

A black and white historical photograph of a busy street in Centralia, Illinois. The street is filled with vintage cars from the early 20th century. On the right side of the street, there are several two-story brick buildings with storefronts. One building has a sign that says 'LOANS', another 'SINGER', and a larger one 'LIVINGS-STEAKS-SEA FOOD'. People are walking on the sidewalks. In the background, a tall building with a clock tower is visible.

City of Centralia, Illinois

2024 Comprehensive Plan

December 16, 2024



Acknowledgments

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A special thanks to all of the various Boards and Commissions established by the City of Centralia for their input and participation in the planning process.

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1. Introduction

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

According to the American Planning Association, community planning is “a process that seeks to engage all community members to create a more prosperous, convenient, equitable, healthy, and attractive place for present and future generations.” One of the fundamental responsibilities of local government is to plan for the future growth and development of the community. The document that results from this community planning process is the comprehensive plan. The figure below illustrates the six-stage comprehensive planning cycle.

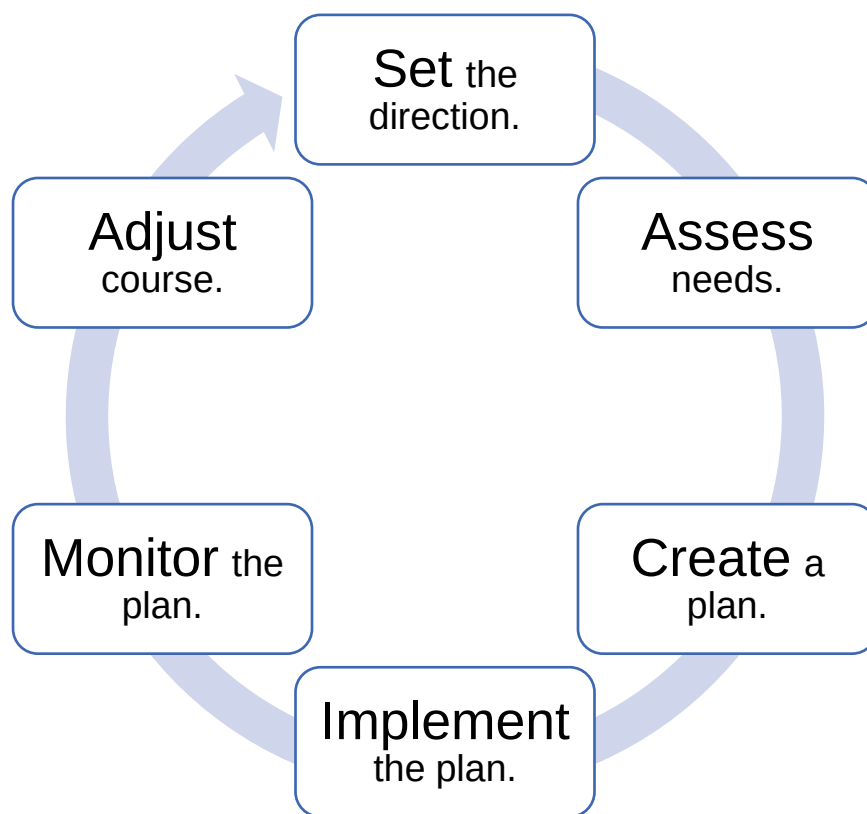


Figure 1.1 – Comprehensive Planning Cycle

The City of Centralia has assembled a unique team of local stakeholders and advisory professionals to develop a new Comprehensive Plan for the city. This Plan is intended to be a living document incorporating goals and objectives that are realistic, achievable, and most importantly measurable. Those involved in preparing and planning this document come from diverse backgrounds and provide a wide spectrum of input, ideas, visions, and opportunities.

The Comprehensive Plan's vision is long-term and should be periodically reviewed and updated as significant changes within the city undoubtedly occur. The reviews of this Plan should take place at least once every five years and assess how the goals and objectives were met, will be met, and if needed provide new avenues to meet those goals. A full rewrite of this planning document should occur every 10-20 years.

This plan is a recommendatory document, meant to provide guidance and a uniform path forward for the future development of the city. It should not be seen as a rigid rulebook or code of ordinances, but as a framework to aid local policymakers in future decision-making. The planning process is a work in motion, and the Plan should never be considered a static document.

Public Outreach and Stakeholder Input

Throughout the planning process, the City of Centralia sought out input from the residents of the city and the surrounding area who call Centralia their home or place of work. This outreach began with the city's creation of a Comprehensive Plan Committee made up of local business leaders, public servants, and stakeholders to help guide the structure and development of the Plan. This Committee met throughout the development and final phases of the planning process.

The city also underwent a Community Vision process, led by the Comprehensive Plan Committee, through a widely available Community Vision Survey. This survey was developed by the Comprehensive Plan Committee to be clear and concise, but also provide the public the opportunity to provide feedback on a wide range of issues that are important to them. A summary of the community's strengths, and opportunities, is provided on the following pages in the form of word clouds.

In addition, the City of Centralia held a public hearing for residents to provide their input into the Plan. This hearing included a review of the draft of the plan, including its components and goals, and a request from the city for the residents to express their opinions on the proposed plan.

Community Vision

- Promote and preserve our rich historic identity and community character
- Actively pursue growth and development through collaboration, cooperation, and public-private partnerships
- Attract and retain a variety of employment opportunities for our residents
- Strive toward a culture of unity through community events, attractions, and recreational opportunities
- Aim to create a safe and inclusive environment for our residents, visitors, businesses, and industry



Community Strengths



Community Opportunities



Community Challenges



2. Community Profile

A Brief History

Centralia, located in the south-central portion of Illinois, was initially built and founded in 1853 by the Illinois Central Railroad, from which its name derives. In the following years, the local economy was formed on the foundation of the railroad, shops, and fruit growing. The city was officially chartered six years later in 1859 and was settled largely by German immigrants.

In 1938 the Pay Day candy factory came to town and became a top employer within the city for most of the century.

One of the other major employers during this timeframe was the coal industry. A mine explosion in 1947 devastated the community, killing 111 people. Folk singer Woody Guthrie memorialized this tragedy in his song “The Dying Miner.” These historical facts and so much more of Centralia's History are on exhibit at the Centralia Area Historical Society Museum located in Downtown Centralia.



Centralia Historical Society Museum – See Centralia, Illinois

The City of Centralia and its residents are proud of its wonderful parks. Foundation Park, located in north central Centralia, has a year-round playground with hiking trails, fishing ponds, an ice-skating rink, a disc golf course, an outdoor amphitheater, shelters, and Chapel in the Woods. This park is also home to the annual hot air balloon festival, held every August.

Centralia's Fairview Park has on display a classic caboose and a 2500-class steam engine, one of only two remaining from the Illinois Central Railroad. Also at the park is an F-105 Thunderchief aircraft. The city also houses Carillon Park and the Carillon bell tower, one of the ten largest bell towers in the world.

In the north east portion of the city, Laura Leake Park provides a public use playground, basketball court and sheltered picnic area with available barbecue grills. This particular park is situated in a predominantly residential neighborhood, providing excellent park facilities within walking distance for many residents.

Located approximately 60 miles east of St. Louis within the counties of Clinton, Jefferson, Marion, and Washington, residents of Centralia are proud of its Historic Downtown, first-rate park, and recreational opportunities, active downtown, and a wide variety of annual festivals that bring in thousands of visitors to the city each year.

Demographics

Since 1970, the City of Centralia has seen a steady decrease in population. In 1970 the total population of the City of Centralia was 15,966 and has decreased at a rate of just over 5% through the year 2020. The population trend over the last 30 years is shown in Figure 2.1. Over the last three decades (1990-2020) the total population has decreased by 2,092 residents. Projects for the next decennial census indicate further population decline at a similar rate. Based on average growth rates over the last half-century, the population of the City of Centralia in 2030 is estimated to be around 11,561.

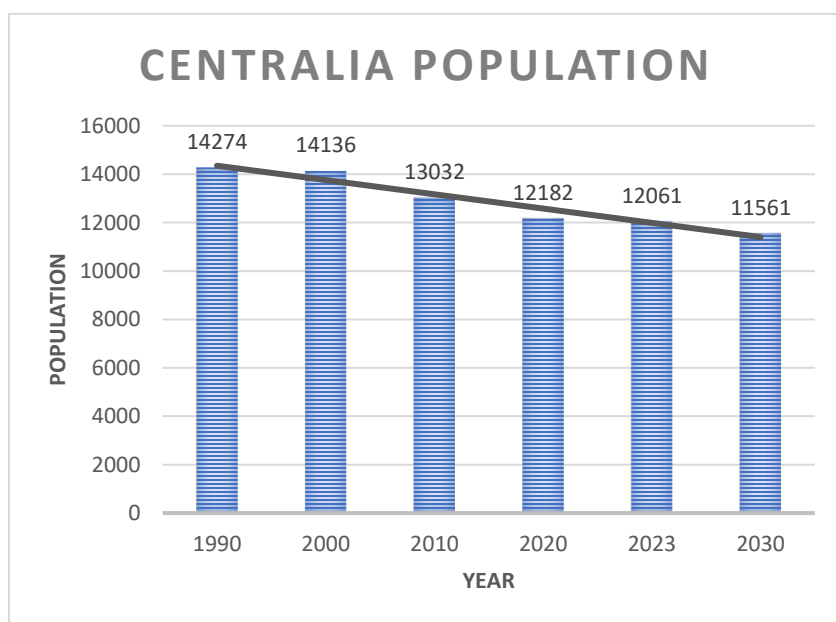


Figure 2.1 – Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

Centralia is not the only community in South Central Illinois that has seen a trend of population decline over the last several decades. The City of Salem, also located within Marion County, and the City of Mount Vernon, located just south in Jefferson County, has seen recent declines in the overall population in recent years. While a projected decrease of 500 residents is expected by 2030, steps can be taken to slow this decrease and ultimately create a community that fosters population growth.

The age distribution of Centralia residents according to the most recent Decennial Census in 2020 (shown in figure 2.2 on the following page) indicates that 7,074 or 58% of the population is within the age range of 25-74. The largest population segment within the city is residents between the ages of 55-64, with 1,690 in total or 14% of the total population. Overall, 2,829 (23%) residents are under 18, 9,353 (77%) are 18 and over, and 2,666 (22%) are aged 65 and over. Lastly, 4,997 (41%) are within the 18-54 age range, nationally known as the prime-age labor force group.

Understanding the community population distribution can be a powerful tool to better plan where the community is headed over the next 10-20 years and what individual age cohorts will need in the future. Based upon this population age distribution, and not accounting for unforeseen in-and-out migration, it becomes apparent that the overall age of the community is likely to increase slightly over the next two decades. Senior housing needs will increase right alongside the rise in the 65+ age cohort.

The median age of residents of Centralia in 2023 was estimated to be 42.6 years of age, this is up 3.3 years from the 2000 Census which indicated a median age of 39.3 years of age.

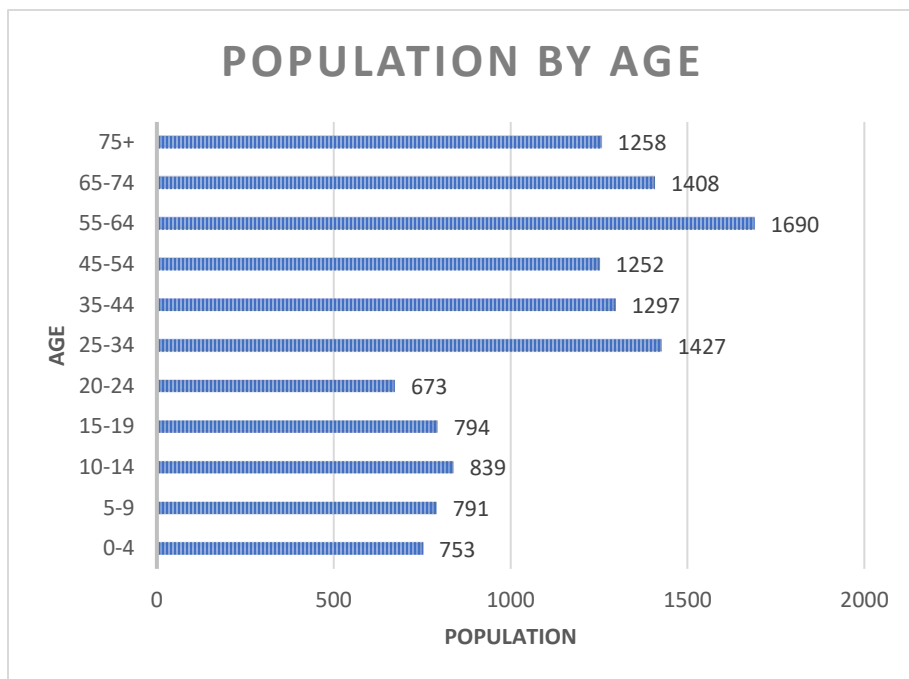


Figure 2.2 – Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

With that said, the overall age distribution of the community is still fairly balanced across all of the age cohorts, as is evident in Figure 2.3. The outlier within the age cohorts is the 75 and over cohort, which makes up only 10% of the total population of the City of Centralia. The other four age cohorts are all within the 20 – 25% range of the total population of the city.

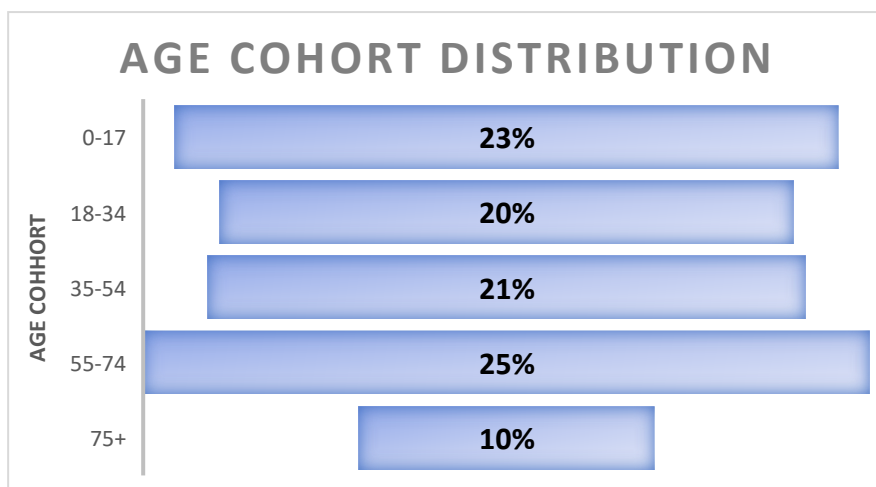


Figure 2.3 – Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

As seen in Table 2.1, Centralia residents predominantly identify as White (77.92%), but there is a significant population that identifies as Black or African American (11.01%) and Two or more races (7.41%). Additionally, there are slightly more female residents within the City of Centralia than male residents. 6,383 female residents make up 52.40% of the total population and 5,799 male residents, make up the remaining 47.60% of the total population of the City of Centralia.

TABLE 2.1: POPULATION BY RACE

Race	Population	Percent (%)
White	9,492	77.92%
Black / African American	1,341	11.01%
American Indian / Alaskan Native	29	0.24%
Asian	254	2.09%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	1	0.01%
Some other race	162	1.33%
Two or more races	903	7.41%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

Income

In 2023, Centralia had approximately 5,230 total households. A household is defined as all the people that occupy one housing unit. A household can be just one person or several. The average household size in 2023 was 2.24 people or residents per household. Among these households, the median household income was \$31,905. Table 2.2 illustrates the income of each household ranging from less than \$15,000 to \$200,000 or more. This table can be seen on the following page.

Similar to the age cohort distribution, the median household income statistics across Centralia are quite balanced until reaching the income range of \$150,000 - \$199,999. All household income ranges through the \$100,000 - \$149,999 income range are within 6.2% of one another. The most common household income range is the \$50,000 - \$74,999 category (17.6% of all households), with the less than \$15,000 annual median household income group coming in as the second largest income group (15.1% of all households).

TABLE 2.2: HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Race	# of Households	Percent (%) of Households
Less than \$15,000	792	15.1%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	650	12.4%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	680	13.0%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	681	13.0%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	92	17.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,000	374	12.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	594	11.4%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	138	2.6%
\$200,000 or more	101	1.9%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

Another interesting income statistic to examine is the median and average disposable income of each household located within the City of Centralia. Disposable Income is the after-tax household income that is remaining following all of the mandatory deductions, that are available to be spent or saved by each household. The 2023 median household disposable income for Centralia was \$37,791 and the average household disposable income for that same year was \$47,759. The median value indicates the middle value among all households within Centralia, so half the population earns more than \$37,791 in disposable income, and the other half less. This average or mean household disposable income skews higher due to the top 4.5% of households that earn more than \$150,000 annually.



Livability

Another factor to be considered when looking inwardly at your community is livability. While not easily defined, a livable community utilizes its history, culture, and natural environmental assets and combines these with efficacious infrastructure and development policies to increase the resident's quality of life.



The Bowl, Foundation Park – centraliafoundationpark.com

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) developed an Overall Livability Index for communities across the United States. The AARP measures Livability through seven categories, they include Housing, Transportation, Environment, Health, Engagement, and Opportunity. Within these categories, they look at 61 indicators made up of 40 metrics and 21 policies. Ultimately, a score between 1-100 is provided and the higher the score, the more 'livable' the community is considered to be.

The AARP Livability Index gives the City of Centralia a score of 49. This score is not dissimilar from surrounding communities. The City of Salem has a score of 51, the City of Carlyle has a score of 53, the City of Mount Vernon has a score of 52 and the City of Vandalia comes in significantly lower with a score of 44. The key indicator that is lowering the scores of south-central Illinois communities is the health indicator. This indicator includes smoking prevalence, preventable hospitalizations, obesity prevalence, and healthcare professional shortages, among others.

AARP Livability Index



Walk & Bike Score

The Walk Score and Bike Score are two other rather useful metrics when looking at the ease of access for residents of a community to complete daily required errands. Both of these scores are on a scale of 1-100 with higher scores indicating that most daily activities can be achieved on foot or via bicycle. Centralia has a very high Walk Score of 78, indicating that the community is Very walkable and most errands can be accomplished on foot. The Bike Score, while not in the upper echelon, is still higher than the U.S. average coming in at 58. This Bike Score indicates that although the full community is not bikeable, there is still some significant bike infrastructure available to residents.

If there is significant interest among the resident population and sufficient support exists amongst Centralia elected officials, the creation of bike lanes can be considered alongside future roadway improvement projects. As large-scale roadway improvement projects are planned and scheduled by city officials, sometimes in conjunction with the Illinois or Federal Department of Transportation, the potential addition of bike lanes can be one of the many areas of discussion.

Walk Score



Bike Score



Cost of Living

Cost of Living is a calculation of the amount of money that is necessary to cover all basic expenditures such as housing, food, household goods, taxes, healthcare, etc. in a certain place and time. According to the Best Places Cost of Living scale, Centralia receives a score of 73. This score indicates that the total cost of living is 27% lower than the U.S. average and 22.1% lower than the average for the state of Illinois.

Cost of Living Score



Centralia's Cost of Living score is quite similar to other comparable communities within the surrounding area. Table 2.3 below illustrates the cost-of-living score of these comparable communities.

TABLE 2.3: COMMUNITY COST OF LIVING

Community	Cost of Living Score
Centralia	73.0
Salem	73.0
Effingham	78.7
Carlyle	84.9
Mount Vernon	74.2
Vandalia	72.8
State of Illinois	93.7
United States	100.0

Source: bestplaces.net/cost-of-living

3. Housing Profile

Local policymakers should see housing as one of the most critical areas for investment within a community. Investment, or for that matter, the lack of investment can have enormous impacts on economic growth, neighborhood stabilization, and individual health. Housing stability is correlated with better educational and health outcomes for children and better mental and physical health for adults.¹

Households

As can be seen in Table 3.1 the total households (occupied homes) within the city have decreased at a rate of about 4.6% over the past 20 years. This decrease in total households follows closely the decrease in the overall population noted previously in Section 2 of the Plan. This decrease is projected to continue for the remainder of the current decade. Specifically, in the year 2000, there were an estimated 5,807 total households in the city. At the current rate, this number of households will decrease by 610 by the year 2028.

When comparing the city's household growth with that of Marion County and the State as a whole it becomes apparent that although the city has lagged behind the county in recent years, that gap is projected to close throughout this decade. Illinois, although growing, has been on a downward trend since the year 2000.

TABLE 3.1: TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS

Year	Total Households
2000	5,807
2010	5,590
2020	5,280
2023	5,230
2028*	5,197

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online & U.S. Census Bureau

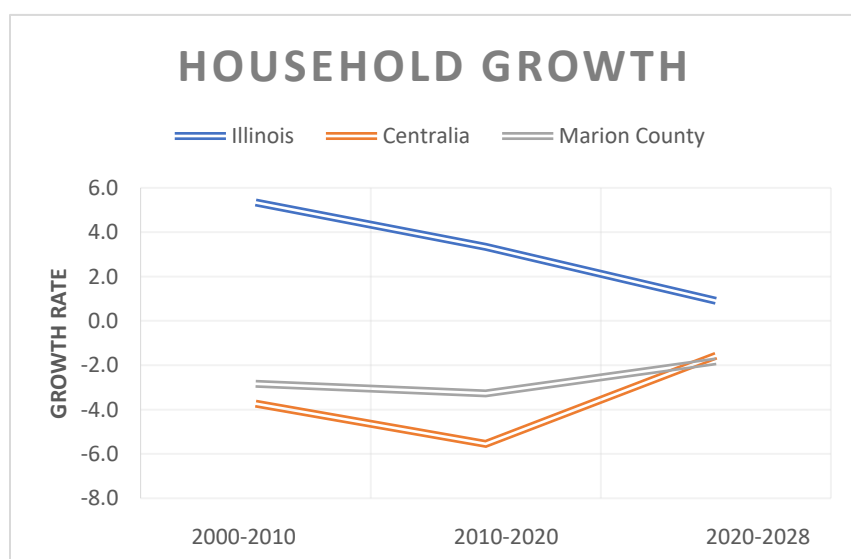


Figure 3.1 – Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online & U.S. Census Bureau
* Projection by ESRI Business Analyst Online

¹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org>. February 15, 2022

Household Size

Household sizes within the City of Centralia are relatively small with an average size of 2.24 persons per household. Of the 5,280 households in the city, a majority are households with only one person. 70.4%, are homes with one or two persons, 13.1% of the households have three persons, and 9.5% are households with 4 people residing within the home.

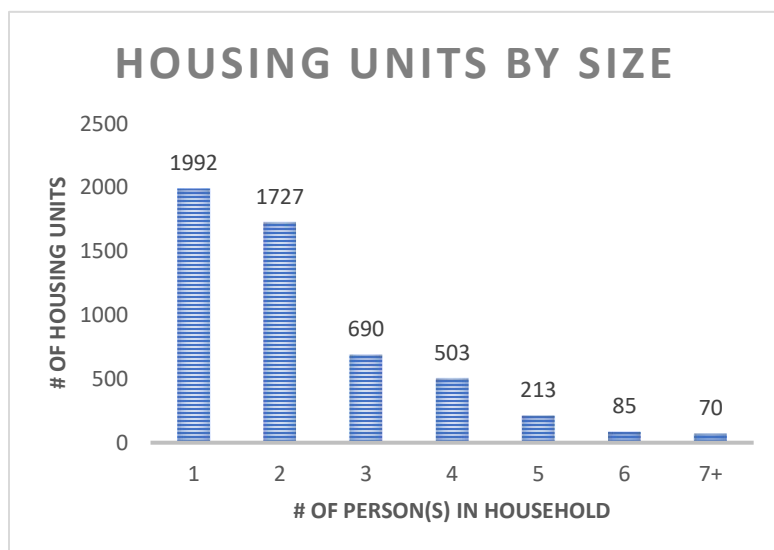


Figure 3.2 – Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online & U.S. Census Bureau

Housing Unit Value

Centralia Home values are illustrated in Figure 3.3. The highest percentage of homes (39.9%) are valued between \$50,000-\$99,000. More than half of all homes within the city (65.7%) are valued from <\$50,000-\$99,000. The overall median home value comes in at approximately \$80,343. Looking back at the median household income for the city which was \$31,905 for the year 2023, housing within the City of Centralia is quite affordable. Setting aside other potential financial assets an individual or family may have at their disposal, the average person who currently resides in the city can afford a home valued between \$120,000 and \$140,000.

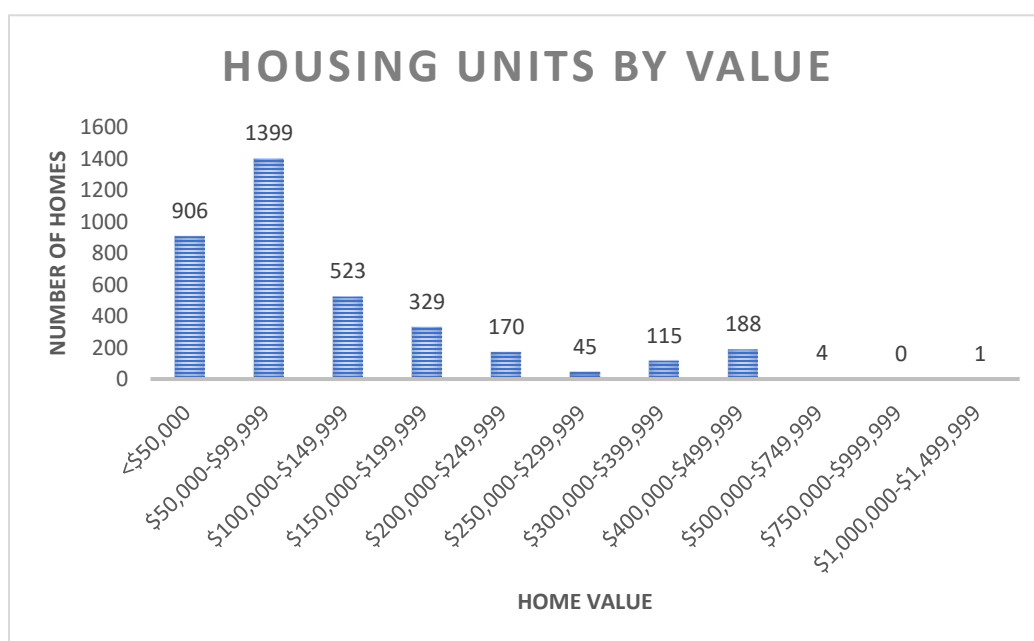


Figure 3.3 – Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

Note: These figures only include Owner-occupied housing units

A home in this range would likely result in a monthly mortgage payment of approximately \$750.00. The home affordability range noted above was calculated utilizing the median income of \$31,905 and the 28% mortgage rule, which states that 28% or less of your monthly gross income should be spent on your mortgage payment. This 28% mortgage rule includes principal, interest, taxes, and insurance.

Housing Unit Vacancy

Thus far the Centralia housing profile has focused on occupied and owner-occupied housing units only. The total number of vacant housing units within Centralia according to the 2022 American Community Survey is 841. This means the total number of both occupied and vacant housing units in the city is 5,968.

Of the 5,127 occupied housing units, 3,338 are owner-occupied, while approximately 1,789 are renter-occupied. The estimated homeowner vacancy rate is 1.6% and the estimated rental vacancy rate is 1.0%. These two vacancy rates are calculated to estimate the number of homes for sale and housing units for rent. Figure 3.4 below illustrates the decreasing number of housing units available for sale in the City of Centralia from July 2016 through April 2024.

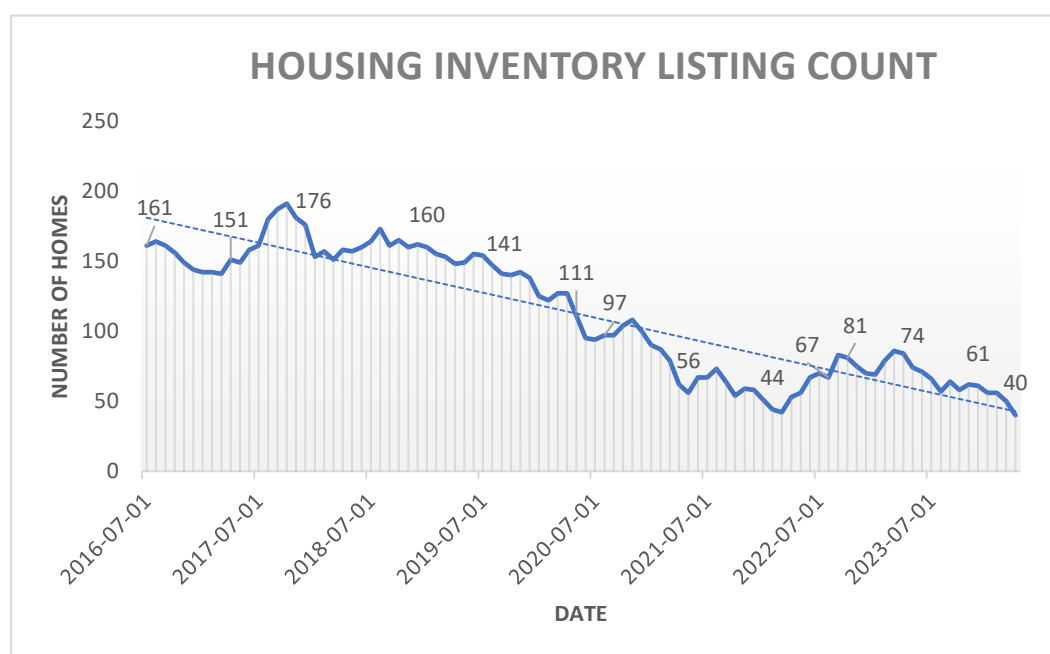


Figure 3.4 – Source: Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED)

Housing Unit Type

As illustrated in Table 3.2, the most common housing unit type in the City of Centralia is one unit detached (77.5%). Apartment units including 10 or more units (6.0%) and 5-9 units (5.1%) are the second and third most common housing unit type respectively.

TABLE 3.2: HOUSING UNIT TYPE

Type of Housing Unit	Total Housing Units	Percent (%)
1 Unit Detached	4,623	77.5
1 Unit Attached	52	0.9
2 Units	234	3.9
3-4 Units	238	4.0
5-9 Units	305	5.1
10 or More Units	361	6.0
Mobile Home or Other	155	2.6

Source: 2022 American Community Survey – U.S. Census Bureau

Housing Unit Age

A significant majority of housing units within the City of Centralia are older, with 75.3% of all housing units aged 45 years or older. Less than 5% of the total housing units were built in 2010 or later. Table 3.3 illustrates the Centralia housing unit age in more detail.

As noted earlier, the median home value within the city is \$80,343, this relatively affordable home value statistic is likely in part due to the age of most homes in Centralia. Generally speaking, newer homes are assessed at a significantly higher value than older homes. Due to the continually aging and decreasing housing stock, it is critically important that significant reinvestment in both the existing housing stock and new housing opportunities is prioritized.

TABLE 3.3: HOUSING UNIT AGE

Year Built	Total Housing Units	Percent (%)
2010 or later	257	4.3
2000-2009	388	6.5
1980-1999	829	13.9
1960-1979	1918	32.1
1940-1959	1477	24.7
1939 or earlier	1099	18.4

Source: 2022 American Community Survey – U.S. Census Bureau



4. Infrastructure & Transportation

During the first two decades of the 20th century, the City of Centralia grew from around 6,500 in population to approximately 12,500 in population. Since 1920 through the present day, this population has generally grown and waned by a few thousand each decade. Most of the community's growth took place in the early 1900s which indicates that a significant amount of its infrastructure, most notably water and sewer lines, is around a century old. Although upgrades have been made over the years to the older clay sewer lines and galvanized steel water lines, Centralia, as with so many other Illinois communities, share a similar long-term burden of upgrading their below-ground infrastructure systems.



U.S. 51 Centralia Water Tower, Chicago Sun-Times

Water & Wastewater

The City of Centralia employs a professional public works staff that manages the infrastructure of the city on a day-to-day basis. This includes both a water treatment plant and a wastewater treatment plant both located within the city. Centralia's water distribution system includes approximately 7,400 service connections within the city serving a total population of around 12,200 people. A 2024 lead service line inventory made possible by funding through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency found that of the over 7,000 service lines, 13 lines were found to be lead and 41 galvanized lines, all of which require replacement. An established plan to replace these lines must be completed and submitted to the Illinois EPA by April 2027.

The system's water intake comes from Carlyle Lake located approximately 9 miles to the northwest of the city. The city also has an emergency intake connection with Raccoon Lake, located in the northeast portion of Centralia. Although the distribution system and the water treatment plant are owned and operated by the city, the system supplies water to other nearby communities amounting to an estimated 32,000 water customers.

The Centralia Water Treatment Plant is as of the writing of this Plan, 100 years old and in dire need of replacement. The city has spent the last several years working to develop the

construction of a new water treatment plant. In November of 2023, the city attained \$1 million in funding through the US House of Representatives with the help of Congressman Mike Bost. In addition, the city is in the final stages of attaining a \$28 million 20-year low-interest loan through the EPA for the construction of the new water treatment plant. This new water plant will be built less than a mile south of the existing plant and will have an increased capacity for future community growth. Currently, the plant can produce 5-6 million gallons of water a day, but the city is authorized to draw over 7 million gallons per day.

As noted earlier, Centralia also owns and maintains a wastewater treatment plant or sewer plant. The treatment of this wastewater is critical to protect the local and regional environment as well as the health of both humans and animals. If not treated properly, this wastewater can pollute natural water sources, cause significant damage to natural habitats, and cause unnecessary illness. Treatment at this facility includes screening, grit removal, activated sludge, and filtration. Sludge is aerobically digested and land applied. The average flow for the facility in recent years is approximately 3.15 million gallons per day and the design maximum flow is 4.5 million gallons per day. The treated wastewater is discharged into 11 outfalls, or discharge points of waste streams into a body of water. All of the city's outfalls connect in some way to the Crooked Creek watershed, ultimately flowing into the Kaskaskia River to the west.

Broadband Infrastructure

In 2019, Illinois launched a statewide initiative called Connect Illinois to expand broadband access across the entire state. This initiative includes a broadband program with \$400 million allocated for a statewide broadband deployment grant. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), fully utilizing digital technologies within the agriculture economic sector could create approximately \$47 to \$65 billion annually for the United States economy.

High-quality and reliable broadband infrastructure is also critical to the success of K-12 education in the 21st century. The recent Covid-19 pandemic forced the development of a digital learning environment for students of all ages. The aforementioned statewide initiative includes state funding allocated to develop a K-12 broadband network at no cost for all Illinois K-12 schools.

The City of Centralia has excellent broadband connectivity availability, with all of the residents and businesses located within the corporate limits having direct access to broadband with 1 gigabit per second (1 Gbps; 1000 Mbps) upload and download speeds. This is exponentially higher than the U.S. average download speed of 242.38 Mbps and Illinois average of 324.9 Mbps². It is important to note that these state and national averages do take into account all rural areas across the country. Many of them have extremely limited broadband access and if

² speedtest.net & highspeedinternet.com, February 2024

available, that broadband connectivity is only available at much slower speeds. Appendix A and B illustrate 1Gbps and 100 Mbps access respectively, throughout the Centralia area.

The availability of 1 Gbps broadband connectivity is not only important for the ever-growing number of devices (i.e. Cell phones, Tablets, Smart TVs, Thermostats, etc.) connected to the internet at home but is critical for entrepreneurs and local businesses. Businesses rely heavily on stable and reliable connectivity for daily transactions and online marketing efforts. The availability of 1 Gbps access is no longer seen as a bonus when a forward-thinking business is choosing a location to develop and grow, rather, this high-speed internet is seen as a necessity.

With technology continuing to change rapidly, communities located in metropolitan areas across the U.S. are now connected to broadband services that are providing internet speeds upwards of 5Gbps. The 1 Gbps broadband access currently available throughout all of the City of Centralia should be viewed as the finish line, but rather a solid foundation for future growth.

Electric Utilities

Since 2012, the City of Centralia has worked with a municipal electrical aggregation consultant Good Energy to help secure fixed electricity supply rates for the entire community. Municipal aggregation allows Illinois communities, such as Centralia, to purchase electricity for its residents and businesses in aggregate from an electricity supplier, often leading to a decreased price, as compared to the Ameren Illinois rates. All residents and businesses can choose to opt out of the electric supply offer if they so choose.

Currently, the city is in the back half of a 22-month term with the electrical supplier Constellation NewEnergy at a fixed rate of 0.1210 cents per Kilowatt Hour (\$/kWh) that began in February of 2023 and is scheduled to end December 31st, 2024.



Roadway Infrastructure

The City of Centralia is centrally located in the southern half of the State of Illinois located about one hour east of St. Louis, Missouri. United States Route 51, which stretches from the Wisconsin-Michigan border south to New Orleans, Louisiana runs through the heart of the City of Centralia. The city is also located just 10 miles north of Interstate 64 and 9 miles west of Interstate 57.

The proximity to national roadway infrastructure provides the city with excellent connectivity to the surrounding region providing a great selling point for business recruitment and expansion efforts. In addition, residents of the community are only about a one-hour drive away from the St. Louis Metropolitan area, a huge quality of life benefit. Residents can enjoy a small-town feel, while also having relatively easy access to a large metro area.

Appendix C, located at the end of The Plan, provides a more detailed look at the Centralia surrounding area through the lens of a Drive Time Map. This map illustrates drive time segments of 15 minutes, 30 minutes, 1 hour, and 1 and ½ hours with the City of Centralia as the starting point.

In recent years, the city has completed numerous local street improvement projects which portions of Randolph Drive, Oak Park Drives, Hickory Street, Locust Street, Frazier Avenue Gragg Street, and Meadow Lane. These projects combined to be more than \$3 million in infrastructure improvements, a majority of which did not come out of city coffers, but rather through grant funding.

Railways

As mentioned in section one of this Plan, Centralia was named after the Illinois Central Railroad, so the community has deep roots in the railroad industry. The initial single-track railroad for Illinois Central Railroad was constructed in 1854-1855, with a double track fully constructed about 50 years later in 1902. Currently, the Canadian National (CN) Railway, formerly Illinois Central Railroad, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway, Norfolk Southern (NS) Railway, and Amtrak all routinely make trips to and through the City of Centralia.



Amtrak Train, Centralia – akronrrclub.wordpress

As of July 2023, the Centralia railroad had an average of 14 daily trains and an average annual daily traffic (AADT) of 2,100 total trains.³ AADT measures all train trips on a specific segment of the railway during a yearlong interval.

The Centralia Amtrak station, located at 101 South Oak in downtown Centralia, offers multiple trains daily in-state for the Illini/Saluki Route between Chicago and Carbondale, Illinois. In addition, a daily train to New Orleans, Louisiana is available. Centralia Amtrak saw a total of 113,525 individuals utilize the station from 2016-2022. From 2016-2019 an average of about 20,000 people per year utilized the Amtrak station. The Covid-19 pandemic caused a significant decrease in usage from 2020-2022 with only about 9,000 passengers per year over that time frame.⁴ Amtrak availability is a wonderful resource that the community has to offer its residents and visitors alike.

Municipal Airport

The Centralia Municipal Airport began in 1947 and is located two miles east of the city center immediately south of Illinois Route 161 or East McCord Street. The airport encompasses over 314 acres and includes two asphalt runways, both considered to be in fair to good condition in 2021. Runway 18/36 is approximately 5,001 feet in length and accommodates corporate aircraft

³ Illinois Commerce Commission Crossing Inventory, 2023 <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/>

⁴ Rail Passengers Amtrak Service Centralia, IL 2023 <https://www.railpassengers.org/site/assets/files/1798/cen.pdf>

Runway 9/27 is slightly shorter at 3,300 feet. Approximately 77 aircraft operations occur per day which amounts to around 28,000 per year.⁵

The Centralia Municipal Airport is also home to the Airgo Flight Academy. Since Airgo's inception in Centralia, Illinois in 1968, thousands of students have been successfully trained as international pilots. Today, pilots trained in Centralia, Illinois can be seen throughout the United States and around the world in other aviation industries.

In a 2021 Economic Impact Study by the South Central Illinois Regional Planning & Development Commission, it was estimated that the Centralia Municipal Airport outputs a total Economic Impact of approximately \$8,000,000 per year and employs 55 individuals through both direct and indirect jobs.⁶

In addition to the Centralia Municipal Airport, the City of Centralia also contains two heliports, the SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital ID (98IL) and Centralia Correctional Center ID (5IL8); both of which are privately owned and operated.

The City of Centralia is also only a one-hour drive from Lambert International Airport located in St. Louis, Missouri. This international airport provides non-stop flights both domestically and internationally to Canada, Mexico, Europe and the Caribbean on a regular basis.

Public Transportation

South Central Illinois Mass Transit (SCT), a public transportation agency, is headquartered within the City of Centralia. Along with its normal routes through the counties of Clinton, Franklin, Jefferson, Marion, Perry and Washington, SCT offers public transportation services including Door-to-Door Service, Curb-to-Curb Service, Medical Transportation, and School Transportation.

SCT is a valuable asset for the entire community, but especially for low-moderate-income individuals as well as senior citizens. SCT's transportation service will take passengers through key commercial corridors of Centralia and make specific stops at or near medical facilities and educational institutions.

⁵ <https://www.airnav.com/airport/kenl>

⁶ https://www.scirpdc.com/Downloads/Aeronautics/Centralia_Municipal_Airport_Study.pdf

5. Local Economy & Jobs

Local Industry

Following its founding in 1859, Centralia's economy was solely focused on the railway industry. Small shops and restaurants began to open up to cater to out-of-town visitors arriving on through the Illinois Central Railroad. The coal industry boom in the first few decades of the 1900s created a boom in the local economy and the population grew rapidly alongside it.

Today the local economy is predominantly made up of two industries, Health Care and Social Assistance and Retail Trade. About 50% of the entire jobs within the city come from these two industries. Specifically of the estimated 5,573 total jobs within the city, 2,841 jobs are within the two aforementioned industries. Table 5.1 below illustrates the top five industries within the community, along with the current average wages an employee earns in the industry.

TABLE 5.1: TOP INDUSTRIES BY EMPLOYMENT

Industry	Jobs	Avg. Annual Wage	LQ*
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,923	\$44,507	2.41
Retail Trade	918	\$32,652	1.64
Accommodation and Food Services	497	\$18,310	1.05
Educational Services	375	\$39,993	0.85
Manufacturing	331	\$51,255	0.74

Source: Jobs EQ, 2022 Q4

*Location Quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which the region has a high concentration of employment compared to the national average

The Health Care & Social Assistance industry includes all jobs within area hospitals, nursing, and residential care facilities, social assistance jobs such as family services, child care, and vocational rehabilitation. When looking more broadly at the regional Economic Development District, which includes the counties of Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Marion, and Jasper, established by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the Health Care & Social Assistance industry is largest in the five-county region reaching nearly 9,000 jobs. A close second in the region is the Manufacturing industry with approximately 7,500 jobs.

The LQ or Location Quotients shown in Table 5.1 indicate sectors in which the city has a high concentration of employment as compared to the national average, with the national average equaling an LQ of one. This means that any industry with an LQ over 1.0 is more highly concentrated in Centralia than the national average. More detailed information on the

industries within the city is located in Appendix D of the Plan. This information includes looking back 10 years in the past and forecasting NAICS industry employment 10 years from now within the city.

Retail Demand Outlook

Since the Retail Trade Industry is the second largest NAICS industry within Centralia, the Centralia Retail Demand Outlook is being included within this Plan to outline recent consumer spending data, as well as the forecasted demand in 2028. This data and information can be found in Appendix E.

Businesses

Within the City of Centralia there is an estimated 566 total businesses according to 2023 ESRI Business Analyst Data. Table 5.5 illustrates these businesses by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Industry also known as SIC code. These numerical codes were created in 1937 and assigned by the U.S. government to categorize which industries to which companies belong.

**TABLE 5.2: BUSINESS BY SIC CODE
INDUSTRY**

Industry	Number of Businesses
Agriculture & Mining	6
Construction	18
Manufacturing	16
Transportation	22
Communication	9
Utility	2
Wholesale Trade	18
Retail Trade	136
Finance	62
Services	236
Government	29
Unclassified	12
Total	566

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

Employment

A valuable metric to calculate and review is the daytime population of the community. This metric follows a basic equation to estimate the population increase of the community during their work week, and even more specifically, uncover the number of non-residents that spend their work week in the City of Centralia. The equation is as follows:

(Total Resident Population (A) + Total Workers Working in Centralia (B)) – Total Workers Working & Living in Centralia (C) = Daytime Population Estimate (D)

$$(A+B) - C = D$$

With an estimated current total population of approximately 12,000 (A) and 5,573 (B) total workers employed within the city, we have a total of 17,573 persons. Next, we subtract out all employed workers in Centralia, who also live in Centralia, which the most recent data available from the 2022 American Community Survey finds to be about 2,766. This means that the daytime population of the city, not accounting for residents that commute outside of Centralia for work, is 14,807. What is most telling is that approximately 2,807 non-residents are coming to Centralia to work each day. *

*(5,573 workers in Centralia – 2,766 workers working & living in Centralia = 2,807 commuters to Centralia).

If the current housing stock was expanded with new development, it is not far-reaching to assume that many of these non-residents who work each day in Centralia may consider purchasing a home in Centralia to be closer to work. While it is true that many of these commuters likely reside in smaller nearby communities such as Central City, Wamac, Junction City, Salem, and Walnut Hill, among others, and likely have strong ties to their hometown. If affordable and appealing housing options were available within Centralia for these individuals, many may choose to bring their families into the city limits.

Another key indicator of the health of the local economy is the labor participation rate. The labor participation rate displays the percentage of the population age 16 and over that is (1) employed at least part-time or (2) unemployed and searching for work. Non-participants are those aged 16 and over who are both (1) not working and (2) not actively seeking to find work. Table 5.2 illustrates Centralia’s labor force participation rate compared to State and National averages over the last three decades.

**TABLE 5.3: LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION
RATE (LFPR)**

Year	Centralia LFPR %	Illinois LFPR %	United States LFPR %
2000	57.0	65.4	63.9
2010	57.3	66.3	64.4
2020	55.4	65.2	63.4

Source: American Community Survey(s) – U.S. Census Bureau

The Centralia Labor Force Participation rate has shown a 1.6% decrease from the year 2000 to 2020, while Illinois and the U.S. as a whole appear to have remained relatively stable, showing only small decreases, during that same 30-year time frame. Additionally, it becomes apparent that the Centralia Labor Force Participation rate is significantly lower than the state and national average.

More specifically, the City of Centralia has an 8-10% reduction of the “potential” labor force as compared to state and national averages. The total 2020 labor force, persons aged 16 and over, for the city equates to approximately 9,711.⁷ If Centralia’s labor force participation rate was operating at state and national averages, there would be an additional 777-971 individuals either working or actively seeking work within the city.

⁷ 2020 American Community Survey – U.S. Census Bureau

TABLE 5.4: LABOR FORCE COMMUTING PATTERNS

Commuting Time (Minutes)	% of Labor Force (Number of Workers)
60+ Min.	4.3 (231)
30-59 Min.	15.7 (845)
15-29 Min.	19.9 (1,071)
10-14 Min.	24.5 (1,318)
5-9 Min.	29.0 (1,560)
<5 Min.	6.6 (355)

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey(s) – U.S. Census Bureau

Table 5.3 takes a closer look at the Centralia labor force population who commute to work and how far they travel for work. Of the 9,711 total individuals 16 years of age and older within the city, 55.4% or 5,380 are active members of the Centralia Labor Force. Table 5.3 shows that of these labor force participants, 60.1% commute 14 minutes or less to work, and 39.9% commute 15 minutes or more to work each day. Since the City of Centralia encompasses about 8.2 square miles in total area, it can be inferred that any commuter traveling more than 15 minutes for work is leaving the city limits for work.

Since earlier data indicated that the number of workers that both live and work within the city amounts to 2,549, this means that the remaining participating labor force, 2,831 individuals, are not working in the city.



**TABLE 5.5: 2020 LABOR FORCE
PARTICIPATION DETAIL**

Centralia Labor Force	Number of persons
Total Potential Labor Force	9,711
Labor Force Participants	5,380 (55.4%)
Labor Force working in Centralia	2,549
Labor Force not working in Centralia	2,831
Labor Force working outside of Centralia*	1,130
Labor Force looking for work without a job	1,701

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey(s) – Census Bureau

**Calculated by multiplying the number of individuals not working in Centralia by the percentage of individuals who travel outside of Centralia for work*

Table 5.4 takes a deeper dive into the labor force participation in the City of Centralia. Several inferences can be drawn utilizing both worker's residence data and the commuter data illustrated in Table 5.3. First, utilizing both the number of individuals within the Centralia labor force that are currently not working in Centralia (2,831) and the percentage of the labor force that travels outside the city for work (39.9%), we can estimate that a total of 1,130 individuals are employed for a business or establishment outside of the City of Centralia.

Secondly, it can be estimated that there are 1,701 individuals active in the Centralia labor force who are currently not employed. This calculation was completed by subtracting the labor force working outside of the city from the number of labor force members who are not working in Centralia.

From this point, it becomes quite difficult to determine further why such a large number of individuals within the Centralia labor force are unemployed and still considered to be actively seeking work. Putting the potential reasons aside, there is without a doubt a substantial number of untapped workers within the City of Centralia that are currently unemployed but still considered to be labor force participants.

Workforce Development

Developing a healthy workforce is an essential component of community economic development, and includes activities and programs to sustain and retain a viable workforce for current and future business. Developing a local workforce capable of filling the jobs of the present and future is not an easy task and demands successful partnerships between the municipality, local businesses, area educational institutions, and other community organizations.



Illinoisworknet.com

Illinois workNet, along with affiliates and community partners, provides one-stop delivery of workforce development services and resources. They include connecting individuals, employers, and education partners to career planning, employment resources and tools, and workforce programs. The City of Centralia is part of Local Workforce Innovation Area 23 within the State of Illinois. A LWIA Regional Map is available as Appendix D to the Plan. The regional Illinois workNet center is located in the City of Effingham, about one hour northeast of Centralia. However, CEFS Economic Opportunity Corporation, located in the Kaskaskia College Crisp Center, is a local Illinois workNet Partner. Appendix F includes a map of the Illinois Workforce Innovation Areas.

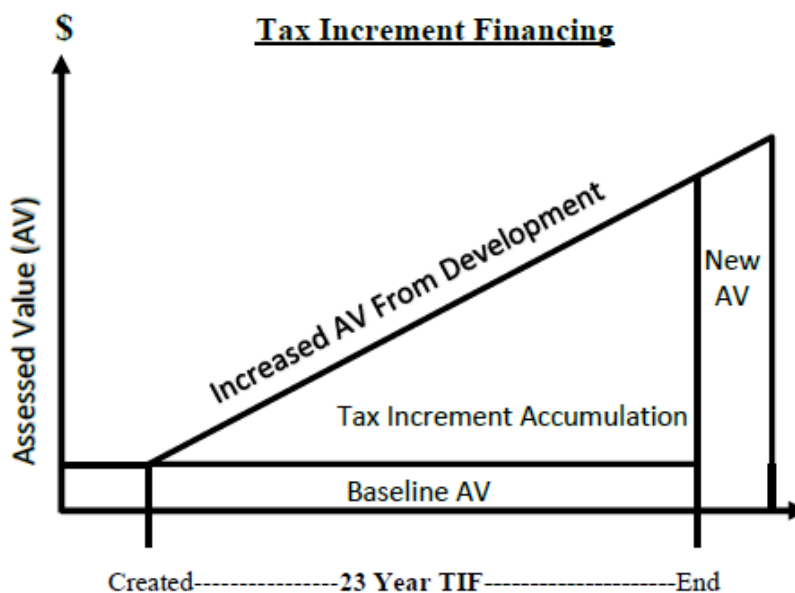
Kaskaskia College located in Centralia, Illinois has an established Workforce Development and Community Education (WDCE) Department that offers continuing education and customized training to students through primarily non-credit and short courses. Kaskaskia College works directly with employers to identify needs and develop customized solutions to maintain a highly skilled workforce that fits the needs of the community.

Between the offerings of Illinois workNet and Kaskaskia College, the City of Centralia and local business and industry are primed with the necessary tools and resources to make proactive steps in workforce development.

The city should pursue and help create close relationships between all of the workforce development partners mentioned above. City economic and community development staff should work in tandem as a liaison between local businesses and industry, Kaskaskia College, CEFS, other applicable community organizations, and Illinois workNet. Marketing these available resources and tools to both residents and local employers should be a priority to secure an educated workforce for the present and future.

Economic Development

The City of Centralia has at its disposal several economic development tools to assist the city in business expansion and recruitment efforts. One of these tools utilized by the city is Tax Increment Financing (TIF), created by the State of Illinois to promote the redevelopment of priority areas within a community. In short, a TIF-designated area or TIF District allocates a portion of property taxes paid by the property owners within the TIF District to a special fund called a Tax Increment Allocation Fund, managed by the municipality.



Source: SCIRPDC TIF Fact Sheet; www.scirpdc.com/Downloads/TIF/tif_fact_sheet.pdf

These TIF funds allow the community to finance otherwise unaffordable public infrastructure projects and provide an economic incentive to businesses to expand their footprint within the city. TIF funds are accumulated into the special allocation fund through property tax increments generated from the increased assessed value of property located within the designated TIF area. After the 23-year life of a TIF District, all increments generated are again shared amongst the taxing bodies within the previously designated TIF area.

Currently, the City of Centralia operates 4 TIF Districts located throughout the entire community. Appendix E, located at the end of this Plan, includes a map showing the boundaries of Centralia's 4 TIF Districts.

Centralia offers downtown businesses and developers the ability to apply for funding through their Downtown Façade Improvement Program. This program can provide up to \$12,000 toward TIF-eligible improvements to the exterior of downtown commercial buildings within the TIF #3 boundary.

A second economic development tool commonly used within the City of Centralia is the Greater Centralia Enterprise Zone, established in 2017. The State of Illinois allows the designation of certain areas as Enterprise Zones, in which businesses are afforded access to incentives that include, (1) sales tax abatement on building materials, (2) property tax abatement on new improvements, (3) Centralia building permit fees waiver, and (4) business income tax credits, if

applicable. The Greater Centralia Enterprise Zone includes not just portions of the City of Centralia, but also the nearby communities of Central City, Wamac, and some unincorporated areas of Clinton, Jefferson, Marion, and Washington Counties. A map of the Greater Centralia Enterprise Zone is also shown on the Centralia Economic Development map in Appendix G of this Plan.

In addition to these economic development incentive tools, the city can also examine the possibility of applying to USDA Rural Development to be a part of its Intermediary Relending Program (IRP). This program allows entities, such as local governments, to apply to receive up to \$1,000,000 in revolving loan funding to help provide funds to create and expand local businesses within the City of Centralia. In this particular case, the city would operate as the intermediary between a local business and USDA Rural Development to market, service, and maintain the lending program.

Alongside these economic development tools, Centralia should have on hand an Economic Development Welcome Packet for current and potential business developers to understand what all Centralia has to offer for prospective businesses. This welcome packet would contain at a minimum, a brief history of the city, demographic and workforce information, and city contact information. Ideally, this packet would be no more than 5-7 pages.

Lastly, although every community across Illinois is continually searching for ways to attract the next big business into the community, most successful economic development projects occur through business retention and expansion efforts. A business retention and expansion plan should be created and maintained to ensure that the needs of the local businesses and industry that call Centralia home are fully met. The Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce can be quite a beneficial partner in these efforts to better understand and meet the needs of local businesses.

Transportation Access

As noted previously in this Plan, the City of Centralia centrally located between Interstate 57 and 70 as well as U.S. Highway 50 and 51. These four major roadways provide residents and businesses alike with direct access to thousands of miles roadway infrastructure that connects all four corners of the United States mainland. This access includes the nearby St. Louis Metro area, with a population of just over 2.8 million, only a one-hour drive from the City of Centralia.

Centralia's history as a railroad community is not just history, but still continues to day with the CN Railway, BNSF Railway, and NS Railway also present in the city. Centralia today has the capacity to provide a new industry or firm with access to a rail spur. This spur would provide a prospective industry excellent access to multiple railway main lines for shipping goods or products across the country via rail. This is a unique economic opportunity and could provide any large firm with increased transportation efficiency and significant cost savings.

6. Tourism & Marketing

As a historic community, the City of Centralia has plenty to offer visitors through annual festivals and events, the community's 60,000 square foot multi-sport recreational complex, the Centralia Carillon, the historical society museum, and a downtown walking or trolley tour, among so many others.



Multiple organizations throughout the community have worked diligently for decades to develop local attractions and events, which have become a mainstay for the local and regional population. Many of these festivals and events, such as the annual Centralia Balloon Fest, bring in approximately 40,000 visitors from across the Midwest and beyond.

Due to the ever-growing success of tourism in the city in recent years, additional steps should be taken to capitalize on the many thousands of visitors coming to Centralia each year.

Place Branding

Place branding, or community branding, consists of finding an authentic, realistic, and flexible identity that can be easily described and used broadly within the community. It needs buy-in from the entire community, elected officials, business leaders, community stakeholders, and most importantly the residents.

Place brands are developed to support specific objectives. Some of these may include:

- Promoting the community as a visitor destination
- Attracting new businesses as well as business expansion
- Attracting new people and families to reside in the community
- Promoting civic pride among community residents
- Encouraging local people to spend more time and money locally

Each place branding process will have varying objectives, but most all will include objectives that are not dissimilar to the ones above.⁸

What is most essential to understand is that place branding is always occurring. When considering communities in the surrounding area, certain phrases, values, or descriptors will

⁸ Localgov.uk

come to mind. If the community itself is not attempting to brand itself, other communities or groups of people will do the branding for you. Often, the place branding a community is given from those outside the community is not well-meaning. Sometimes this branding's central purpose is to tear down the community. This is why, despite being arduous at times, the community needs to find and take control of its own identity and express its values outwardly through its place brand.

One final aspect of place branding that is important is what it is not meant to represent. While the City of Centralia's local government staff, public service departments, and elected officials should have a leadership role in the place branding process, the place brand is the community's identity, not the identity of the local government and the services it provides. In sum, the place brand is about the place and the community that the Centralia local government serves. It is not about the local government, its partners, or any individual businesses.

Place Marketing

While Place Marketing flows much easier following the completion of Place Branding, continuous efforts to advertise and promote local events and attractions are still greatly beneficial. The City of Centralia, Centralia Tourism, and the Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce, among other community organizations and businesses, have already taken important steps to adequately market Centralia as a place to be both locally and for people abroad. Centralia is already working with state-wide entities such as Discover Downstate Illinois and Enjoy Illinois to promote event attractions within the community, and this should continue to be an integral part of future marketing campaigns. The Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce is another partner the city should utilize to shine a light on successful businesses and promote new ones that come into the community.

Currently, See Centralia provides an excellent foundation for future tourism efforts. This tourism wing of the city is consistently promoting activities and events throughout the city via social media outlets such as Meta (Facebook). The See Centralia website (seecentralia.com) is one example of a great online marketing strategy for local events and attractions throughout the year. Utilizing online promotion and advertisement tools is one the best and most cost-efficient ways to market a community. However, once these online marketing tools begin to be used, it becomes essential to keep them up to date with the most recent events.

The City of Centralia is ideally located at the heart of the continental United States. Businesses and residents alike are within a one-hour drive of the St. Louis Metro area, and with it a large commercial market area for selling goods and services as well as an abundance of recreational opportunities and entertainment offerings. One vital piece of any Centralia place marketing campaign will certainly be advertising its prime location to potential residents, business and industry.

In addition, Centralia also can provide new business and industry with excellent nationwide transportation access through interstate roadways, railway access, a local and nearby international airport and the St. Louis Metro Ports along the Mississippi. Ensuring these first-rate transportation opportunities are marketed effectively will be extremely beneficial in the recruitment of potential new business and industry.

Before going all in on a full-fledged marketing strategy for the community, the place branding process should occur. Once place branding is complete, a 5-to-10-year marketing strategy including website promotion, social media advertising, a billboard campaign, email marketing, print marketing, and even television and radio, can be created and budgeted for.

7. Community Assets & Community Development

City Services

The City of Centralia operates under a Council-Manager form of government originally adopted by referendum. The city council is made up of four elected council members and the mayor. The powers of the council are entirely legislative and their roles are principally policy-making. The appointed city manager is the administrative and executive head of the operations of the local government. In this form of government, the city manager is the one responsible for the efficient administration of all departments and the implementation of policies established by the city council.



Centralia City Hall – southernillinoisnow.com

Public Safety

The City of Centralia Police Department consists of 26 full-time sworn officers and 13 full-time civilian staff members. The mission of the Centralia Police Department is:

“...to work in partnership with our community to preserve safety, maintain human rights, protect property and improve the quality of life by providing excellent police service to all in a fair, sensitive and professional manner.”

According to the 2021 Illinois State Police Uniform Crime report, the city had a total index crime of 645. This index crime rating is the total number of crimes reported to the Illinois State Police. Although crime rates are significantly higher in the city than U.S. averages, the nearby communities of Salem, Effingham, and Mount Vernon, Illinois all suffer similar issues with increased crime compared to U.S. averages.

The common thread amongst these communities is the proximity to U.S. Interstates 57, 64, and 70. While this interstate roadway infrastructure provides excellent transportation access for local industry and residents, it commonly brings increased crime alongside it.

The Centralia Police Department should continue to strive for its stated mission statement each day. Developing positive relationships with the entire community, especially the youth of today and tomorrow, is an essential step in preserving safety for all residents of the community.

The Centralia Fire Department consists of 15 full-time firefighters and five part-time firefighters. The department has two fire stations located on South Poplar Street and West Broadway. The mission of the Centralia Fire Department is:

“...to protect life and property from loss, suffering, and damage due to fire, medical and environmental emergencies within the community through public education, code management, and incident response.”

The City of Centralia currently has an Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating of 3. The I.S.O. rating can have a direct impact on insurance premiums that individuals pay on their homes and especially on commercial buildings. The ISO rating is on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being considered a perfect rating. The ISO review examines three primary three areas, (1) emergency communication systems (10 points), (2) personnel, capabilities, training, equipment, etc. (50 points), and (3) water supply (40 points).⁹

The ISO rating of 3 should be considered an excellent achievement and indicates that the fire department has significantly more than adequate capabilities for the community.

Parks & Recreation

The City of Centralia has been afforded several unique parks and recreational areas for residents and visitors alike to enjoy. Fairview Park in the northwest portion of the city includes playground equipment, baseball and softball fields, tennis courts, a skate park, horseshoe pits, sand volleyball, as well as 11 sheltered picnic areas. Additionally, Fairview Park is home to Railroad Village which includes a historic train engine and caboose on display and a Republic F-105 Thunderchief jet flown during the Vietnam War.



Balloon Fest, Foundation Park – centraliafoundationpark.com

Centralia Foundation Park, although privately owned and operated, is open to the public year-round. This park includes nearly 300 acres of preserved park grounds and has been in existence since 1946. There are miles of hiking trails, two fishing ponds, an ice-skating pond, an outdoor amphitheater, and disc golf.

⁹ <https://www.powerdms.com/policy-learning-center/iso-ratings-for-fire-departments>

The Centralia Community Youth Center offers the youth of Centralia several after-school activities including tutoring, wrestling club, chess club, basketball, dance, and karate.

Centralia is also home to the Centralia Recreation Complex, a 60,000-square-foot multi-sport facility located downtown. This facility offers a walking and jogging track, a large gymnasium with two full courts, a fitness room, an indoor six-lane competition pool, a waterslide, and a family leisure pool.

For avid golfers, in the southern portion of the city is Greenview Country Club which offers a full 18-hole golf course.

With a mixture of public and privately owned recreational areas within the city, continued strong partnerships between the City of Centralia, the Centralia Foundation, the Centralia Community Youth Center, and all other applicable community organizations are critical.

Education

The level of educational attainment within Centralia can be attributed to access to post-high school educational institutions. Centralia is fortunate to be home to Kaskaskia College, which has served as the local community college since 1940. Kaskaskia College offers 56 degrees and 92 certificate programs. The local community college serves approximately 7,600 students annually and has an 18:1 student-to-faculty ratio.¹⁰ The closest four-year universities include Southern Illinois University (60.8 miles), Greenville University (39.1 miles), McKendree University (43.2 miles), Eastern Illinois University (97.1 miles), and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (134.5 miles).

As indicated in Figure 7.1, 61.1% of the population of Centralia have at least some college education. Of that 61.1%, over 30% of the population has an Associate's Degree or higher.

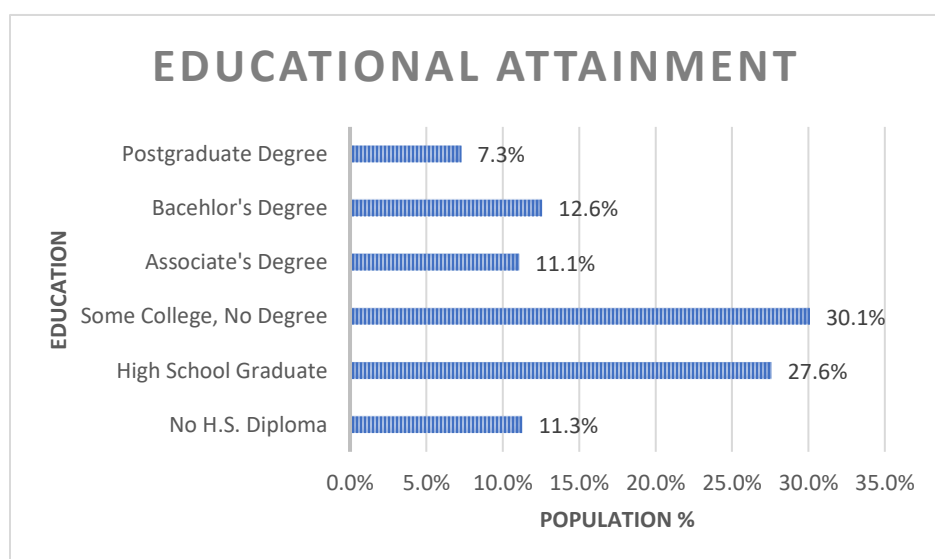


Figure 7.1 – Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

¹⁰ <https://www.kaskaskia.edu/about-kc/>

The educational and economic value of Kaskaskia College on the City of Centralia and the greater region is immense. Aside from the thousands of students, a recent economic impact study completed by Lightcast,¹¹ found that Kaskaskia College had added or support \$132.7 million in income and 2,062 jobs supported through the region in 2022-2023. If these numbers indicate anything, it is that the college should be seen as important partner in the future growth of the city and entire region.

Centralia is also home to three public school districts, Centralia School District #135 (SD 135), Willow Grove School District #46 (SD 46), and Centralia High School District #200 (HSD 200).

Centralia SD 135 includes Schiller Elementary School (Pre-K – 1st Grade), Jordan Elementary School (2nd – 3rd Grade), and Centralia Junior High School (4th – 8th Grade). In total Centralia SD 135 had an enrollment of 1,105 during the 2022-2023 school district with average spending per student of approximately \$16,000 and a student-to-teacher ratio of 17:1.

Willow Grove SD includes one elementary school for Pre-Kindergarten through 8th Grade, Willow Grove Elementary School. This school had an enrollment of 159 students in the 2022-2023 academic calendar year, expended approximately \$13,000 per student, and had a student-to-teacher ratio of 17:1

Centralia HSD 200 includes Centralia High School. In total, the high school had a total enrollment of approximately 831 students in 2022. The school spent approximately \$19,000 per student and had a student-to-teacher ratio of 15:1.¹²

The city is also home to several private schools including Christ Our Rock Lutheran High School, Trinity Lutheran School (K-8th Grade), St. Mary Elementary School (K – 8th Grade), and New Horizon Christian School (Pre-K – 8th Grade).

Historic Preservation

Centralia is a historic community. The community's history has been discussed throughout this entire Plan and this history is without a doubt one of the fundamental pillars of community. As the community and city continue to adapt to changes, staying rooted in the history of the community should be a priority. The Centralia Commercial Historic District is a prime example of this history. The entire district of 57 buildings, as well as the historic wooden water tower, are included on the National Register of Historic Places as of March 7, 2012.¹³

The properties within the Commercial Historic District must be preserved, maintained, and restored to protect their character from development that could detract from their historic nature. Properties that are on the National Register of Historic Places cannot have future

¹¹ https://www.kaskaskia.edu/media/web-assets/documents/about-kc/KC_EIS_MainReport_2223_Final_V2.pdf

¹² <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/>

¹³ <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/index.htm>

alterations, both interior and exterior if the owner is utilizing state or federal funds without the approval of the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office.¹⁴

In addition, the City of Centralia has established a Preservation Commission with certain powers and duties to ensure that these historic properties are identified and preserved. Those powers are explicitly provided for within Article VI. Division 5 of the Centralia Code of Ordinances.

Preserving the historic identity of the city includes more than just maintaining historic buildings and structures, it also includes the community's cultural identity. The city is fortunate to have two significant organizations that each strive to maintain Centralia's historic culture. These organizations include the Centralia Area Historical Society and the Centralia Cultural Society.

The Centralia Area Historical Society's mission is to maintain historical information and artifacts about the community and region for study, education, and enjoyment by the public. The Historical Society's Museum is located in downtown Centralia and contains three floors of artifacts, and memorabilia and also houses the George Ross Library on the second floor.

The Centralia Cultural Society, which has been serving Centralia since 1961, has at its core a central focus on the cultural arts. Its mission is to connect arts with the community. With over 300 volunteers and 250 financial patrons, the Centralia Cultural Society has six member groups including, Little Theatre Players, Choral Society, Philharmonic Orchestra, Create Endeavors, Light and Lens, and Palette & Brush.¹⁵ These member groups represent several art mediums including theatre, music, writing, photography, and painting.

The City of Centralia should work closely with these community organizations and help shine a light on their efforts in the Centralia Area. These cultural arts and cultural heritage organizations help residents' young and old remember and celebrate shared experiences and community traditions. These civic activities bind the residents together and help to build a strong sense of community.

Boards & Commissions

The City of Centralia has as of the drafting of this Plan eighteen different boards and commissions that are currently actively meeting at least semi-regularly. A full list of these boards and commissions is shown in Table 7.1. Municipal boards, commissions, task forces, and committees are established by local governments to aid elected officials and appointed staff in the decision-making process on specific policy issues. While some boards are mandatory under for certain municipal governments, such as the Police and Fire Commission, the Enterprise Zone Board, and the Zoning Board of Appeals, others are created by the municipality to aid in policy decisions. These boards can be strictly advisory, existing to provide staff and elected officials

¹⁴ <https://www.landmarks.org/>

¹⁵ <https://www.centraliaculturalsociety.org>

with policy-making advice, while others may be given specific authority established by municipal ordinance.

In addition, some boards may be temporarily established by the City Council to research specific policy issues such as the Fairview Park Pool Committee. Following the completion of the necessary policy research, those boards are likely to be no longer necessary and eliminated.

TABLE 7.1: CENTRALIA BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Airport Advisory Board	Parks and Recreation Committee
Cemetery Advisory Commission	Plan & Zoning Commission
Enterprise Zone Board	Police Pension Board
Fairview Park Pool Committee	Preservation Commission
Fire Pension Board	Tree Board
Fire & Police Commission	Tourism Commission
Fishing Committee	Veterans Affairs Committee
Housing & Code Enforcement	Youth Commission
Industrial Commission	Zoning Board of Appeals

Source: cityofcentralia.org

The City of Centralia has a variety of boards with differing roles to play in the municipal decision-making process. As part of the planning process, research into the roles these boards and commissions play in the City of Centralia was conducted. The number of meetings and attendance at those meetings varied greatly from board to board. This is not necessarily unusual since many of the established boards in Table 7.1 work on specific policy issues that only need to be addressed from time to time. Several ways to improve the operation of the established commissions are included in the Plan Priorities section of the Plan.

8. Land Use

The Land use element of the Plan looks at existing land uses and established the pattern for future land development within the City of Centralia. The policies outlined in this section will help guide future development practices in coordination with the Centralia zoning ordinance and map.

Land Use & Zoning

When examining future land practices and development it is important to distinguish between land use and zoning. Land use classifications are general in nature and often include the delineation between single family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, industrial, and park categories. Future land use planning can range from meticulous boundary mapping parcel by parcel to a broader, less definite categorization of land use areas, allowing for more flexibility in municipal zoning.

The Zoning District Map is shown in Appendix F and corresponds with the Centralia Zoning code. Illinois municipalities can create a zoning ordinance for property located within the corporate boundaries of the municipality and unincorporated land that is within a 1.5-mile radius of the corporate limits. The City of Centralia has established seventeen zoning districts. These include the following districts shown on Table 8.1.

TABLE 8.1: CENTRALIA ZONING DISTRICTS

AG – Agricultural District	I-1 – Light Industrial District
SR-E – Single Family Residential Estate	I-2 – Industrial District
SR-1 – Single Family Residential District	S-1 – Flood Overlay District
SR-2 – Single Family Residential District	S-2 – Airport District
MR – Multiple Family Residential District	INS – Institutional District
MH – Mobile Home Overlay District	B-4 – Corridor Business District
B-1 – Neighborhood Business District	Wireless Communications Facilities
B-2 Centralia Business District	Preservation Overlay District
B-3 – Highway/Arterial Business District	

An established zoning ordinance and map allows the city to specify rules and regulations for development in particular areas of the community. These regulations can include limits on building height, lot size, and the types of buildings that can be build (i.e. residential, commercial, industrial, etc.). The purpose and specific regulations concerning the Centralia zoning ordinance can be accessed online through the City of Centralia website.

It is important for City of Centralia elected officials, municipal staff, as well as the established municipal zoning board, to periodically review the established zoning districts and consider if there are ways to increase zoning efficiency and decrease unnecessary obstacles to new development and re-development of existing structures throughout the city. Property development can be a cumbersome process. With that in mind, the city should seek out ways to limit these development hindrances in any way possible. One way to do this, is through regular zoning ordinance review and revision.

Floodplain & Wetlands

Appendix I and J located at the end of the Plan provide a detailed illustration of the 100-year floodplain and wetlands areas located in and around the City of Centralia. Prior to any construction occurring in or through areas denoted as a Floodplain or Wetlands a thorough assessment of the environmental impacts of such construction should be completed. The city should consider establishing local ordinances dictating what types of construction are allowed in floodplains and wetlands areas and the mitigation measures that need to be taken for development in those areas.

Property Annexation

As development within the city continues over the next two decades, the City Council and municipal staff should also examine opportunities for future municipal property annexation in order to ensure the community has room for continued growth beyond the current limits of the corporate boundaries. Potential areas for future annexation of property for the city could include property to the northwest and northeast of the current corporate boundaries as well as property to the southeast of the city.

9. Plan Implementation & Priorities

This Comprehensive Plan should serve as a guide for the future growth and development of the community. It is intended to be a dynamic document that can be altered as the needs and conditions of the community change over time.

Using the Comprehensive Plan

It is essential to first and foremost recognize this Plan as a guide. The Plan's intention can be summarized in four parts:

- 1) Establish a data-driven foundation of where Centralia currently stands;
- 2) Determine the values and principles that community members embrace;
- 3) Provide a community vision for the future of Centralia; and
- 4) Finalize a list of practical priorities to help achieve that vision.

Due to the fact that the community needs will change over time it is important that the City of Centralia is able to adapt to new opportunities and situations as they arise. Local elected officials and appointed decision-makers should recognize the broader intentions of the plan to make decisions that best serve the community. Monitoring the Plan implementation and conducting annual reviews are vital to keeping the plan relevant to the community as it changes.

This Comprehensive Plan can and should be used to coordinate the development and implementation of additional more specific plans for the city. These plans may include, a Capital Improvement Plan, Park and Recreation Planning, Downtown Redevelopment Plans, a Tourism Strategic Plan, and Sidewalk Improvement Plans, among many others.

Plan Maintenance & Implementation

The Centralia City Council, committees, commissions, and municipal staff all share the responsibility and obligation to work in partnership toward achieving the priorities outlined herein. The Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee, created to guide the development of this Plan, should also be included and engaged in conversations regarding any significant amendments or alterations of the Plan.

Plan maintenance and implementation does not fall on any one person or group, but rather all Centralia stakeholders share in an obligation to implement, maintain, review, and alter the data, information, and priorities contained in this Plan on a semi-regular basis.

The City Manager, or equivalent, has the responsibility to ensure that relevant municipal staff regularly review the progress of priority implementation as well as recommend changes to the Plan as necessary and required. Each municipal staff member has a specific role to plan in the implementation of the plan priorities.

The City Manager, or equivalent, has the additional responsibility to develop and implement a priority development or achievement tracker in cooperation with municipal staff. Not only will this tracker aid in measuring progress toward priority completion, but also safeguard against municipal staff changes that will undoubtedly occur over the course of the implementation of this plan.

On a regular basis, and no less than quarterly, the City Manager, or designated municipal staff member(s), should provide the Centralia City Council with updates regarding progress toward Plan priority implementation. This Plan priority review or update can occur during regularly scheduled council meetings or at special meetings of the City Council.

Following or during the implementation of Priority 4 under Community Assets & Community Development, many of the Plan priorities may fall within the purview of an established City of Centralia Committee. Each of the established committees should aid the city in the implementation of this Plan's priorities, where their involvement is deemed relevant by municipal staff and the City of Centralia City Council.

All significant content changes or alterations to the Comprehensive Plan should be made available to the public before approval by the Centralia City Council.

Table 9.1 outlines the most essential roles for both the Centralia City Council and City Staff.

**TABLE 9.1: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
RESPONSIBILITIES**

City Council	City Staff
• Regularly review the progress of Plan Priority implementation • Set annual priorities and budget in alignment with the Plan • Refer to the Plan during decision-making processes • Ensure that all other planning documents align with the comprehensive plan • Seek Plan implementation partners throughout the community and region • Champion the Plan	• Regularly report Plan Priority progress to the City Council • Monitor the progression of day-to-day projects • Review the compatibility of individual projects with the priorities of the Plan • Prioritize the Plan priorities when meeting with residents or potential developers • Manage and draft Plan alterations or amendments • Negotiate intergovernmental or other agreements necessary to fully implement the plan

Comprehensive Plan Priorities

The Plan Priorities should be considered to be the practical, actionable, and measurable objectives of the planning process. These priorities are being established with input from the community-wide visioning survey process, assessed needs based on relevant data, and formal, as well as informal, meetings with city staff, local business leaders, local stakeholders, and municipal commission members.

Each priority within this Plan directly aligns with at least one section of the Plan and includes, (1) a priority statement; (2) a course of action to help meet the objectives of the priority, and (3) potential funding opportunities to finance the course of action, if applicable.

What will become apparent through these Plan Priorities is the interconnectivity of each of the goals. For example, new housing development will not only provide a home for a new family, but also increase the community tax base through property tax revenue, and potentially add new participants in the Centralia Labor Force.

As is the case with the entirety of the Plan, these Plan Priorities should be considered a road map of actionable items for the Centralia City Council that can be changed and altered as the needs of the entire community change over time.



Plan Priorities

Housing

Priority 1: Maintain current housing stock through home repair, rehabilitation efforts, and code enforcement.

- a. Examine the opportunity and financial feasibility of developing a city-sponsored small home improvement program to provide low-moderate-income homeowners the ability to apply for and receive small home repair grants.
 - A city-sponsored small home repair grant would help to encourage well-maintained occupied homes throughout the city. This potential re-investment would be a direct benefit to low-moderate-income homeowners who otherwise would be unable to properly perform routine maintenance on their homes due to income limitations. Furthermore, this program would help to negate the number of homes falling into disrepair and ultimately vacant.
 - The guidelines for such a program can be established through collaboration between City Staff and the City Council. A few pillars of the program would ideally include:
 - i. Income limits for program applicants based on established county median household income limits established by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.
 - ii. An annual allocation of funding to the program, to be managed by appropriate city staff and overseen by the City Manager.
 - iii. A maximum amount of funding obligated to each approved program applicant/homeowner (i.e. \$10,000 - \$20,000). The intention should be to positively impact the greatest number of homes with the money available.
 - iv. This program would ideally include an annual budget allocation of \$100,000 - \$150,000. This would allow the repair of 8-12 homes per year depending on the exact allocation, number of homes, and amount of funds granted per home. A proof-of-concept program year with a smaller amount of funding would be a great first step to get the program off the ground.

Potential Funding Source(s): Cost-Sharing opportunity with other Centralia area community organizations

- The city should first examine how it can cooperate with other community organizations and/or foundations to establish a cost-sharing agreement for the program. Organizations such as the Centralia Foundation, BCMW Community Services, School District(s), Kaskaskia College, and the County Housing Authority(ies) should be part of program development and implementation.
 - If funding from outside the City of Centralia is unavailable, the city should examine its own annual budgetary obligations to attempt to set aside funds for a small home repair program.
- b. Explore State and Federal grant opportunities for home repair and rehabilitation. Coordinating these efforts with local and regional community organizations may be beneficial.**
- Examine the possibility of applying for Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Community Development Block Grant Funds for Housing Rehabilitation. This grant program will provide municipalities with direct funding for low-moderate-income home rehabilitation.
 - Explore potential funding availability through the Illinois Housing Development Authority for home repair and rehabilitation assistance. Programs that may be available include the Home Repair and Accessibility Program (HRAP) and the Illinois Homeowner Assistance Fund Home Repair Program (HAFHR).
 - The United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development division offers grant and/or loan funds to low-income homeowners who are in need of home repair. The homes must owner occupied. Grant funds of up to \$10,000 are available for homeowners age 62 and older and can be combined with up to \$40,000 in low-interest loan funding to improve and modernize homes as well as remove health and safety hazards.
- c. Actively enforce the local building codes and examine ways to streamline the code violation correction process.**
- Ensure that the local building codes are in line with applicable state and federal guidelines. These codes include, but are not necessarily limited to, the International

Building Code, Illinois Energy Conservation Code, Illinois Accessibility Code, Illinois Plumbing Code, National Fire Protection Association Codes.

- Collaborate with the municipal code enforcement officer and other supporting staff to ensure they have the necessary resources at their disposal to effectively enforce local building codes.
- Collaborate with the municipal code enforcement officer, city attorney and other supporting staff to establish a housing inspection policy or ordinance requiring mandatory inspections of rental properties within the city on regular or semi-regular basis.

Priority 2: Advance and support new housing development throughout the city.

- a. Work with local community organizations, developers, and contractors to support residential infill development within the City of Centralia. Infill development refers to the construction buildings on previously underutilized or unused land within an otherwise developed area of the community.
 - Residential infill development is more financially feasible than new housing subdivision development because these infill homes would utilize existing city-owned infrastructure (i.e. roadways, water, sewer, electrical, etc.)
 - Infill development also provides the city with new property tax revenue. One of the largest benefits of this kind of residential development is the ability to turn vacant lots, or properties with dilapidated homes that are in disuse, into valuable tax base assets.
- b. The City of Centralia should examine the opportunity for establishing a Residential Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.
 - A municipal Residential TIF District can be utilized to reimburse a portion or percentage of taxes paid on the tax increment generated by new property improvements, such as the construction of a new housing unit.

Potential Funding Source(s): Housing Development Firms, Illinois Housing Development Authority, Local and Regional Contractors, City of Centralia

Priority 3: The City of Centralia should consider submitting a Request for Proposals (RFP) to applicable firms to complete a Residential Housing Study to further drill down on the current and future housing needs of the city.

- a. The city would not necessarily be obligated to select a firm to complete the plan, but this due diligence would put the city in a position to more effectively make specific housing policy decisions for the future.
- b. The city could work with other municipalities with Marion County, (i.e. Wamac, Central City, Salem, Odin, etc.) to submit an RFP for a county-wide housing needs study.
- c. Three findings and/or recommendations from the completion of this full Housing Study would likely include:
 - A recommendation to establish a county-wide Land Bank. An established Marion County Land Bank would act as a public entity with specific powers to put vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties back to productive use.
 - Establish a plan to complete the full repair or replacement of all homes built prior to 1959 over the next 10-20 years. In the case of the City of Centralia, this would include approximately 2,576 residential units or 43.1% of the entire housing stock of the City of Centralia.
 - Continue to maintain the current Vacant Property Registry and attempt to stay as up-to-date as possible with new vacancies. For property owners that have no interest in maintaining their property to building code standards, options should be afforded to facilitate the property's disposal.
 - Consider the development and approval of a municipal ordinance requiring homeowners, land lords and property managers to notify the City of Centralia if a residential home becomes vacant. These ordinances are known as Vacant Building Ordinances (VBOs).

Potential Funding Source(s): City of Centralia, Marion County Municipal Cost-Sharing

Infrastructure & Transportation

Priority 1: Develop a five-year Capital Improvement Plan to plan for future roadway, water, sewer, stormwater or other necessary infrastructure maintenance projects.

- a. The creation and implementation of a Capital Improvement plan will help elected officials and city staff members plan and properly finance capital improvements in the short-term. This plan will explicitly state, the type of project being proposed, the location of the project, and the timing of the project over the five-year life cycle of the plan.
 - The Capital Improvement Plan is a municipal internal document and should be overseen by the City Manager and contributed to by support staff. Similar to this Comprehensive Plan, the Capital Improvement Plan should be considered dynamic and can be altered as capital improvement projects are completed or changed.

Priority 2: Develop subsections of the Capital Improvement Plan including a Sidewalk Master Plan, Roadway Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan.

- a. The Sidewalk Master Plan should include current sidewalk inventory by location and develop a condition rating scale for municipal owned sidewalk. Priority should be given to areas commonly used by children, senior citizens, and those using sidewalk to reach medical facilities.
- b. Similar to the Sidewalk Master Plan, the Roadway Master Plan should include municipal roadway inventory and a condition rating for established for the roadway. Priority areas for roadway improvement projects should include those utilized to reach educational institutions, medical facilities, grocery stores, city facilities, parks, and large employers.
- c. The city should also consider the creation and development of a Bicycle Master Plan. This plan should consider the inclusion of bicycle lanes on major and minor roads (Collector Roadways) during the planning phases of large-scale roadway improvement projects. These Collector Roadways have speed limits between 35 and 55 mph. These roadways commonly connect local streets to high volume roadways that lead to schools, commercial areas, medical facilities and large employers.

Potential Funding Source(s): Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Department of Transportation, City of Centralia

Priority 3: Strive to maintain and expand the municipal water system infrastructure.

- a. The City of Centralia's water system not only delivers potable water to municipal residents, but also provides water service to approximately 32,000 people throughout the Greater Centralia area. It is vital that this infrastructure, including all owned water mains and the water treatment plant, are well maintained and receive considerable investment.
- b. Centralia's current water treatment plant is no longer viable for the future, as such, in May of 2024 the city has approved the construction of a new water treatment plant for approximately \$28,000,000. Elected officials and city staff should continue work toward obtaining other sources of funding for water plant construction to offset costs being expended locally.

Potential Funding Source(s): Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, City of Centralia General funds, City of Centralia Tax Increment Financing funds, Illinois Capital Grant Funding

Priority 4: During the planning phase of future infrastructure projects seek out state and federal funding opportunities to aid in the financing of those projects.

- c. Many state and federal agencies will pay for a significant portion of planned infrastructure projects through competitive grant programs. The city should be in continued communication with their regional planning commission as well as local and regional engineering firms to help apply for and manage grant funds awarded for infrastructure projects.
 - Example infrastructure projects that may be eligible for grant funding include water distribution improvements, sewer main improvements, roadway improvements connected to business expansion, sidewalk improvements, etc.

Potential Funding Source(s): Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois Department of Transportation, United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Local Economy & Jobs

Priority 1: Streamline the business development process.

- a. Economic and Community Development staff members should take steps to eliminate barriers to opening a new business in Centralia. One simple, but important way to do this is for the city to create an official process for handling potential business owners and developers. This official process would include:
 - Establishing an initial city staff member as the first point of contact for potential business owners and developers.
 - Determining the city staff members that should be involved in an initial meeting with the potential business owner or developer. This initial meeting should include economic development staff, community development staff, the potential business owner, and if applicable, project engineers or architects.
 - Provide the potential business owner or developer with other necessary information including, potential economic development incentives, and any required permitting that may be required, among other information deemed necessary.

Priority 2: Establish a formal Business Retention and Expansion Program.

- a. The Economic Development Director should establish a formal Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program that includes outreach to local businesses and industry to ensure their current needs are met.
 - This BRE program should include in-person meetings with the business or industry owner, manager, president, plant manager, or CEO. Additionally, a BRE survey should be presented for completion. These surveys will provide many key business indicators such as employment needs, supply-chain issues, and future expansion possibilities, among others.
 - Resources to begin a formal BRE program can be received from the local regional planning commission or the Illinois Rural Affairs Institute.
 - Cooperation with the Greater Centralia Area Chamber of Commerce and other local business organizations on the implementation of the BRE should be considered.

- This BRE program should not only focus on existing business, but also include a plan for business attraction. The program should include the development of green sites so that they are project ready. These project ready sites should have all necessary infrastructure, such as electricity, water, sewer, gas and roadway access, in-place for developers interested in locating within the City of Centralia.

Priority 3: Develop and market a Business Resource Packet.

- a. The Economic Development Director should create a Business Resource Packet that can be distributed to potential employers and developers interested in making Centralia their business destination. These Resource Packets should include but are not limited to, a brief introduction to the city, socio-demographic information, local business and industry data, workforce data and availability, and contact information to reach city officials.
- This Business Resource Packet, once completed, should be made available online via the city's municipal webpage. The Packet should be provided to all potential developers looking to establish a new business within the City of Centralia.

Priority 4: Examine the opportunity to establish a Centralia Workforce Development Board.

- a. The intent of the Centralia Workforce Development Board would be to ensure that the employment needs of the Centralia area businesses and industry are being met. Members of the Workforce Development Board would include the Centralia High School District, Kaskaskia College, CEFS (an Illinois WorkNet Partner), local business and industry stakeholders, and applicable city staff.
- The Workforce Board will look toward offering students a direct pathway from specific training and certification programs to current or future employment opportunities with local businesses and industry in the City of Centralia.

Tourism & Marketing

Priority 1: Submit an RFP to applicable firms for a Place Branding and Place Marketing study.

- a. A Place Branding and Marketing study, as well as its implementation, supports the creation of one unified community brand to market abroad. The place brand and place marketing will support community objectives such as, (1) promoting the community as a visitor destination, (2) attracting new businesses and families to reside in the community, (3) promoting civic pride among community residents, and (4) encouraging local people to spend more time and money locally.
 - Since a Place Branding and Marketing study is not solely a Centralia governmental effort, but rather a community-wide endeavor, the city should look to work with other organizations and businesses within the city to help sponsor and pay for a portion of the study.

Potential Funding Source(s): City of Centralia, Centralia Tourism, Greater Centralia Area Chamber of Commerce, Centralia Foundation, Local Industry and Businesses

Priority 2: Support new and existing attractions and annual events.

- a. Currently the City of Centralia has numerous ongoing attractions and annual events that attract not just residents, but thousands of visitors to the Centralia Area each year. Community organizations must cooperate to ensure that these existing events and attractions are conducted efficiently. The more cooperation and collaboration that exists within the community, the greater the likelihood of a successful event.
 - Explore opportunities to combine smaller local events to create larger-scale regional events. Although not always a simple task, combining similar small local events can ultimately increase the number of attendees, both locally and abroad.
 - Coordinate annual events with local businesses to plan “Shop Local” days during the annual event. This cooperation can help fully capitalize on the number of visitors in Centralia during these events. If successfully planned, local businesses that can provide sales and discounts on products during these events will see increases in foot traffic and sales. Businesses would not be the only beneficiaries, as increases in sales will also have a direct impact on tax revenue for the city.

Potential Funding Source(s): City of Centralia, Centralia Tourism, Greater Centralia Area Chamber of Commerce, Centralia Foundation, Local Industry and Businesses

Priority 3: Submit an RFP to applicable firms for the completion of a Hotel Feasibility Study.

- a. A consistent concern amongst residents and community leaders is the purported ongoing loss of potential tax dollars during large community events. While the city prides itself on providing excellent lodging facilities for overnight visitors, during large events there can be a lack of availability, resulting in a portion of these visitors often staying overnight in surrounding communities rather, than in Centralia. A Hotel Feasibility Study would provide the city with an assessment of the financial viability and potential sustainability of proposed hotel project within the city.

Potential Funding Source(s): City of Centralia

Priority 4: Continue to keep the municipal website up to date and ensure important information is easily accessible to residents, visitors, and businesses.

- a. One of the first things potential investors, developers, businesses, or homeowners do when considering a location to call home is visiting the municipal website. The first look at Centralia’s municipal website should entice the visitor to investigate the website further to see more of what Centralia has to offer.
 - The current City of Centralia municipal website was overhauled into a new design in August of 2024. This website re-design was a significant update to the previous municipal website, and offers an increase in user accessibility and visual appeal.
 - The Centralia municipal website should be updated regularly with important news, updates to ongoing community activities, as well as the removal of old news items.

Potential Funding Source(s): City of Centralia

Community Assets & Community Development

Priority 1: Continue to support and advance park and recreation opportunities throughout the city for both children and adults.

- a. The city is currently home to numerous parks and recreation opportunities through Fairview Park, Bicentennial Park, Raccoon Lake, Centralia Foundation Park, the Centralia Community Youth Center, and the Centralia Recreational Complex. Coordination between each of these groups is critical and to the extent possible, the city should take the lead in ensuring these relationships continue to be healthy.
 - These partnerships are not only important for the successful provision of these recreation opportunities, but also for determining and implementing an effective marketing campaign, locally, regionally, and if needed, nationally.
- b. The city should develop or commission the development of a Parks and Recreation Plan. This plan should at a minimum examine the condition of existing park and recreation equipment, and plan for ongoing maintenance of the equipment (i.e. playground equipment, skate park equipment, Tennis Courts, etc.). The plan should also study park and recreation accessibility, local marketing efforts, and ways to improve the current recreational offerings.
 - The Centralia Parks & Recreation Committee, alongside Centralia Community Development staff, should take the lead in developing a Parks and Recreation Plan. This plan can be developed without hiring a third-party firm to achieve cost savings or a third-party firm can be sought out to complete the plan.

Potential Funding Source(s): City of Centralia, Centralia Recreation Complex, Centralia Foundation, Centralia Community Youth Center, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Priority 2: The Centralia Police Department and Fire Departments should develop five-year Capital Improvement Plans in coordination with the city-wide five-year Capital Improvement Plan.

- a. Due to the ongoing maintenance costs of Police and Fire Department equipment and required new purchases regularly, a five-year improvement plan should be developed to aid in the annual prioritization of funding toward equipment purchases.
- b. Since the required vehicles, equipment and training for the police and fire department often require significant investment, the city, alongside the police and fire department heads, should examine all granting agencies for additional funding to offset local expenditures.

Potential Funding Source(s): City of Centralia, Department of Justice, FEMA/IEMA

Priority 3: The Centralia Preservation Commission should recommend specific design standards for re-development of buildings and property considered historic within the City of Centralia.

- a. While any recommendations made by the Preservation Commission for design standards of historic property may be considered obstacles for re-development of these historic properties, since the community at-large has a deep connection with the history of Centralia, as shown in the community vision survey, ensuring that this historic identity is not lost is important. Specific historic property design standards would aid in this endeavor.

Priority 4: Provide clarity on the roles and obligations of established Centralia Committees and Commissions.

- a. Due to the lack of new board member orientation, many members of multiple committees are unsure of their commission's role within the City of Centralia. The development and provision of committee specific orientation packets for new members would provide the necessary clarity of their role in the policy and decision-making process.
- b. The Centralia City Council should consider setting aside a portion of the regularly scheduled council meetings each month to hear commission reports. This report could be provided by an assigned staff member or a member of the established commission. This action would help to eliminate the feeling of disconnection some established boards or commissions have with the Centralia City Council.

- c. The City Council should consider requesting, through advice from the City Manager and other supporting staff, a written report of the effectiveness and productivity of each established Centralia Board. This report should include the number of meetings the board has had in the last calendar year, attendance records of those meetings, and specific action items discussed and acted upon by each board.
 - The results of this written report should be used by Centralia elected officials to determine the usefulness of each established committee and whether or not significant changes should be made to each established committee on a case-by-case basis.
 - This report should also indicate a short-term strategy to increase the effectiveness of Centralia Committees and Commissions and explore potential committee consolidation, if deemed necessary.

Land Use and Zoning

Priority 1: Establish a modernized zoning code.

- a. Review the existing zoning districts within the city and evaluate whether each of these zoning districts are still being utilized effectively. Examine whether certain zoning districts could be combined together to improve the efficiency of new development within the city.

Priority 2: Examine the need for floodplain and wetlands ordinances.

- a. Utilizing current floodplain and wetlands maps, the city should examine what types of construction has occurred in these areas and whether or not proper mitigation efforts were undertaken.
- b. Through ordinance, dictate the types of construction activities that are allowable in these areas. In addition, specific mitigation activities should be listed as a requirement for both new development and re-development in those areas.

Priority 3: Determine parcels of property contiguous to the current corporate boundaries of the city for potential annexation.

- a. In concert with relevant municipal staff such as the City Manager, Economic Development Director and Community Development Director, the Centralia City Council should examine opportunities to extend the legal corporate boundaries of the city.

Appendices

Appendix A: Centralia 100 Mbps Broadband Map

Appendix B: Centralia 1 Gbps Broadband Map

Appendix C: Centralia Drive Time Map

Appendix D: Centralia NAICS Industries 2022Q4

Appendix E: Centralia Retail Demand Outlook

Appendix F: Illinois workNet LWIA Regional Map

Appendix G: Centralia Economic Development Map

Appendix H: Centralia Zoning Map

Appendix I: Centralia Floodplain Map

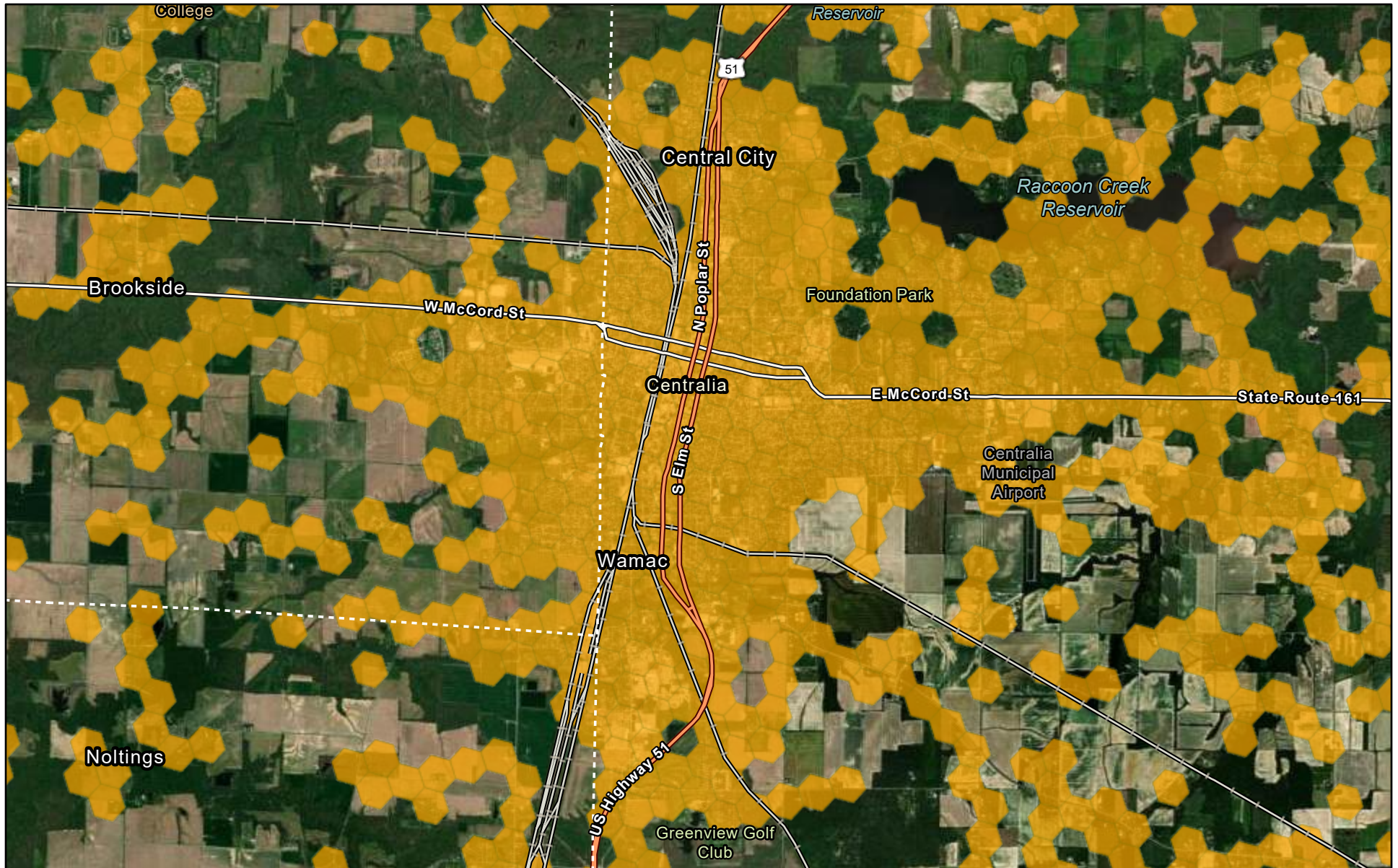
Appendix J: Centralia Wetlands Map

Appendix K: Community Vision Survey

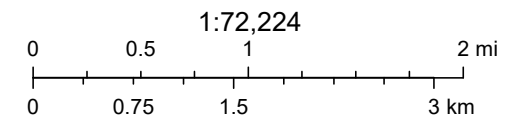
Appendix L: Community Vision Survey Results

Appendix M: Public Hearing Minutes & Attendance Sheet

Centralia 100 Mbps Broadband Map



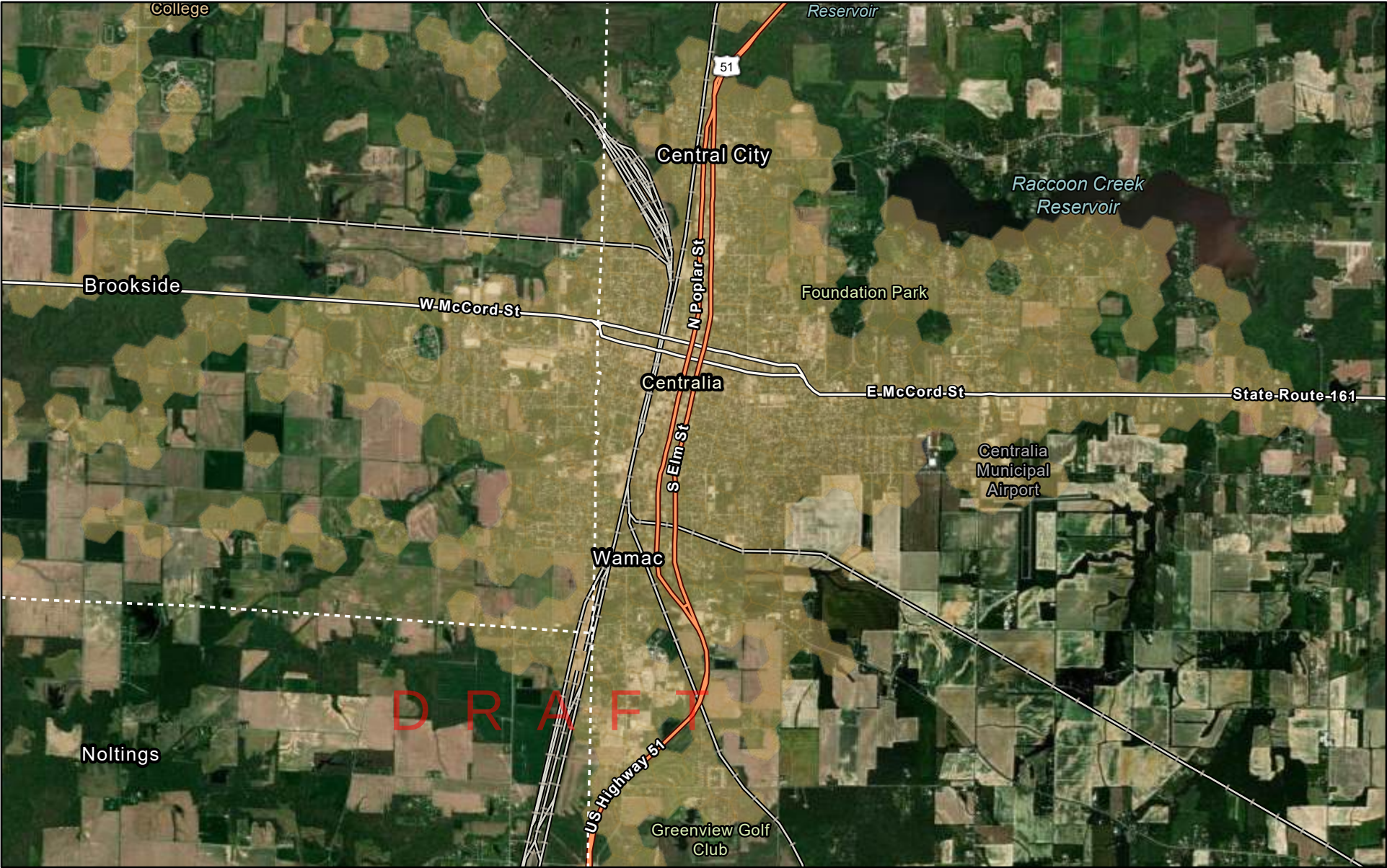
 Coverage by hexbin



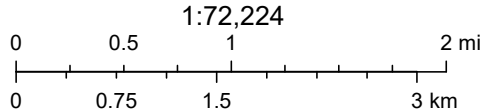
Connected Nation, BDO, FCC/Costquest, Earthstar Geographics, Connected Nation, Missouri Dept. of Conservation, Missouri DNR, Esri, TomTom,

Centralia 1 Gbps Broadband Map

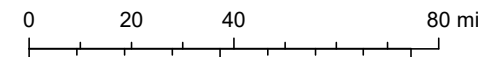
Appendix B



 Coverage by hexbin



Connected Nation, BDO, FCC/Costquest, Earthstar Geographics, Connected Nation, Missouri Dept. of Conservation, Missouri DNR, Esri, TomTom,



City of Centralia, Illinois NAICS Industries 2022Q4

NAICS	Industry	Empl	Current	LQ	10-Year History		Total Demand	10-Year Forecast			Ann % Growth
			Avg Ann Wages		Empl Change	Ann %		Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	1,923	\$44,507	2.41	-382	-1.8%	1,792	880	1,033	-121	-0.6%
44	Retail Trade	918	\$32,652	1.64	174	2.1%	1,107	524	695	-112	-1.3%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	497	\$18,310	1.05	99	2.2%	893	397	481	15	0.3%
61	Educational Services	375	\$39,993	0.85	90	2.8%	331	169	187	-26	-0.7%
31	Manufacturing	331	\$51,255	0.74	-212	-4.8%	268	121	206	-59	-1.9%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	246	\$30,825	1.03	17	0.7%	288	123	170	-5	-0.2%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	221	\$62,413	0.80	-118	-4.2%	237	103	151	-18	-0.8%
92	Public Administration	176	\$40,466	0.69	-30	-1.5%	142	68	96	-21	-1.3%
23	Construction	152	\$53,931	0.46	27	2.0%	124	50	90	-16	-1.1%
52	Finance and Insurance	140	\$51,831	0.62	-58	-3.4%	108	47	77	-16	-1.2%
42	Wholesale Trade	120	\$65,631	0.57	-55	-3.7%	110	46	79	-15	-1.3%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	94	\$46,038	0.23	-8	-0.8%	74	30	51	-7	-0.8%
51	Information	92	\$40,442	0.80	-52	-4.4%	53	27	50	-24	-3.0%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	90	\$17,078	0.83	0	-0.1%	131	56	77	-1	-0.2%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	50	\$35,996	0.14	-110	-10.9%	54	24	35	-4	-0.8%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	49	\$37,150	0.49	7	1.6%	41	21	26	-6	-1.4%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	48	\$36,798	0.56	-10	-1.9%	38	16	27	-5	-1.1%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	33	\$41,215	0.44	-170	-16.7%	34	17	21	-5	-1.6%
22	Utilities	16	\$102,150	0.57	2	1.5%	10	5	9	-3	-2.3%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	\$29,904	0.03	-2	-13.0%	1	0	0	0	-1.6%
Total - All Industries		5,573	\$43,775	1.00	-791	-1.3%	5,706	2,571	3,586	-450	-0.8%

Data as of 2022Q4

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.

1. All data based upon a four-quarter moving average

Exits and transfers are approximate estimates based upon occupation separation rates.

Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2022Q3 with preliminary estimates updated to 2022Q4. Forecast employment growth uses national projections adapted for regional growth patterns.

City of Centralia, Illinois

Top Tapestry Segments	Percent	Demographic Summary	2023	2028
Small Town Sincerity (12C)	22.6%	Population	11,878	11,639
Heartland Communities (6F)	17.5%	Households	5,230	5,197
Traditional Living (12B)	14.6%	Families	2,862	2,832
Hometown Heritage (8G)	12.9%	Median Age	42.6	42.8
Midlife Constants (5E)	12.4%	Median Household Income	\$44,900	\$48,412
		2023 Consumer Spending	2028 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth
Apparel and Services		\$6,835,013	\$7,453,703	\$618,690
Men's		\$1,235,814	\$1,348,128	\$112,314
Women's		\$2,337,682	\$2,549,653	\$211,971
Children's		\$1,066,744	\$1,162,507	\$95,763
Footwear		\$1,559,109	\$1,700,007	\$140,898
Watches & Jewelry		\$495,746	\$540,741	\$44,995
Apparel Products and Services (1)		\$139,917	\$152,667	\$12,750
Computer				
Computers and Hardware for Home Use		\$750,646	\$818,905	\$68,259
Portable Memory		\$14,489	\$15,800	\$1,311
Computer Software		\$42,592	\$46,481	\$3,889
Computer Accessories		\$77,666	\$84,729	\$7,063
Entertainment & Recreation		\$12,292,964	\$13,407,279	\$1,114,315
Fees and Admissions		\$1,906,222	\$2,079,426	\$173,204
Membership Fees for Clubs (2)		\$772,627	\$842,764	\$70,137
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips		\$315,600	\$344,484	\$28,884
Tickets to Theatre/Operas/Concerts		\$155,899	\$170,091	\$14,192
Tickets to Movies		\$72,521	\$79,125	\$6,604
Tickets to Parks or Museums		\$80,212	\$87,441	\$7,229
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips		\$182,059	\$198,417	\$16,358
Fees for Recreational Lessons		\$324,096	\$353,602	\$29,506
Dating Services		\$3,209	\$3,502	\$293
TV/Video/Audio		\$4,702,873	\$5,128,758	\$425,885
Cable and Satellite Television Services		\$3,095,840	\$3,376,585	\$280,745
Televisions		\$490,408	\$534,693	\$44,285
Satellite Dishes		\$5,618	\$6,124	\$506
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players		\$15,345	\$16,731	\$1,386
Miscellaneous Video Equipment		\$37,310	\$40,697	\$3,387
Video Cassettes and DVDs		\$20,543	\$22,411	\$1,868
Video Game Hardware/Accessories		\$141,965	\$154,725	\$12,760
Video Game Software		\$66,057	\$72,024	\$5,967
Rental/Streaming/Downloaded Video		\$395,530	\$431,213	\$35,683
Installation of Televisions		\$4,265	\$4,656	\$391
Audio (3)		\$416,895	\$454,624	\$37,729
Rental and Repair of TV/Radio/Sound Equipment		\$13,096	\$14,275	\$1,179
Pets		\$3,258,338	\$3,553,844	\$295,506
Toys/Games/Crafts/Hobbies (4)		\$522,671	\$569,851	\$47,180
Recreational Vehicles and Fees (5)		\$500,824	\$545,877	\$45,053
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment (6)		\$800,716	\$873,293	\$72,577
Photo Equipment and Supplies (7)		\$135,003	\$147,274	\$12,271
Reading (8)		\$389,338	\$424,991	\$35,653
Catered Affairs (9)		\$76,979	\$83,966	\$6,987
Food		\$33,598,738	\$36,646,972	\$3,048,234
Food at Home		\$22,194,140	\$24,208,215	\$2,014,075
Bakery and Cereal Products		\$2,907,930	\$3,171,767	\$263,837
Meats, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs		\$4,809,481	\$5,245,620	\$436,139
Dairy Products		\$2,137,830	\$2,332,173	\$194,343
Fruits and Vegetables		\$4,249,221	\$4,635,549	\$386,328
Snacks and Other Food at Home (10)		\$8,089,678	\$8,823,106	\$733,428
Food Away from Home		\$11,404,598	\$12,438,757	\$1,034,159
Alcoholic Beverages		\$1,991,288	\$2,172,778	\$181,490

Data Note: The Consumer Spending data is household-based and represents the amount spent for a product or service by all households in an area. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding. This report is not a comprehensive list of all consumer spending variables therefore the variables in each section may not sum to totals.

Source: Esri forecasts for 2023 and 2028; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2019 and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

City of Centralia, Illinois

	2023 Consumer Spending	2028 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth
Financial			
Value of Stocks/Bonds/Mutual Funds	\$107,550,240	\$117,442,360	\$9,892,120
Value of Retirement Plans	\$409,064,657	\$446,226,222	\$37,161,565
Value of Other Financial Assets	\$24,627,543	\$26,885,887	\$2,258,344
Vehicle Loan Amount excluding Interest	\$12,249,144	\$13,350,796	\$1,101,652
Value of Credit Card Debt	\$10,084,394	\$10,996,847	\$912,453
Health			
Nonprescription Drugs	\$619,011	\$675,207	\$56,196
Prescription Drugs	\$1,424,065	\$1,553,057	\$128,992
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	\$384,986	\$419,846	\$34,860
Home			
Mortgage Payment and Basics (11)	\$36,399,571	\$39,687,237	\$3,287,666
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	\$10,934,700	\$11,926,152	\$991,452
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials (12)	\$2,718,187	\$2,962,294	\$244,107
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	\$20,054,875	\$21,866,579	\$1,811,704
Household Furnishings and Equipment			
Household Textiles (13)	\$379,536	\$413,994	\$34,458
Furniture	\$2,636,585	\$2,875,239	\$238,654
Rugs	\$126,647	\$138,161	\$11,514
Major Appliances (14)	\$1,720,113	\$1,875,311	\$155,198
Housewares (15)	\$323,062	\$352,509	\$29,447
Small Appliances	\$228,110	\$248,860	\$20,750
Luggage	\$41,245	\$44,999	\$3,754
Telephones and Accessories	\$346,276	\$377,772	\$31,496
Household Operations			
Child Care	\$1,419,278	\$1,546,961	\$127,683
Lawn and Garden (16)	\$2,206,564	\$2,406,533	\$199,969
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	\$267,533	\$291,988	\$24,455
Housekeeping Supplies (17)	\$3,101,416	\$3,382,852	\$281,436
Insurance			
Owners and Renters Insurance	\$2,694,742	\$2,937,539	\$242,797
Vehicle Insurance	\$7,269,164	\$7,926,570	\$657,406
Life/Other Insurance	\$2,242,310	\$2,445,084	\$202,774
Health Insurance	\$17,142,951	\$18,697,105	\$1,554,154
Personal Care Products (18)	\$1,725,622	\$1,882,402	\$156,780
School Books and Supplies (19)	\$413,047	\$450,462	\$37,415
Smoking Products	\$1,883,174	\$2,052,357	\$169,183
Transportation			
Payments on Vehicles excluding Leases	\$10,325,917	\$11,254,797	\$928,880
Gasoline and Motor Oil	\$8,713,185	\$9,499,523	\$786,338
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	\$4,387,043	\$4,783,932	\$396,889
Travel			
Airline Fares	\$1,256,324	\$1,370,913	\$114,589
Lodging on Trips	\$2,155,346	\$2,350,542	\$195,196
Auto/Truck Rental on Trips	\$229,927	\$250,771	\$20,844
Food and Drink on Trips	\$1,677,770	\$1,830,019	\$152,249

Data Note: The Consumer Spending data is household-based and represents the amount spent for a product or service by all households in an area. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding. This report is not a comprehensive list of all consumer spending variables therefore the variables in each section may not sum to totals.

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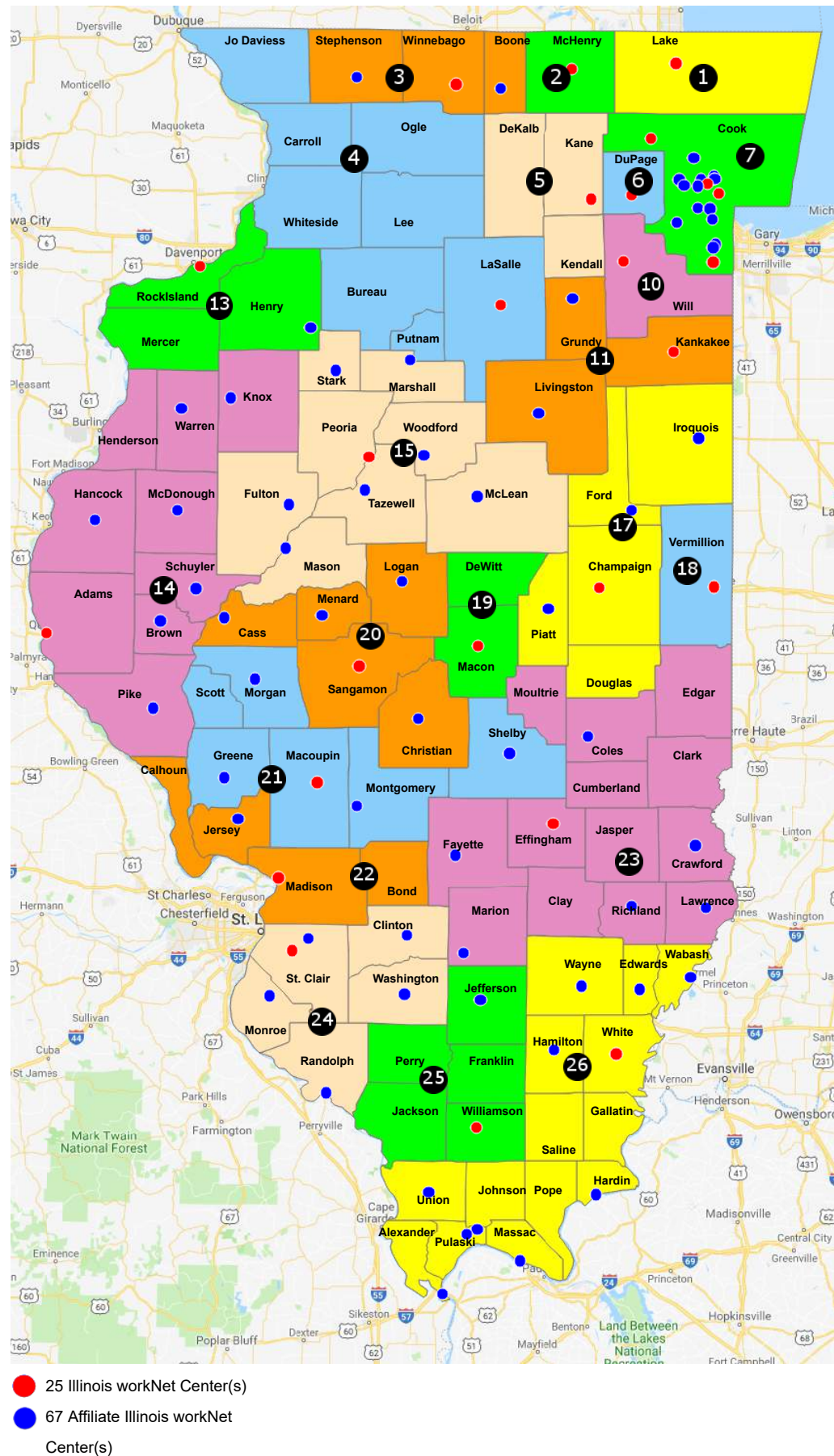
City of Centralia, Illinois

- (1) Apparel Products and Services** includes shoe repair and other shoe services, apparel laundry and dry cleaning, alteration, repair and tailoring of apparel, clothing rental and storage, and watch and jewelry repair.
- (2) Membership Fees for Clubs** includes membership fees for social, recreational, and health clubs.
- (3) Audio** includes satellite radio service, radios, stereos, sound components, equipment and accessories, digital audio players, records, CDs, audio tapes, streaming/downloaded audio, musical instruments and accessories, and rental and repair of musical instruments.
- (4) Toys and Games** includes toys, games, arts and crafts, tricycles, playground equipment, arcade games, online entertainment and games, and stamp and coin collecting.
- (5) Recreational Vehicles & Fees** includes docking and landing fees for boats and planes, payments on boats, trailers, campers and RVs, rental of boats, trailers, campers and RVs, and camp fees.
- (6) Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment** includes exercise equipment and gear, game tables, bicycles, camping equipment, hunting and fishing equipment, winter sports equipment, water sports equipment, other sports equipment, and rental/repair of sports/recreation/exercise equipment.
- (7) Photo Equipment and Supplies** includes film, film processing, photographic equipment, rental and repair of photo equipment, and photographer fees.
- (8) Reading** includes digital book readers, books, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, and single copies of magazines and newspapers.
- (9) Catered Affairs** includes expenses associated with live entertainment and rental of party supplies.
- (10) Snacks and Other Food at Home** includes candy, chewing gum, sugar, artificial sweeteners, jam, jelly, preserves, margarine, fats and oils, salad dressing, nondairy cream and milk, peanut butter, frozen prepared food, potato chips and other snacks, nuts, salt, spices, seasonings, olives, pickles, relishes, sauces, gravy, other condiments, soup, prepared salad, prepared dessert, baby food, miscellaneous prepared food, and nonalcoholic beverages.
- (11) Mortgage Payment and Basics** includes mortgage interest, mortgage principal, property taxes, homeowners insurance, and ground rent on owned dwellings.
- (12) Maintenance and Remodeling Materials** includes supplies/tools/equipment for painting and wallpapering, plumbing supplies and equipment, electrical/heating/AC supplies, materials for roofing/gutters, materials for plaster/panel/siding, materials for patio/fence/brick work, landscaping materials, and insulation materials for owned homes.
- (13) Household Textiles** includes bathroom linens, bedroom linens, kitchen linens, dining room linens, other linens, curtains, draperies, slipcovers and decorative pillows.
- (14) Major Appliances** includes dishwashers, disposals, refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, ovens, microwaves, window air conditioners, electric floor cleaning equipment, sewing machines, and miscellaneous appliances.
- (15) Housewares** includes flatware, dishes, cups glasses, serving pieces, nonelectric cookware, and tableware.
- (16) Lawn and Garden** includes lawn and garden supplies, equipment and care service, indoor plants, fresh flowers, and repair/rental of lawn and garden equipment.
- (17) Housekeeping Supplies** includes soaps and laundry detergents, cleaning products, toilet tissue, paper towels, napkins, paper/plastic/foil products, stationery, giftwrap supplies, postage, and delivery services.
- (18) Personal Care Products** includes hair care products, nonelectric articles for hair, wigs, hairpieces, oral hygiene products, shaving needs, perfume, cosmetics, skincare, bath products, nail products, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, adult diapers, other miscellaneous care products and personal care appliances.
- (19) School Books and Supplies** includes school books and supplies for college, elementary school, high school, vocational/technical school, preschool and other schools.

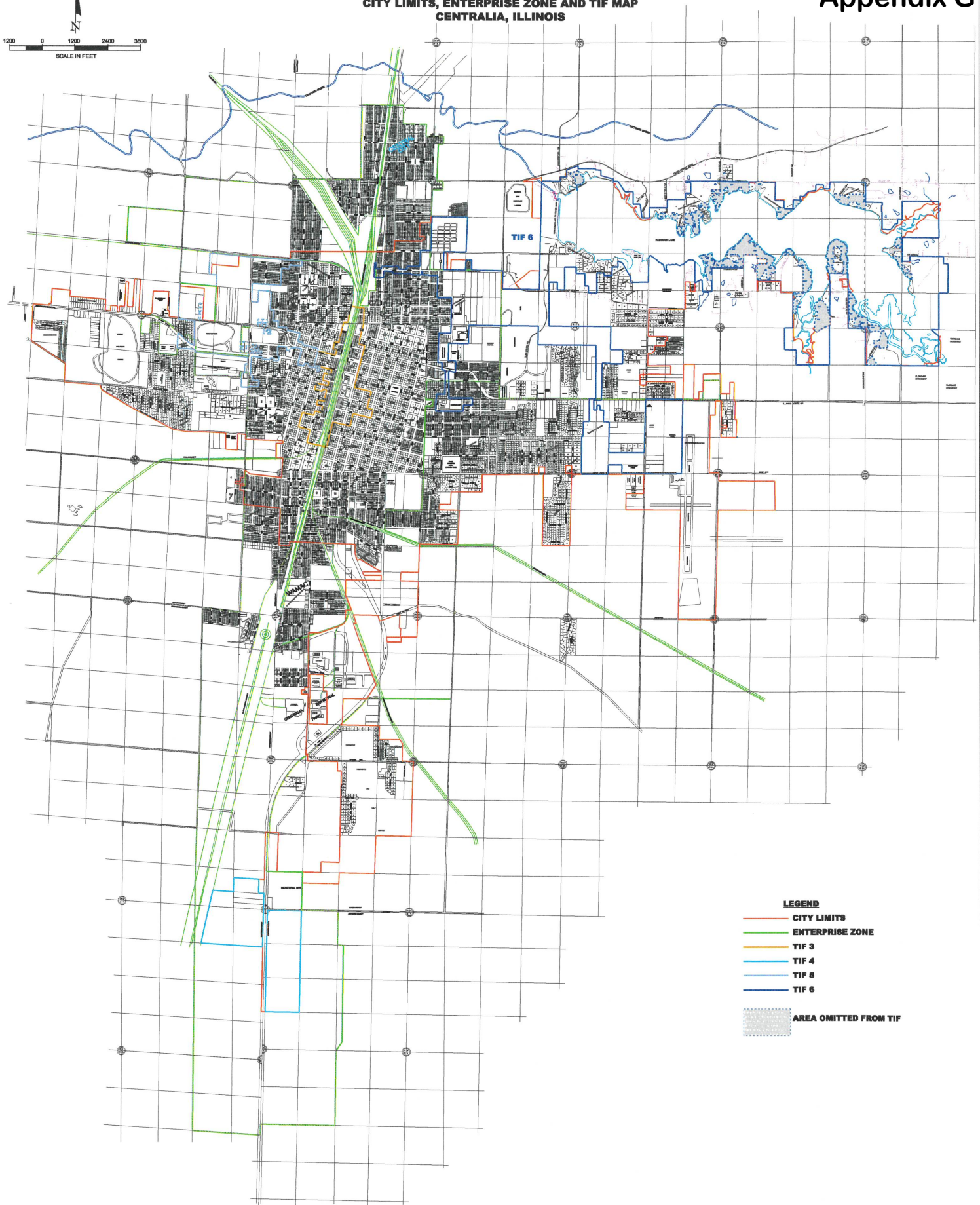
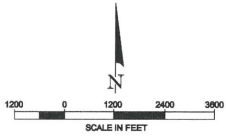
Data Note: The Consumer Spending data is household-based and represents the amount spent for a product or service by all households in an area. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding. This report is not a comprehensive list of all consumer spending variables therefore the variables in each section may not sum to totals.

Source: Esri forecasts for 2023 and 2028; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2019 and 2020 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Local Workforce Innovation Area (LWIA) Map of Illinois workNet Centers and Affiliates



Appendix G

CITY LIMITS, ENTERPRISE ZONE AND TIF MAP
CENTRALIA, ILLINOIS

LEGEND

- CITY LIMITS
- ENTERPRISE ZONE
- TIF 3
- TIF 4
- TIF 5
- TIF 6
- AREA OMITTED FROM TIF

PROJ. NO. C0409.2
DATE 09/22/2013
SHEET NO. 1

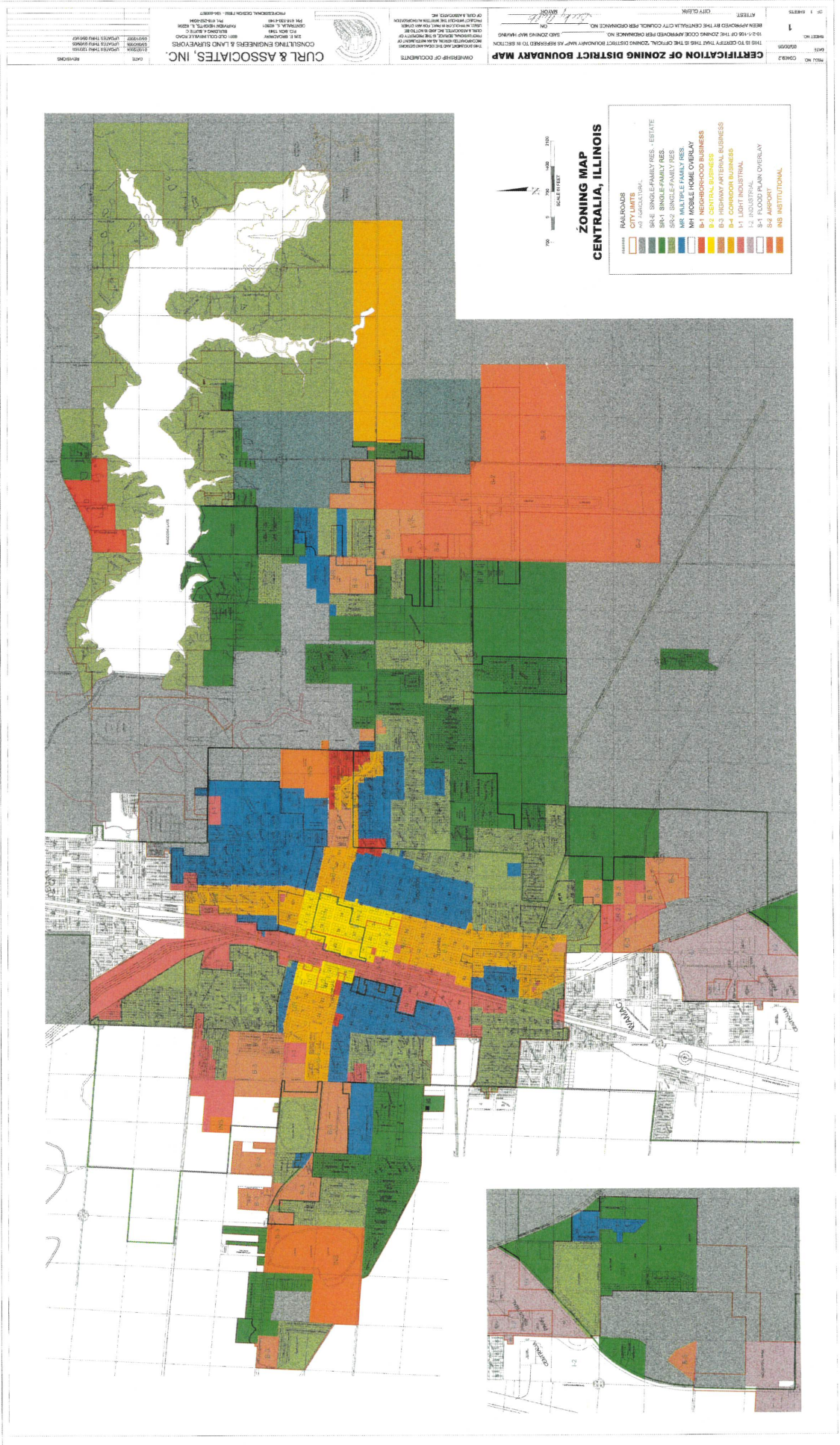
CITY LIMITS, ENTERPRISE ZONE AND TIF MAP
CITY OF CENTRALIA, ILLINOIS

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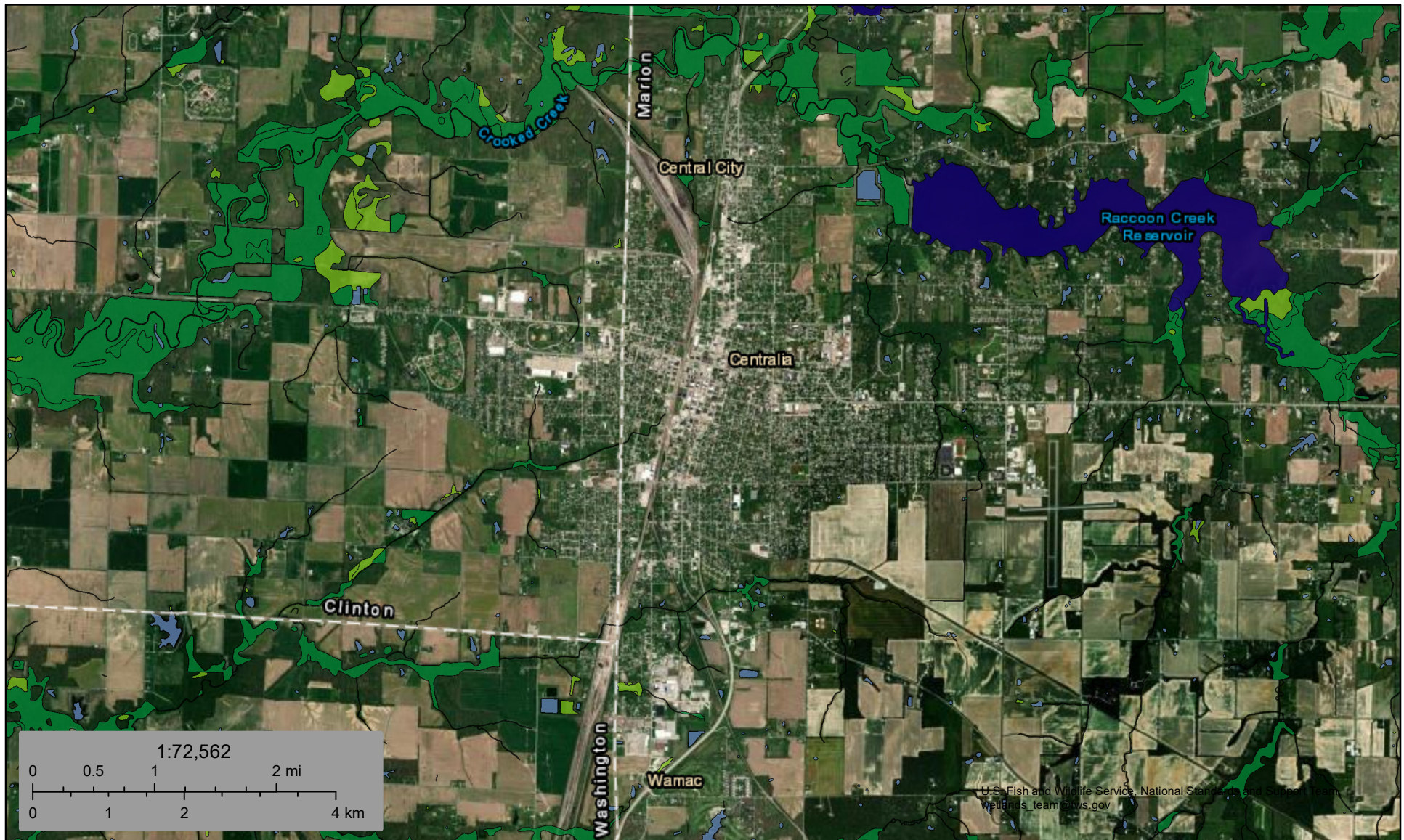
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8001 OLD COLLINGSVILLE ROAD
BUILDING 4, SUITE C
FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS, IL 62208
PH 618-262-4004
PROFESSIONAL DESIGN FIRM - 184-00077

DATE	REVISIONS
01/07/2004	UPDATES TIF#1 12/01/03
03/06/2006	UPDATES TIF#1 09/06/05
06/06/2007	UPDATES TIF#1 05/06/07
03/02/2010	UPDATES TIF#1 03/02/10
03/01/2013	UPDATES TIF#1 03/01/13
08/22/2013	ADDED TIF 4, 5 & 6, REVISED ENTERPRISE ZONE



Centralia Area Floodplain Map





November 21, 2024

Wetlands

	Estuarine and Marine Deepwater		Freshwater Emergent Wetland		Lake
	Estuarine and Marine Wetland		Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland		Other
			Freshwater Pond		Riverine

This map is for general reference only. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is not responsible for the accuracy or currentness of the base data shown on this map. All wetlands related data should be used in accordance with the layer metadata found on the Wetlands Mapper web site.

This community survey is being administered as part of the City of Centralia’s Comprehensive Plan Community Vision process. Your input in this survey will help shape a vision for a better future for the City of Centralia. This survey is intended to engage residents, business owners, staff, elected representatives, partners, and other stakeholders. Your participation in this survey, while strongly encouraged, is voluntary and your responses will be kept anonymous. This survey may be completed: 1) online at cityofcentralia.org; 2) by mailing completed surveys to City of Centralia, PO Box 569, Centralia, IL 62801; 3) by scanning and emailing completed surveys to Luke Eastin, SCIRPDC, at leastin@scirpdc.com

1. How do you relate to the City of Centralia? *Select all that apply*

- I live in Centralia ☐
 I work in Centralia ☐
 I own and operate a business in Centralia ☐
 I am an elected official in Centralia ☐
 Other (please specify) _____

2. Please mark the three words you would use to best describe the City of Centralia?

- ☐ Growing ☐ Friendly ☐ Historic ☐ Lacking ☐ Stuck ☐ Homey
☐ Vibrant ☐ Inclusive ☐ Uninspiring ☐ Unique ☐ Engaged ☐ Restrained
☐ Other: _____

3. Considering your word choices above, what do you think are the City of Centralia’s biggest strengths?

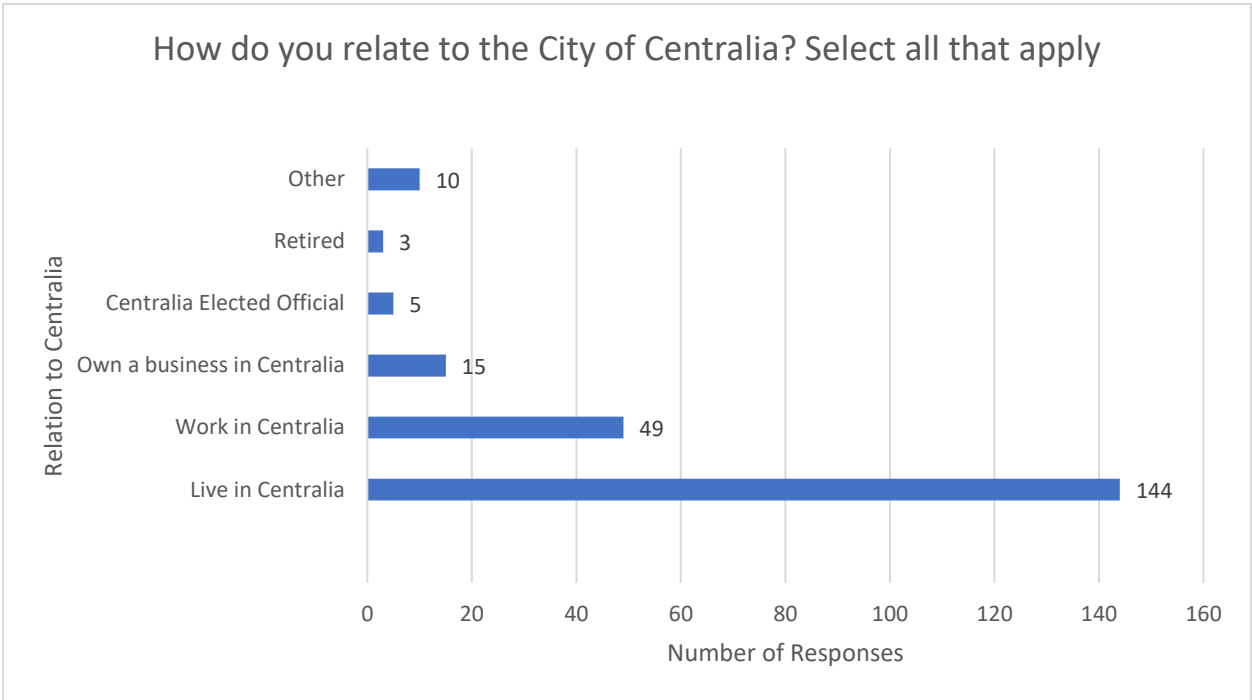
4. What do you believe are the biggest opportunities for improvement in Centralia over the next 5-10 years?

5. What do you believe are the most difficult challenges Centralia will face in the next 5-10 years?

2024 City of Centralia Community Vision Survey Results

In the late Spring and Summer of 2024, the City of Centralia conducted a five-question Community Vision Survey for the residents of the community. 159 responses of this survey were recorded and the results are outline below.

Question 1: How do you relate to the City of Centralia? Select all that apply



Question 2: Please mark the three words you would use to best describe the City of Centralia.

- 1 Stuck, Unique, Restrained
- 2 Growing, Historic, Restrained
- 3 Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
- 4 Growing, Friendly, Unique
- 5 Growing, Historic, Lacking
- 6 Friendly, Historic, Homey
- 7 Lacking, Stuck, Restrained
- 8 Friendly, Historic, Unique
- 9 Historic, Inclusive, Restrained
- 10 Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
- 11 Historic, Lacking, Stuck
- 12 Stuck, Uninspiring, Restrained
- 13 Friendly, Homey, Engaged
- 14 Friendly, Historic, Unique
- 15 Friendly, Lacking, Stuck
- 16 Growing, Lacking, Stuck
- 17 Growing, Historic, Engaged
- 18 Growing, Friendly, Unique
- 19 Friendly, Historic, Homey
- 20 Growing, Friendly, Inclusive
- 21 Friendly, Lacking, Inclusive
- 22 Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
- 23 Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
- 24 Lacking, Stuck, Inclusive
- 25 Historic, Lacking, Stuck
- 26 Friendly, Lacking, Homey
- 27 Lacking, Stuck, Homey
- 28 Growing, Friendly, Historic
- 29 Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
- 30 Historic, Lacking, Restrained
- 31 Lacking, Stuck, Restrained
- 32 Friendly, Historic, Homey

33	Friendly, Stuck, Homey
34	Friendly, Lacking, Homey
35	Growing, Homey, Engaged
36	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
37	Friendly, Lacking, Stuck
38	Stuck, Uninspiring, Restrained
39	Growing, Friendly, Engaged
40	Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
41	Friendly, Historic, Homey
42	Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
43	Friendly, Historic, Homey
44	Historic, Stuck, Inclusive
45	Friendly, Lacking, Uninspiring
46	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
47	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
48	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
49	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
50	Friendly, Historic, Homey
51	Historic, Uninspiring, Restrained
52	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
53	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
54	Historic, Stuck, Unique
55	Historic, Lacking, Homey
56	Friendly, Historic, Engaged
57	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
58	Historic, Stuck, Uninspiring
59	Historic, Lacking, Homey
60	Friendly, Lacking, Inclusive
61	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
62	Friendly, Historic, Homey
63	Lacking, Uninspiring, Restrained
64	Friendly, Lacking, Uninspiring
65	Lacking, Uninspiring, Restrained
66	Friendly, Stuck, Restrained

67	Lacking, Stuck, Homey
68	Friendly, Historic, Homey
69	Historic, Lacking, Homey
70	Lacking, Inclusive, Uninspiring
71	Growing, Lacking, Uninspiring
72	Historic, Lacking, Restrained
73	Historic, Stuck, Restrained
74	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
75	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
76	Friendly, Historic, Lacking
77	Growing, Friendly, Historic
78	Growing, Friendly, Historic
79	Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
80	Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
81	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
82	Growing, Friendly, Unique
83	Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
84	Growing, Friendly, Homey
85	Historic, Lacking, Unique
86	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
87	Friendly, Historic, Restrained
88	Friendly, Historic, Inclusive
89	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
90	Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
91	Friendly, Historic, Homey
92	Growing, Historic, Homey
93	Historic, Homey, Unique
94	Stuck, Homey, Uninspiring
95	Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
96	Lacking, Uninspiring, Unique
97	Lacking, Uninspiring, Restrained
98	Historic, Stuck, Restrained
99	Friendly, Historic, Homey
100	Friendly, Historic, Restrained

101	Historic, Lacking, Uninspiring
102	Historic, Stuck, Homey
103	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
104	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
105	Friendly, Historic, Homey
106	Growing, Friendly, Historic
107	Friendly, Historic, Engaged
108	Friendly, Lacking, Inclusive
109	Growing, Historic, Homey
110	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
111	Historic, Stuck, Uninspiring
112	Growing, Stuck, Unique
113	Historic, Lacking, Unique
114	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
115	Lacking, Stuck, Restrained
116	Growing, Historic, Lacking
117	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
118	Friendly, Lacking, Engaged
119	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
120	Friendly, Lacking, Restrained
121	Growing, Friendly, Historic
122	Growing, Stuck, Engaged
123	Growing, Friendly, Historic
124	Friendly, Historic, Stuck
125	Historic, Stuck, Unique
126	Lacking, Homey, Uninspiring
127	Growing, Friendly, Inclusive
128	Friendly, Historic, Stuck
129	Growing, Friendly, Historic
130	Growing, Historic, Unique
131	Lacking, Uninspiring, Restrained
132	Friendly, Lacking, Restrained
133	Friendly, Historic, Homey
134	Friendly, Historic, Homey

135	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
136	Lacking, Homey, Restrained
137	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
138	Growing, Historic, Unique
139	Growing, Historic, Restrained
140	Growing, Lacking, Restrained
141	Growing, Historic, Lacking
142	Growing, Lacking, Unique
143	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
144	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
145	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
146	Friendly, Historic, Stuck
147	Friendly, Lacking, Uninspiring
148	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
149	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
150	Historic, Stuck, Unique
151	Friendly, Lacking, Restrained
152	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
153	Stuck, Homey, Restrained
154	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
155	Lacking, Uninspiring, Restrained
156	Historic, Lacking, Stuck
157	Historic, Stuck, Unique
158	Lacking, Stuck, Uninspiring
159	Growing, Friendly, Homey

Question 3: Considering your word choices above, what do you think are the City of Centralia's biggest strengths?

- 1 Unique attractions and events, Historic Downtown, "Off the highway" slower-paced lifestyle.
- 2 Ambitious people. Lovely, old buildings that could be quite quaint and charming.
- 3 Dedicated people
- 4 Friendliness, history, originality.
- 5 The ability to persevere
- 6 The historic buildings downtown and our railroad history
- 7 Education, Revenue Streams, Events
- 8 Diversity. Acceptance. Faith.
- 9 Location, Outdoor Activities, Historic buildings
- 10 No Answer Provided
- 11 No Answer Provided
- 12 Proximity to interstates and highways
- 13 Progressiveness, the citizens
- 14 Dedicated people
- 15 Tradition
- 16 Small business growth
- 17 The small community that is continually reinvesting back into our town.
- 18 Community, everyone knows everyone, volunteerism
- 19 it's people, they are friendly, warm, and inviting
- 20 I like living and working in centralia.
- 21 Community involvement and willingness to help each other
- 22 Our location. We are 10 miles off of two major US Interstates...north/south and east/west.
- 23 No Answer Provided
- 24 Opportunity
- 25 Amtrak, ballonfest. Halloween parade
- 26 Small town Friendly
- 27 People coming together as a community
- 28 Development
- 29 Historical
- 30 History
- 31 Sports
- 32 Friendly and welcoming

33 Downtown activities
 34 Friendly
 35 Downtown activities, recreation center, major medical facilities, cultural society, Foundation Park
 36 Parks, Downtown tourism
 37 Community, friendly people, and opportunity to develop downtown.
 38 Rec Center, Castle Ridge, Winery, Raccon Lake, Centralia High School -Orphan Basketball
 39 Community Growth
 40 Raccoon Lake, Centralia Rec Center, Foundation Park, the Castle
 41 historic
 42 Not trying to be funny but the people with the money.
 43 Rich historical impact
 44 Communities commitment to striving for better even when it doesn't always work
 45 Law and order
 46 Local healthcare physicians & hospital; Walmart; Schnucks; library; local businesses
 47 Historical
 48 People in charge that are determined to bring change and growth
 49 volunteerism
 50 Historic, friendly
 51 Historical past
 52 Sports baseball basketball
 53 Downtown activities and the parks
 54 History and kind people
 55 The History of Centralia is rich. Most don't know about the museum nor do they ever visit
 56 Our parks, historic museum, library, and community events.
 57 Size of city, nice park
 58 Basketball, balloon festival
 59 Community getting together for events
 60 Its location, good government, the industrial park
 61 Mexican restaurants and bars
 Caring for each other, historical buildings, continuing growth by listening to citizens needs,
 62 , proximity of schools, colleges, libraries and entertainment.
 63 No Answer Provided
 64 Loyalty
 65 Baseball Fields

66 Reliable water and power supply. Good trash and city pickup item services.
67 Friendly, historic.
68 The young people invested in its success
69 Centralia Foundation
70 No Answer Provided
71 Working towards being better.
72 No Answer Provided
73 I'm honestly not sure it has any.
74 Not sure yet, really. Owner occupied residence for one year now.
75 No Answer Provided
76 It's giving nature
77 Having a base of people willing to ignore the naysayers and work to improve our city
78 Desire to do better
79 Activities around town
80 Vacant property cleanup and hospitality
81 Historic identity, foundation park, bell tower
82 Youth programs
83 History
84 New business being developed
85 History
86 Chamber of commerce and what they do for the city
87 Historic
88 Residents are friendly and try to invest in their community.
89 Basketball Tournament
90 No Answer Provided
91 Sense of community, family activities
92 The new push in the downtown area. And all the new summer events going on.
93 The community's commitment to retaining our historic identity.
94 The police presences, I like seeing them about. Even spite being pulled over.
95 You now have a city council, mayor, and manager in there that care about the city.
96 Location
97 Cost of living not to bad.
98 Use of historical and community events for tourism
99 the people

100 The hometown feel and community willingness to help others.
 101 It's history
 102 Sense of community
 103 No Answer Provided
 104 Drug trade
 105 friendly, homey town with a lot of basketball history.
 106 People
 107 Friendly, good schools, opportunities to grow
 108 Small businesses, volunteer community
 109 Community events
 110 It's trying
 111 New city council to bring change and new ideas to help the city
 112 May Fete and Balloon Fest
 113 rich history, sits in three counties, a lot of character
 114 History
 115 Community
 116 Small town tradition & charm
 117 Churches
 118 Community wants to improve. That's half the battle.
 119 Engaged leaders
 120 They don't have any
 121 Strong community. Caring. Supportive.
 122 It has great leadership, great infrastructure, and I think a vision to grow and build the city at once was
 123 Education and Schools
 124 Friendly small community with turn of the century downtown architecture just begging to be revived.
 125 Improvements around Castle Ridge
 126 The people
 127 city improvements, drug enforcement, Balloon Fest tourism
 128 The people and the community.
 129 Historic
 130 There are so many different areas for the opportunity to grow.
 131 No Answer Provided
 132 Friendly
 133 Small town vibe. Affordable real estate. Great people. Multiple church choices.

134 Generous people, property rehabilitation
135 Trying to get by
136 Community Events
137 Historic
138 The new downtown area is coming to life
139 Opportunity for growth, Locals that want to invest, Local college, family friendly events, niche events
140 Trying to revitalize
141 Historic downtown/downtown area
142 We have been able to bring on new companies
143 Having a lot of railroads.
144 Slot machines and bars
145 Sports
146 It's sense of community.
147 I believe that Centralia has a wonderful community
148 Space for industrial growth
149 Space for industrial growth
150 Tradition and pride.
151 The splash pad, nice library
152 Unique, Historic, Castle Ridge entertainment
153 Downtown and it's activity as of recent
154 No Answer Provided
155 No Answer Provided
156 Potential to do better
157 Location and history
158 No Answer Provided
159 Community- our people really pull together to help one another in times of need.

Question 4: What do you believe are the biggest opportunities for improvement in Centralia?

- 1 Historic Downtown, quality of life businesses, housing
- 2 More business growth in the downtown district, historic building upkeep
- 3 Visual community image desperately needs improvement; business growth
- 4 Destination get aways, revitalized downtown, force the shopping center owners to update for safety.
- 5 New/updated housing, continued beautification in all districts and along 161/51, and marketing Centralia
- 6 Continued restructuring of downtown buildings and attracting business to Industrial Park
- 7 New businesses, community image, cleaning up old buildings
- 8 Space for things to be built. Resources still untapped. Work force willing to remain.
- 9 Continue to remove dilapidated building/houses and improve the visual appearance of the community
- 10 Historic Building Cleanup
- 11 No Response given
- 12 City government helping all businesses instead of focusing on just one area
- 13 Infrastructure
- 14 Enhancing the city's infrastructure; demolishing dilapidated properties; property maintenance incentives
- 15 We need a Theater, and other things for teenagers to do. Livable wage
- 16 Attract large scale businesses who would employ 100-200 people
- 17 We need another overpass on the south side of town.
- 18 Amenities, living wage paying jobs
- 19 marketing our community, growing small businesses
- 20 More things for the kids to do.
- 21 Putting more family friendly businesses in empty buildings
- 22 Market our city as a crossroads. We have abundant land around us. foresight and prospection, not hindsight and nostalgia.
- 23 Jobs
- 24 New businesses lower property taxes
- 25 Swimming pool aquatic center.
- 26 No opinion
- 27 Hopefully better opportunities
- 28 Infrastructure
- 29 More businesses and restaurants
- 30 Summer recreation
- 31 N/A
- 32 Incentives to promote startup businesses and industries

33 Dilapidated clean up, park upgrades, improved outdoor spaces.
 34 We need better paying jobs that are located in town, not just the surrounding areas.
 35 Movie theater, Raccoon Lake made into a recreational lake like Centralia Lake, more approachable police force
 36 Continue to develop downtown area. Demolish abandoned homes/ buildings
 37 Downtown, youth sports, keep getting rid of old houses.
 38 Restore Raccon Lake!!!, Attract job opportunities
 39 Continuing to stay involved with locals and having friendly activities all year round to keep people preoccupied and happy.
 40 Public private partnerships
 41 more industrial and less drugs
 42 For a town the size of Centralia we need more basic things to do.
 43 Remove abandoned buildings
 44 Business development that fits the community
 45 Attract business
 46 Attracting industry; well-paying jobs; sidewalks along East McCord>Country Club Rd
 47 N/A
 48 Rotary ball park, Castle ridge guyetti sports arena
 49 lowering taxes volunteerism
 50 Restore or remove old buildings; encourage new industry to Centralia
 51 Sports, tourism
 52 City administration
 53 Providing opportunities and recreation, and live music downtown.
 54 New housing, especially quality middle class housing
 55 help for the homeless
 56 Trying to get more businesses into the Centralia
 57 More recreation
 58 Growth plant
 59 Creating a more safe place for children
 60 r youth activities. Expansion of the industrial park. The improvement of the downtown area
 61 Hopefully something for the youth to do besides get into trouble and do drugs
 62 Revitalizing downtown and mall area, infrastructure upgrades
 63 New businesses, restaurants, and shopping
 64 Make people upkeep their property
 65 Fix the roads, a pool, more things for kids to do
 66 Advertise and feature more activities in Foundation Park and Raccoon Lake and Castle Ridge.

67 Bring on new businesses excluding gambling.
 68 Market more work from home families and create a safe fun family environment
 69 Streets-housing-shops-restaurants
 70 New administrators
 71 Need more to do besides bars, and slot machines.
 72 Things for kids to do besides get in trouble
 73 Kid friendly establishments, reduce the number of gaming facilities (it's not the only way to make tax money)
 74 Safety!! The economy needs improvement, if possible. Employment opportunity. Neighborhoods
 75 No Response given
 76 A need to work on a more positive and inclusive branding of the community.
 77 51 extension through West side of town. More hotel rooms more entertainment venues
 78 Roads, business, get rid of crime
 79 Drugs off streets
 80 Cleaning up the drug and crime problems. Lowering taxes
 81 We have an industrial park. Also, more people work from home, and we have some scenic asights that may attract people
 82 Getting people to quit bad mouthing the town publicly, potential industries might be in ear shot or social media
 83 If it is going to be a family town there needs to be things for families; Ex.beautiful parks
 84 Tear down abandoned property
 85 New industry or businesses, better eateries
 86 New Business for jobs and more kid friendly thing to do to keep children out of trouble.
 87 There are enough good people in this town to create lasting change. We need to unite a
 88 Small, locally owned businesses, removal of derelict and substandard properties
 89 More businesses
 90 Restoring some of the historic buildings, bringing businesses to Centralia, supporting the local youth
 91 I see more people getting involved in helping others with food boxes set up at Library, feed Centralia gardens.
 92 Housing cleanup. And become a place for date night and a vibrant night life
 93 Growth of the family businesses, including restaurants and shops.
 94 A sidewalk/bike path to Bryan Manor.
 95 The city has several empty buildings. There is a need to recruit businesses in the city
 96 Attract employers
 97 No response given
 98 Attractions for community events
 99 more well paying jobs, a new swimming pool at Fairview Park
 100 Bringing the community together to help deal with the problems of drug abuse and poverty.

101 Getting rid of the drugs and help homeless
 102 Growing and keeping businesses
 103 To have more shopping, more places for children to go and have fun.
 104 No response given
 105 continue working on the jobs, for the young men and women in town. new water plant will be a good thing
 106 New businesses
 107 Industry to locate in Centralia
 108 Need more factory jobs with competitive pay and benefits, there is lots of possibilities in the tech sector
 109 Beautifying, grow small business opportunities
 110 Youth involvement and activities, houses (new, remodel, tear down), trash pick up, landscaping/curb appeal
 111 Get people to work again/ major businesses to bring jobs. Community is dying from lack of money in local economy
 112 More community things to do.
 113 something for children/teenagers. hold ball tournaments at fairview park.
 114 Business
 115 Commerce
 116 Emerging tourism/service opportunities
 117 More for kids to do
 118 Unsure
 119 Drug problem.
 120 Jobs
 121 Shop local. Helping others.
 122 Upgrade the infrastructure such as the water plant. Economic development, and tourism.
 123 Expanding and retaining local businesses
 124 Continued revitalization of the downtown area and infrastructure including renovation
 125 Improvements in lower class neighborhoods
 126 Infrastructure and business
 127 water park, movie theater, competition for Wal Mart (such as Target)
 128 The downtown area. I would like to see another restaurant downtown. I love seeing kids out enjoying the splash pad. I
 129 Improve tourism and kid friendly activities
 130 Downtown area growing
 131 bring in more jobs
 132 New businesses
 133 Upgrade housing. A rail trail along an abandoned train track would bring in revenue.
 134 Home renovations. Adding a rail trail would bring in tourism and revenue..... Hosting biking tours on the trail!

135 Keep trying
136 Mandatory occupancy inspections
137 Stuff for kids to do. A pool, bowling alley and movie theater would be nice
138 Remove abandoned houses and slum lords. Fix the homeless problem witch is growing
139 Retention upcoming Generation, financial growth
140 New industry,more for the youth to do
141 Park inprovement
142 More FAMILY friendly establishments, things for teens and kids to do.... less gambling and bars
143 Reduce crime/drugs
144 Things to involve kids.
145 Removing condemned houses/ buildings. Trying to get better businesses in the city.
146 Taking events to regular activities. Updating the walk availability of our town. Investing in things such as farmers market.
147 I hope to see Centralia take entertainment more into account. I would also love to see more restaurants
148 Industry must be brought in or the town will lose half of the existing businesses in the next decade.
149 Industry must be brought in or the town will lose half of the existing businesses in the next decade.
150 Getting a pool. Cleaning up abandoned properties and eliminating meth.
151 A new park with nicer more inclusive playgrounds
152 Growing businesses. And not just small businesses. Take care of the homeless problem.
153 Downtown and both parks
154 none
155 none
156 War on drugs
157 Unknown
158 Bring in more jobs
159 Growing downtown and occupying the empty buildings around town.

Question 5: What do you believe are the most difficult challenges Centralia will face?

- 1 Housing, childcare, and public transportation
- 2 The negativity. the homeless population needs assistance.
- 3 Getting in its own way. Dwindling population
- 4 Funding, political infighting, derelict buildings.
- 5 Changing the negative narrative we have gained in the last 30 years.
- 6 Cleaning up the drugs and lack of pride in our town. People just don't have pride in their properties a
- 7 People buying up property just to have it - then never doing anything with it. Its sad to see the amount of buildings downtown owned
- 8 Working together. Agreeing on priorities.
- 9 The current decline in population for the State of Illinois, Southern Illinois, and Centralia.
- 10 Clean up streets, safety, law enforcement
- 11 Finding enough employment to bring in new residents who'll buy homes and raise families and invest their lives.
- 12 Loss of population
- 13 Money
- 14 lack of motivation to pursue personal improvement. the economy
- 15 There are no major industries here, so people are having to move away in order to make a living.
- 16 Housing, low income salaries that do not help support Centralia's need for growth
- 17 Funding for the water treatment plant, the overpass we need and what to do with the empty shopping center.
- 18 Drug issues, homelessness, poverty
- 19 retaining and attracting larger employers, which are needed to keep our young people here
- 20 Im not sure
- 21 Crime rate rising
- 22 Our work force / city streets / water and sewer systems / drug problems / run-down neighborhoods / high property taxes
- 23 Crime drugs and lack of opportunity
- 24 Illinois state government
- 25 gambling establishments, crime, and drugs.
- 26 No opinion
- 27 Unsure
- 28 Economy
- 29 Attracting businesses and building infrastructure
- 30 Cost of living
- 31 Violence
- 32 Unemployment

33 Poverty and inability to move forward with projects. Property taxes in general are already outrageous
 34 The lack of job opportunities seems to be the biggest problem.
 35 Building the population, Decreasing illegal drug trafficking and crime, tearing down all of the condemned homes
 Jobs
 36 Attracting new businesses/ restaurants. Declining population.
 37 Growth, drugs, lack of youth sports.
 38 Attracting industry
 39 Keeping businesses alive as technology continues to take control. Customer service and community engagement is key.
 40 New water treatment plant, attracting industry, and maintaining infrastructure
 41 jobs and education of our children
 42 Keeping the people here and not moving out and also not spending money in other towns.
 43 Workforce--people wanting to work here
 44 Homelessness and economic development
 45 Loss of population
 46 Drug usage; unemployment; crime; cost of living; rising local & county taxes
 47 Yes
 48 Growth and keeping people living here
 49 water department and taxes
 50 Keep hospital and doctors here; new growth industry for jobs to keep people here;
 51 Current government administration
 52 Money
 53 Keeping the city looking like a place that people want to live
 54 Culture of poverty. Infrastructure, lack of investment
 55 Homelessness and unemployment
 56 Keeping our population status quo as is or higher. Finding positive outlets for today's youth.
 57 Economy
 58 Drugs, gangs
 59 Creating more jobs and businesses to bring/keep people here
 60 declining population. a lot of workers in the City that don't live in the City. Need new housing
 61 Drugs
 62 Encouraging population growth with good employment opportunities
 63 Decline in income for resident living here and the rise of declining neighborhoods and increased crime
 64 Drugs
 65 Drugs violence over dose theft

66 No big business to provide reliable jobs.
 67 Drugs, witchcraft practices.
 68 Our education we offer has to be top notch to attract the people and of course our water treatment plant to enable growth
 69 Population loss due to lack of services
 70 Poverty, homelessness, crime, lack of youth work ethic
 71 Drugs and violence.. poverty
 72 None
 73 Bringing in new wholesome business and not ones that are geared toward gamblers and drinkers.
 74 Safety!The economy needs improvement, if possible. Employment opportunity. aesthetics of many neighborhoods.
 75 A concern is habitability considering the constant rise in taxes and decrease in economic opportunities.
 76 Creating a better workforce.
 77 Caring for our growing homeless population
 78 Drugs, crime, improvements to infrastructure
 79 Drugs
 80 Losing people in the community due to crime.
 81 We now have an undereducated workforce. Many of our educated children do not return to work/live here.
 82 Retaining our youth after college and encouraging skilled trade training
 83 Continued drug saturated unless some change takes place
 84 Cleaning up the streets from criminal
 85 Growth, economic development, policing recruitment
 86 Jobs
 87 Overcoming victim mentality, improving the neglected homes/buildings, r
 88 Population decline, jobs
 89 No tax money because there's no new businesses
 90 Money and crime.
 91 Homelessness, housing
 92 Homelessness, and pushing out people that just want to line there pockes and not help the city.
 93 The economic uncertainties
 94 The price of taxes. They suck.
 95 Poverty level citizens who cannot find jobs. Diminishing population due to joblessness.
 96 Malaise in our city officials
 97 See answer above.
 98 Low employment opportunities, violent crime, drug use and dealing, abandoned/dilapidated properties
 99 drug culture, limited opportunities for employment

100 Dealing with the issues of drug abuse and poverty which lead to homelessness, hopelessness and intolerance.
101 Homeless and nowhere to live
102 Keeping businesses
103 Having things for kids to do
104 Being in a drug free area
105 rising cost of everything, budget to run the city proper
106 Politics
107 Creating positions whereby people will locate in Centralia
108 The increasing drug abuse and homeless problems
109 Reputation
110 Drugs, exodus of young families
111 Change the attitude of community to get it to grow again instead of dying.
112 Money issues.
113 lack of money, the status quo mentality in the whole of the state of Illinois
114 Infrastructure
115 Growth
116 Investment capital options & lack of focus
117 Drugs
118 Population decline
119 Education
120 Falling apart
121 Economy
122 The Illinois government, high taxes, and an unskilled workforce
123 Retention of citizens within our community.
124 Declining population, poverty, lack of educated workforce and poorly maintained housing stock.
125 People moving out of town
126 Loss of population
127 affordable housing, city income, jobs
128 Drugs and homeless.
129 Recession
130 residents not supporting business and growth opportunities
131 none
132 People moving out, crime
133 Good local jobs.

134 Providing good paying jobs, cracking down on crime and drugs. Clean up trash....
135 Attracting new people
136 Citizen backlash to change or ignorant to why it is needed
137 Continual death of the town I
138 Getting people to support there home town again.
139 Decline in population
140 Our drug problem and gangs
141 Young people leaving.
142 Community attitude
143 Crime. Drugs.
144 More things will shut down
145 Management and corruption.
146 CHANGE. Our town is stuck in it's ways.
147 Bringing people into this town.
148 No Response
149 No Response
150 Eliminating drugs and ending the cycle of poverty.
151 More homeless
152 Homelessness, unemployment, undergrowth of franchise/big business.
153 Declining population and poverty
154 a lot
155 growing the population/keeping people around
156 Drugs
157 Illinois issues
158 Keeping citizens from leaving
159 Growing our population and getting younger adults involved as our older generation taps out.

Appendix M

Centralia Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing

Meeting Minutes

December 10, 2024

5:00 PM

Centralia City Hall

101 S. Locust Street

Centralia, Illinois 62801

Public Attending:

Attendance recorded by sign-sheet (attached).

SCIRPDC Staff Attending:

Luke Eastin, Executive Director, SCIRPDC

City Staff Attending:

W. Kory Smith, City Manager

Kimberly A. Enke, City Clerk

Jeremy Henderson, Finance Director

Derek Sherman, Economic Development Director

Gayla Harting, Community Development & Zoning Director

Elected Officials Attending:

Israel Fontanez, Councilman

Meeting Minutes:

The public hearing began promptly at 5:00 PM. Luke Eastin, Executive Director of the South Central Illinois Regional Planning and Development Commission (SCIRPDC), then proceeded through the hearing agenda items.

Mr. Eastin first began by introducing himself and thanking all of the hearing attendees for being there. He noted that he has provided all in attendance with a Comprehensive Plan Summary Packet outlining the accomplishments through the planning process.

Eastin then provided a brief description of the purpose of comprehensive planning and the overall planning process. He then went on to discuss the Community Visioning process that took place during the Spring and Summer of 2024, including the provision of a community-wide, community vision survey that was made available for the public to complete.

He then provided a summary of the community vision survey results and specifically noted the survey's findings regarding community strengths, opportunities for improvement and challenges.

Next, Eastin went on to describe the needs assessment process that his organization undertook, guided by the established Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee. This assessment included not only the results of the community vision survey, but also data collection and analysis. He noted a few central concerns moving forward including housing, workforce development, employment opportunity and community branding.

Eastin then provided an overview of all the of Comprehensive Plan priorities that were developed by the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee following the needs assessment portion of the planning process. Examples of these priorities include, (1) a housing rehabilitation program, (2) an official five-year capital improvement plan, (3) a formal business and expansion program, (4) submission of a request for proposal for a place branding and marketing study, (5) the review of all established community committees and commissions for to ensure they are working as intended, among others.

Lastly, he discussed the next steps of the planning process, the implementation of the plan priorities. He stated that the City Council and City Staff should take responsibility for the implementation of the plan priorities. He stated that at least on a quarterly basis the City Council should review progress toward completion of the plan priorities and make adjustments accordingly.

Eastin then opened up the hearing to receive and answer questions about the planning process and the information he has provided.

Ms. Marion "Bunny" Garrett posed two questions, (1) why was not all advisory boards made aware or asked for input through the planning process? and (2), why did the SCIRPDC planning organization complete this Comprehensive Plan process on behalf of the City of Centralia rather than municipal staff who are capable of this type of work?

Eastin responded by stating that during the planning process he and the city tried to receive input from as many committees, commissions, advisory boards, etc. as possible. He noted that it is of course possible that not all members of all boards had direct input into the planning process, but he invited those comments and input going forward. He then stated that is common practice for municipalities to hire 3rd party firms to help guide the comprehensive planning process for their municipality, most notably due to the significant number of labor hours that the planning process requires.

Ms. Garrett then followed up with a question about how the community vision survey was made available to the public to ensure that it had a wide reach. Eastin noted that the survey was not only available online, but hard copies of the survey were also available, as well as the City Council directly requesting the public to complete this survey during regular meetings of the City Council.

City of Centralia Councilman Israel Fontanez then commented that the city contracted with SCIRPDC to develop the Comprehensive Plan because these types of planning activities are what SCIRPDC does for the South Central Illinois area.

Ms. Garrett then stated she understood why SCIRPDC was chosen do the work and that her intention was not to take anything away from SCIRPDC's work, but that she just wanted to ask the question since the city does pay for municipal staff.

Mr. Julius Flagg, a member of the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee, then stated that the community vision survey was provided to everyone via mail alongside their water bill.

Ms. Garrett then asked Mr. Eastin how long this plan was for. Eastin responded that it was a 20-year comprehensive plan, but it should be a living document that is changing alongside the changes within the community.

Councilman Fontanez, Ms. Garrett and Mr. Eastin then shared in a discussion on how the plan priorities will be implemented through the municipal staff with regular oversight of the Centralia City Council.

Ms. Rae Quidgeon, a member of the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee, then stated that she felt the progress of plan priority implementation should be on agenda of the City Council on a quarterly basis for review, and not just reviewed behind closed doors.

Ms. Garrett then noted that the quarterly review of plan priority progress by the City Council was something she would like to see also.

Ms. Quidgeon asked Mr. Eastin whether he felt the attendance at this public hearing was lower, higher, or about average in his experience. Eastin responded by saying it is about average, but it can vary somewhat from community to community.

Ms. Garrett then went on to discuss the positive impacts that Kaskaskia College has on the community, surrounding area, especially in the areas of workforce development. Eastin confirmed their importance to the surrounding area.

Ms. Teresa Flagg, a member of the Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee, noted that the President of Kaskaskia College was a member of Comprehensive Plan Stakeholder Committee and was a part of the planning process.

Ms. Flagg went on to discuss how the different Centralia committees and commissions should be involved in the plan priority implementation. She stated that those priorities that align with different committees should be taken up and implemented by those committee members.

Ms. Garrett agreed with Ms. Flagg and noted that everyone needs to come together to work toward moving the city forward.

Eastin then agreed that this sentiment is likely widely accepted, and that is important those everyone who is invested in the community's success resolve ongoing conflicts and work together to implement the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan.

As the hearing concluded, Eastin reiterated that if there are further public comments or questions about the comprehensive plan or process that he can be contacted directly and those comments will be included in the final plan.

At this time the hearing was adjourned.

Centralia Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Centralia City Hall

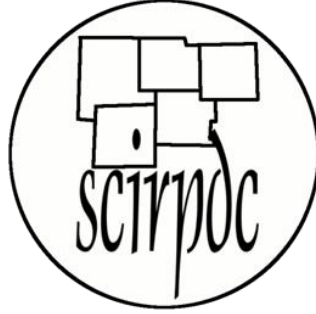
101 S Locust St

Centralia, Illinois 62801

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Attendance Sheet

No.	Name (Please Print)
1	Bunny Garrett
2	Jan I. Fugle
3	Rae Quaden
4	Matt Packman
5	Theresa Hagg
6	Marwest Holland
7	Kym Enke
8	Lyne Mack
9	Julie Eastin
10	
11	
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13	
14	
15	
16	



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