closely monitored to ensure it provides the necessary level of services (LOS) to carry the existing and projected traffic volume safely and efficiently. This intersection carries the highest traffic volumes in Swansea, therefore the safety and functional capacity of this intersection is critical to the future safety and economic stability of the area.
  - d. *Ongoing Maintenance:* Continue to repair potholes, curbs/gutters and provide ongoing resurfacing and road replacement at scheduled intervals.
  - e. *Complete the Installation of Sidewalks Village-wide.* Continue to seek funding, right-of-way and construction assistance to facilitate the installation of new sidewalks and the rehabilitation of old sidewalks. Make it a priority to provide sidewalks and paths to connect Swansea's schools, neighborhoods and parks in accordance with the Future Land Use & Transportation Plan.
- 2. Encourage the beautification of key nodes and entryways into Swansea**
  - a. *Gateways:* Utilize public/private partnerships to implement gateway features whereby private industries may incorporate corporate logos, etc. within the gateway improvements in exchange for sharing in the costs of the gateway features including installation and maintenance. Gateway features are recommended at key entryways leading into Swansea and at major intersections within the Village limits.



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- b. *Lighting*: The use of direct and indirect lighting and other signage/branding elements should be incorporated within the recommended gateway locations.
  - c. *Art and Aesthetics*: A prominent feature, such as swan statue or similar feature combined with fountains and professional landscaping, is recommended at key focal point(s) within Swansea, including the recommended gateway locations shown on Future Land Use & Transportation Plan and discussed in Chapter 4.
- 3. Promote and Coordinate Streetscape Improvements:** Beautify major transportation corridors through the immediate implementation of Complete Street initiatives and the application of related grants and technical assistance. The following improvements will help make Swansea's commercial areas safer and more accessible, attractive, desirable and profitable:
- a. Create walkable, outdoor shopping districts along Swansea's commercial corridors and near the MetroLink Station.
  - b. Install outdoor furniture, landscaping, planters, banners and improve lighting and sidewalks to improve the safety, comfort and aesthetics of Swansea's commercial areas.
  - c. Extend the recommended streetscape improvements into the adjacent residential neighborhoods to improve safety, access and increase pedestrian activity.
  - d. Support future investment in the safety, appearance and upgrades to the Swansea MetroLink Station, bus stops, trails and sidewalks.
- 4. Partnership.** Continue working with State, Metro and regional partners to take advantage of any funding or other programs that would make it feasible to improve public transportation services and facilities to ensure Swansea continues to have the best public transit in the region.
- 5. Power of 10.** Work with Metro to integrate a mix of residential, retail and commercial services near the MetroLink Station and improve the safety, comfort and convenience in the area. Utilize the "Power of 10". The "Power of 10" was created by the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) to transform sterile urban spaces into thriving community assets by providing at least ten (10) things to do. The frequency and duration people visit a place is based on their experiences there. Places that evoke positive experiences attract people. The best way to attract people is through the presence of other people. The Power of 10 is based on this concept. The addition of (phone) charging stations, art, media kiosks, music, swings fountains, vendors, food trucks, shaded benches and picnic tables are recommended to



**Power of 10.** A mixed use development fronting a wide pedestrian plaza with outward facing businesses, alfresco dining and continuous rows of shops provides lots to do-transforming pedestrians into consumer and consumers into residents. Freehold, NJ.



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create the Power of 10 at the Swansea MetroLink Station and other public gathering areas.

6. *Upgrade Streets:* Require new development and major redevelopment projects to install new streets and/or improve existing streets to the latest standards and in accordance with the Complete Streets principles.
7. *Sidewalks:* All new streets should have sidewalks, trees and street lights on each side or as required by the Village Trustees.
8. *Curb & Gutter:* All new streets should have curb and gutters or as required by the Village Trustees.
9. *Improve Signage / Way-finding:* Improve signage and way-finding by developing a consistent signage theme using the Village logo to help “brand” Swansea and inform people of the Village’s attractions and guide them to these places. Develop sign regulations to minimize visual clutter and require professional signage.

### IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following performance measures are recommended to help track the implementation of the recommended transportation goals, objectives and strategies.

1. Itemize all road improvements by type and track the amount spent on each road project as well as the source of money.
2. Track major private and semi-private investments made to beautify gateways into Swansea as well as any streetscape improvements that promote the quality of life in Swansea.
3. Track the linear feet of new sidewalks installed, dilapidated sidewalks replaced, street trees planted, street lights installed, bike lanes created, shoulders improved and other improvements following Complete Street standards and recommendations.
4. Track any progress made to enhancing the Swansea MetroLink Station, including any development or improvements to the area surrounding the MetroLink Station
5. Following the principles of the Power of 10, identify 10 things to do at the Swansea MetroLink Station as well as at other public spaces both before and after recommended improvements.

### Section 3.8 Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure

Public utilities and infrastructure such as roads, water, sewer, electric, code enforcement, fire protection, police, parks and other community services are provided to Swansea residents directly by the Village of Swansea, through the private sector, or through other governmental agencies. According to feedback from the public engagement process, the community is satisfied with existing utilities and public services. When survey respondents were asked if they; “were pleased with Swansea’s public services”, **88%** of respondents replied “YES”, however, most community members also stated a desire for more sidewalks and bike paths along the main roads and interconnecting Swansea’s neighborhoods, parks and schools. Additionally, Swansea’s public infrastructure is aging and will require incremental updates and ongoing maintenance to avoid costly emergency replacements and associated repairs. The following goal, objectives and implementation strategies should be considered when preparing Swansea’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and making decisions regarding future public service, utility and infrastructure improvements.



**Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure Goal:** *Preserve and improve upon the quality, affordability and capacity of the Village's public utilities, services and infrastructure to ensure current and future needs of Swansea's growing, prospering population are met.*

## **Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure Objectives and Implementation Strategies**

1. *Incremental Improvements:* This Plan recommends the Village provide continued investment in the Village's infrastructure and services (water, sewer, electric, internet, gas and telecommunications) to ensure quality, affordable utilities to serve Swansea's present and future needs. Incremental upgrades to the Village's aging infrastructure are recommended to avoid costly one-time expenditures and allow the Village to spread the costs out over several years.
  - a. Plan for and perform incremental replacement of old sanitary lines and routine maintenance to the Village's water treatment and storage facilities to meet current and future regulations.
  - b. Provide annual evaluations of the Village's park and recreation services, public safety, public transportation, code enforcement and sewer services to ensure they meet the needs of the community.
2. *Administrative Office:* Provide all departments with adequate staff and the latest computers, printers, communication devices and software needed to continue providing excellent public services.
3. *Police:* Promote incremental upgrades to the police facilities, equipment, vehicles and invest in ongoing training, the latest safety equipment and the latest communication devices.
4. *Emergency Preparedness:* Develop, adopt and annually review and update an emergency preparedness manual, co-authored by each department head including top police and fire officials.
5. *Future Capital Improvements:* Concentrate capital investments into areas that are contiguous to currently developed land and within Swansea's service delivery limits.
6. *Financing New Infrastructure:* Initiate development agreements that help pay for the direct and indirect costs of new infrastructure development and continue to plan and budget for near-term capital improvements.
7. *Code Enforcement:* Continue supporting fair, consistent and ongoing code enforcement and zoning administration duties to enforce Swansea's Ordinances and implement the goals and objectives of this Plan.
8. *Economic Development Position:* Hire or train existing staff to serve as economic development liaison to retain and recruit businesses and jobs to Swansea, strengthen the local economy and serve as Swansea's "ambassador" to local, regional, state and national markets. The individual should be responsible for seeking available resources, grant writing and take a proactive role working with county, state and federal representatives to take advantage of financing opportunities and other available resources.



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9. *Public Funding:* This plan recommends the Village pursue grants and low-interest loans to help cover the costs of future utility and infrastructure improvements. Become strategic partners with East-West Gateway, St. Clair County and other public agencies that provide programs that offer funding, technical assistance and other resources to support public infrastructure and the provision of public services and utilities

## IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following performance measures are recommended to help track the progress of the implementation of the recommended Community Services & Public Facilities Goals and Objectives.

1. Track the number of code violations prosecuted as well as corrected annually. Summarize the infractions by type and identify repeat offenders. Consider placing repeat offenders on a “hot docket” to expedite the prosecution process, to the extent permitted by law. Highlight at least one code compliance success story each year in the ‘Report’ and/or on the Village’s website.
2. Track the dollar amount spent on public roads and infrastructure and quantify the improvements (i.e. linear feet of curb, miles of road resurfaced, number of street signs replaced, etc.).
3. Track the number of grant applications submitted and the amount awarded from any successful applications.
4. Track the linear feet of utility lines replaced, repaired or retrofitted and any facilities or equipment replaced, improved, or retrofitted. Track annual improvements to the Village’s parks and recreational facilities, public safety services or equipment and administrative services or facilities.

## Section 3.9 Future Development and Annexation

In order to retain Swansea’s family-friendly, bedroom community atmosphere the Village must grow its economic base by attracting more businesses and growing its residential population. Since the community is not willing to pay more taxes, Swansea needs to focus on future development and growth that expands and diversifies the economic base and sources of revenue. This will require expanding Swansea’s housing stock (to support retail and commercial services) and annexing properties that provide new economic opportunities. Officials must carefully consider future growth. Future annexations or growth that compromises Swansea’s ability to provide quality, affordable services should be avoided. The following future land use goals and objectives are recommended to help create an environment ripe for economic growth while protecting the quality of life and family-friendly, bedroom community atmosphere Swansea residents enjoy.

**Future Development & Annexation Goal:** *Promote future growth that expands and diversifies the Village’s tax base, provides development to support a growing prospering population, increases property values and is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the goals, objectives and implementation strategies developed for this Plan.*



## Future Growth & Annexation Objective and Implementation Strategies

The following objectives and implementation strategies are designed to help guide the development/redevelopment of land uses in a market-supportive and fiscally responsible manner.

1. Promote higher density, mixed-use development in order to create vibrant live-work-play activity centers in targeted areas as depicted on the Future Land Use Plan.
2. Continue the Village's policy of controlled annexation to incorporate adjacent territories contiguous to the Village to the north, west and east as shown on the Future Land Use Map and described below:
  - a. North towards the Frank Scott Parkway and Fairview Heights City Limits.
  - b. West to Sullivan Road
  - c. East towards Old Collinsville Road to Shiloh City Limits.
3. Ensure that economic development objectives are included in the evaluation of all future development, transportation and infrastructure projects.
4. *Accommodate Smart Growth:* Promote and initiate annexation efforts that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and where the costs to provide utilities, roads and all other associated infrastructure is either already provided or paid for in whole, or at least in part, by the developer. The Village should closely review all proposed annexation plans to control the timing, type and density of future development to ensure they are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the future growth and annexation goals, objectives and implementation strategies provided in this Plan.
5. *Future Commercial & Mixed Use Development:* Encourage commercial reinvestment along Highway 159, Highway 161 and new development along Boul Avenue. Future uses should include a mix of retail, commercial services, medical, technology, hospitality and limited residential uses that enhance the appearance and convenience of the area. The architectural character and site design should functionally and aesthetically complement the built and natural environment. Annex additional commercial growth areas northeast and northwest of the current Village limits as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
6. *Future Residential Development:* Encourage the development of quality, well-built homes that are market-driven. The intent is to provide housing for all stages of the life-cycle, so that moving up in life does not require moving out of Swansea. Preserving and stabilizing the Village's existing neighborhoods should be a priority. New residential development should not compromise the safety, privacy, or enjoyment of existing residential areas. This plan also recommends the following neighborhood stabilization and future residential growth strategies.
  - a. Annex residential growth areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
  - b. Encourage the development of single family, estate-style custom homes adjacent to areas already development as such as well as within the future growth areas.
  - c. Encourage the development of condos, garden apartments and senior housing in areas identified as "Multi-Family" on the Future Land Use Map.



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- d. Modernize zoning ordinances, procedures and code enforcement policies to more effectively address absentee landlord issues.
7. **Promote the Redevelopment of Outmoded Residential Sites.** Facilitate affordable housing for first-time home-buyers on infill lots where homes, including mobile homes, no longer meet Swansea's building or zoning codes, are in disrepair, or show other signs of blight.
8. **"Downtown" (159 from Boul to Southern Limits):** Re-establish the original downtown by restoratively developing vacant buildings and encouraging the development of underutilized lots. Small-scale commercial services, retail boutiques, delicatessens, bakeries and entertainment uses are envisioned in this area fronting Route 159 and as a redevelopment option for the residential lots to the west.
9. Encourage the removal and replacement of outmoded housing units and mobile homes that have outlived their usefulness with new, quality built single family homes to help restore neighborhood vitality and create a self-renewing housing stock.
  - a. Promote reinvestment in the existing building stock that is repairable. The preservation and revitalization of existing buildings of architectural significance should be a priority.
  - b. Promote the goals, objectives and implementation strategies presented in the Economic Development Section of this Chapter and recommendations contained in the Future Land Use Chapter.
10. **Open Space Preservation:** Preserve the area's open spaces and other natural resources that promote the quality of life, create wildlife corridors and make Swansea a healthy place to live.
11. **Zoning:** Update the Village's zoning ordinances to promote well-planned growth and encourage commercial, residential and mixed-use development as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
12. **Develop & Adopt Design and Subdivision Layout Guidelines:** The development and adoption of guidelines that address residential development in the Village's "PB" Planned Business district is recommended. The recommended guidelines, contained in Chapter 4, should address density, architectural design and subdivision layout for all residential development proposed using the Village's Planned Unit Development option.
13. **Sustainability:** Promote the following green building principles:
  - a. **Low Impact Development (LID) & Best Management Practices (BMP).** Low Impact Development and Best Management Practices promote green building and site design strategies to reduce the development's footprint and its impact on the environment. Building up (vertically) instead of out (horizontally) increases the compactness of the development, thereby reducing the development footprint. Development should also be encouraged where the land is already impacted by development or adjacent to areas that are already developed. Development that is outside Swansea's service delivery limits or that skips over large tracks of undeveloped land should be discouraged. The following types of low impact development are recommended:
  - b. **Restorative development** - improving an existing home or building;
  - c. **Redevelopment** - demolishing a building or home that has outlived its usefulness and replacing it with a new building on the same lot;



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- d. *Infill development*- constructing a home or building on an empty lot along an existing developed block. This includes consolidating two or more underutilized lots or non-conforming lots (in an existing developed block) to create legal lots for future residential development that blends with the existing built and natural environment.
- e. *Stormwater Management*- Instead of conveying and managing/treating stormwater in large, costly end-of-pipe facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas, manage stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features located on site. LID and BMP stormwater management techniques are derived from nature and strive to mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate and detain runoff on-site. Rain gardens, green roofs and other micro-detention strategies that slowly release stormwater are recommended stormwater management techniques.
- f. *LEED*: The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) evaluation criteria is recommended to help create buildings and site designs that are sustainable. LEED includes several strategies relating to site design, building design, materials, HVAC, energy, air quality and waste reduction that encompass all phases of development from site selection to occupancy. The use of LEED building practices such as the use of alternative energy (i.e. solar), well insulated windows, walls and roofs, high efficiency HVAC, geothermal, green roofs, rain gardens and compact building and site designs that minimize sprawl are LEED recommended building considerations.

### Section 3.9 Summary

Expectations for the implementation of this Plan need to be placed in a realistic context. The goals and objectives will not be obtained overnight. The objectives and implementation strategies should be viewed as a plan of action that requires daily, incremental efforts executed over the next several years. Economic and financial conditions are slowly gaining momentum, but major development will take time, coordination, creative financing and unique partnerships. As the economy recovers, it will become more economically viable for development to occur. This development, in some cases, will create synergies that could create additional opportunities and challenges. The foundation of the plan rests on the belief that Swansea's elected and appointed officials will do what is necessary to understand changing market demands, accommodate new trends in land use and seize the opportunity to improve the existing commercial and residential areas, create new housing options and attract businesses that cater to the needs of Swansea residents. This Plan recognizes that if Swansea does not proactively position itself to take advantage of, or even create economic opportunities, they will occur elsewhere; leaving Swansea's financial outlook in jeopardy. The Village is already taking an active role in revitalizing the Boul Avenue corridor, investing in the Village's administrative capabilities and providing excellent public utilities. The Village must continue to be proactive in activities such as economic development, code enforcement and the delivery of public services to maintain a high quality of life and encourage the confidence to invest in Swansea.



## **CHAPTER 4: FUTURE LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION**



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## Section 4.1 Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan serves as a guide for the planned and orderly growth of Swansea and its 1.5 mile extraterritorial growth boundaries. The Plan includes the Future Land Use Map, Future Land Use Matrix and supporting text; all of which must be considered when making future land use and zoning decisions. The Plan provides recommendations for the future land use and development for the next (10) years. The future land use recommendations were developed based on the community's feedback provided during the public engagement program and careful consideration of the various physical, social, economic and political factors and influences. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to implement the goals, objectives and vision presented in Chapter 3 which is to;

***“Make Swansea a great place to live, work and play by preserving Swansea’s family-friendly atmosphere, providing efficient public services and increasing the confidence to invest in the Village’s commercial areas, neighborhoods and the qualities that make Swansea a desirable bedroom community.*”**

Factors such as compliance with the Village’s Zoning Code, impact on existing development, capacity of adjacent streets, latest development trends, the impact on the natural environment and community input should all be considered when reviewing new development or zoning changes. The intent of this Plan is to accommodate a wide range of market-driven land uses and development configurations with the understanding that land use and development is constantly evolving and changing. Therefore, the recommendations of this plan should be considered with a sense of flexibility. Development proposals that do not exactly match the Future Land Use Map and Comprehensive Plan recommendations, but reflect market place demands, should be given reasonable consideration provided they do not present significant public service burdens or negatively impact the health, safety, or welfare of the community. According to State Statutes, zoning changes, subdivisions, infill development, redevelopment and new development should be consistent with this Plan. Therefore, this Plan should be updated or “forwarded” if a future land use or development proposal is approved that is not consistent with this Plan. Development that compromises the health, safety, or welfare of the community should not be allowed.

## Section 4.2 Socio-Economic Trends

The socio-economic and development trends included in the following sections will greatly influence future development, redevelopment and lifestyle choices. The information was published in the Urban Land Institute’s 2015 and 2017 Emerging Trends Reports.

The Millennial Generation (aka “Millennials”) consist of those people generally born in the early 80s to early 2000s (age 15-35). This generation just passed the size of the Baby Boom Generation according to a June 25, 2015 US Census Report. While the Baby Boom Generation is 75.4 million and shrinking, Millennials are 83.1 million strong and growing as a result of steady immigration rates. Millennials are the most diverse of all generations with regard to religion and race and stands out as the most multi-cultural and transient generation in America. The most economically stable cities in the United States have the highest concentration of Millennials. Millennials are changing the marketplace due to their large size and will continue to influence future land use and development as they age. When asked about the importance of specific community features, Millennials ranked the following characteristics highly; ***a short distance to work and school, proximity to shopping and entertainment and walkability.***



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Millennials are setting the standard for land use development for all generations and throughout the nation. Therefore, it is important that the Village of Swansea strives to provide the housing options, walkability, access to shopping and entertainment that Millennials (and all other generations) desire.

The growth of Millennials and their impact on all sectors of real estate could be the most dominate land use trend in years. This group lives, works and plays in different ways than previous generations. Millennials will repopulate aging downtowns and urban areas as they seek convenience, walkability and connectivity. Access to arts, entertainment, recreation, culture and connections to cyber space are top priorities. “Location, location, location” will take a back seat to “broadband, broadband, broadband”. From in-town rental housing to collaborative (flex) office space to close-in warehouse (to ensure same-day delivery), Millennials will be a noticeable force in shaping the real estate market. On the other side of the demographic shift, the Baby Boomers will also drive change as they age; many will sell their oversized homes on sprawling lots and move to in-town locations with similar amenities as those desired by Millennials, but with a stronger emphasis on health care. Car ownership will decline, but the desire to be mobile will not. Millennials will demand other forms of transportation such as biking, walking and public transportation. The “sharing economy” will continue to increase as more and more users look towards Uber and Airbnb as legitimate transportation and lodging options.

### **Section 4.3 Latest Development Trends**

Despite historic high unemployment, the National Housing Crisis and declining consumer confidence resulting from the 2000-2001 and 2007-2009 United States’ Recessions, Swansea has made some major accomplishments in the area of economic development. Over the next ten (10) years reinvestment activity is anticipated to continue in Swansea as new commercial, industrial and mixed use development is constructed near the Swansea MetroLink Station and along Routes 159 and 161. Economic and social changes will drive demands for real estate. Swansea’s officials must identify, understand and adapt to these changes in demand. Swansea should follow the lessons learned in the post-recession economy which found out “it’s not the BIG that eat the SMALL...it’s the FAST that eat the SLOW. Therefore business and community leaders must anticipate and adapt to change in order to attract the best future development and economic opportunities.

All real estate sectors are making changes going forward. Office users are demanding less space per worker as they reconfigure for more flexibility (flex-space), shared-space and telecommuting. Retailers are looking at smaller brick and mortar concepts and virtual formats that serve multiple locations (in lieu of one mega-store serving entire regions) and making adjustments to accommodate the on-line shopping phenomenon. Industrial space is being designed and located where it can meet the needs of online retailers with faster delivery times. Housing is adapting to provide open concept floor plans, accommodations for home offices, guest suites, less square footage of living space and an increased emphasis on outdoor common areas. After a long, slow recovery, housing prices are on the rise, returning to “normal” levels prior to the bursting of the housing bubble. This will create more demand for new home construction as buyers demand the latest housing concepts and competitive financing options.

The top priority of US retailers and manufactures in the foreseeable future is to reduce the supply chain; also known as “shoring up the supply chain”. This means less products



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manufactured overseas, more centrally located distribution warehouses and a continued increase in on-line sales. On-line retailing is impacting the whole distribution program. Distribution centers must be built near major metropolitan areas to enable same-day delivery in areas that have never been contemplated for such uses. In response to the increase of on-line shoppers, retailers are transitioning from using brick and mortar stores as showrooms to using them as quasi-distribution centers. Brick and mortar retail will continue to converge with on-line shopping as retailers become progressively drawn into competition with Amazon to deliver goods to customers on the same day they are ordered. Stores will increasingly fill online orders from their own shelves, effectively blurring the line between retail and warehouse space. Swansea officials should be prepared to respond to the demands for this new retail/warehouse/distribution format as well as the latest housing trends.

### **Section 4.4 Profile of the Trade Area:**

Historically, Swansea has not been a major retail hub. Only 26% of the over 400 registered Swansea businesses are retail; the remaining 74% are service related. However, there is potential for retail and mixed use development in Swansea due to the presence of prime underutilized land near key transportation routes, two (2) active TIF districts (which are not presently available in Fairview Heights and Belleville) and a Business Improvement District. A key locational strength for Swansea is the MetroLink Station and the availability of commercially zoned developable land. Additional opportunities that support future retail and mixed-use development include:

- ✓ Continued population growth, including the construction of more homes.
- ✓ Available vacant commercially zoned land along 159.
- ✓ High average family income approaching \$100K (\$97,157).
- ✓ Positive government and community support for future development.

While Swansea is not a traditional retail hub, it provides the locational strengths and demographics that are attractive to prospective developers. This includes opportunity areas located near major highways, near transit, near moderately dense neighborhoods, near a major military base and well positioned to reach larger National Markets. In addition to the Trade Area statistics provided in Chapter 1, the following market data provides an overview of the customer base that make-ups the Village of Swansea's primary trade area.

- ✓ Approximately 1,000 MetroLink riders who pass through the Swansea Station daily.
- ✓ Over 44,000 households with 5 miles
- ✓ A population of almost 110,000 within 5 miles with an average family income of \$85K and average home value of \$104,500.
- ✓ Almost 93% of residents over the age of 18 have high school diploma or higher education.
- ✓ Over 30,000 potential customers per day travel along Routes 159 and 161

According to Bob Gibbs, a retail development expert, "suburbs that have done well are those that emulate cities and create mixed-use, walkable places". The demise of the shopping mall and many big box formats are teaching us that retail cannot survive on its own. Retail can no



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longer subsidize the infrastructure, roads and public amenities it once supported; nor can residential development be expected to subsidize retail. Land uses must create synergies where each land use derives some benefit from the other. The vertical and horizontal mix of land uses that share parking and cross-sell to the same consumer (who may also desire to live nearby and use personal services and medical care nearby) create land use synergies where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. According to Gibbs; “moving forward, the new trend is to build multiple uses, not just one”. This supports the findings of the Design Charrette conducted by Douglas Farr for the Village of Swansea and one of the key foundations of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) – which is the development of compact, mixed use development.

### **Section 4.5 Future Land Use Map**

The Future Land Use & Transportation Map shows the recommended distribution of future land uses and how land should be generally occupied or preserved to best meet the vision, goals adopted as part of this Plan. The future land uses designated on the Future Land Use Map are defined in the Future Land Use Matrix located on the following pages. The future land use categories include.

- Non-Urban Residential
- Single-Family
- Multi-Family
- Commercial/Mixed Use
- Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public

The *Future Land Use & Transportation Map* is meant to portray a conceptual plan, with the understanding that the boundaries of the Future Land Use categories identified on the Future Land Use Map are general recommendations and slight modifications to their precise boundaries are anticipated during Plan implementation. The use of transitions such as roads, stream buffers and woodlands between dissimilar land uses is recommended. The intent of the Future Land Use & Transportation Map, Land Use Matrix and the following recommendations is to implement the vision and goals of this Plan while providing for the planned, orderly development of the Village of Swansea and the recommended growth areas.



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FUTURE LAND USE MATRIX		
<b>Description (Corresponding Zoning)</b>	<b>Density</b>	<b>Recommended Uses</b>
<b>Non-Urban (“C”)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> No less than 2 acres or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Farms &amp; Agriculture Uses</li> <li>- Single Family</li> <li>- Nurseries, greenhouses</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated as “Non-Urban” are primarily undeveloped areas and include farmland, lakes, woodlands and creeks. These areas are generally not connected to public infrastructure or utilities and not recommended for urban development. Uses should be limited to future parks and recreational uses, existing agricultural and low density residential uses. New single-family homes should be located on at least 2 acre lots or as approved by the Board. Any utility, infrastructure, or road improvements should be the responsibility of the owner or developer(s). The preservation of natural areas and open spaces is recommended.</p>		
<b>Residential (“SR1 - SR4” &amp; “PB”-PUD)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 6,000 SF to 12,000 SF or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single Family</li> <li>- Modular Homes</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated “Residential” are intended for single-family homes in well-planned subdivisions ranging in lot sizes from 6,000 square feet in areas zoned “SR-4” to 12,000 square feet or larger in areas zoned “SR-1”. Planned Unit Developments (PUD) located within an existing “PB” Planned Business District may contain smaller lots, but should generally maintain the same density as the surrounding subdivisions, or in the absence of existing development, the zoning district most compatible with the proposed development. A special use permit is recommended for proposed subdivisions that cannot meet the minimum density or lot size requirements in the Village’s Single Family (“SR”) Districts. The special use permit criteria should discourage densities that exceed the maximum density permitted in the designated “SR” zoning district. All development should be served by public sewer, water and streets that meet Swansea’s latest subdivision standards. All subdivisions should include street trees and street lights, new or improved roads, sidewalks, utilities and storm water facilities- the cost of which should be paid for and installed by the developer prior to the occupancy of any dwellings.</p>		
<b>Multifamily (“MR1-2” &amp; “MH1-2”)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 2,000 SF per unit or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multifamily</li> <li>- Single Family</li> <li>- Single Family Attached, Villas.</li> <li>- Duplexes, Triplexes, &amp; Condos</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated as “Multifamily” are intended for a mix of residential uses and densities including senior housing, assisted living facilities, apartments, condos, villas, duplexes and single family dwellings. All multifamily development should contain at least 2,000 square feet of land per dwelling unit, unless developed as part of a TOD (transit oriented development). All multifamily development should provide buffers between less intense residential developments. Any infrastructure improvements should be paid for and installed by the developer. Single or unified ownership of all multi-family structures and common use areas is encouraged. Multifamily development should be permitted as a special use, require a public hearing and review/approval by the Planning Commission &amp; Board, including multifamily development located in an area zoned Planned Business “PB”. All multi-family development should be in accordance with the architectural design guidelines provided in Section 4.10.</p>		



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Future Land Use Matrix (continued)		
Description	Density	Recommended Uses
<b>Commercial-Mixed Use (“HB” &amp; “PB”)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 18,000 SF or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commercial Service &amp; Retail</li> <li>- Office, Medical, Financial</li> <li>- Planned Residential &amp; Mixed use</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated “Commercial-Mixed Use” includes Swansea’s existing business districts and prime opportunity areas that provide excellent visibility and highway access. A wide range of commercial uses such as restaurants, retail sales, medical, commercial services and planned mixed use development are envisioned. Areas located at the intersection of two (2) major roads (nodes), adjacent to the MetroLink Station, along Boul Avenue and commercially zoned property within a TIF or Business District should be targeted for future Commercial-Mixed Use development. The use of shared access, shared parking and monument signage (in lieu of pole signage) should be encouraged. Buildings should be designed to the human scale, with visible street oriented entrances, and unifying architectural and landscape designs. The use of landscape buffering and screening is recommended to buffer commercial uses from other less intense uses. Multifamily development, condos and villas are recommended when they are part of a planned mixed-use development. Stand-alone residential development should require a special use permit in areas designed “Commercial-Mixed Use”. Transit oriented development (TOD) should be offered waivers from zoning district requirements, as determined by the Board, to encourage compact development that is contiguous to the MetroLink Station, walkable, safe and attractive.</p>		
<b>Industrial (“LI” and “HI”)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 18,000 sf in the “LI” and 62,500 sf in the “HI” zoned district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manufacturing / Assembly</li> <li>- Warehouse, Distribution</li> <li>- Vehicle &amp; Equipment Sales</li> <li>- Parks &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated “Industrial” are intended for environmentally “clean” manufacturing and industrial operations, including warehousing, transportation and distribution related uses. All industrial uses should provide on-site buffering when abutting less intense uses. Pole buildings should be prohibited. All uses that include the storage of inoperable automobiles, boats, RVs or other such inoperable equipment should contain sight proof screening, approved by the Village. The maximum lot coverage should not exceed 80% of the total area of the lot.</p>		
<b>Public &amp; Semi-Public Uses (All Districts)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> No less than 2 acres or as approved by the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agriculture Uses</li> <li>- Golf Courses</li> <li>- Public &amp; Semi-Public Rec.</li> <li>- Nurseries, greenhouses</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Public/Semi-Public uses are allowed in all of the designated future land use categories subject to Village approval. Areas currently being used for public or semi-public uses are shaded blue on the Future Land Use Map. Uses include, but are not limited to, active and passive public parks, open space and recreational areas, sports fields, schools, community facilities, churches and other institutional/governmental uses. All public and quasi-public uses and facilities should provide access to public roadways and public utilities and comply with the applicable zoning and design criteria. Should a public or semi-public parcel stop being used as public or semi-public, it should be rezoned to the zoning district most representative of the adjacent zoning or use and developed accordingly.</p>		



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## **Section 4.6 Future Land Use Recommendations**

The vision and goals of this Plan will not become reality unless the daily decisions and implementation activities follow the future land use & transportation recommendations provided herein. The decision to locate new uses and activities in the Village should be based upon factors such as compliance with the Village's Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Ordinance, the impact on existing development, capacity of adjacent streets, and the compatibility between the built and natural environment. The Village should consider annexing areas, on a case by case basis, that might be developed in the near future to ensure greater control over the timing, density, use and type of development. The Growth Management Section provides specific growth recommendations at the end of this Chapter. When an area is annexed into Swansea, the official zoning district should be that which corresponds to the Future Land Use designation as shown on the Future Land Use Matrix. For example, areas designated "Non-Urban" should be zoned "C" Conservation, unless the petitioner specifically requests and obtains approval of a different zoning request pursuant to the applicable rezoning rules and regulations. All future development & zoning changes should be reviewed for consistency with this Plan and compliance with Swansea's Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Code. If a property is rezoned to a zoning district that is different than the corresponding zoning district as shown on the Future Land Use Table, the Comprehensive Plan should be updated accordingly.

The future land use strategies and recommendations included in the following sections are intended to create opportunities for a wide range of land use and development scenarios while ensuring continuity through form-based, contextual design controls. The future land use recommendations are based on past patterns of growth, the analysis of existing conditions, anticipated growth projections and the need to create harmony between the built and natural environment. The intent of the future land use recommendations is to provide the focus and direction necessary to turn community goals into productive community action and replace or significantly revitalize existing deteriorating buildings, homes and underutilized sites with market-driven uses and sustainable site designs.

## **Section 4.7 Non-Urban**

The Non-Urban future land use designation includes agricultural land, open space and undeveloped areas shaded green on the Future Land Use & Transportation Map. Future development should be limited to agriculture uses or agriculturally related uses, single-family detached residential dwellings, recreational uses, parks and open space. Residential homes should be located on lots two (2) acres or larger. The intent of the Non-Urban land use designation is to serve as a tool to minimize the impact of urban development on the natural environment, agricultural areas and open space by restricting more intense development and uses. Future commercial and residential development should be directed to areas that are adjacent to existing development and already served by publicly provided roads and infrastructure. Generally, urban development is recommended in areas designated "Residential", "Commercial-Mixed Use", or "Industrial" on the Future Land Use Map.

## **Section 4.8 Residential**

Swansea's central location, high quality of life and history of successful annexations have resulted in steady residential growth. However, over half of the homes in Swansea were built prior to 1959 and 25% were built before 1939. As a result, the majority of Swansea's housing stock is almost 60 years old or older. The availability of newly constructed homes is limited,



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meanwhile the demand for new quality-built homes is driving the cost of homes up and selling homes faster. As a result, the market for high-end single family homes is very strong in the Swansea area. Single-family homes on large lots characterize the majority of new homes constructed in or near Swansea in the last 15-20 years. Wolf Creek Estates, just north of Swansea, offers “upscale executive homes” in the \$350-500,000 range. Lake Lorraine Subdivision also offers upscale executive homes on large lots in with comparable home values. This same pattern of low-density, single family residential development is anticipated to continue along Smelting Works Road, Sullivan Road, Old Collinsville Road and in undeveloped pockets located in the northern portions of Swansea and the adjacent unincorporated areas. In-fill development and the reinvestment in Swansea’s existing neighborhoods is also recommended to help modernize and revitalize Swansea’s aging housing stock. The future annexation of residential areas is also recommended to help support Swansea’s growing, prospering population. Areas recommended for future single-family development are shaded yellow on the Future Land Use & Transportation Map.

New medium density single family subdivisions (6,000 square feet lots or larger) are recommended adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods of similar densities where public utilities, roads and infrastructure is already provided. All new development should provide sidewalks and linkages to any existing or planned bike/pedestrian-ways. This pattern of development will minimize the costs associated with providing services to new residential areas and minimize incompatible mixes of land use. Future single family development is also recommended in the form of infill development of empty lots in existing subdivisions or as replacement of a substandard or outmoded home. The minimum lot sizes and setbacks of infill should be compatible with the adjacent land uses. Infill development will help renew the Village’s housing stock by adding vitality and value to the Village’s existing neighborhoods. Infill development should take advantage of locations that provide connections to public utilities and excellent access to the Village’s roadways, schools and parks. The following restorative development options are recommended to help stabilize, diversify and expand the Village’s housing stock.

1. *Restorative Development:* The restoration of older homes to include the latest architectural designs, floor plans, building materials, finishes and the use of sustainable building practices are recommended. This may include open concept floor plans, modern kitchens, first floor master bedrooms, energy efficient HVAC systems, ENERGY STAR compliant windows and doors and the latest roofing, siding and building materials and technologies.
2. *Redevelopment:* The replacement of substandard homes or outdated homes with new housing to help create self-renewing neighborhoods of lasting beauty and value.
3. *Infill Development:* The development of vacant parcels within existing neighborhoods with new residential homes that blend with the existing built and natural surroundings.

Encouraging homeowners and developers to renovate existing homes, replace existing homes when they have outlived their usefulness and construct new homes on infill lots are community reinvestment strategies necessary to diversify the Village’s housing stock and accommodate the latest residential housing trends. These alternative development options keep existing neighborhoods intact and reduce the demand for new residential development, which is more expensive to develop and reduces precious green space. However, infill and restorative residential development will not meet the needs of all future homebuyers nor provide the expansion needed to accommodate future growth. Therefore, several areas are



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designated for future residential growth on the Future Land Use Map. Generally, these areas are located in the northern fringes of Swansea and offer the topographic advantage of flat, well-drained soils and connections to public utilities and roads. Unincorporated areas that are adjacent to Swansea's existing limits should be considered for immediate annexation. This Plan recommends the following future residential land use strategies:

1. Encourage a variety of residential densities, types and price ranges to serve Swansea's diverse housing needs.
2. All new residential development should be in harmony with the existing built and natural environment and preserve, to the extent possible, the physical attributes and natural features of the site.
3. Encourage the development of quality neighborhoods that offer choice, connectivity, outdoor gathering areas and provide residents with a sense of identity.
4. The Planned Business "PB" District should be updated to restrict residential uses not part of a mixed use development via a separate Panned Unit Development (PUD) procedure (similar to a Special Use Permit). All planned residential subdivisions should be allowed waivers from the Villages' "SR" District regulations, excluding density and use regulations, and comply with the design guidelines recommended in the next Section.
5. Infill development should maintain lots sizes that are consistent with the adjacent lots. Generally, new development should not exceed the average surrounding residential density by more than 25%. The size, height and design of new homes should relate to the scale, size and character of the adjacent homes.
6. Encourage the development of "cottage homes" (small single-family homes between 1,000 and 2,000 square feet built in clusters), townhouses and mid-rise apartments and lofts (dwelling units built over the retail space) as redevelopment options to replace aging, outmoded homes, mobile homes, or manufactured homes and development options near the Metrolink Station when part of a mixed use development.
7. All subdivisions should have a SSA (Special Service Area), pursuant to the Village's Subdivision Code, prior to the sale or occupancy of any lot. The SSA should address the cost, installation, ownership and maintenance of any improvements, landscaping and use of any common ground, utilities, or stormwater facilities that benefit the residents of the subdivision.

## **Section 4.9 Residential Design Guidelines**

All future single family housing should comply with the following guidelines:

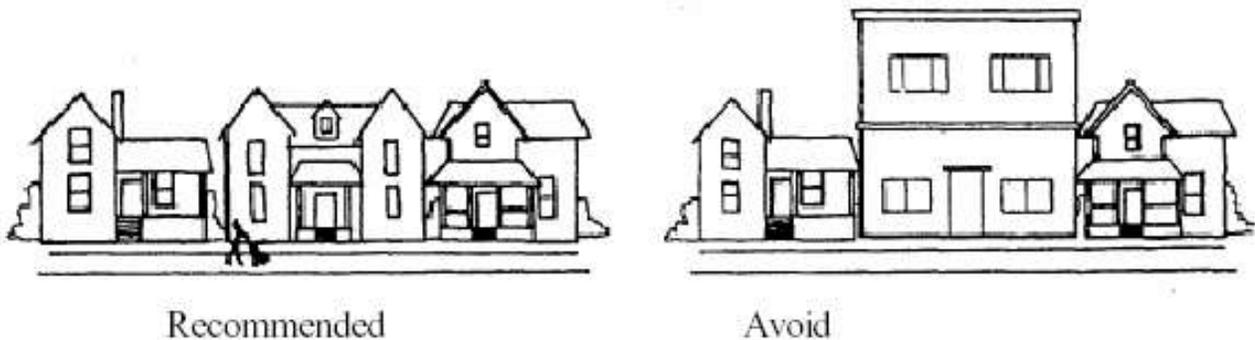
- a) Each single family home should contain street-facing architectural features which provide human scale to the facade, enhance the "curb appeal" and reinforce local building traditions. Generally, the primary façade should be parallel to the street and contain a street-oriented entrance and street facing architectural features. Architectural features may include, but are not limited to, doors, bay windows, covered porches, balconies, dormers and cupolas. The use of front porches and architectural treatments and landscaping that help define the primary (front) entrance are recommended.



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- b) Garages should not dominate the design of the primary façade of any residential structure. Rear and side entry garages are encouraged. No garage wall should be closer to the street than any other house wall. Garage or door openings facing a street should not exceed 50% of the width of the house facade.
- c) All new construction should include durable, high quality exterior building materials. The use of bright colors and highly reflective surfaces should be limited to accent features only.
- d) The quality of the exterior materials, architectural details and their application should be consistent on all sides of the building.
- e) The development footprint and/or area impacted during construction should be reduced to the extent possible to avoid disturbing natural water courses, steep slopes, wooded areas and other natural features. The developer should utilize development approaches such as the principles of low impact development (LID), See Section 3.9. The recommended approaches include, but are not limited to, clustering lots and dwellings on a site to preserve natural areas, innovative use of stormwater management techniques and the permanent preservation of green space via conservation easement or other means.
- f) *Development should blend well with the existing built and natural environment.* When developing in or adjacent to established neighborhoods containing larger lots than those proposed, the proposed lot sizes should best represent the existing neighborhood lot sizes and densities adjacent to the development and transition to smaller lot sizes and/or densities within the interior of the proposed subdivision.
- g) *Maintain consistent front setbacks.* Residential development located within 50 feet of a site with an existing single family home fronting the same street should have a front yard setback that is within 5 feet of the setback of the established dwelling structure.
- h) *Taller buildings should step-down to provide a height transition to existing nearby buildings.* This standard applies to new and vertically expanded buildings. Structure height for new and expanded structures should not exceed that of the adjacent structure by more than one story at the setback line. See example below:



- i) *Relate the size (bulk) and proportions of new structures to the scale of adjacent buildings.* Avoid single monolithic forms with no articulation. Break up uninteresting boxlike forms into

smaller, varied masses by using dormers, foundation off-sets and porches. Create design symmetry by adding fenestrations such as windows, doors, dormers and porches that are in harmony with the techniques utilized with adjoining structures. Refer to the following illustrations:



Source: City of Ashland, OR Site, Design and use Standards

## Section 4.10 Multi-Family

The demand for quality, well-appointed multi-family housing and senior housing is increasing across the nation. The demand for senior housing is anticipated to double over the next ten (10) years due to the aging of the Baby Boom Generation and functional obsolescence of older independent living facilities. The most recently developed affordable senior housing in the area are the Cottages at Cathedral Square. It was developed in 2015 in downtown Belleville and at the time of this writing all 32 units were occupied and there was a waiting list of over 50 applicants. Wingate Manor, another senior living development in Belleville, was constructed in 2010 and all 48 units are occupied with a waiting list of 60 applicants. These are just two (2) examples of recently constructed senior living developments in the immediate region that are successful and fully occupied. New senior housing, be it apartments, villas/duplexes, townhomes, or active living communities, are recommended in the areas designated as Multifamily on the Future Land Use Map and as redevelopment options for the outmoded/aging housing units and manufactured homes.

In addition to a steady flow of Baby Boomers looking to downsize, the Census Bureau is projecting a boom in the population of young adults (Millennials), one-person households and married couples with no children. Alternative housing options to single family homes are attractive to Millennials and Baby Boomers as they seek flexibility, mobility and walkability in their living environments. Today's multifamily developments, condos and villas are better suited to the needs of these groups by combining convenience and amenities. These new luxury developments are equipped with outdoor pools, exercise rooms, dog parks, guest suites and other amenities commonly associated with condominium developments and resorts.

Most new multi-family construction in the region is in the form of high-end apartment communities located near I-64. Fairview Heights and Belleville has dominated the apartment market. However, with the exception of Winchester Place Apartments and the Villa's at Crystal Lake, the multi-family units available for rent in the immediate study area are aging and do not provide the aforementioned amenities demanded of Millennials and Baby Boomers, who make up the majority of apartment seekers. Therefore, although senior housing is the preferred type



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of multifamily housing desired by the community, market-rate multifamily development, condominiums and villas should also be considered in areas designated as “Multifamily” on the Future Land Use Map.

Swansea should be prepared to accommodate the latest trends in multi-family development. Newer senior facilities are resort-like and provide a wide range of amenities, health care and medical services required of an aging population. This plan envisions new market-rate multifamily development, or the redevelopment of existing housing, that compliments Swansea’s existing housing stock and provides opportunities for new housing configurations for Baby Boomers. The recommended multifamily development should include the latest indoor and outdoor amenities demanded in a market primarily made up of “singles” (young adults), “mingles” (newlyweds) and “jingles” (empty nesters).

Demand for attached single-family villas is also strong and growing, especially among Baby Boomers. Villas are attached single-family structures separated into two (2) owner-occupied living units. They include common-wall construction (zero setback), individual garages, private yards, landscaped common areas and homeownership is generally required. Maintenance of the public and private outdoor areas is typically provided by professional property management organizations. Providing housing options that meet all phases of the life-cycle for Swansea’s residents is recommended. Therefore, future medium density residential infill or redevelopment of individual lots is recommended as a Special Use in areas designated “Residential” on the Future Land Use Map when such development contributes to, rather than detracts from, existing neighborhoods. All infill and redevelopment proposals should be consistent with the surrounding residential neighborhood and blend with the surrounding land uses with regard to character, density, height and massing. Duplexes or any building containing more than two (2) dwelling units should not be permitted in the areas designated “Single Family” or “Attached Single Family” on the Future Land Use Map; these areas are intended for owner-occupied Villas and single family homes.

Any development that creates traffic congestion, noise or other conditions that would interfere with the enjoyment of adjacent properties should be prohibited or regulated to the extent permitted by law. All future multifamily development located adjacent to single family should provide on-site buffering or screening. Based on the market demand for senior housing and luxury apartments and the community’s general acceptance of such housing, this Plan supports the development of senior housing and higher-end apartments in areas adjacent to public transit and existing multi-family development or land zoned for multi-family purposes. The following additional recommendations are provided for future Single-Family Attached and Multifamily development:

1. Attached single family dwellings over 2 units, apartments and nursing or convalescent homes are recommended as planned uses in the “MR1-2”, “MH1-2” and “PB” Zoning District or areas designed “Multi-Family” on the Future Land Use Map in accordance with the following objectives:
  - a) Creation of a more desirable environment than may be possible through the strict application of conventional land use regulations.
  - b) Promotion of a creative approach to land use development resulting in more functional designs, improved aesthetic amenities and more cost-effective development implementation.



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- c) Heightened level of continuity with regard to the character, form and the relationship of structures to one another, both existing and proposed, to maximize property values and promote the public health, safety, comfort and general welfare of Swansea's residents.
  - d) Preservation and enhancement of desirable site characteristics such as natural topography, vegetation and open space.
2. Update the Zoning Code to include a "Planned Use District" or "Planned Unit Development" (PUD) option that offers flexibility and predictability in the review process for the recommended residential, commercial and mixed use development. Consider the following objectives and procedural recommendations:
  - a) The planned use option should offer relief from certain district regulations in exchange for on-site amenities or superior site designs or combinations of uses.
  - b) The planned use option should provide clear, concise design guidelines to aid in the petitioner/developer's understanding of Swansea's expectations for future development.
  - c) The planned use option should constitute a legislative act of "rezoning" and adhere to the requirements related to public hearings and public notices as required by law.
  - d) The planned use option should require site plan review by the Planning Commission and approval by the Board. If the Planning Commissions denies a site plan, a super majority vote by the Board should be required to over-rule the Planning Commission's decision.
3. Encourage the removal of dilapidated homes or entire outmoded manufactured home parks or residential blocks that show signs of blight with moderate density single-family or attached single family villas for seniors and existing residents. The intent is not to break up neighborhoods, but rather to renew an area that has aging, outmoded housing with the latest housing types.
4. Encourage the development of well-constructed "active living communities" consisting of a mix of condos, villas and small single family homes consisting of a variety of site amenities for folks age 55 and over to provide housing for all stages of the life-cycle, so that moving up in life does not require moving out of Swansea.
5. Mixed-use development that includes various types and densities of residential dwellings is recommended near the Swansea MetroLink station. Common transit-oriented development (TOD) projects that are successful include condominiums and apartments in wrap projects (with internal parking structures) and single- or mixed-use podium projects (with residential on a podium deck above parking and ground floor uses), with wrap or podium projects built to multiple stories. These types of projects are recommended near the Swansea MetroLink Station.
6. The combination of all structures and paved areas in multi-family developments containing structures with over three (3) dwelling units should not cover over sixty-five (65) percent of the total area of the lot, except for transit oriented (TOD) development located near the Swansea MetroLink.
7. No building should exceed 35' in height, unless as approved by the Board when located near the MetroLink Station or enclosed, underground, or garage parking is provided.



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8. Two parking stalls should generally be provided per dwelling unit. With the exception of multifamily development near the MetroLink Station or when part of a TOD and/or if an alternative parking plan is provided a parking reduction is recommended.
9. Any development with a density equal to or greater than 14 units per acre should include public and private outdoor areas the combination of which should include at least 20% of the site area. Private outdoor space may include decks, patios and roof-top areas when lawfully permitted. Public outdoor areas may include, but are not limited to, preserved natural areas, trails, pools, dog parks, playgrounds, tennis/basketball courts, sports fields, etc.
10. Consider the following “density by design” guidelines to avoid monotony in higher density residential development.
  - a) Stagger or zigzag zero lot line homes, setbacks and garage locations to create variety, break up the massing of the block and create private outdoor spaces.
  - b) Alternate and separate the entrances of duplexes and triplexes from one another to break-up building masses, create articulation and provide privacy.
  - c) The use of professionally landscaped areas are recommended to soften higher density development, provide shade, animal habitat and incorporate an ever-changing natural feel to the urban fabric.
  - d) Create variety in the roof lines, setbacks and colors in large multifamily development projects to break up the massing and create interest.
  - e) HVAC equipment should be located at the rear of buildings and screened from adjacent properties.

### Section 4.11 Commercial-Mixed Use

The areas designated as Commercial-Mixed Use on the Future Land Use and Transportation Map are located in areas that already contain commercial or multi-family development. These areas are generally along Route 159 and 161 and at strategic nodes or opportunity area along Frank Scott Parkway, Boul Avenue and Collinsville Road. The future economic stability of Swansea relies on the success of its retailers and future growth and development of the existing commercially zoned areas. Route 159 and areas near the Swansea MetroLink Station are the best places to encourage the latest development trends in retail, commercial and multi-family residential construction. The purposeful revitalization of Swansea’s existing commercial areas could address many of the future land use and economic development issues raised during the comprehensive planning process.

Overall, vacancy rates in Swansea’s commercial office sector are low. This is an indicator that demand is high for office space. “Back office” space that supports and supplements larger offices in Clayton, St. Louis, Belleville and Edwardsville is fueling this demand for additional office space in the Swansea area. “Flex-space” which provides shared office space for telecommuters, small businesses, or entrepreneurs with temporary, shared, or on-demand office space, amenities, and services has also remained strong within the commercial real estate market as businesses continually try to provide the amenities and work environments that best fit the culture of its employees and improve productivity. Swansea should continue supporting the recruitment and expansion for “Back-Office” and “Flex-Space” users in accordance with the demand for such uses.



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Mixed use developments have also become very successful and are gaining considerable popularity as discussed in Section 4.3. Mixed use developments are places where people can live, work and shop all within walking distance. The key to successful mixed land use development is compatible design and the creation of positive, synergistic land uses. Through good design and thoughtful tenant selection, mixed use developments can successfully integrate seemingly incompatible land uses. The synergies created between complimentary tenants, well-planned site amenities and pedestrian activity can create a sense of place that visitors want to experience again and again- similar to a traditional downtown.

Future commercial and mixed use development are recommended at existing and planned transportation nodes. These locations provide excellent access and visibility to both regional travelers passing through Swansea and local residential traffic and daily commuters. Nodes are intersections of two key roadways where vehicular activity is concentrated. Businesses prefer to locate at intersections due to their ease of access and high visibility. Commercial uses clustered together at key intersections or **nodes** often do better than scattered commercial uses because each store benefits from the customers drawn by other stores. Additionally, concentrated shopping districts typically attract customers from a wider market area than a single store. Residential land uses, offices and certain public buildings and facilities often reinforce shopping districts even further and benefit themselves from increased public accessibility. Swansea should encourage compact commercial and mixed use development or redevelopment at key nodes. All future development should provide improvements to ensure safe, convenient vehicular and pedestrian accessibility. This Plan recommends the Village concentrate efforts and resources into existing businesses, assisting local entrepreneurs and minimizing retail leakage by implementing the following land use and economic development objectives and implementation strategies:

1. *Model Project:* Work with the property owners, real estate experts and the County to facilitate the development of a “model” project within one of Swansea’s two (2) TIF and/or Businesses Districts in order to generate TIF proceeds and serve as catalysts for additional projects.
2. *Prospective Businesses:* The Village of Swansea should consider recruiting the following retail and commercial services that provide comfort and convenience to Swansea’s residents and locate them along the Village’s major corridors so Swansea’s workforce can conveniently access them to and from work. Recommended uses include:
  - a) Personal Services such as; Shoe repair, dry cleaning/alterations, mail services, office supply/copy services,
  - b) Food & beverage providers such as; food services, family restaurants, coffee shop, bagel shop, craft food and beverage purveyors, deli, bakery, health food stores, etc.
  - c) Special interest vendors such as; music instrument stores, sewing supplies, outdoor outfitters, card/gift shop, furniture and unique boutiques reflecting the lifestyles and creativity of Swansea’s residents.
  - d) Include supplemental office (i.e. “back office” and “flex-office space) in future commercial projects as demand is currently strong and anticipate to grown.



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3. *Transit Oriented Development (TOD) near MetroLink Station:* Due to its central location, excellent highway access and proximity to concentrated populations, the area near the MetroLink Station provides a unique and competitive location for niche boutique retail shops and services that offer convenience and comfort to MetroLink riders. Office and a wide range of market-driven commercial space and housing is recommended as part of an overall mixed use Town Center development north of the intersection of IL 161 and IL 159 (Swansea's busiest intersection). This area falls within Swansea's 300 acre tax increment financing district (TIF) which includes 50 acres immediately adjacent to the MetroLink Station, with the remaining acreage being within ½ mile radius (less than 10 minute walk) of the new station.
4. *Town Center:* A destination **mixed use development** such as the TOD recommendation above and/or a "Town Center" complete with outdoor gathering areas, is recommended to serve Swansea's residents. The development should include a synergistic tenant mix. The following uses should be considered: boutique retail sales and services, cafes, bakery, coffee shop, fitness and a casual restaurant with al fresco dining, possibly near a lake or water feature with a swan sculpture. The development is recommended in nodal locations along Routes 159 and 161, off Boul Avenue, adjacent to the Metro-Link Station, or as a restorative development option for the Knights of Columbus Property, Moose Lodge, Clinton Hill Country Club or other similar area.
5. *Create Areas Poised & Ready for Development:* Identify the owners of undeveloped properties located in the Village's prime commercial districts, properties located within a TIF or Businesses District and properties adjacent to the MetroLink Station and work towards consolidating the properties and assembling them into single-ownership. The intent of this recommendation is to get the properties "poised and ready" for the immediate installation of the necessary infrastructure to support future development. The objective is to establish control or influence over these opportunity areas to better leverage funding for infrastructure, construction and the installation of public improvements. The following opportunity areas are recommended for commercial and mixed use development:
  - a) The redevelopment of the Vandalia Bus Lines property is recommended for future commercial, office/warehouse, or mixed use development.
  - b) The redevelopment of the intersection of Garden and 161, just south of the Metro-Link, is recommended for immediate commercial development. This area has room and demand for a casual restaurant and space for a variety of retail offerings including a home improvement store or mixed-use office building. The Village has already purchased and assembled 11 properties and demolished and removed all structures. Swansea released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of this area in the spring of 2017.
  - c) The redevelopment of the manufactured home park on 159 with moderated density single-family or attached single family villas for seniors and existing residents of the development area is recommended. The intent is not to break up the neighborhood, but rather to renew an area that contains aging, outmoded housing.
6. *Commercial & Mixed-Use Development Guidelines:* Development guidelines should be adopted as a supplement to Swansea's "PB" Planned Business District Regulations to aid in the review of Transit Oriented Development and Town Center type development.



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The intent of the guidelines are to help increase the confidence to invest in Swansea by encouraging preferred development and prohibiting undesirable development. The guidelines should function as a revitalization tool that encourages the latest trends in retail and mixed use development. The following guidelines are recommended:

- a) New development and major renovations must follow the Architectural Design Guidelines provided in Section 4.12.
- b) Minimize traffic conflicts by limiting curb-cuts through the use of shared or consolidated drive entrances and spacing point of ingress and egress according to IDOT access management guidelines. Mixed-use developments such as Town Centers and TOD that are compact, connected and walkable are recommended as they minimize traffic conflicts and require minimal curb-cuts.
- c) Multi-tenant developments should line the primary façades of anchor tenants with smaller tenants in an effort to improve the retail performance of the development and break the architectural massing of the long, tall and blank walls that are common of larger tenants.
- d) Encourage clustering and stacking of residential, commercial and retail uses as an alternative to conventional, land consumptive strip-type development. The clustering and stacking of mixed-uses creates built-in markets/customer-base, maximizes pedestrian access and improves traffic circulation.
- e) A minimum of two (2) stories is encouraged for all buildings located near the MetroLink Station or at the intersection of two (2) main roads (nodal development). Multiple story buildings consume less land and result in a more compact, pedestrian friendly business district.
- f) Uses that rely on the outdoor storage, display and sale of merchandise for a majority of their sales should include screening and buffering from any public right-of-way or adjacent lot zoned or being used for residential purposes.
- g) The density of any development should generally be the same as that allowed in the underlying zoning district; however, increased density should be considered if master planned as a mixed use development under the provisions of Village's planned development regulations (i.e. "PB").
- h) Appropriate screening, landscape buffering and open space must be provided wherever a commercial or mixed use development abuts a residential area or similar development of less density/intensity.
- i) The use of boundaries (natural and man-made), landmarks and public art should be used to help define the sense of place for neighborhoods, commercial districts, Village limits and/or entrance gateways. Gateway features should be provided at the locations shown on the Future Land Use and Transportation Map. Gateways serve as identity features and may consist of monument structures, distinctive building designs, unique landscaping, lighting, public art, or similar features.



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- j) Enhance the streetscape with new lighting and street trees planted close to the roadway. Consider the establishment of a landscaped median in selected areas of the main roads that serve Swansea to limit access and calm traffic. See also the recommendations in Section 4.20.
  - k) Parking should be shared and consolidated to central parking areas that are landscaped and buffered to minimize views from major rights-of-way and adjoining properties.
  - l) Transitional uses should be encouraged between residential and intense commercial uses to mitigate negative land use externalities.
  - m) Consider replacing minimum setback, building bulk and parking requirements with maximum setbacks or “build to” limits, stacked uses and builder established parking counts that encourage buildings to be closer to the street and uses to be mixed.
  - n) Consider maximum and minimum FARs (floor area ratios) that encourages compact, multi-story construction that fully utilizes the capacity of commercial and mixed use sites.
7. *Site Plan Review:* All major development or redevelopment proposals should be subject to site plan review. Site plan reviews should be performed by the Zoning Administrator or planner knowledgeable of the Village’s codes and regulations and submitted to the Planning Commission for approval. Site plan review should address the following concerns.
- a) Access management and the safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement along the Corridor.
  - b) The extent to which the proposed development meets the standards and guidelines of Swansea’s zoning regulations and best planning practices and/or the recommended development guidelines.
  - c) The extent to which the proposed development meets the goals, objectives and policies of this Plan.
8. *Update Swansea’s zoning code:* Update Swansea’s zoning code to address: 1) Active pedestrian-friendly Complete Streets, 2) Building intensity and scale and 3) integrating transit- oriented development (TOD) into an otherwise sub-urban environment and governed by conventional zoning districts.
9. *East West Gateway’s 8 Point System:* East West Gateway uses an 8 point system for evaluating TOD projects eligible for funding. A mixed-use project, future Town Center, or combination of the two would be eligible for funding provided they score well using the 8 Point System. Staff or the Village’s grant writer should be knowledgeable of this system and apply it to any future grant applications.
10. *Place Making & Revitalization.* Apply the latest urban renewal techniques to improve the Swansea MetroLink Station and other public spaces. Consider the aforementioned 8 point evaluation system. Also identify any safety hazards (i.e. hidden corners), cluttered kiosks, inactive spaces, lack of shade, unused concrete, underutilized opportunity areas,



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signs of blight, etc. Apply the Power of 10 and other place-making or revitalization strategies recommended in Chapter 3.

11. *Promote Quality Development:* A quality commercial area is achieved through attention to its design, mix of uses, scale and the ways in which pedestrians, bicycles, public transit and motor vehicles are accommodated. The following additional quality places strategies are recommended.

- a) Quality places include a variety of uses (e.g. retail stores, residences, civic buildings and offices) that create multipurpose activity centers in neighborhoods and cities.
- b) The scale, character and function of a quality development are compatible and integrated with its surroundings while establishing a desirable context for the design and color palettes of future development.
- c) Quality places are built to live a long life and loose fit. Quality places are built with quality materials that are durable and long-lasting and designed to allow for changing uses over time that evolve with shifting markets and consumer needs.
- d) Quality commercial areas, small or large, are designed to make the pedestrian feel comfortable and safe by providing inviting storefronts that open to the street and provide shade, shelter and a sense of spatial enclosure. They are designed to facilitate employee and customer access via wide sidewalks, bicycle trails, transit services and roads.
- e) Quality commercial areas provide a variety of convenient parking choices consistent with the scale of the development, its location and the type of stores. Parking is divided into smaller components to the rear or side of the buildings and landscaping and sidewalks provided for each with safe pedestrian movements. A quality place allows flexible parking arrangements such as on-street parking and shared parking to minimize an abundance of parking.

### **Section 4.12 Commercial Design Guidelines:**

All future commercial and mixed use development should be reviewed for compliance with the following architectural guidelines.

1. Architectural design should create visual interest through the use of differing textures, complementary colors, shadow lines and contrasting shapes. The use of walls in a single color, with little detailing, lack of architectural interest, or completely blank is discouraged.
2. The form and proportion of buildings should be in harmony with the scale, form and proportion of existing development in the immediate area. Where large structures are proposed with overly-long facade walls and where the horizontal dimension significantly exceeds the perpendicular dimension, building mass should be articulated with variations in the building wall planes and wall height and through the use of other unique design or site plan features.



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3. The rhythm of structural mass to voids, such as windows and glass doors, of a front facade should relate to the rhythms established in adjacent buildings. The use of unusual shapes, color and other characteristics that cause new buildings to call excessive attention to them by creating disharmony should not be allowed.
4. Architectural treatments (e.g., materials, colors, facade design, roof lines, screening) and the use of screening devices (walls, fences, berms, landscaping) should be consistent and compatible on all sides.
5. Use quality, durable materials such as masonry materials (face brick, split-face block and stone) is encouraged. The use of aluminum siding and metal ribbed panels should be used as accent features only. The evaluation of building materials should be based on the quality of its design and relationship and compatibility to building materials used elsewhere in the Village.
6. Landscaping, including the use of natural stormwater management facilities such as rain gardens, should be used to complement and enhance a building's design, color and material.
7. All exterior and rooftop equipment should be placed so that it is screened from the view of occupants of vehicles on adjoining streets or highways and from people located at or near ground level on surrounding properties. Screening material should be compatible with the primary building material and at least equal to the height of the screened equipment.

### **Section 4.13 Industrial**

The future Industrial land use category includes a range of industrial uses including warehousing, distribution, heavy manufacturing, office warehouse, contractor yards, motor vehicle repair, wholesale uses and business parks. Future Industrial uses should be directed to areas designated "Industrial" (grey) on the Future Land Use & Transportation Map. The strengthening of the economy since 2008 has increased the demand for industrial space, decreasing vacancy rates and increasing rents. Therefore, future industrial development should be encouraged within the industrial areas shown on the Future Land Use Map. These areas provide good highway access and separation from residential development. This Plan recommends clustering and consolidating industrial uses in areas where access is provided to major roads and buffered from residential land uses.

### **Section 4.14 Future Parks & Recreation**

Swansea should continue pursuing additional rights-of-way or easements needed to create trails and sidewalks connecting neighborhoods to Swansea's parks, schools, businesses districts and the preservation of open space by implementing the recommendations of the "Explore Swansea Plan", included as part of this Plan in the Appendix. Additionally, Swansea should encourage the preservation of land east of Route 159 for the creation of future parkland. There are no parks in the eastern portions of Swansea, nor can residents on the east side easily or safely access Swansea's existing parks (across 159). The areas designated "Non-Urban" along Smelting Works and at Clinton Hills Country Club are recommended locations for future parks.



## FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### Section 4.15 Existing Transportation Conditions

Roads are categorized according to the Functional Classification System to differentiate between the various types of streets and their intended purpose. Regulations, standards for design and construction and funding are based on the functional classification system. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) the following functional classifications are applicable to Swansea's transportation network:

- Arterial: A street that provides the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance, with some degree of access control. This classification is generally subdivided into minor arterial and principal or major arterial, with the latter encompassing all freeway and highway designated routes.
- Collector: A street that provides a less highly developed level of service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them to arterials. Since collectors provide a dual function of distributing traffic to local streets while at the same time moving increasing volumes of traffic to an arterial, provisions must be made to move traffic forward at a reasonable rate of speed while maintaining access at intersections and driveways.
- Local: A street that consists of all roads not defined as arterials or collectors; primarily provides access to land with little or no through movement.

Traffic volumes and speeds are typically higher on roadways of increasing functional classification while pedestrian and bicycle counts are lower. Major Arterial roads have the highest traffic counts. Since they carry more traffic, arterial streets typically include multiple lanes and have grade separated intersections. Access to adjacent lots is limited and on-street parking is prohibited on arterial roadways as these elements increase the frequency of stops and turning movements. Major intersections should be grade-separated to maintain uninterrupted traffic flow on the arterial roads. Collector streets carry intermediate volumes of traffic, provide slightly better access to developed land and more pedestrian and bike friendly than arterial roadways. Local streets carry the lowest volume of traffic, have fewer lanes and slower posted speed limits. This allows more safe and efficient points of access to land development and the use of narrower lane widths. On-street parking is common on local streets.

Street classification is very important for project funding. Federal and local funding in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area is managed by the East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWGCOG), the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In order for a roadway project to be eligible for federal funds, the facility must be classified in the region's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) as a Collector or higher. There are a number of roadways in and around Swansea classified at this level or higher.

The Village of Swansea is served by two (2) major arterial roadways; Illinois Route 159 and Illinois Route 161. Both roadways have undergone improvements over the years to keep pace with increasing traffic volumes and evolving design requirements. The section of Route 159 between Belleville and Fairview Heights contains the majority of Swansea's commercial development. This section of 159 consists of five (5) lanes and carries an average daily traffic



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count (ADT) of 10,000 to 30,000 depending on the specific location along its 3.5 mile length through Swansea. Route 161 is also an important commercial corridor that carries similar volumes of traffic (10,000-30,000 ADT). Route 159 serves as the “spine” for the local transportation network. All other collector and local roads make up the “grid”. The focus of this section is to concentrate improvements to the local and collector roads, which are mostly controlled by the Village. By increasing traffic volumes and pedestrian and bicycle usage, these roadways can relieve traffic volumes and congestion along 159 and 161 allowing them to better serve their intended purpose- *to move the most vehicles at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance.*

### Section 4.16 Future Transportation Recommendations

An effective transportation system integrates and enhances the social, physical and economic elements of the region. Therefore, annual investments to the local transportation network are recommended to preserve and enhance safe, efficient travel and mitigate traffic congestion. Transportation improvements should be viewed from the perspectives of the user, both locally and regionally, and prioritized based on the benefits to the overall transportation system as measured against how much the improvements cost and/or impacts the community. When planning future transportation improvements, the following objectives are recommended to ensure future improvements serve the best overall public interest.

1. **Preservation of the existing infrastructure:** Manage and maintain the current transportation system assets, capacities and levels of service.
2. **Congestion management:** Ensure that congestion on the roadways does not reach levels which compromise safety, economic competitiveness or the quality of life.
3. **Alternative modes of transportation:** All modes of transportation should be considered with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle linkages to community activity centers.
4. **Sustainable development:** Coordinate land use, transportation, economic development, environmental quality and community aesthetics in a manner that meets today’s needs without compromising the ability to address the needs of future generations.

Roadway design standards have been developed by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) for the design and construction of arterial, collector and local roadways. Projects funded with governmental funds are typically required to be built to AASTO standards. Therefore, it is recommended that future improvements comply with AASHTO standards, to the extent possible. Consideration should also be given to the existing development conditions and other local constraints. The recommended transportation goals, objectives and implementation recommendations focus primarily on the preservation and maintenance of the current transportation infrastructure and improving connectivity thereto.

### Section 4.17 Connectivity

Overall, Swansea’s transportation system lacks connectivity. This is partially caused by limited east-west transportation linkages. This Plan recommends evaluating various locations for future connections and roadway realignments to determine the most effective routes and then



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implementing the preferred solutions as funding and/or development proposals provide the impetus and opportunity for installing future connections and realignments. East/West connections are recommended for immediate consideration at the following locations:

1. *Grimming, Munie & Huntwood- Realignment,*
2. *Frank Scott Parkway to Winslow (Northwest future growth/annexation area)*
3. *Old Fullerton Realignment at Route 159.*
4. *Boul, Route 161, & Morgan- Roundabout*

The Future Land Use and Transportation Map depicts the recommended connectivity improvements. Prior to any major improvements, a traffic study should be conducted to consider the existing and anticipated ADT, channelization, signal timing, pedestrian accessibility, street lighting, realignment, modifications to lane widths, driveway spacing, sight distances and beautification. All Route 161 and 159 Road improvements must be approved by IDOT and done in accordance with the applicable design standards. All future development and associated roadway alterations should be evaluated to ensure minimal negative impact on the area-wide roadway system.

### **Section 4.18 Access Management**

Access management includes the planning, design and location of points of access (driveways/intersections) within the public roadway system. The goal of access management is to protect taxpayers' investment in the roadway by increasing the functional capacity and safety of the transportation system while minimizing congestion and creating better conditions for non-automobile transportation modes. Recent improvements to the Highway 159 corridor focused primarily on increasing vehicular flow and congestion mitigation. Swansea leaders should encourage IDOT to implement access management standards, where they are appropriate, to all major collector roads and arterials to achieve the goals and objectives of this Plan.

### **Section 4.19 Gateway Features**

Special interest should be given to the main transportation "entrances" into Swansea. These areas are best described as the viewsheds and sightlines one sees as they enter the Village along major thoroughfares. Gateway areas should be reserved for thematic design elements including landscaping, signage and other aesthetic features that showcase Swansea's commitment to economic development, a high quality of life and a quiet bedroom community atmosphere. See the Future Land Use and Transportation Map for the recommended locations for gateway features. This Plan recommends partnering with businesses and property owners to develop incentives that encourage the private sector to fund the acquisition, installation and ongoing maintenance of gateway features. For example, Village Officials should allow neighborhoods groups, organizations, or private businesses to be publicly recognized within the design of the Gateway in exchange for covering the cost of the design, installation and maintenance of a gateway feature. This recommendation is modeled in part after the adopt a road program instituted by the highways department across the nation.

### **Section 4.20 Streetscape Improvements**

The streetscape is the area between buildings along both sides of a right-of-way that helps define the character of the corridor. In the absence of buildings, the limits of the streetscape



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could be a fence or row of trees or whatever provides a visual boundary. The streetscape includes both private property and public right-of-way. The development of a streetscape, therefore, involves both private sector and public sector participation. The private sector generally contributes through the construction of buildings and other elements that define the edges of a streetscape. The public sector generally contributes to the streetscape by providing public infrastructure and improvements within the right-of-way. Design elements that can affect the character and effectiveness of streetscapes include above ground utilities, traffic signals signage, wayfinding, street width and capacity, street trees, sidewalks, lighting, commercial signage/monumentation, street furniture, public spaces (plazas, parks, etc.) building height, massing, scale, building materials, paving materials, transparency and land use. Elements of a successful streetscape include:

1. Efficient vehicular circulation,
2. Definition (the streetscape needs a visual boundary),
3. Pedestrian accessibility,
4. Visual interest and activity,
5. Transparency,
6. Surface texture and articulation (opportunity for light and shadow) and
7. Street trees.

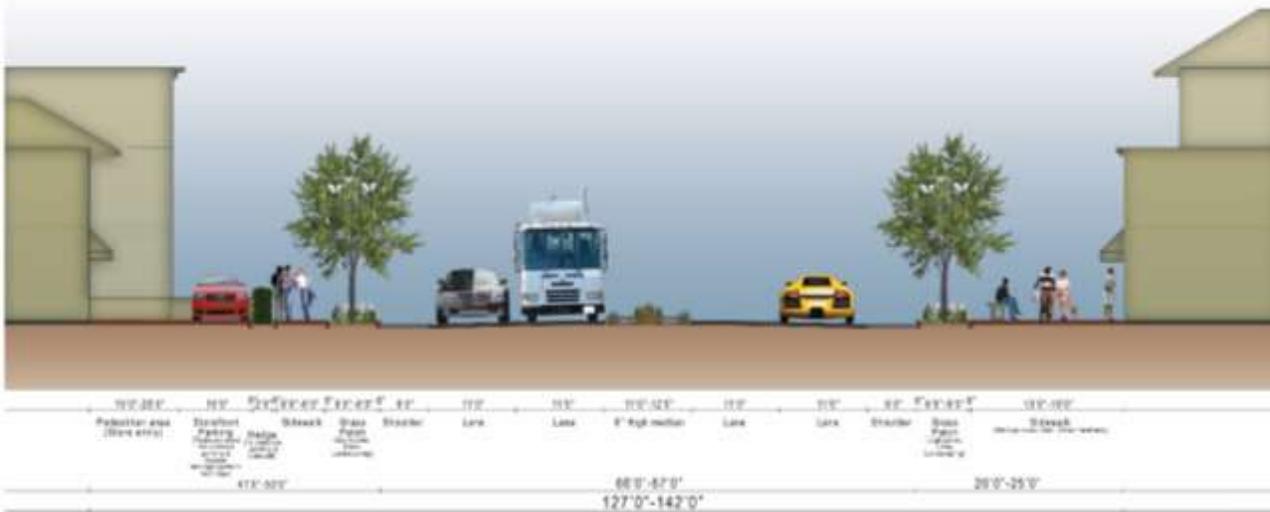
The overall character of the Highway 159 corridor has been cited by the community as one of the most persistent planning challenges facing Swansea. This Plan provides an opportunity to create a vision for Swansea's streetscapes that integrates access management and pedestrian accessibility with streetscape design, development and transportation considerations. Accomplishing this vision will require an effective partnership with the State, adjoining property owners and the business community to identify improvements that are consistent with the goals of this Plan and address the state's transportation requirements for the corridor. Recommended streetscape implementation strategies include:

1. Creating attractive defined gateways.
2. Improving intersections with Route 159 by making them more aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian-friendly and realigning intersection offsets.
3. Enhancing the landscaping and architectural character of the corridor.
4. Installing landmark features, such as public art, gateways or other significant architectural or landscape elements at highly visible locations, and
5. Providing safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings at key locations.

Figures 4.4 and 4.5 illustrate how access management techniques, such as installing a raised median, can be used to integrate desirable streetscape features such as landscaping within Route 159 or 161. They also show how the recommended complete street recommendations included in the Explore Swansea Plan, such as textured walks, lighting and landscaping can be used to define the limits of the streetscape and improve the travel experience by creating a more aesthetically pleasing streetscape and sense of place.



**Figures 4.4-4.5: Recommended Route 159/161 Road Improvements**



Source "Explore Swansea"

## Section 4.21 Recommended Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Pedestrian walk and bike trails have become very popular in communities in recent years as sources of recreation, exercise and as an alternative means of transportation for citizens of all ages. Swansea has enjoyed the recent addition of a wide range of pedestrian, bike and multimodal facilities, including the popular MetroBikeLink Trail. There is strong support from the community, as evidenced in the information gathered during the public engagement process, to



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complete a comprehensive Village-wide system of sidewalks, trails, pathways, bike lanes and other bike and pedestrian amenities connected to area parks, neighborhoods, businesses and activity centers. Currently, Swansea's transportation system does not provide adequate pedestrian access nor provide the aforementioned linkages. The installation of pedestrian and bicycle linkages will have the potential to decrease vehicular traffic volumes as they provide direct, multi-modal linkages to the community's major commercial corridors and destination centers. These improvements will also address existing and potential safety problems by taking pedestrian traffic off busy roadways with poor pedestrian access.

The most effective and efficient strategy to achieve the desired pedestrian and bike connectivity is to implement the policies of "Complete Streets". According to the American Planning Association (APA), "complete streets" accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and cars, creating multi-modal transportation networks. In October 2007, complete streets policy became law in Illinois mandating that the principles of Complete Streets be incorporated into all new projects receiving state or federal monies and/or projects on state or federal roads and highways. Therefore, this Plan recommends implementing the "Complete Streets" recommendations of the Explore Swansea Plan to create of an integrated pedestrian/bicycle system that includes on-street bicycle lanes as well as the utilization of off-road multi-use paths and greenways.

Swansea Officials should work with the Metro-East Park and Recreation District, St. Clair County and the cities of Belleville, O'Fallon, Shiloh and Fairview Heights to develop and implement "Complete Street" improvements and the recommended community-wide bicycle/pedestrian pathway system. The intent of the pedestrian/bicycle improvements is to increase non-motorized transportation options by providing connections between parks, schools, neighborhoods and other transportation generators. The following strategies should also be considered:

1. Utilize a common-sense approach for locating any proposed trails. Conduct a trail audit prior to the installation of any permanent trails or trail segments. The audit should include site investigations of all proposed trail locations to identify areas where pedestrians are already cutting through. The audit should include the development of an opportunity traces map that shows existing short cuts and un-official trails created by pedestrian use. These areas should be identified on the opportunity traces map and considered for future permanent trail/pedestrian way improvements that are safer and protects the privacy of adjacent properties. Areas with steep grades or where the safety or privacy of adjacent properties cannot be protected should be avoided.
2. Investigate the possibility of obtaining easements along natural streams and riparian areas for the specific purpose of developing an integrated trail system, while simultaneously preserving riparian areas and protecting the privacy of adjacent homeowners.
3. Encourage a competition among neighborhoods to create an award winning trailhead.
4. Facilitate the installation of an on-street system of bikeways, pursuant to the Explore Swansea Plan".

The recommended top priorities include:



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1. Improving sidewalk and bike conditions on streets leading to the Swansea MetroLink Station, parks, schools and other popular destinations. This includes providing pedestrian and bicycle connection and other facilities at least 1 mile (approximately a 15 minute walk) from the aforementioned destinations.
2. Partner with Metro and the State to install or improve sidewalks/pathways along Route 159, 161 and Franks Scott Parkway.
3. Facilitate the installation of sidewalks or trails along both sides of all streets to accommodate pedestrian circulation.
4. Install cross walks, ADA compliant access ramps, signage, lighting and signalization at all existing and future intersections where pedestrian traffic is anticipated to ensure safe, convenient pedestrian crossings.
5. The width, high traffic volumes and vehicular speeds along Route 159 make pedestrian crossings extremely difficult and dangerous. Therefore, a grade-separated pedestrian crossing is recommended. Preference should be given to locations that connect to existing or future planned pedestrian linkages and major destinations.
6. Create a linear park system that serves as a “preservation corridor” that integrates the area’s precious natural resources with its urban systems. Trail locations and sidewalk improvements should link to major roads, schools, churches, businesses, recreational facilities, parks and neighborhoods. The general location of the recommended trails and greenways are shown on the Future Land Use and Transportation Map. Trailheads, picnic areas, restroom facilities and parking areas should be provided at the major points of access to primary trail/pathway segments. Additionally, educational kiosks should be located at strategic trailhead locations along trail routes. Trailheads, kiosks and other amenities should be designed and located in areas that attract a wide range of users.

The implementation of a comprehensive trail system increases accessibility options to Swansea’s activity centers and reduces demand for vehicular travel. It also supports the Explore Swansea Plan and Metro-East Park and Recreation District and Metro’s mission to support multi-modal transportation and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMI). Implementation of additional trails and sidewalk improvements will complement the existing and proposed trail systems already in place (i.e. the MetroBikeLink Trail, Centennial Park Trail, etc.) and may increase commercial activity via improved surface transportation options. Methods of obtaining land and/or right-of-way for an integrated trail system include the creation of community land trusts, conservation easements, preservation corridors and land dedications. Swansea and the recommended partners should consider acquiring rights to property in the general vicinity of the recommended greenway locations. It is recommended that the location and design of greenways and sidewalk improvements utilize existing built and natural topography whenever possible to minimize erosion, preserve existing vegetation and mitigate any negative impacts to surrounding land uses.

The recommended trail, sidewalk and other improvements contained in the ‘**Explore Swansea Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan**’ are also the recommendations of this Plan. Therefore, the “Explore Swansea Plan” is included in the Appendix as part of this Plan. The general location and recommended improvements are shown on the Future Land Use & Transportation Map.



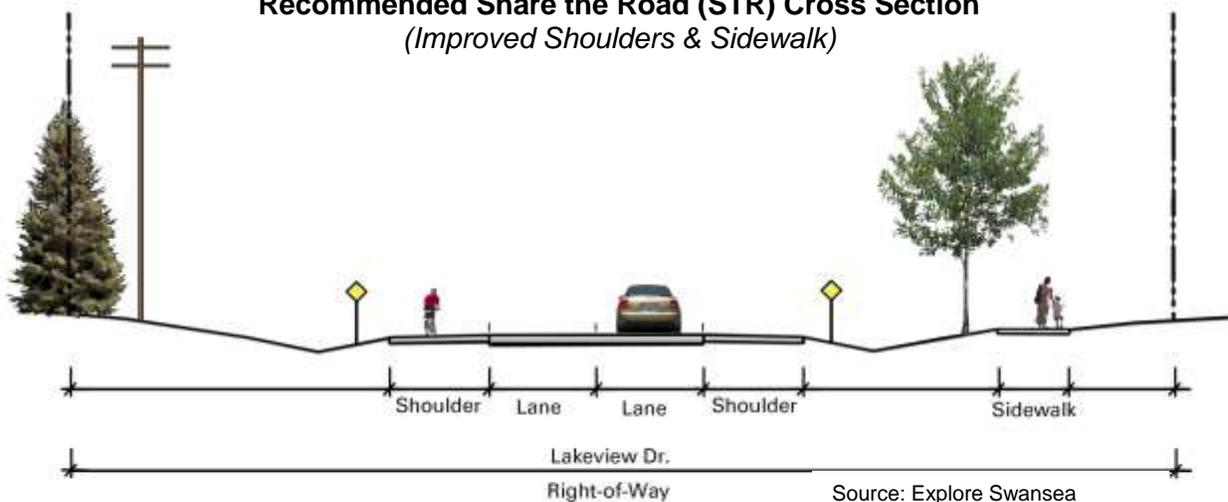
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There are five (5) categories of Complete Street facility types recommended for Swansea. They are summarized in Table 4.2 and depicted in the following streetscape illustrations.

Table 4.2: Recommended Pedestrian Improvement Strategies		
Type of Improvement	Description	Recommendations
Share-The-Road (STR) Signs	Use of STR signs to designate on-street bicycle routes.	Install signs along routes designated for advanced cyclists to increase awareness of both the automobile operator and the cyclist to the presence of the other.
Share-The-Road Signs & Shared Lane Markings (Sharrows)	Re-stripe existing ROW to provide safe bicycle lanes & install STR signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install dedicated bike lane as shown on the Future Transportation Map</li> <li>Install crosswalks at all major pedestrian crossings.</li> </ul>
Share-The-Road Signs, Shared Lane Markings & Sidewalks	Incorporating bike lanes and sidewalks within an existing roadway right-of-way. May require the use of narrower lane widths to accommodate shoulder, bike lane and sidewalks. This concept is known as a "road-diet".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace gravel or oil and chip surface with asphalt surface.</li> <li>Reduce lane widths and/or extend shoulder width as needed/feasible.</li> <li>Apply pavement markings (sharrows).</li> <li>Install wayfinding/route signage.</li> <li>Install sidewalks (min. 5') along all streets or upgrade existing sidewalks in need of repair.</li> </ul>
Ped Paths	Acquire needed ROW and provide necessary improvements to create connections to Swansea's exiting trails, parks, institutions, businesses, neighborhoods and other activity centers or traffic generators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install Ped Paths and Multi-Use Trails as shown on the Future Transportation Map measuring at least 6' wide and consisting of a continuous smooth pavement surface.</li> <li>Include trailheads, comfort stations, parking and other amenities to complement the trail segments.</li> </ul>
Multi-Use Trails		

*All improvements should meet the minimum AASHTO requirements*

**Recommended Share the Road (STR) Cross Section**  
(Improved Shoulders & Sidewalk)





## **Section 4.22 Growth Management**

Certain areas that; 1) are adjacent to Swansea's current limits; 2) within the Village's service delivery areas; and 3) provide benefits that outweigh the costs of annexation to the overall community (not just the adjoining parcels) should be considered for annexation. The objectives and implementation recommendations contained in this Plan should be followed by public officials when making decisions regarding annexation which include, but are not limited to, public services, land use, future development, economic development and neighborhood preservation. Obtaining the future vision for Swansea and the goals outlined herein will require the coordination and leadership of all levels and forms of government, both internal and external to the Village, plus strong support from community groups and private entities.

## **IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Swansea is well known for its excellent schools, parks, quiet neighborhoods and bedroom community ambiance. To maintain and enhance these highly valued assets, the Village must continue providing excellent public services and develop innovative approaches to encourage on-going investment within the community's commercial corridors, along Boul Avenue and within the Village's existing neighborhoods and housing stock. The implementation strategies and recommendations that were developed and co-authored by the community for the purposes of realizing the vision and goals outlined in this Plan are provided in Chapter 3. The following are recommended funding available and land use policies to help implement the vision, goals and objectives of this Plan.

## **Section 4.23 Special Service Area**

Special Service Areas (SSA) are funding mechanisms designed to cover the cost of public services or improvements that benefit the subdivision it covers. They are funded by a separate property tax paid by the owners of the subdivision. They may cover a variety of improvements or services as agreed upon by the subdivision. The establishment of a Special Service Area (SSA) is required by ordinance for all new subdivisions in Swansea. Subdivisions existing before December 5, 2016 are exempt from this requirement. However, if the residents of an existing subdivision wishes to establish a SSA, they could petition the Village to establish the SSA by ordinance. It takes at least 51% of the owners and electors to prevent the SSA from being approved.

## **Section 4.24 Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a development tool designed to help finance certain eligible improvements to property in designated redevelopment areas (TIF districts) by utilizing the new, or incremental, tax revenues generated by the project after completion. Upon the creation of a TIF District, the current property values within that district become a base value from which it cannot decrease. Any projects or improvements that cause an increase in value over that base would create an increment in value and the incremental tax revenues from that increment in value are paid to a "special allocation fund". The proceeds of the fund are then used to reimburse the developer for eligible project costs or to retire indebtedness incurred to cover those costs. Eligible project costs are the total of all reasonable or necessary costs incurred or estimated to be incurred and any costs incidental to a redevelopment plan or project. Specifically, these costs include, but are not limited to:



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- ✓ Costs of studies, surveys and plans
- ✓ Professional service costs (architectural, engineering, legal, financial, etc.)
- ✓ Property assembly costs (acquisition, demolition, clearing and grading)
- ✓ Costs of rehabilitating, reconstructing, remodeling of existing structures
- ✓ Costs of construction of public works
- ✓ Financing costs, including issuance interest and reserves.

Swansea's Official TIF Maps are included as part of this Plan in the Appendix.

### **Section 4.25 Business Districts**

Swansea has two Business Districts that generate revenue for improvements via a sales tax levy of up to 1.00%. This revenue is placed in a "special allocation fund" and used for assistance in rehabilitating buildings, historic preservation, new construction and infrastructure improvements. The Business Districts are intended to assist individual business as well as elevate the economic competitiveness of the entire District. The Business District incentives can be used alone or in conjunction with the TIF to enhance the competitiveness of Swansea's commercial districts. Swansea's Official Business District Maps are included as part of this Plan in the Appendix.

### **Section 4.26 Stormwater**

According to State Statutes, no landowner shall increase the natural flow of surface water onto the property of an adjacent landowner. In Illinois, municipalities have the authority to establish a storm water utility system and charge a storm water fee to pay for that service, but only if they are "home rule". Swansea is not a home rule municipality, so it does not have that authority. As a result, the Village of Swansea has no obligation to maintain the surface drainage or any storm water system underground on private property. Therefore, if there is a natural drainage way or storm sewer pipes across private property, the private property owner and not the Village, must keep them clear and free flowing, so that storm water does not back up onto a neighbor's property or into the public streets. Likewise, private property owners, cannot change the flow of storm water so that it leaves the property at a rate faster than it naturally would.



## **APPENDIX A: Public Engagement Summary**



## **APPENDIX B: Explore Swansea**



## **APPENDIX C: TIF & Business District Map**