

# McHenry County



## Comprehensive Plan 2015 - 2035



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**And thanks to the citizens of McHenry County who participated in the comprehensive plan process.**

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# McHenry County Comprehensive Plan

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## Preface

In North Dakota, all counties which exercise zoning authority are required by the North Dakota Century Code to have an adopted Comprehensive Plan. McHenry County has a zoning ordinance and exercises zoning authority. This document is the McHenry County Comprehensive Plan.

## Introduction

A comprehensive plan is a policy document, not a regulatory document. The comprehensive plan provides foundation policies and principles for implementing zoning controls. The zoning ordinance regulations contain specific requirements which set the standards for land development by regulating the sizes, locations, and uses of buildings. By establishing locations for various land uses such as commercial, industrial, and residential, the zoning map together with the zoning ordinance provides the basis for how land in the county will be developed or conserved.

Zoning establishes what landowners can and cannot do with their property and this zoning authority is not taken lightly. The North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) 11-33.2.12(3) instructs county commissioners to inquire into the public interest and to make determinations based upon whether the public interest is being served when considering approval of subdivision plats.

Policies in the comprehensive plan represent public values because the plan is developed with direct input from county residents. In this way, the comprehensive



*Photo: Welcome to McHenry County, Courtesy of Kay Buri.*



plan policies provide guidance that serves as the basis for exercising local control. The plan was developed using a bottom-up, grassroots approach.

The commissioners can rely on these policies with confidence in making decisions on land use including development proposals, zoning changes, subdivisions, special use permits, variances, and when making changes and updates to the zoning regulations.

The North Dakota Century Code allows counties, cities, and townships to exercise zoning authority but only with the condition that a comprehensive plan is utilized. The mandate for comprehensive planning is found in the following sections of the North Dakota Century code:

- For counties: NDCC 11-33-03
- For townships: NDCC 58-03-12
- For cities: NDCC 40-47-03

In discussing the purposes of zoning regulations, the Century Code connects zoning to the comprehensive plan in NDCC 11-33-03 as follows:

These regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and designed for any or all of the following purposes:

1. To protect and guide the development of non-urban areas.
2. To provide for emergency management. "Emergency management" means a comprehensive integrated system at all levels of government and in the private sector which provides for the development and maintenance of an effective capability to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from known and unforeseen hazards or situations, caused by an act of nature or man, which may threaten, injure, damage, or destroy lives, property, or our environment.
3. To regulate and restrict the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, or use of buildings and structures, the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and structures, the percentage of lot that may be occupied, the size of courts, yards, and other open spaces, the density of population, and the location and use of buildings, structures, and land for trade, industry, residence, or other purposes.
4. To lessen governmental expenditures.
5. To conserve and develop natural resources.



These regulations shall be made with a reasonable consideration, among other things, to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses. The comprehensive plan shall be a statement in documented text setting forth explicit goals, objectives, policies, and standards of the jurisdiction to guide public and private development within its control.

The McHenry County Comprehensive Plan was prepared over a one-year period beginning in the fall of 2014. In addition to providing McHenry County with a policy statement, the plan functions as a blueprint for how the county grows and evolves. Future growth patterns were considered in the preparation of this plan and a future land use map was developed to guide orderly growth.



*Photo: Velva Sportsman's Pond in McHenry County, ND. Courtesy of Kay Buri.*

The future land use map does more than provide a guide for development. By designating locations for various types of future development, it provides property owners with an understanding of what is envisioned and helps diminish concerns of not knowing what could be built next door in the future.

The comprehensive plan also identifies needs such as staffing, regulatory tools, facilities or public services. Funding agencies will routinely expect that the need for a project has been officially documented. The comprehensive plan provides the basis for requesting funding by identifying and substantiating needs. The comprehensive plan can be cited in funding and grant applications to show that specific needs exist.

The comprehensive plan is a dynamic tool to be used on a routine basis. As a living document, the comprehensive plan will be updated from time to time. To keep pace with new trends that emerge, new tools will be needed to effectively manage growth. The McHenry County Comprehensive Plan can be amended at any time but it should be revisited again in the year 2020 to reexamine the policies and assure it remains consistent with public values.

As mentioned, the comprehensive plan should be viewed as a living document, rather than as a permanent policy document carved in stone. Also, this plan is more than a mere “guide” or “suggestion”; it is a powerful tool to be carefully used as the basis for making decisions on future development. For each new development proposal, the comprehensive plan should be consulted to determine whether the proposal is consistent with this plan.

The Future Land Use Maps provided on pages 41 and 42 identify areas which are deemed suitable for future growth. These areas are designated as “Growth Nodes”. Because the Future Land Use Maps are adopted as part of the comprehensive plan, they become part of the official policies of the county.

Whenever a new development is proposed in the county, these maps should be referenced to determine whether the location of the proposed development is consistent with the adopted maps. For undeveloped areas, a new proposal will likely include a request to change the zoning from agricultural to commercial or industrial followed by an additional request for approval of a subdivision plat.

If a new development is proposed for a location outside of a designated “Growth Node”, the applicant would also request an amendment to the Future Land Use Map (in addition to requesting approval of a zoning change and approval of a subdivision). At the Commission meetings, the first item on the agenda should be the requested amendment to the comprehensive plan. The question is whether the proposed development is appropriate for the requested location. If the planning commission believes the location is not appropriate, they can deny the request to amend the comprehensive plan and deny the proposed development because it is not consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan.

However, if a requested location outside of a designated Growth Node is deemed reasonable, the Future Land Use Map of the comprehensive plan can be amended and a new Growth Node can be established.

For every newly proposed development, the question should be asked “Is the proposal consistent with the McHenry County Comprehensive Plan?” By following these procedures, the county will not become vulnerable to legal challenges on land use decisions and growth will evolve in an orderly manner.

## County Overview Summary

### History

The Territorial legislature formed McHenry County in 1873 from part of Bottineau County. The name comes from James McHenry, an early settler of Vermillion, South Dakota. The county government was first organized on October 15, 1884. Before becoming Towner in 1886, the county seat was Villard from 1884 to 1885 and Scriptown from 1885 to 1886. Both of these early county seats are now uninhabited.

### Existing Land Use

The predominant land use throughout McHenry County is agriculture. Cities within the county such as Velva, Towner, and Drake, contain a diversity of land uses such as residential, commercial, industrial. There are a few examples of non-agricultural land uses throughout the county that are not located within a city. Some examples include: rural residential uses north and west of the City of Velva, a larger industrial development at the intersection of ND Highway 97 and US Highway 52, and open space/recreation uses at Buffalo Lodge Lake and Bentley Lake.

The communities which fall under the current zoning jurisdiction of McHenry County include: Voltaire, Balfour, Upham, Norwich, Denbigh, Berwick, and Simcoe. The county has six existing zoning districts, including two residential districts, a commercial district, an industrial district, an agricultural district, and a recreational district.

### Population

McHenry County's total population in 2013 was 5,922; of which approximately 2,903 is derived from the cities and 3,019 from rural areas of the county. The county experienced both positive and negative population fluctuations in the past century. From 2010 to 2013, McHenry County's population increased by 9.8% to 5,922. Compared to state averages, McHenry County has a larger distribution of seniors and "baby-boomers" suggesting a preference to retire within the county.

McHenry County had a total of 2,948 housing units in 2010. The average persons per household in the County was 2.32 for owner-occupied units and 1.92 for renter-occupied units. Both are lower than the state average. The vacancy rate in the county was 19.4 percent, which is higher than the state average. Approximately 83 percent of housing is owner-occupied, which is higher than the state average. McHenry County is currently experiencing a limited supply of affordable and higher density housing. Factors contributing to this limitation may include the rising demand from the oil boom.

Housing

Numerous types of transportation infrastructure sustain McHenry County including roads, railroads, and airports. The roadways in and around the County are administered by different agencies depending upon their jurisdictional classification. The US Department of Transportation (DOT) controls US Highway 2 and 52, the NDDOT controls state Highways 41,97,53, and 14, the county controls other regional routes and local city streets are controlled by the cities. There are four railroads that traverse the county; two of which are BNSF lines and the others are Canadian Pacific Railroad lines. The only publicly owned airport in the county is Towner Municipal Airport which averages approximately 70 aircraft operations a month.

Transportation

An analysis of growth opportunities and constraints analysis was conducted to determine appropriate growth areas for the future land use plan. This mapped analysis can be viewed in Figures 9 and 10. There are seven categories of opportunities and constraints including: transportation infrastructure, water resources, government boundaries, government land, services, infrastructure and development, and endangered or threatened species. An example of a growth opportunity might be access to municipal sewer service. An example of a growth constraint might be land which is already owned by the federal or state government.

Growth Opportunities and Constraints

# Existing Conditions

## Demographics

Throughout the past century, the population in McHenry County continued to decline at various rates. According to the most recent U.S. Census in 2010, the population of the county was 5,395, down 9.9 percent from 2000. The total population of the county also fell below one percent of the North Dakota population due to both county decline and state growth. The cities of McHenry County have obtained a greater share of the total population in the county as outlined in Table 1. In the 1920s, the cities possessed approximately 25 percent of the total population in McHenry County; while in 2010, the total share was over 50 percent. Illustrated in Figure 1, the increased population share by the cities is likely the result of rural population decline, since city population has remained fairly consistent.

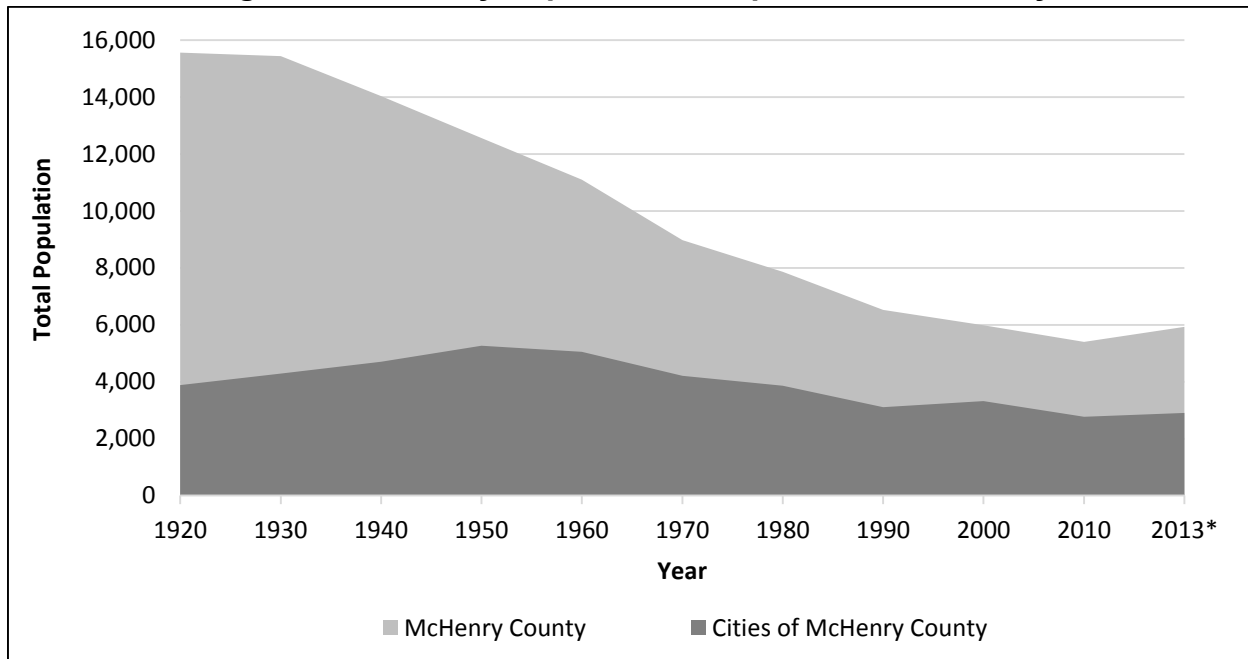
**Table 1: Population Change Comparison, 1920 to 2013**

Year	North Dakota		McHenry County			Cities of McHenry County		
	Pop.	Percent Change	Pop.	Percent Change	Percent of ND	Pop.	Percent Change	Percent of McHenry County
1920	646,872	12.1	15,554	-11.8	2.4	3,887	--	25.0
1930	680,845	5.3	15,439	-0.7	2.3	4,283	10.2	27.7
1940	641,935	-5.7	14,034	-9.1	2.2	4,702	9.8	33.5
1950	619,636	-3.5	12,556	-10.5	2.0	5,268	12.0	42.0
1960	632,446	2.1	11,099	-11.6	1.8	5,048	-4.2	45.5
1970	617,761	-2.3	8,977	-19.1	1.5	4,206	-16.7	46.9
1980	652,717	5.7	7,858	-12.5	1.2	3,863	-8.2	49.2
1990	638,800	-2.1	6,528	-16.9	1.0	3,106	-19.6	47.6
2000	642,200	0.5	5,987	-8.3	0.9	3,319	6.9	55.4
2010	672,591	4.7	5,395	-9.9	0.8	2,770	-16.5	51.3
<i>2013</i>	<i>703,203</i>	<i>4.6</i>	<i>5,922</i>	<i>9.8</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>2,903</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>49.0</i>
<b>Average</b>	<b>644,580</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>10,343</b>	<b>-11.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>3,947</b>	<b>-2.1</b>	<b>45.0</b>

Source: United States Bureau of the Census, Decennial Census and American Community Survey, 1920 to 2013. Note: Italics are estimates.

While all of these numbers are indicative of the long term demographic history for McHenry County, they do not necessarily address recent changes. The U.S. Census estimate from 2013 shows an increase in population for the county at 5,922. In the three years following the 2010 Census, McHenry County has increased in population by approximately 9.8 percent. This change contrasts the long term demographic history and explains the recent growth within the county.

**Figure 1: Total City Population Compared to the County**



*Source:* United States Bureau of the Census, Decennial Census and American Community Survey, 1920 to 2013. *Note:* Cities of McHenry County includes: Velva, Towner, Drake, Granville, Anamoose, Upham, Deering, Karlsruhe, Voltaire, Balfour, Bantry, Keif, and Bergen. Asterisk indicates an American Community Survey Estimate. Asterisk indicates ACS estimate.

Another beneficial method to determine population trends of the county is examining trends in the Souris Basin region via comparison. When comparing the population of McHenry County to adjacent counties, as illustrated in Table 2, the results reveal the recent growth to be the highest in the region. Up to the 2010 Census, there was a clear indication of out-migration occurring in McHenry County and the region, with Ward County being the only exception. Within the last three years however, McHenry County has become the frontrunner of population growth and in-migration in the region.



**Table 2: Population Change County Comparison, 1920 to 2013**

County	2010	2013	Percent Change
<b>McHenry</b>	<b>5,395</b>	<b>5,922</b>	<b>9.8%</b>
Ward	61,675	65,911	6.9%
McLean	8,962	9,517	6.2%
Renville	2,470	2,608	5.6%
Bottineau	6,429	6,736	4.8%
Pierce	4,357	4,451	2.2%
Sheridan	1,321	1,304	-1.3%
<b>Average</b>	<b>12,944</b>	<b>13,778</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

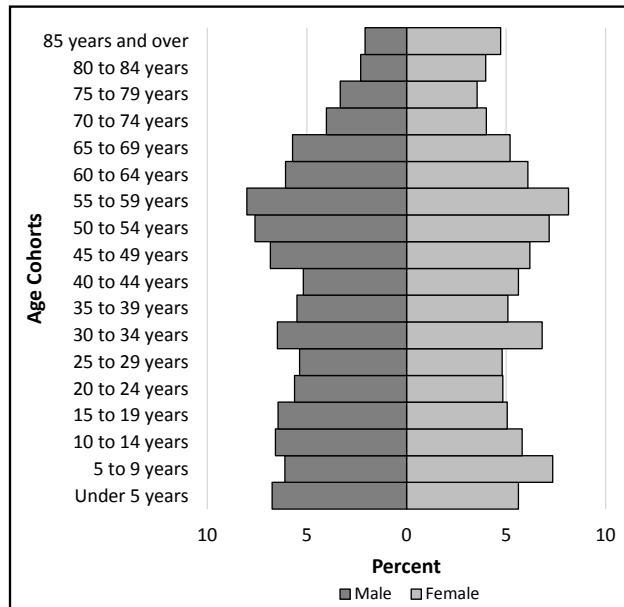
Source: United States Bureau of the Census, Decennial Census and American Community Survey, 1920 to 2013.

## Age Distribution

A population pyramid illustrates the distribution of age groups in a population within an area. The graph consists of two back-to-back bar graphs, with the population plotted on the horizontal axis and the age groups on the vertical axis. The left side of the graphs represent the number of males and the right side the number of females in each of the five-year age groups. Due to the recent changes in population discussed in the demographics section, data from the 2013 American Community Survey was applied for the pyramids.

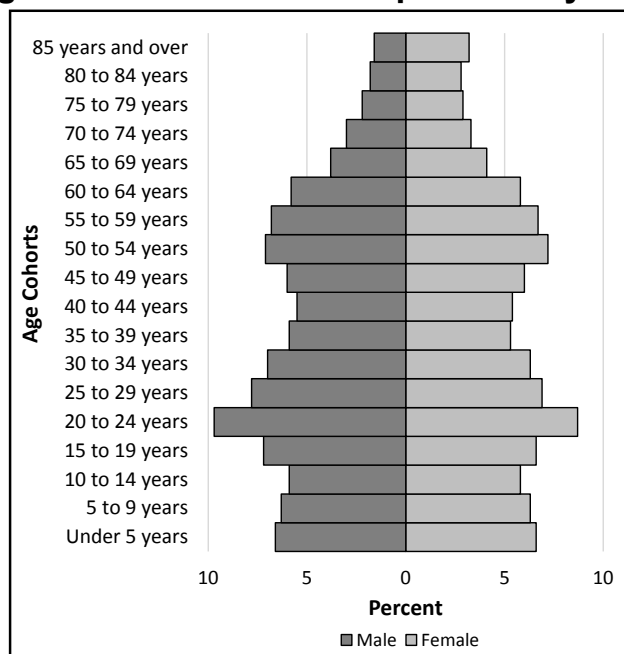
By comparing McHenry County's (Figure 2) pyramid and North Dakota's (Figure 3) pyramid, consistencies and inconsistencies of population can be identified. From these graphs, there are two evident consistencies and inconsistencies. Both McHenry County and the state have a large 45 to 64 age cohort, otherwise known as the Baby Boomer generation. McHenry County's infant and children cohorts are also consistent with the state, suggesting birth rates are similar. Contrasting the state, McHenry County's larger 65 and older cohort distribution signifies a preference to retire in the county, while the smaller 19 to 29 cohort distribution suggests out-migration.

**Figure 2: McHenry County Population Pyramid**



Source: United States Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2013.

**Figure 3: North Dakota Population Pyramid**



Source: United States Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2013.

## Housing Characteristics

The U.S. Census also has an extensive library of housing data which can be valuable to the planning process. Some of the most useful data sets include persons per household, housing occupancy, and housing tenure. This data identifies current housing trends in a community by examining housing supply and demand, which can help decision makers with decisions on future development. The average persons per household in the county for 2010 is 2.25, which is similar to the state and only slightly under the national average. The vacancy rate in the county is 19.4 percent, which is both higher than the state and national averages. McHenry County's housing tenure is 82.5 percent of housing being owner-occupied, which is higher than both the state and national averages. By having a large number of owner-occupied homes, McHenry County's population is more likely to be invested in the county and local communities. The higher than average vacancy rate indicates available housing supply that may reduce the demand for new housing construction in the short term.

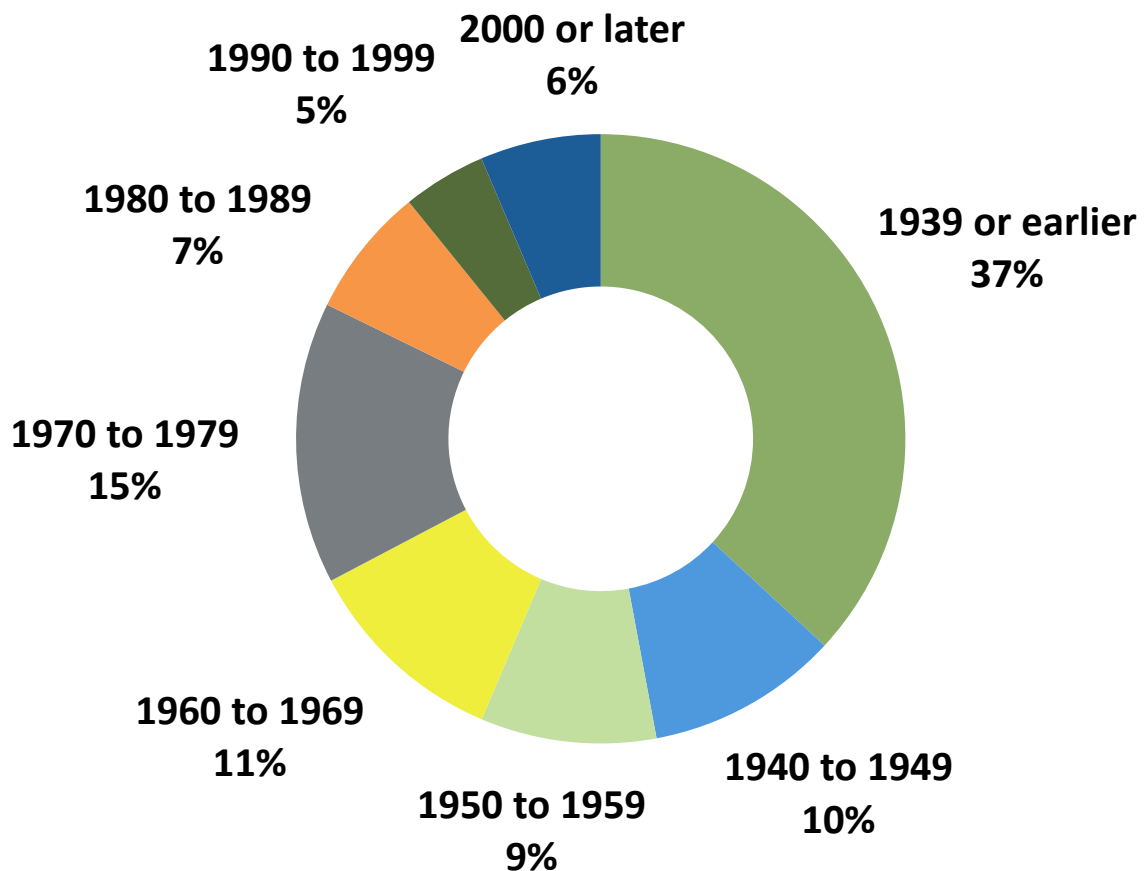


*Source:* Example of Residence in McHenry County, ND. Courtesy of Kay Buri.

## Age of Housing Stock

The age distribution of housing stock in McHenry County is illustrated in Figure 4. This analysis shows the majority of housing in McHenry County was built in 1939 or earlier. The second largest group of housing was built in the 1970s. Only 6 percent of housing in McHenry County has been built since 2000. The high vacancy rate may be impacted by this older housing stock where some housing may be uninhabitable but still recorded by the Census.

**Figure 4: Age of Housing Stock Distribution**



Source: United States Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2013.

## Forecasts

Updated population, housing, employment, and industry projections are important to allow the county to properly plan for its growth and continue to fund important items, such as infrastructure and services. Further, projections help the public and decision makers determine future land use needs. Existing and historical population, housing, employment, and industry data help illustrate a depiction of how the community might grow or decline in the next two decades. It is important to note that future land use plans are not limited to what the projections show, instead they gauge the general long term needs for various land uses.

The most comprehensive sources for statistically accurate information on McHenry County are the decennial Census of Population and Housing and the American Community Survey. In 2012, North Dakota State University (NDSU) formulated population, housing, and employment projections applying these sources for the greater Minot region, including McHenry County, up to the year 2025. From this study, it is evident that McHenry County can expect both a population and employment increase, while housing has the possibility of a slight decrease or increase. Averages from the NDSU projections were developed to determine a change rate, which was then applied to establish projections for 2035. A growth projection for industry was also developed through the use of County Business Patterns data from the U.S. Census.

## Population Forecast

A population forecast is a judgmental statement of what the population is likely to be in the future. Effective planning needs to be based on reasonable expectations of future populations, as there is a greater likelihood that services and facilities will be available at the time and in the place they are most needed. The NDSU study projects a population increase from 2010 to 2025 of up to 44 percent for McHenry County. This growth rate is moderately reaffirmed by the 2013 population estimates released by the U.S. Census, with an estimated population of 5,922. The average annual change rate for the NDSU population forecasts is 4.65 percent. After applying this number towards 2035, a forecasted population of 8,525 results. When comparing the forecasted population for

McHenry County to adjacent counties, as illustrated in Table 4, the results reveal the growth to be above the average.

**Table 3: Population Forecasts, 2010 to 2035**

Study	Forecasts			Avg. Change Rate	Forecast
	2015	2020	2025		2035
NDSU	7,116	7,687	7,784	4.65%	8,525

Source: North Dakota Statewide Housing Needs Assessment, Center for Social Research at North Dakota State University, 2012.

**Table 4: Population Forecast Comparison, 2010 to 2035**

County	2010	2035	Percent Change
Bottineau	6,429	11,528	79.3%
<b>McHenry</b>	<b>5,395</b>	<b>8,525</b>	<b>58.0%</b>
Renville	2,470	3,867	56.6%
Ward	61,675	81,731	32.5%
Pierce	4,357	5,661	29.9%
McLean	8,962	9,310	3.9%
Sheridan	1,321	941	-28.8%
<b>Average</b>	<b>12,944</b>	<b>17,366</b>	<b>33.1%</b>

Source: North Dakota Statewide Housing Needs Assessment, Center for Social Research at North Dakota State University, 2012.

## Housing Forecast

Comparable to a population projection, a housing projection is a judgmental statement of how many permanent housing units there are likely to be in the future. As a result, effective planning also needs to be based on reasonable expectations of future housing trends. Proper anticipation of future housing trends increases the likelihood that services and facilities will be available at the time and in the locations that they are needed most. Applying housing data from the U. S. Census, the NDSU study projects a very slight decline from 2010 to 2025, down ½ percent. The slight decline may change positively however, since the 2013 housing estimates reveal an increase in housing units. Either way, the NDSU projections indicate a stagnant change rate of zero percent, meaning that for 2035 the housing stock will have remained around 2,948. When comparing the projected housing units for McHenry County to adjacent counties, as illustrated in Table

6, the results reveal that even with a slight decline the county remains above average. By having a population increase and no change in housing units, this suggests that vacancy rates will lower, some overcrowding may occur, and that replacement of older housing units with new units is a possibility.

**Table 5: Housing Forecasts, 2010 to 2035**

Study	Forecasts			Avg. Change Rate	Forecast
	2015	2020	2025		2035
NDSU	2,948	2,948	2,948	0.0%	2,948

Source: North Dakota Statewide Housing Needs Assessment, Center for Social Research at North Dakota State University, 2012.

**Table 6: Housing Forecast Comparison, 2010 to 2035**

County	2010	2035	Percent Change
McLean	5,528	6,548	18.5%
Ward	26,294	30,670	16.6%
<b>McHenry</b>	<b>2,963</b>	<b>2,948</b>	<b>-0.5%</b>
Sheridan	919	844	-8.2%
Pierce	2,177	1,957	-10.1%
Bottineau	4,362	3,777	-13.4%
Renville	1,439	1,212	-15.8%
<b>Average</b>	<b>6,240</b>	<b>6,851</b>	<b>-1.8%</b>

Source: North Dakota Statewide Housing Needs Assessment, Center for Social Research at North Dakota State University, 2012.

## Employment and Industry Forecast

Changes in population and housing stock will directly and indirectly effect future employment and industry numbers and vice versa. Therefore, successful planning also needs to be grounded in reasonable expectations of future economic trends. By properly anticipating future employment and industry trends, there is a greater likelihood that services, facilities, and housing will be available at the time and in the locations they are needed most.



In order to determine the future employment trend, data from the U.S. Census and an employment growth rate from an NDSU were applied. The results revealed an increase in employment from 2010 to 2035, up to 12.6 percent as seen in Table 7. Attributable to any projection, numerous unforeseen variables can impact the final observed number for 2035; nevertheless, employment change in the county is expected to be positive. Estimates from the 2012 American Community Survey revealed the industries of construction, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, and public administration as the current economic drivers. A likely attributing factor for this economic growth is the rising oil and gas industry within the state.

**Table 7: Employment Forecasts, 2010 to 2035**

Study	2010	Forecasts					Change: 2010 to 2035
		2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	
NDSU	2,751	2,817	2,885	2,954	3,025	3,098	12.6%

*Source:* North Dakota Statewide Housing Needs Assessment, Center for Social Research at North Dakota State University, 2012.

In order to determine the future industry establishment trend, data from the U.S. Census County Business Patterns were aggregated to establish a growth rate. After applying the growth rate, the results revealed an increase of industry establishments from 2010 to 2035 as seen in Table 8. During this time, the projection predicts an increase of 50 establishments, a growth of 43.9 percent. Awareness of industry growth is vital in the preparation of future land use, since such growth is an indicator of future land use demand.

**Table 8: Industry Forecasts, 2010 to 2035**

Source	2010	Forecasts					Change: 2010 to 2035
		2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	
CBP	114	136	143	150	157	164	43.9%

*Source:* U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns, 2010.

## Existing Zoning

McHenry County currently has zoning authority in 49 of the 53 townships within the county. The four townships not under the zoning jurisdiction of McHenry County include Gilmore, North Prairie, Pratt, and Norwich. In terms of cities, there are three which fall under the jurisdiction of McHenry County’s zoning regulations including Balfour, Upham, and Voltaire. Cities that are not under the zoning jurisdiction of McHenry County consist of the following: Anamoose, Bantry, Bergen, Deering, Drake, Granville, Karlruhe, Kief, Towner, and Velva. Also noteworthy, the J. Clark Salyer national wildlife refuge is also not under the jurisdiction of McHenry County according to the official zoning map. The county’s zoning ordinance provides zoning districts for agricultural, residential, rural residential, recreational, commercial, and industrial uses (Figures 5 and 6).

## Agriculture

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, 1.06 million acres of land in McHenry County are in some form of agricultural production, consisting of crops or livestock. As shown in Table 9, the total number of farms decreased from 928 in 2007 to 911 in 2012. This decrease occurs in the larger farms of 180+ acres. The findings from Table 9 reaffirms the suggestion in the demographics section that rural areas of the county are currently diminishing. In 2012 the Census of Agriculture reported that the gross market value of agricultural products in the county was \$198,200,000, up nearly 48 percent from 2007.

**Table 9: Farms by Size, 2002 to 2012**

Year	2002		2007		2012	
	Farm Size (acres)	Number of Farms	Number of Farms	Percent Change	Number of Farms	Percent Change
1 to 9	5	9	80.0%	16	77.8%	
10 to 49	40	50	25.0%	68	36.0%	
50 to 179	138	183	32.6%	195	6.6%	
180 to 499	181	203	12.2%	187	-7.9%	
500 to 999	177	150	-15.3%	144	-4.0%	
1,000 +	360	333	-7.5%	301	-9.6%	
Total	901	928	--	911	--	

Source: Census of Agriculture, 2002, 2007, 2012.

## Historical Resources

Historical resources are an important part of the character of McHenry County. Historic Sites such as the Denbigh Experiment Forest and the Granville State Bank are all part of the historical background of McHenry County. All sites in the County listed on the National Register of Historic Place or as a State Historic Site are shown below.

### Denbigh Experimental Forest National Historic Site

The Denbigh Experiment Forest is located south of U.S. Route 2 in central McHenry County between the cities of Granville and Towner. The site is an arboretum and experimental forest which contains about 30 species of woody plants.

### Elliott Bridge

The Elliott Bridge is located four miles north of Towner and crosses the Souris River. Built by Fargo Bridge & Iron Co. in 1902, this bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.

### Granville State Bank

The Granville State Bank is located in the City of Granville on Main and 2nd Street. Built in 1903 using sandstone and prairie granite, the Granville State Bank was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.

### Hotel Berry

Hotel Berry is located in the City of Velva at 100 West Central Avenue. Built in 1906 due to railroad expansion and development, Hotel Berry was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981.

## **Liberty Baptist Church**

The Liberty Baptist Church is located in the City of Keif at the intersection of Fifth and Christina Street. Built in 1902, the Liberty Baptist Church was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987 for its design and being the first Stundist church in North America.

## **Lower Souris NWR Airplane Hangar**

The Lower Souris NWR Airplane Hangar is located in the J. Clark Salyer NWR near Upham. Built in 1947 as a home base for an airplane to manage land for conservation, the hangar was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2011.

## **McHenry County Courthouse**

The McHenry County Courthouse is located in the City of Towner at 407 Main Street South. Built in 1907, McHenry County Courthouse was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

## **Norway Lutheran Church and Cemetery**

The Norway Lutheran Church and Cemetery are located ten miles south of Denbigh. Built in 1907 with sand bricks in a Late Gothic Revival style, the Norway Lutheran Church and Cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.

## **Old Saint John Nepomucene Cemetery**

The Old Saint John Nepomucene Cemetery is located near Orrin. The site includes wrought-iron crosses and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

## **Old Saints Peter and Paul Cemetery**

The Old Saints Peter and Paul Cemetery is located near Karlsruhe. The site also includes wrought-iron crosses and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

## **Alfred and Clara Sevareid House**

The Alfred and Clara Sevareid House is located in the City of Velva at 2nd Street West. Built in 1913, the Alfred and Clara Sevareid House was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1996 as it was the best example of a Craftsman architecture bungalow house in the city. Coincidentally, Alfred and Clara were the parents of Eric Sevareid, the world-famous news journalist and foreign correspondent.

## **Westgaard Bridge**

The Westgaard Bridge is located near the City of Voltaire on 10th Lane North and crosses the Souris River. Built in 1902, the Westgaard Bridge is the oldest bridge in McHenry County and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1997.

## **David Thompson State Historic Site**

The David Thompson State Historic Site is located in the former townsite of Verendrye approximately two miles north and one mile west of Karlsruhe. A granite globe marks the site which is accessible year round. Thompson's survey data contributed to the first dependable map of the region, which was used by the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

## Water Resources

There are numerous water resources throughout McHenry County including lakes, wetlands, and rivers (Figures 5 and 6). Notable lakes with the county include the following: Buffalo Lodge Lake, Connia Slough, Stevens Slough, Cottonwood Lake, Bentley Lake, Flat Lake, Round Lake, Bromley Lake, Lake Lemer, Lake George, Long Lake, North Lake, Rock Lake, Duckshire Lake, Martin Lake, Rutten Lake, Spring Lake, Erickson Lake, Stink Lake, Heringen Lake, Lake Hester, and Heffner Lake. Since McHenry County is located within the Prairie Pothole region, many wetlands are scattered throughout the county. Prairie potholes are round shallow depressions in the ground resulting from glacier retreatment over 10,000 years ago. The J. Clark Salyer national wildlife refuge's most prominent feature in northern McHenry County is glaciated prairie potholes. There are three rivers found in the county including the Souris River, Wintering River, and Deep River. The Souris River is the most prominent in the county, providing water downstream from Lake Darling to the J. Clark Salyer national wildlife refuge.



*Source:* Buffalo Lodge Lake in McHenry County, ND. Courtesy of Kay Buri.

## Wildlife and Waterfowl

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the State of North Dakota own land throughout the county (Figures 5 and 6). The wildlife refuges and protected lands in these areas are important for the abundant waterfowl and other wildlife in the area. The publicly owned lands work in concert with the agricultural land and windbreaks to provide wildlife habitat. The most prominent wildlife refuges and protected lands include the J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge, the Denbigh Experimental Forest, the Cottonwood Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and the Wintering River National Wildlife Refuge.



Source: J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge in McHenry County, ND. Courtesy of Kay Buri.

## Parks and Recreation

The national wildlife refuges within the county provide numerous opportunities for recreation (Figures 5 and 6). Leisure and recreational activities are a measure of quality of life. The county's recreational resources are seasonal including ample opportunities for hunting, fishing, camping, boating, canoing, kayaking, birdwatching, swimming, and recreational facilities for golfing, softball, baseball, and other sports. Many of the cities within the county have city parks that have varying degrees of development such as picnic areas and sports facilities. With so many lakes throughout the county that are less developed, the potential for increased usage remains a possibility.





Source: Buffalo Lodge Lake in McHenry County, ND.

## Emergency Services

McHenry County's emergency services consist of law enforcement, ambulance service, and fire protection. The county's law enforcement is served by the County Sheriff's Department. There are six separate ambulance response districts, half of which are from cities within the county including Velva, Towner, and Upham. The remaining ambulance response districts are Harvey, Bottineau, and Glenburn. There are eleven separate fire protection districts originating from the cities of Anamoose, Drake, Butte, Velva, Karlsruhe, Granville, Towner, Willow City, Upham, Deering, and Glenburn.

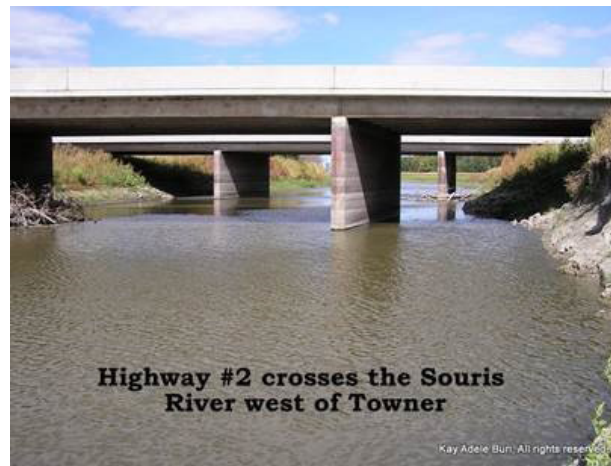


Source: Drake fire hall and emergency services in McHenry County, ND. Courtesy of Kay Buri.

# Transportation

## Roadway System

US Highway 2 and 52 are the major vehicular transportation routes in McHenry County. US Highway 2 extends across the county and is the major east-west route, while US Highway 52 also extends across and is the major northwest-southeast route. The state of North Dakota has supplemented this federal highway system with important state routes within McHenry County, such as ND Highways 14, 19, 41, 53 and 97. These important highway facilities are further supplemented with county and township roads that allow access to most areas within the county. The majority of county and township roadways are gravel, which can result to maintenance concerns once traffic volumes get above 200 to 300 vehicles per day. The major county roads are located throughout the county and include 2nd, 4th, 7th, 9th, 12th, 16th, 17th, 49th, 51st, 68th, 75th, and 80th. These roads provide access to all of the cities within the county as well as the state and US Highways.



Source: U.S. Highways 53 and 2 in McHenry County, ND. Courtesy of Kay Buri.

## Railroads

There are numerous railroads that traverse McHenry County. Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) has two tracks that cross the entire county. One of the tracks runs along US Highway 2 east-west, while roughly 7 miles north of US Highway 52 another BNSF railroad parallels the northwest-southeast route. Moving along the north side of US Highway 52, there is a Canadian Pacific Railroad which provides another northwest-southeast route, and has two junctions moving southwest-northeast.

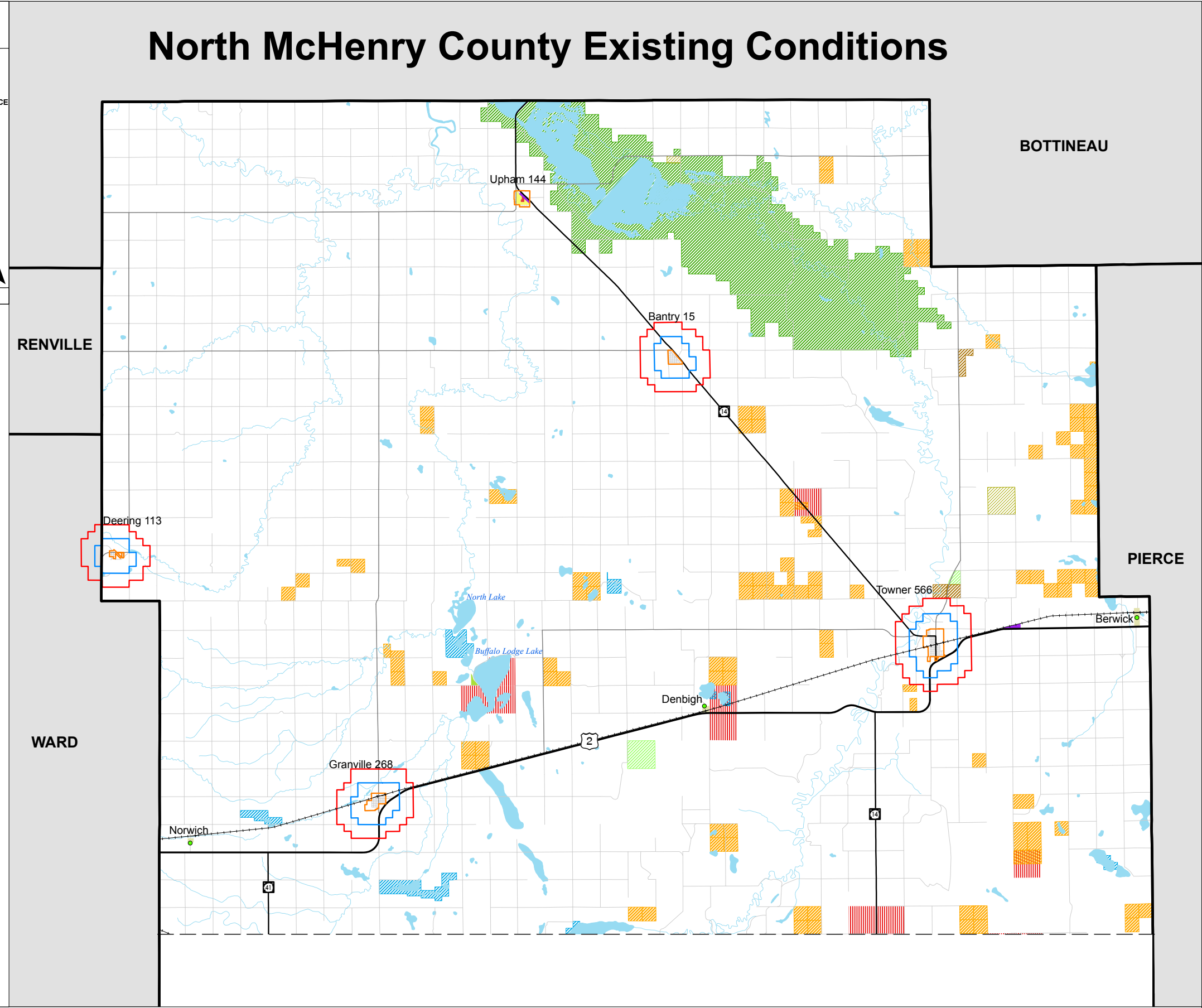
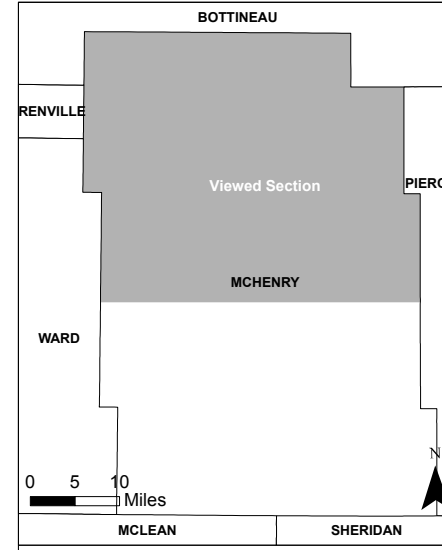


Source: CP railroad in McHenry County, ND. Courtesy of Kay Buri.

## Airports

Within McHenry County, there is one publicly owned municipal airport and eight privately owned airstrips. The majority of the private airstrips are located north of US Highway 2 and west of ND Highway 14. The only publicly owned airport is Towner Municipal Airport, which can be found just north of the City of Towner. It averages 70 aircraft operations per month. Identifying airport locations is significant when dealing with growth and future land use due to the impacts airports have on their surrounding environment. In addition to aircraft noise, there are other issues such as safety and environmental impacts to the land uses around airports which need to be considered when addressing land use compatibility. Incompatible uses with airports include residential, schools, and churches while more compatible uses include industrial and commercial.

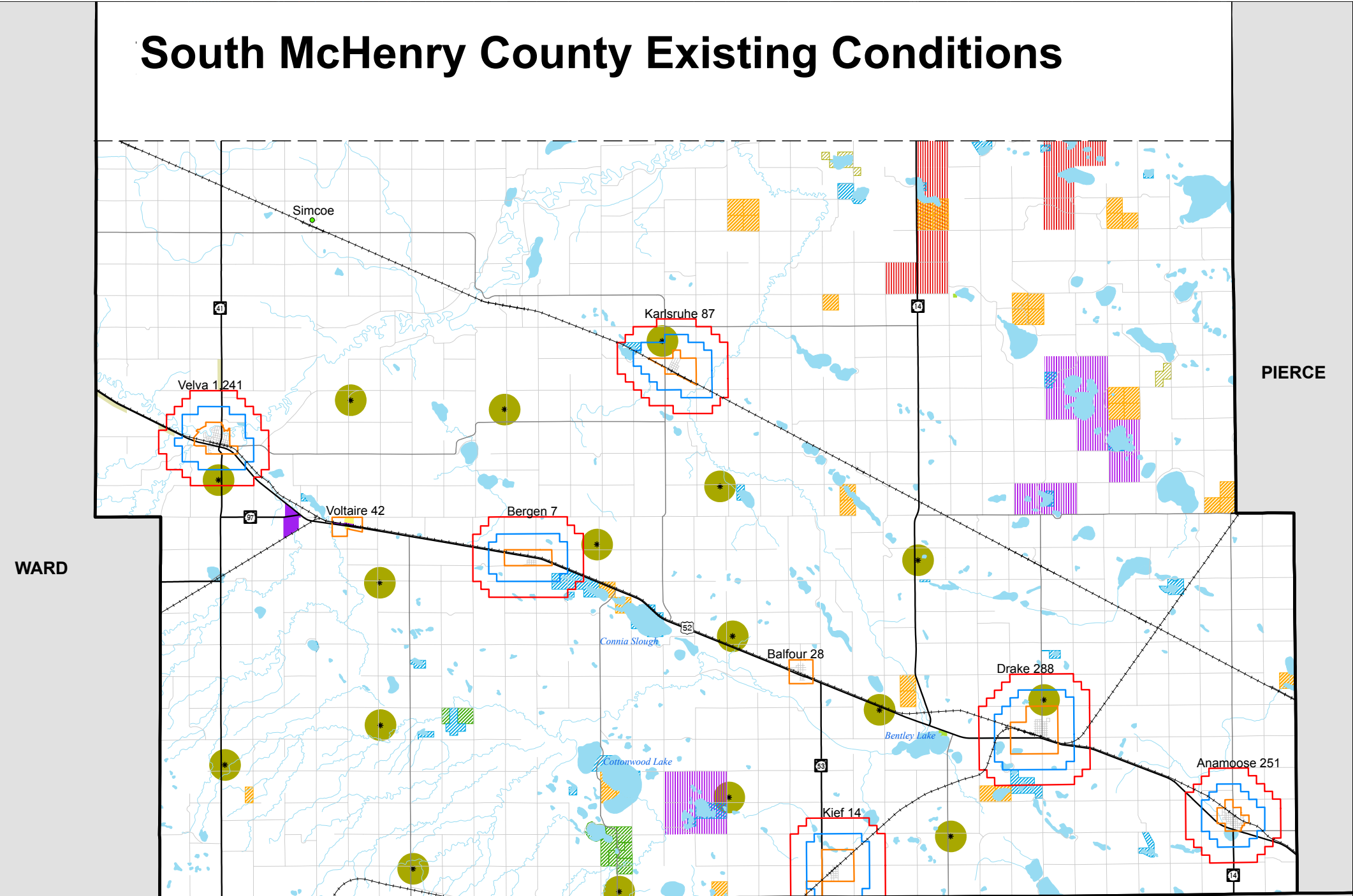
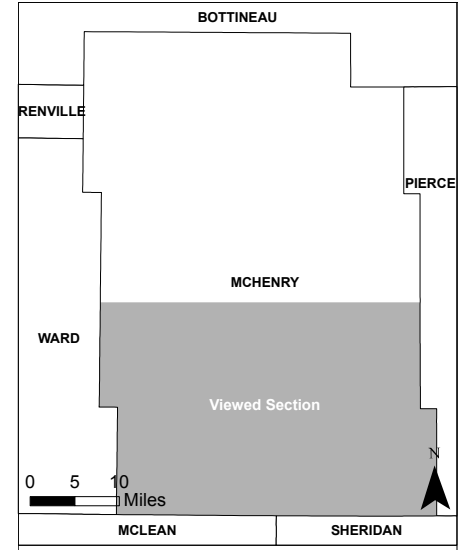
# North McHenry County Existing Conditions



- Transportation Infrastructure**
  - Major Highways
  - Major Collectors
  - County Roads
  - +++ Railroads
- Water Resources**
  - Open Water
  - Streams and Rivers
- Government Boundaries**
  - County Boundary
  - 1 Mile ETA
  - 1/2 Mile ETA
  - City Limits
  - Unincorporated Town
- Existing Zoning**
  - Residential
  - Rural Residential
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Recreation
- Government Land**
  - National Wildlife Refuges
  - Wildlife Management Areas
  - Waterfowl Production Areas
  - National Grasslands
  - State Trust Land Surface Right
  - State Forest
  - Missile Site 1/2 Mile Radius
  - \* Missile Site
- Endangered or Threatened Species**
  - Dakota Skipper
  - Piping Plover/Rufa Red Knot



# South McHenry County Existing Conditions



- Transportation Infrastructure**
  - Major Highways
  - Major Collectors
  - County Roads
  - +++ Railroads
- Water Resources**
  - Open Water
  - Streams and Rivers
- Government Boundaries**
  - County Boundary
  - 1 Mile ETA
  - 1/2 Mile ETA
  - City Limits
  - Unincorporated Town
- Existing Zoning**
  - Residential
  - Rural Residential
  - Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Recreation
- Government Land**
  - National Wildlife Refuges
  - Wildlife Management Areas
  - Waterfowl Production Areas
  - National Grasslands
  - State Trust Land Surface Right
  - State Forest
  - Missile Site 1/2 Mile Radius
  - \* Missile Site
- Endangered or Threatened Species**
  - Dakota Skipper
  - Piping Plover/Rufa Red Knot

# Energy

## Oil and Gas

McHenry County is located atop the Bakken Shale play and is one of 16 active oil and gas producing counties in North Dakota; however, the county is outside the current core area for production. The county's most significant area for production comes from Pratt Field located in the northwestern portion of McHenry County (Figure 7). There are a total of nineteen (19) wells capable of producing within McHenry County, thirteen (13) of which are currently producing. In July of 2015, a total of 6,386 barrels of oil were produced.

## Wind

North Dakota is the number one state in the U.S. for wind-energy potential. Located east of ND Highway 41 and south of 47th St N, the Velva wind farm was completed in 2005 with a capacity of 12 megawatts using 18 turbines (Figure 8). Approved in 2012, the New Frontier Project located adjacent to state Highway 41 in McHenry County would have a capacity of 102 megawatts, covering approximately 17 square miles (Figure 8).



Source: Velva Wind Farm in McHenry County, ND. Courtesy of Kay Buri.

## Pipeline Corridors

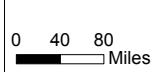
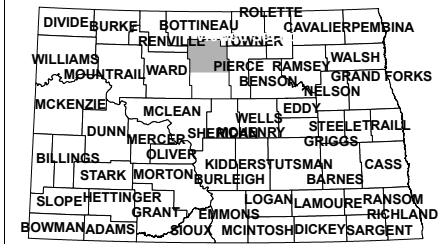
McHenry County has four types of pipelines which transverse the county (Figures 7 and 8). There is one petroleum product pipeline which is located roughly 7 miles north of US Highway 52 and runs northwest-southeast towards the City of Minot. There is one crude oil pipeline running southwest-northeast also towards Minot and is located along US Highway 2. There is one natural gas pipeline approximately 7 miles west of ND Highway 14 running parallel in a northwest-southeast direction. Between this natural gas pipeline and ND Highway 14, two natural gas liquid pipelines follow the same northwest-southeast route.

## Schools

There are currently a total of eight school districts within McHenry County that are operational. The cities of Anamoose, Granville, Towner, and Velva each have elementary schools; and the cities of Drake, Granville, Towner, and Velva each have high schools. Recognition of operational school facilities is significant as it can be an indication of where future growth may occur. As population increases, families which require educational resources have a greater probability of moving to areas with closer access to educational facilities.



# North McHenry County Existing Conditions II

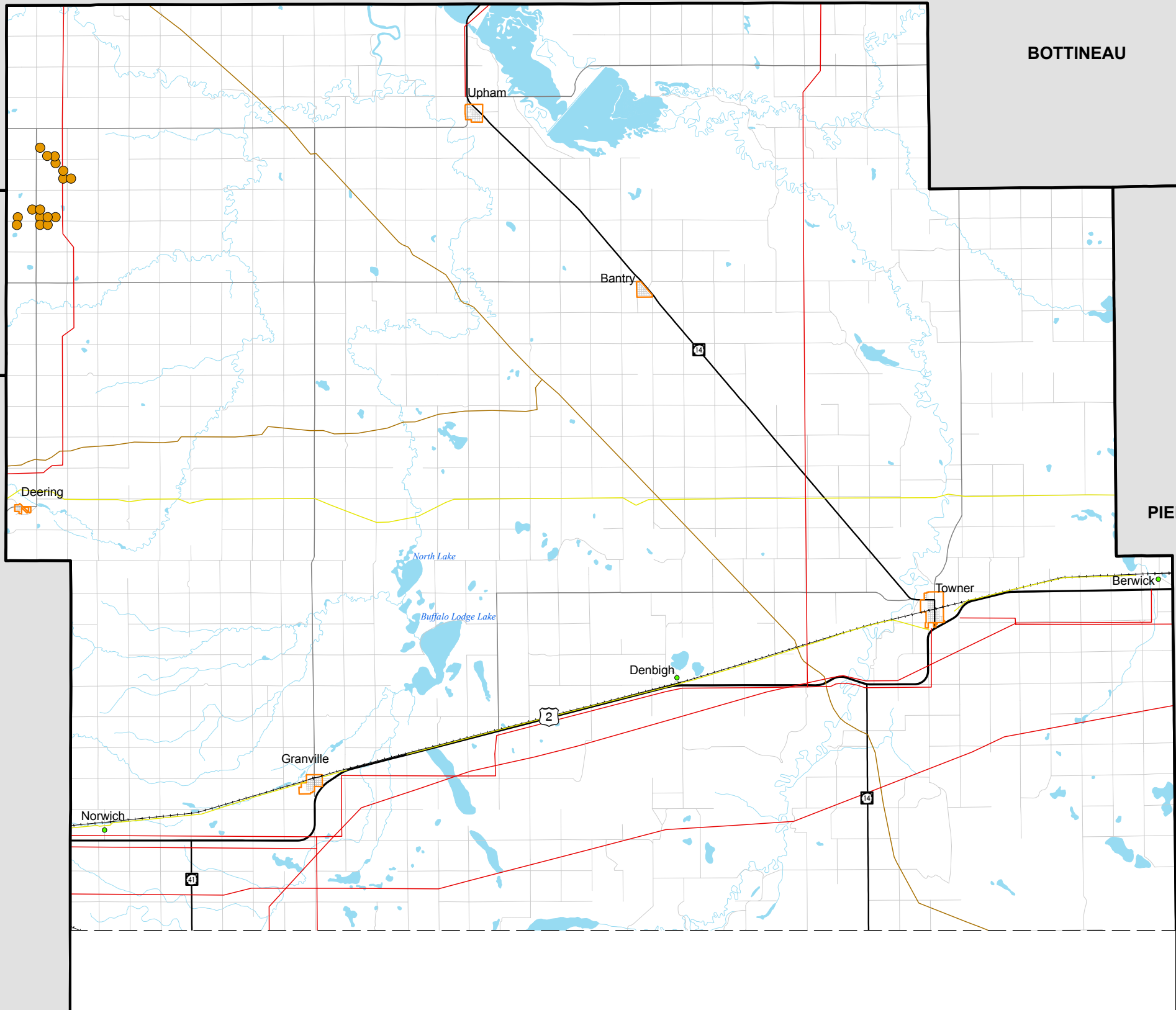


RENVILLE

WARD

BOTTINEAU

PIERCE



**Transportation Infrastructure**

- Major Highways
- Major Collectors
- County Roads
- +++ Railroads

**Water Resources**

- Open Water
- Streams and Rivers

**Government Boundaries**

- ▭ County Boundary
- ▭ City Limits
- Unincorporated Town

**Energy Infrastructure**

- Wind Farms
- Active Wells

**Transmission Lines**

- Gas Lines
- Electric Lines
- Oil Lines

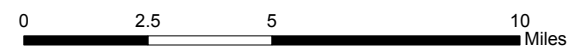
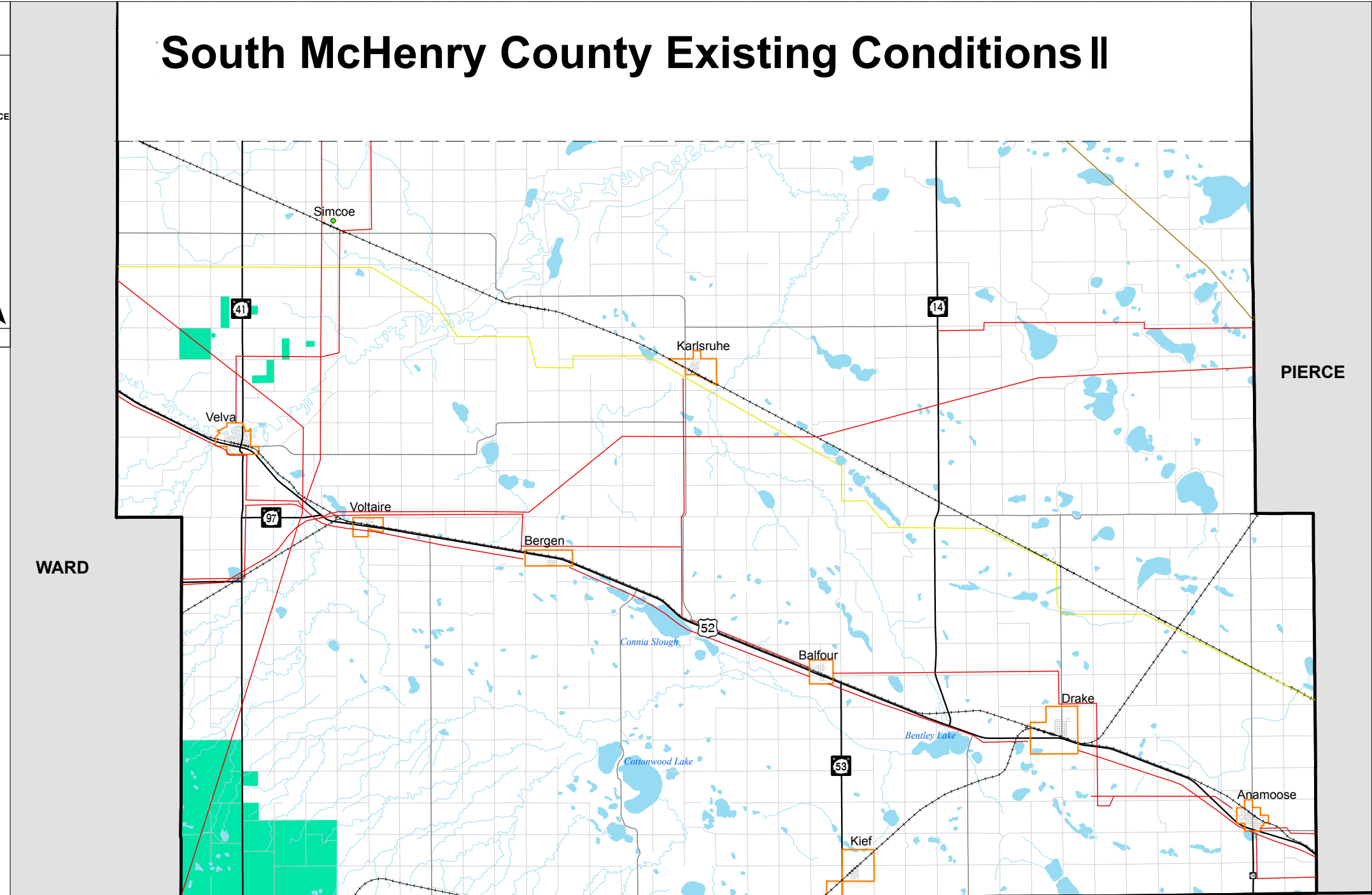
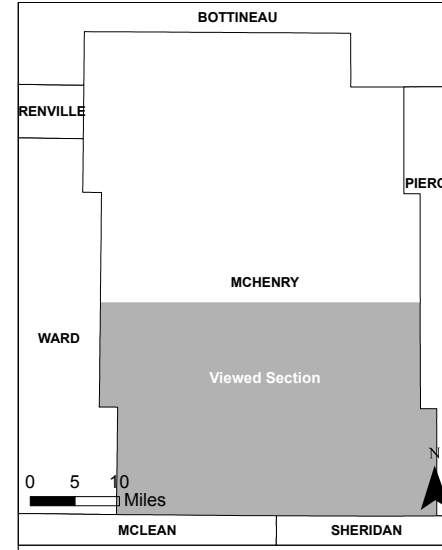


Figure 7



# South McHenry County Existing Conditions II



- Transportation Infrastructure**
  - Major Highways
  - Major Collectors
  - County Roads
  - +++ Railroads
- Water Resources**
  - Open Water
  - Streams and Rivers
- Government Boundaries**
  - County Boundary
  - City Limits
  - Unincorporated Town
- Energy Infrastructure**
  - Wind Farms
  - Active Wells
- Transmission Lines**
  - Gas Lines
  - Electric Lines
  - Oil Lines

WARD

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## Opportunities and Constraints

With recognition of existing conditions in McHenry County, a growth opportunities and constraints analysis was conducted to determine appropriate growth areas for the future land use plan (Figures 9 and 10). There are seven categories of opportunities and constraints including: transportation infrastructure, water resources, government boundaries, government land, services, infrastructure and development, and endangered or threatened species. An example of a growth opportunity might be access to municipal sewer service, while an example of a growth constraint might be land which is already owned by the federal or state government. Directing growth towards areas where there are more opportunities than constraints is not only advantageous for the county, but encourages orderly development.

## Missile Sites

The south half of McHenry County is within the missile complex of Minot Air Force Base. The entire complex covers 8,500 square miles and eight counties. There are 150 intercontinental ballistic missile launch facilities and 15 missile alert facilities in the complex. Missile sites can be considered as development constraint areas.

Since 1965, McHenry County has hosted 15 launch facilities and two missile alert facilities. The facility locations are shown on the “Existing Conditions” maps (pages 27 and 28) and on the “Opportunities and Constraints” maps (pages 37 and 38) of this document. The map symbol marking each site is a black dot in a green circle.

A launch facility is a vertical underground silo containing a Minuteman III nuclear missile. Each silo is connected by a underground cable to a missile alert facility. Each missile alert facility has an underground launch control center. The launch control center contains equipment and personnel capable of controlling, monitoring, and launching missiles.

## Military Easements

Each launch facility is located in the center of a military easement. The easements have a radius of 1,200 feet (easement diameter = 2,400 feet). The existing easements are no-build easements, restricting development for a distance of 1,200-feet outward from each military installation. In the event of an emergency, the US Government will enforce evacuation of the area within 2,500 feet of an installation.

The military's rights within their easement include:

- Limiting the use of land to agricultural operations;
- Posting of warning signs
- Prohibiting human habitation;
- Removing existing or future buildings used for human habitation;

## HICS Cables

The Hardened Intersite Cable System (HICS) connects the manned missile alert facilities to the launch facilities. Cable locations are not public information. The ND One Call system notifies MAFB of requests they receive for locating underground utilities in the missile complex area. If a HICS cable is near a proposed excavation, MAFB personnel will monitor the excavation activity.

## Minot Air Force Base Joint Land Use Study

The Minot Air Force Base Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) is a regional study that was prepared in 2014 and 2015. The study was funded by the US Department of Defense, Office of Economic Adjustment. As mentioned, the study area includes eight counties in north-central North Dakota. Two representatives from each county participated in the development of the study. Larry Haman and Darlene Carpenter served as McHenry County representatives.

The purpose of the JLUS is to provide strategies to promote land use compatibility between military installations and private sector development. Study recommendations are designed to protect public safety and preserve military readiness by preventing encroachments on military installations.

## JLUS Recommendations

Based on the JLUS, following are a few summary recommendations for how counties can promote compatibility between new private sector developments and existing military installations:

- A proposed development should be checked for its proximity to a military facility. MAFB is interested in commenting on any proposed construction within two miles of Air Force installations. Provide MAFB with Zoning Board meeting agendas one week in advance of the meetings.
- Local governments may adopt regulatory measures to guide development around military installations. Buffer zones, zoning overlay districts, building setback distances and conditional use permits are some zoning tools available to promote compatibility.
- Prior to submitting subdivision plats for county approval, developers should conduct a title search at the County Recorder's Office to determine if any military easements exist on the subject property. Such easements should be shown on subdivision plats.
- US Government easements restrict development within 1,200-feet of launch facilities. MAFB has indicated that a building setback distance of 2,500 feet is desirable for dwellings and habitable structures. In the event of an emergency, the US Government will enforce evacuation of the area within 2,500 feet of an installation.
- To protect HICS cables, all contractors should notify the ND One Call system (by dialing 811) to have underground utilities located before they dig. Building permits can be used as a tool to assure compliance by requiring confirmation of ND One Call notification as a condition for obtaining a permit.

- Installers of underground utilities (petroleum product pipelines, water lines, electrical and fiber optic, etc.) should coordinate with MAFB to avoid impacts to HICS cables.
- No-fee, courtesy building permits can be required for agricultural buildings for the purpose of assessing the building site location in respect to military easements and facilities.
- Local Emergency Response personnel (Sherrif's Dept., Rural Fire Dept., EMS providers) should coordinate with MAFB to assure proper response in the event of a military emergency.
- Development proposals should assess the impact of storm water runoff volumes and flow directions on military facilities.

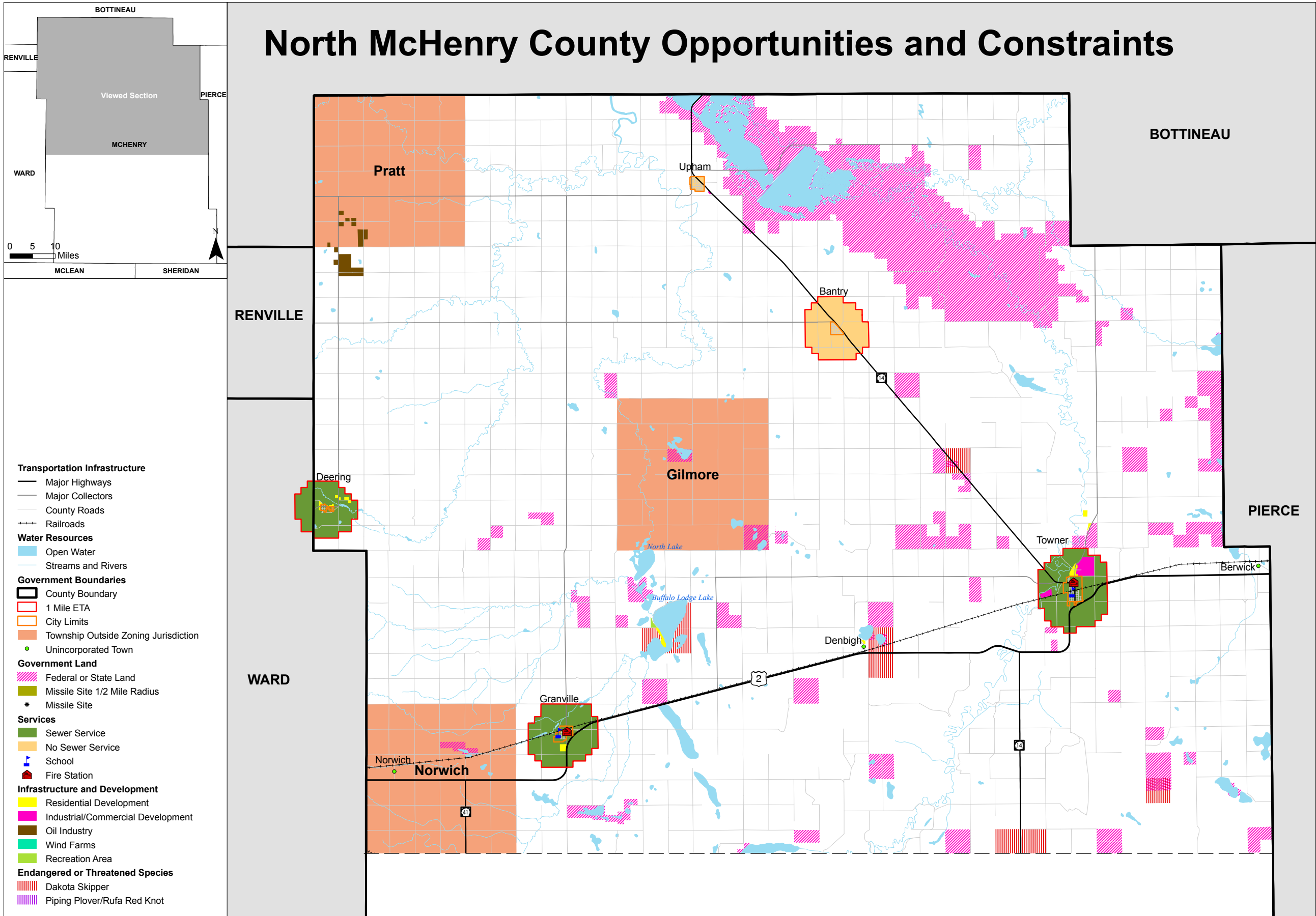
## Contact MAFB

Minot Air Force Base personnel can be reached by phone at the following numbers and asking to be connected to the MAFB Community Planner.

- MAFB Public Affairs Office: (701) 723-6212

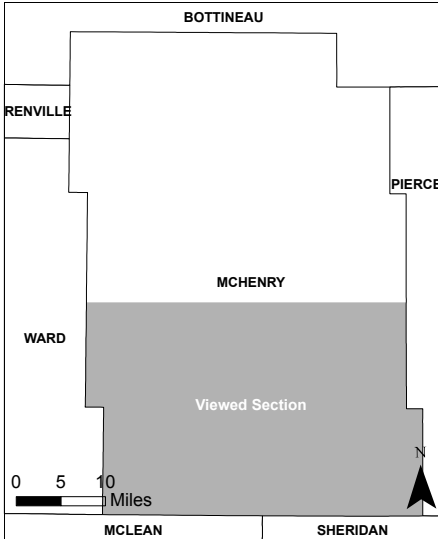
The MAFB Joint Land Use Study final report can be found on the documents page of the project website “[minotafbjlus.com](http://minotafbjlus.com)” or on the Souris Basin Planning Council website at “[sourisbasin.org](http://sourisbasin.org)”.

# North McHenry County Opportunities and Constraints

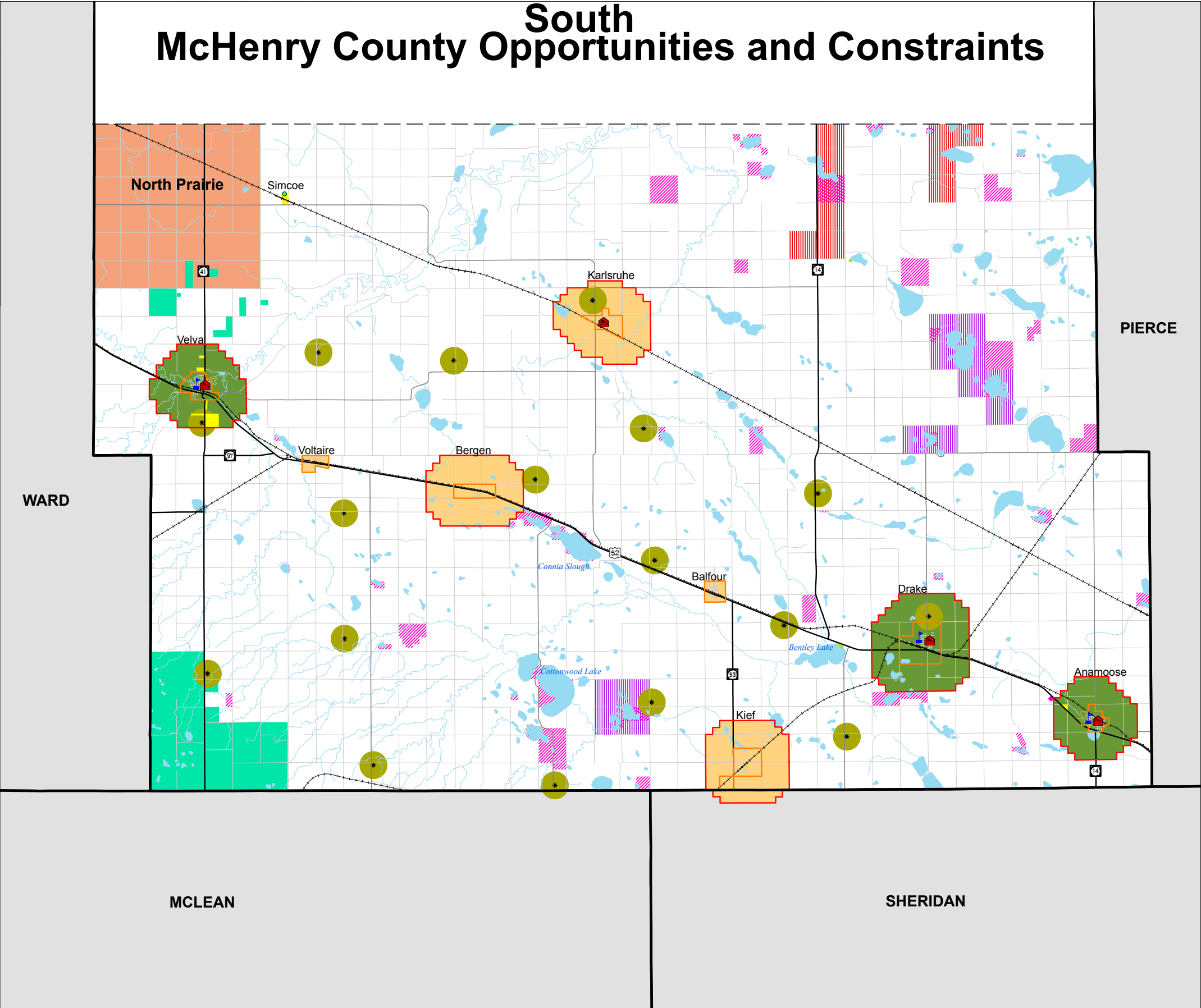




# South McHenry County Opportunities and Constraints



- Transportation Infrastructure**
  - Major Highways
  - Major Collectors
  - County Roads
  - Railroads
- Water Resources**
  - Open Water
  - Streams and Rivers
- Government Boundaries**
  - County Boundary
  - 1 Mile ETA
  - City Limits
  - Township Outside Zoning Jurisdiction
  - Unincorporated Town
- Government Land**
  - Federal or State Land
  - Missile Site 1/2 Mile Radius
  - Missile Site
- Services**
  - Sewer Service
  - No Sewer Service
  - School
  - Fire Station
- Infrastructure and Development**
  - Residential Development
  - Industrial/Commercial Development
  - Oil Industry
  - Wind Farms
  - Recreation Area
- Endangered or Threatened Speices**
  - Dakota Skipper
  - Piping Plover/Rufa Red Knot





# Growth Management Plan

## Introduction

The growth management plan supports county decisions on land use as required by the North Dakota Century Code. It provides a blueprint for implementing the goals and objectives of the county comprehensive plan. It provides information to prospective developers on the county's strategy to guide growth.

A growth management plan is neither anti-development nor pro-development; it is about orderly development and serving the public interest. Given McHenry County's projected population growth, the growth management plan will be an important tool for guiding future growth and development.

Based on public input, McHenry County citizens are aware of the importance of providing opportunities for residential, commercial, and industrial growth while at the same time, protecting agriculture and the environment. The public involvement process indicated a preference for the county to take a stronger stance in guiding growth.

The growth management plan consists of two components: a map that identifies the designated growth areas throughout the county and the supporting text of this comprehensive plan.

## Growth Nodes

### Community Growth Node

The term "community growth node" refers to the existing communities in McHenry County where infill development, redevelopment, and growth will occur. Growth within existing communities has some advantages over rural growth but it generally requires a higher degree of planning for the new development to fit with existing streets, infrastructure, and land use. Development within community growth nodes is subject to the approval of city government.

When compared with lower density rural development, assessed values per acre of municipal growth are higher, resulting in increased property tax revenues for the County. When compared to remote developments outside city limits, the more compact nature of a community allows residents who live and work in the community to have shorter, quicker, and more affordable commutes. Community growth nodes allow residents to collectively share the costs of streets, sidewalks, street lights, water, and sewer.

Land surrounding a community is also considered part of the community growth node. When development occurs at the outside edge of a community's jurisdiction, county involvement is required. Even though a new development may be close to a city, if the property is not annexed to the city, the county is responsible for roadway maintenance and emergency services.

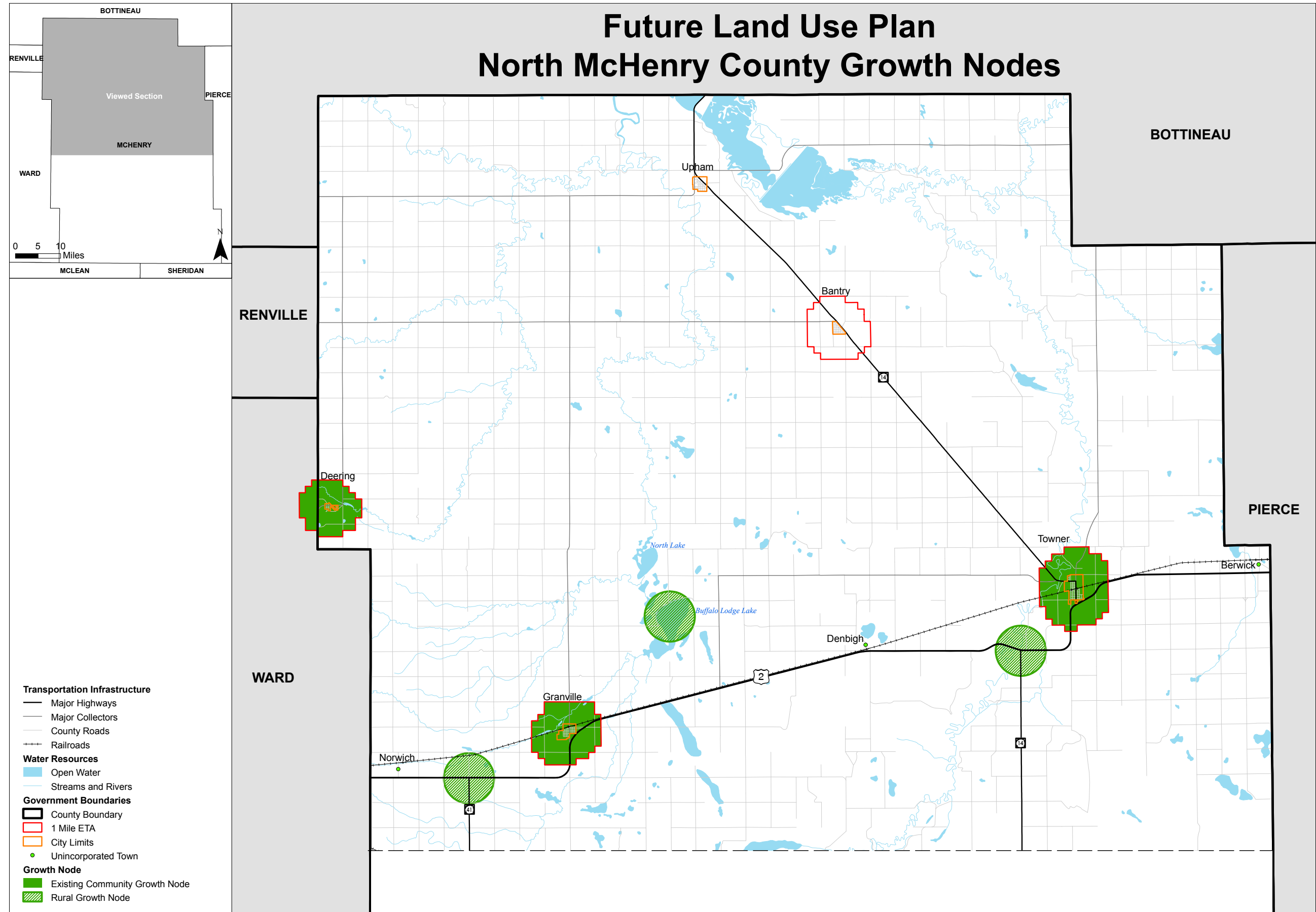
Ideally, a community will promote a growth pattern of infill development properties and contiguous outward growth. Discouraging a leap-frog or checkerboard pattern of development at the fringe of a community promotes cost-effective infrastructure improvements. It also helps clarify a community's sense of place by having a recognizable separation of city and rural environments.

An analysis of existing conditions, growth opportunities, and growth constraints identified six communities within McHenry County as growth nodes. These cities are shown in a solid dark green on Figures 11 and 12 and include the following: Velva, Drake, Anamoose, Deering, Granville, and Towner. While other cities may become growth nodes in the future, the cities mentioned are more likely to experience growth due to a higher availability of existing infrastructure and services.

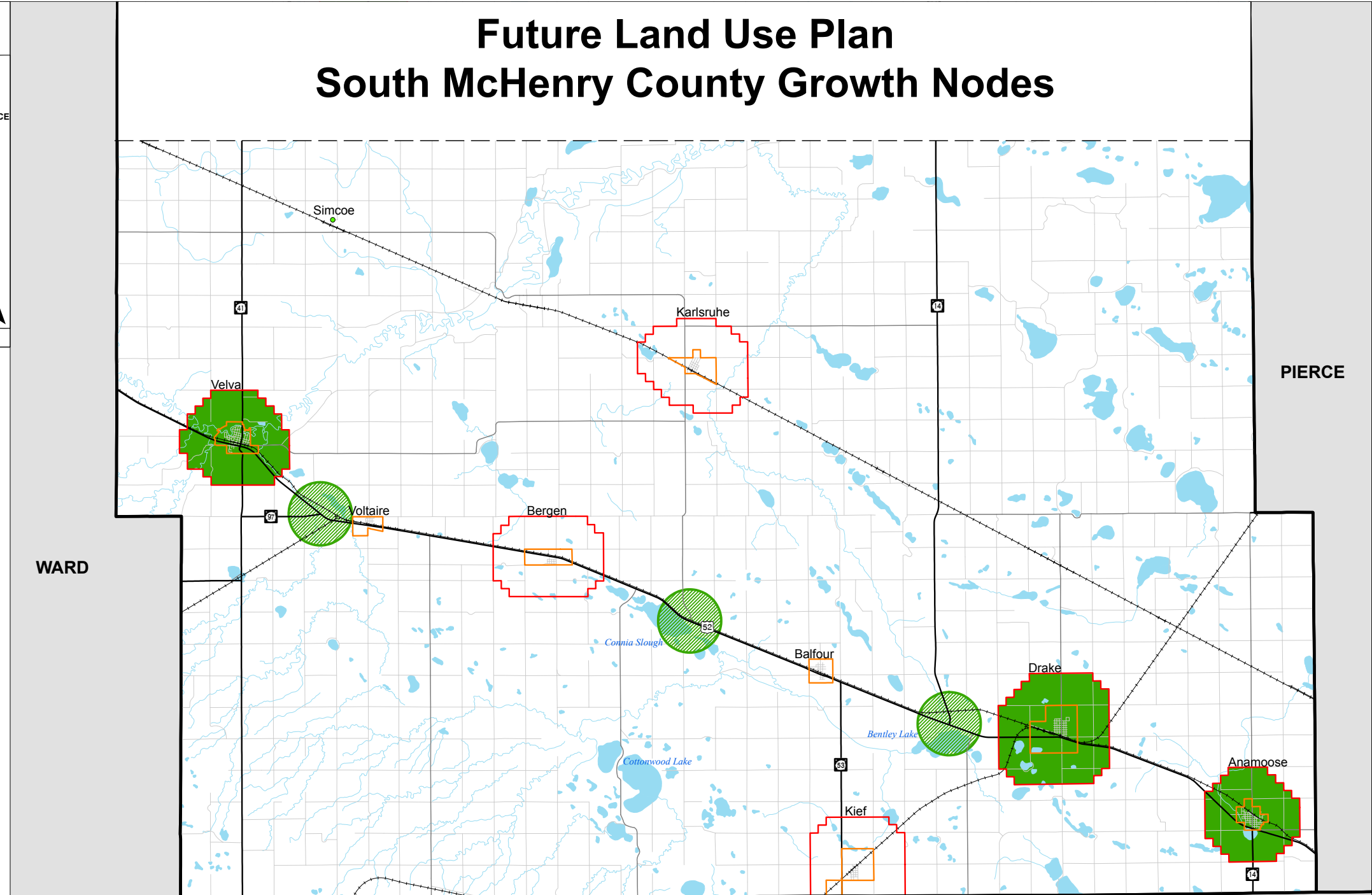
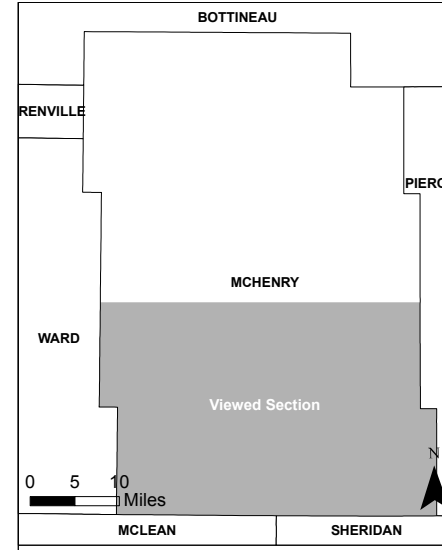


*Photo: Example of Community Growth Node in McHenry County, ND.*

# Future Land Use Plan North McHenry County Growth Nodes



# Future Land Use Plan South McHenry County Growth Nodes



- Transportation Infrastructure**
  - Major Highways
  - Major Collectors
  - County Roads
  - +++ Railroads
- Water Resources**
  - Open Water
  - Streams and Rivers
- Government Boundaries**
  - County Boundary
  - 1 Mile ETA
  - City Limits
  - Unincorporated Town
- Growth Node**
  - Existing Community Growth Node
  - Rural Growth Node

## Rural Growth Node

Areas designated as rural growth nodes are typically located at major junctions of rural roadways. Development in rural areas may realize an initial savings in land costs but utility and infrastructure costs can be higher. If rural water service is not available, the developer will pay for the extension or pay for the installation of a well. Because the water pressure and volume of a rural water line is not adequate for fire suppression, a water storage reservoir and pumping system may be needed in some commercial and industrial applications. Electrical power will also be needed. A rural development site will require an on-site sewage treatment system and to accommodate storm water runoff, site grading and drainage improvements are needed. Design and construction of a highway access approach will also be needed.

Based on an analysis of existing conditions and growth opportunities and constraints, six rural growth nodes were identified. The locations are shown in hatched dark green circles on Figure 11 and 12 and include:

- Intersection of US 2 and ND 41,
- Intersection of US 2 and ND 14,
- Intersection of US 52 and ND 97,
- Intersection of US 52 and ND 14,
- Intersection of US 52 and 2nd Ave. N, and
- The northern half of Buffalo Lodge Lake.

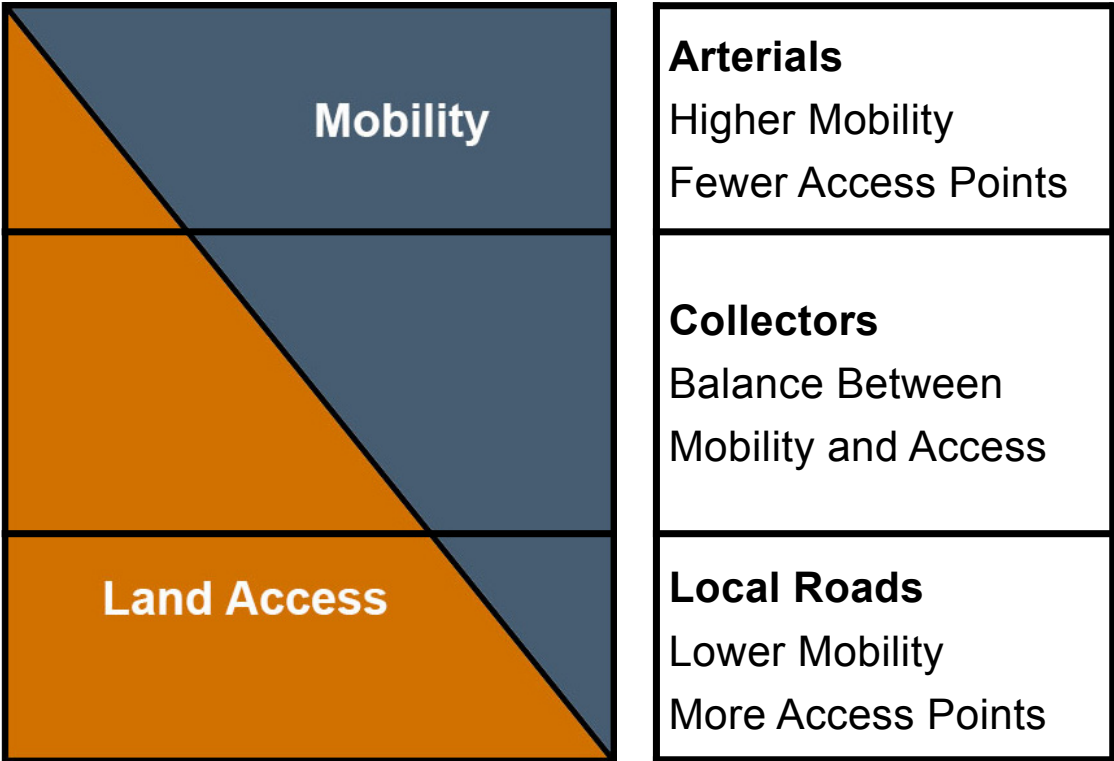


*Photo: Example of Rural Growth Node in McHenry County, ND.*

While other areas may be added to this list in the future, these areas are the most likely to experience growth due to their easy access to major roads, their higher traffic volumes and greater visibility.

# Growth Impact on Roads and Accessibility

Given the projected population increase over the next two decades, growth will have an impact on roads and accessibility. It is useful to examine the purpose or function of roadways by considering the relationship between mobility and land access. The graphic below illustrates this relationship as an inverse correlation; meaning as one decreases, the other increases. The designation of roads as arterial, collector, and local roads is known as the functional classification system. Many jurisdictions will take it one step further and designate major and minor arterials and collectors. It is important to monitor traffic volumes and service patterns. When the functional classification system for a jurisdiction is regularly updated, the appropriate roadway design standards and improvements can be implemented.





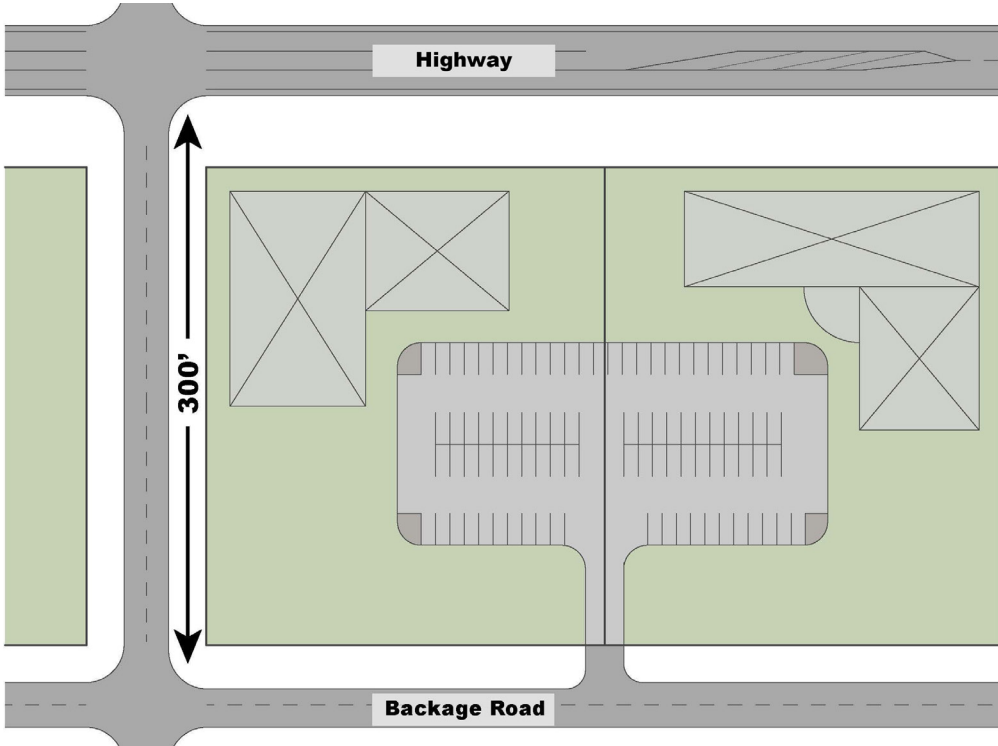


**More  
Access  
Points**

**Lower  
Degree of  
Mobility**

**Fewer  
Access  
Points**

**Higher  
Degree of  
Mobility**



# Community Involvement

## Introduction

An important aspect of the comprehensive planning process is to obtain public input on the values and concerns of county residents. The intent was to obtain input during public meetings but due to low attendance at meetings, a survey questionnaire was developed to provide a better basis for the plan.

## Public Input Meeting #1

The initial public input meeting was held on January 12, 2015 at the County Courthouse. During the meeting, residents and city officials were provided with an overview of the comprehensive planning process and a review of existing demographic and geographic information. Two alternative scenarios for growth were presented at the meeting. One scenario focused on growth nodes in rural locations near highway junctions, while the second scenario directed growth towards existing communities. A discussion of the alternatives allowed participants to have a hand in determining the optimum scenario. A group discussion about values, concerns, and perceptions provided the initial steps toward formulating a future vision for the County. Input received at this meeting is outlined in Appendix A.



Example notice of public input opportunity in the McHenry County, ND.



## Public Input Meeting #2

The second public input meeting was held on \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_, 2015 at the County Courthouse. Participants were presented with elements of the draft comprehensive plan. Based on the input received at the first meeting, a preferred growth scenario map was provided. This meeting previewed the County's vision, demonstrating how public participation was utilized in developing county goals, objectives, policies, and implementation actions. Input received at this meeting is outlined in Appendix A.

## Survey Format Design

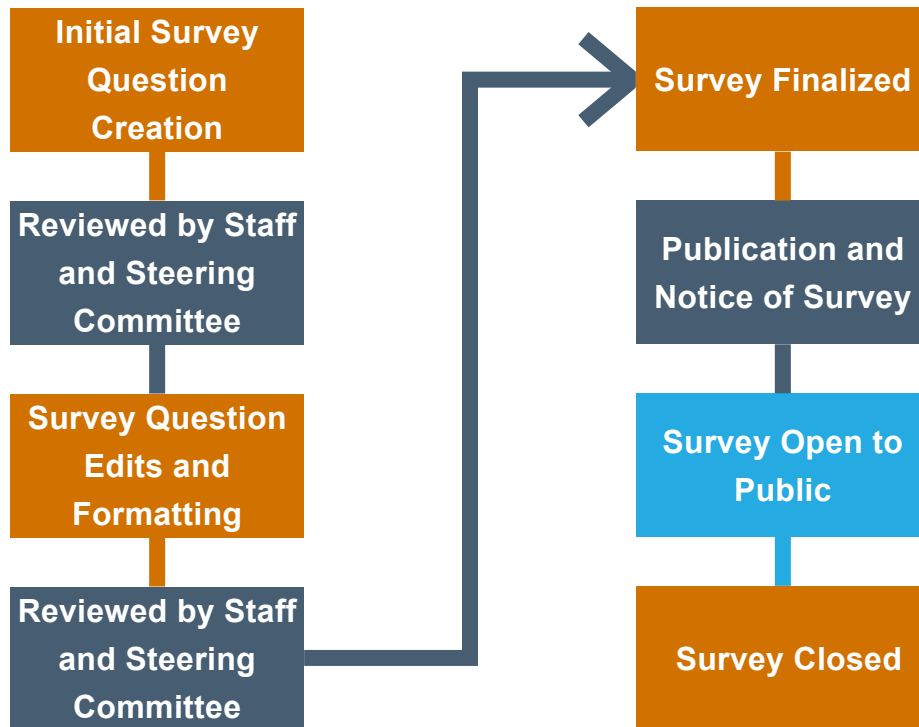
To obtain information on community values, a survey was developed with input from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. Two options for taking the survey were offered; the survey could be completed and submitted on paper or online. Seven survey categories contained 33 questions. The categories were:

- Quality of Life
- Land Use
- Public Services
- Housing
- Transportation
- Public Involvement, and
- Demographic Information

A copy of the survey and complete results are provided in Appendix A.

## Survey Development Process

The graphic below illustrates the development process for the creation, distribution, and finalization of the survey. A public notice of the survey was published in the Mouse River Journal and Velva Area Voice newspapers. The survey was also emailed to residents of McHenry County with known email addresses. A summary of the survey results is offered in the next section.



# Survey Summary

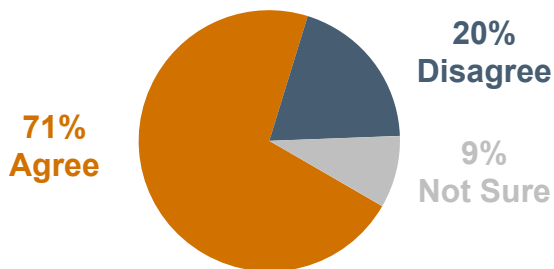
## Survey Responder Characteristics

Most of the 56 people who participated in the survey represented older rather than younger age groups within McHenry County. Eighty percent of respondents were over the age of 45 (approximately half of the population of McHenry County is over age 45). Ninety-six percent of responders are homeowners, and of those, fifty-nine percent have lived in the same house for over 20-years. From this it appears that the survey represents opinions of mature people who are long-term residents of the county who are well established in the community, pay property taxes, and are familiar with the county.

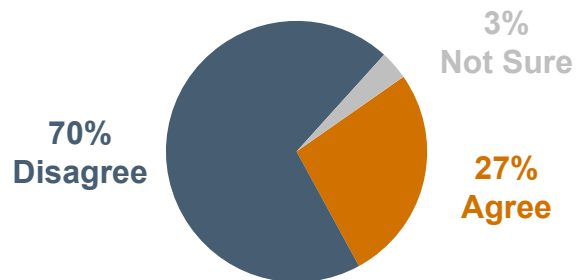
## Stronger County Role

A majority of people favored having the County assume a stronger role in directing growth. Another question, asked in a different way, supports that finding because most said they did not favor developers being allowed to develop land without many restrictions. Similarly, a majority supported stronger zoning enforcement. Almost 90 percent of respondents indicated that they do not like sites littered with objects normally considered junk and think the county should have programs to address old, unsafe buildings and to clean up problem properties. Problem properties are defined as sites where the presence of junk is detracting from the appearance of the property or the general vicinity.

The county should have a stronger role in directing future growth and development.



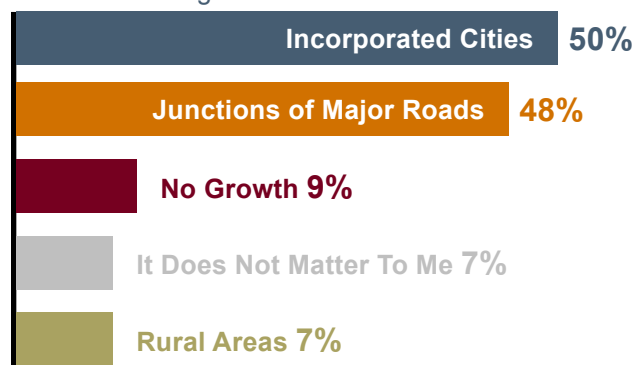
Individuals and developers should be free to develop land without many restrictions.



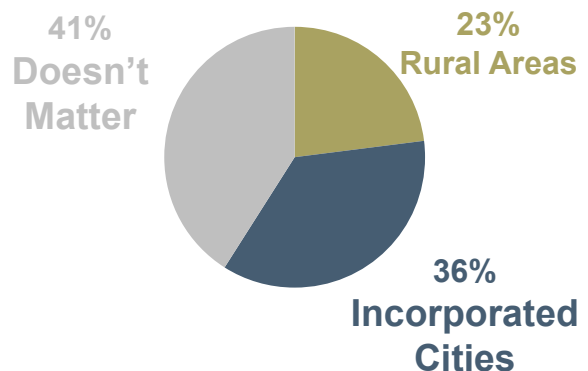
## Growth Patterns

A majority of survey respondents favor more urban development over rural development. Most respondents supported the protection of farmland from encroaching development. And while most people said commercial and industrial developments should be directed to the cities, a significant number said these types of developments should be located at the junctions of major roads and highways. Note that on the question regarding locations for commercial and industrial growth, respondents were asked to choose all selections they felt were appropriate. On the residential growth question, respondents could make only one choice of the selections offered. A majority did agree that more commercial areas are needed. A smaller majority acknowledged the need for more industrial and office locations.

Where would you prefer to see new **commercial and industrial** growth?



Where would you prefer to see **residential** growth?



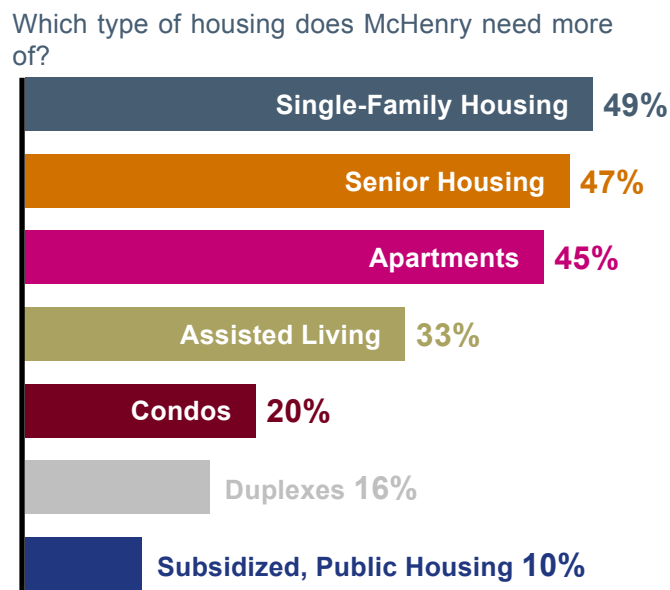
In comparing residential to commercial and industrial growth, there is more support for directing commercial and industrial growth towards the cities. Many people did not register an opinion about the preferred direction for residential growth. When asked about the density of rural growth, there were no strong indications on changing the current rural density policy of one dwelling per 40-acres. Most people are comfortable with the current 2-acre minimum lot size, based on survey responses.

Nine out of ten people acknowledged that an increasing population will require a proportional increase in emergency services. A similar majority indicated that developers should pay for all improvements inside the development; a smaller majority said

developers should also contribute towards the increased needs generated by a new development.

## Housing

The survey asked if more of any specific type of housing was needed in the County. The ranking indicated single family housing as a priority, followed by senior housing, apartments, and assisted living. Condos, duplexes, and subsidized public housing ranked lower than other housing types.

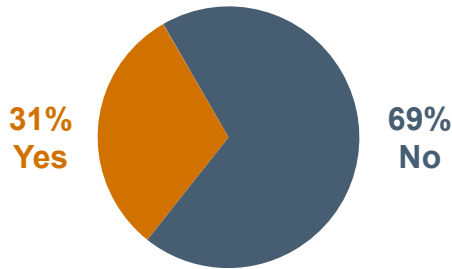


Another question asked for the respondents' level of agreement with this statement: "More affordable housing options are needed in the County." The majority of respondents, 51 percent, said they "moderately agree" with that statement.

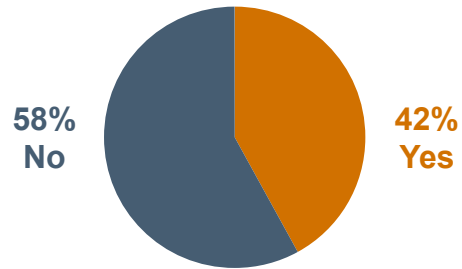
## Temporary Housing

On the question of whether temporary oil field workers should be allowed to park their camper trailers and RVs on farmsteads, most people said no. But when asked if RV parks or man camps should be allowed, most people again said no. This indicates a preference for permanent housing over temporary living arrangements.

Should workers be allowed to park camper trailers and RVs on farmsteads?



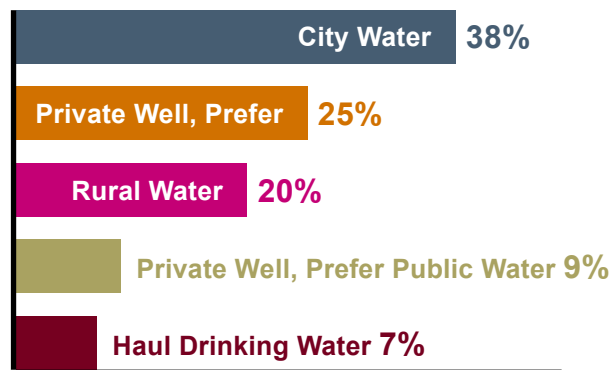
Should the County encourage RV park and man camp development?



## Rural Water

Most respondents see the correlation between the availability of rural water and rural residential development. When asked for their level of agreement with a statement that said greater rural water availability would result in greater interest in rural living, most respondents (55 percent) said they moderately agree. The majority of responders are connected to a water system, either city water or rural water. Over a third of the people who responded have water wells and a few who responded indicated they haul their drinking water. Most people say the rural water system should be expanded in the county and the county should collaborate with the rural water district in planning future service areas.

What is your household's source of drinking water?

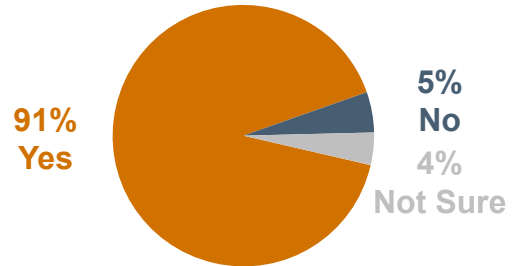


## Public Services

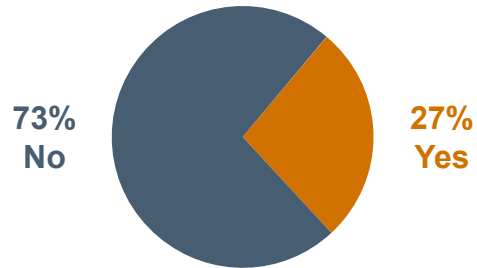
When asked about public services, the type of service discussed in the question determined the results. The responses provide insight of citizen expectations for public services. For example, respondents indicated that they expect a proportional increase in emergency services as the rural population increases.

There is currently no public rural transit system operating in McHenry County. A survey question was designed to measure interest in having a such a system. Over 25 percent indicated they would be likely to use a rural bus service. This is significant because it shows a relatively strong interest in such a service. Normally, far fewer than 25 percent would be expected to indicate interest. The response could be somewhat related to the age of responders.

When the rural population increases, should there be an increase in emergency service facilities and providers?

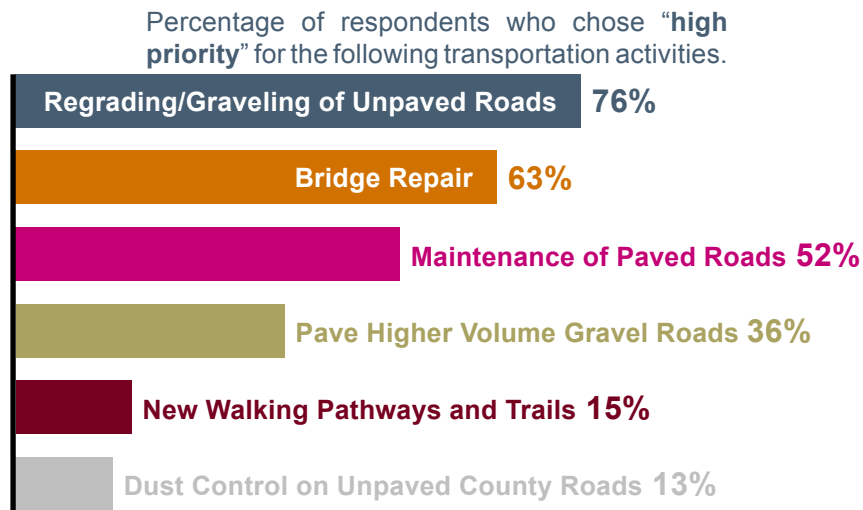


If a bus service became available to serve rural residents in the county, would you be likely to use it?



## Roads

There were several transportation-related questions asking the responders to indicate the relative importance of roadway maintenance issues. The survey question asked respondents to prioritize each of several types of roadway maintenance activities. Four priority levels were offered for each selection, from “high priority” to “not a priority”. The percentages of those who marked “high priority” for the maintenance activities listed are shown below. For complete survey results, please see the appendix.



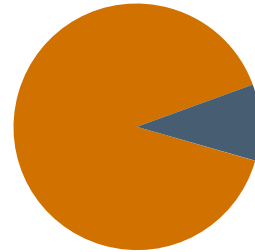


## Environment

In order to identify the relative importance of environmental issues, responders were asked several environment-related questions. The survey revealed that the majority of McHenry County residents view the conservation of natural resources as a high priority.

Maintaining clean water, fresh air, and conservation of natural resources is a high priority.

**90%**  
Agree



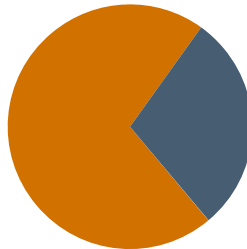
**10%**  
Disagree

Appearances are also important to the people who took the survey. When asked about the accumulations of clutter and debris, a majority indicated that such properties should be cleaned up and the County should be actively involved in doing so.

Which statements best describes your feelings about old, dilapidated, and unsafe buildings in the County.

**71%**

The county should have a program to remove and require improvements to unsafe buildings.



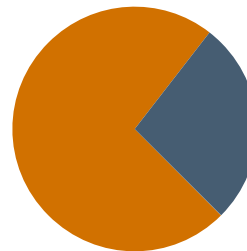
**29%**

Only property owners should decide what to do with the unsafe buildings they own.

Which statement best describes your feelings about properties with accumulations of junk and abandoned vehicles.

**73%**

The county should have a program to get junky areas cleaned up.



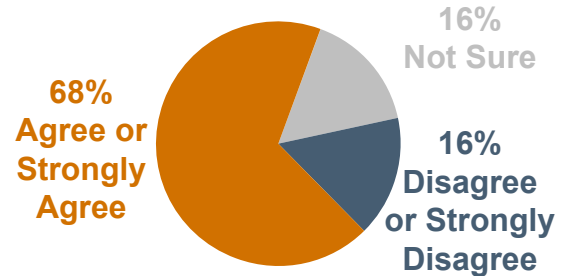
**27%**

Only property owners should decide what to do with the junk they have accumulated.

## Enforcement

Responding to concerns such as junk areas and dilapidated housing can be translated to zoning ordinance enforcement. When asked for their level of agreement with a statement saying “The County should more actively enforce zoning laws, a majority of the responders indicated that they either agree or strongly agree.

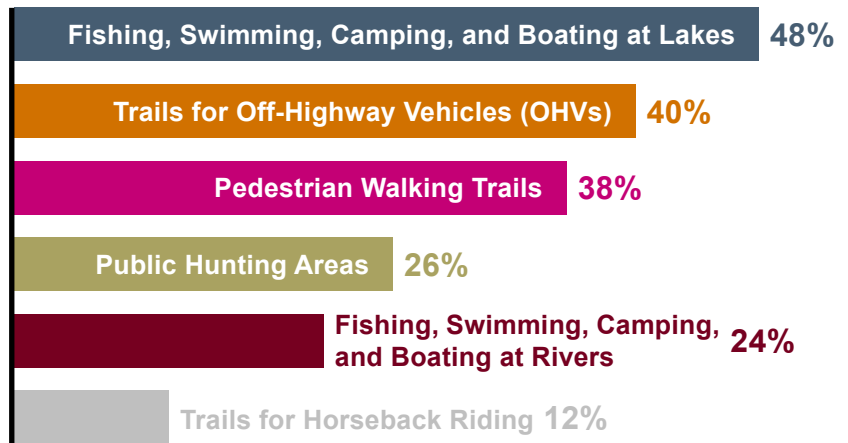
The county should actively enforce existing zoning laws.



## Parks and Recreation

There was not overwhelming support for increasing the number of county parks. Of those people who felt more public access to open space was needed, access to lakes and rivers for fishing, swimming, camping and boating was the number one choice with off-highway vehicle (OHV) trails coming in second.

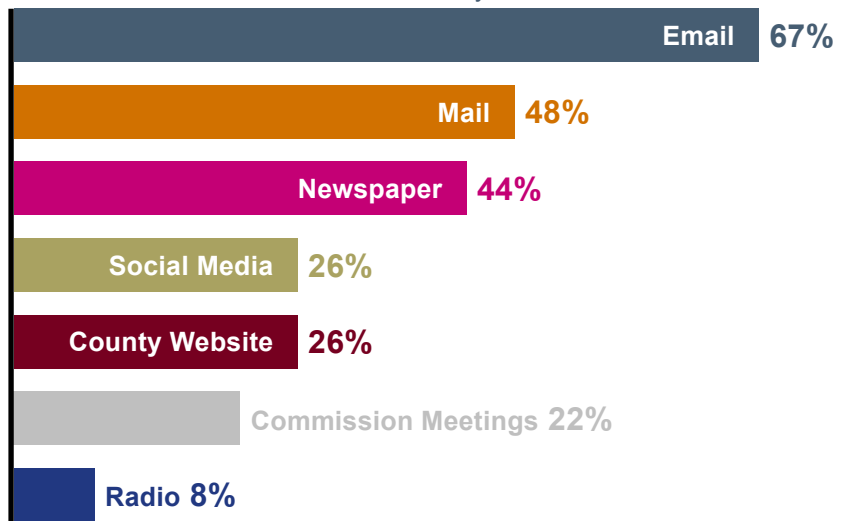
Would you like to see more public access for recreational activities? If so, where would you like to see more access? (Choose all that apply)



## Getting the Word Out

The figure below illustrates people's preferred means of receiving information from or about the County. This information can help the County determine the best way to reach people. Email, newspapers, and mail are the preferred means for receiving information from the county.

The preferred methods of people to receive information about the county are:



## Goals, Objectives, Policies, & Implementation

The purposes of comprehensive planning were introduced at the beginning of this document. Although the plan serves many purposes, establishing a solid foundation of goals, objectives, and policies is at the core of any comprehensive plan.

County leaders are responsible for making important decisions which affect the lives of county residents. Given the projected increase in the population of McHenry County, there will be an increasing number of decisions to be made. The comprehensive plan provides a guide for decision-making.

This plan will allow county leaders to operate in an even-handed manner, treating all development proposals with the consistent and uniform application of adopted policies. This plan will provide the basis for approving developments that are consistent with the County's vision, goals, and policies, and for denying inappropriate developments that are not consistent with the County's vision, goals, and policies. This is significant because once subdivision plats are approved, lots are created, and roads are built, development patterns are set; changing that pattern after development has occurred is generally not feasible without significant expense. The comprehensive plan promotes long-term, orderly and sustainable development throughout the county.

To best serve the people of McHenry County, the policies will also help with decisions on the allocation of limited resources. Directing growth and development as prescribed by this plan will allow the county to operate in an effective and efficient manner, best serving the public interest.

In the pages that follow, there will be several broad categories of issues. Under each category will be the goals, objectives, and policies. Goals are broad statements, expressions of the community's aspirations. Objectives are more specific than goals and focus on specific actions needed to achieve the goal. From the stated goals and objectives, policies emerge. There may be multiple policies related to one goal.

The key factors needed to implement the County's vision for the future require goals, objectives, and policies to be "SMART".

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Attainable**
- **Realistic**
- **Timely**

Action statements indicate specific measures to be taken for achieving the goals and objectives through policy implementation. Sentences containing action verbs such as: establish, provide, create, regulate, promote, adopt, encourage, report, support, develop, and maintain - - all indicate actions that can be taken to achieve the goals and objectives of this comprehensive plan. Those who are most capable or appropriate for taking action are identified under the tab "Implementation".

**Theme**

**Growth, Development, and Regulating Land Use**

**Goal**

Promote the health, safety, moral, and general welfare of the county residents and the orderly development of lands within the county.

**Objective**

Maintain the quality of life by guiding land use and development.

**Policy**

Regulate growth and development through the consistent application of the zoning regulations, comprehensive plan policies, the growth management plan, the issuance of zoning permits, and enforcement of zoning violations.

**Implementation**

Zoning Board  
County Commissioners

**Goal**

Maintain and strengthen county involvement in directing growth and reviewing development proposals.

**Objective**

Guide county growth and development patterns.

**Policies**

Establish a reasonable time-frame between application deadlines and commission meetings to allow for careful review and processing of development applications.

Create a checklist for evaluating new development proposals.

Provide commissioners with staff reports on development proposals which include “findings of fact” indicating comprehensive plan support or opposition to specific proposals.

Routinely amend zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to improve and clarify.

**Implementation**

County Staff

County Planning Commission

County Commissioners



**Goal**

Preserve and maintain agricultural lands for farm use.

**Objective**

Encourage non-farm growth to locate within existing communities or within the immediate environs of communities.

**Policies**

Adopt future land use map which designates growth areas at major road junctions and within and around existing communities.

Locations of proposed developments should be evaluated for their impacts on agricultural lands, roads that serve farms, agriculture equipment, and farm to market routes.

**Implementation**

County Staff

County Planning Commission

County Commissioners

**Theme**

**Environmental and Scenic Protections**

**Goal**

Maintain and protect air and water quality.

**Objective**

Keep McHenry County clean by preventing environmental pollution.

**Policy**

Report pollution and spills to the Rural Fire Department, First District Health Unit, ND Department of Health, and EPA.

**Implementation**

Citizens of McHenry County

## Goal

Promote a healthy and visually attractive environment.

## Objectives

Promote growth and development by maintaining visually attractive properties, especially along highways and gateways to communities.

Promote McHenry County as a permanent home for new residents and businesses by establishing and maintaining a healthy and visually attractive environment.

Maintain appearances by using existing regulatory tools (“Junk Yard” definition and Conditional Use Permit requirement) and applying existing enforcement procedures to abate problem properties (i.e. dilapidated buildings, junk, and unsafe structures).

Develop new ordinance language and procedures for identifying and facilitating the removal of old buildings.

Develop an inventory of unsightly properties, identify violators, encourage compliance, and issue notices.

## Policies

Maintain appearances by using existing regulatory tools to abate junky areas and unsafe structures.

Follow-up on citizen complaints of alleged zoning violations.

## Implementation

County Staff

County Planning Commission

County Commissioners

**Theme**

**Services and Infrastructure**

**Goal**

Maintain adequate emergency services throughout the county.

**Objective**

As the population increases, plan for corresponding increases in emergency services.

Review service call statistics to ensure county leadership has an up-to-date understanding of the numbers and types of calls for service.

**Policies**

Meet periodically with EMS providers, McHenry County Sheriff, and Rural Fire Districts; evaluate emergency response times and population growth to determine needs and identify optimum locations for future emergency facilities and expansions and improvements to existing facilities.

Use documentation about service calls to pursue outside funding sources for meeting the demands of residents, employers, and travelers in McHenry County.

**Implementation**

County Planning Commission

County Commissioners

County Emergency Manager

County Sheriff

Rural Fire Districts

EMS Providers

**Goal**

Have a safe and reliable water source available to county residents.

**Objective**

Identify new service areas to increase the availability of rural water.

**Policies**

Collaborate with the Rural Water System Boards; promote expansions to serve growth area locations as identified on the future land use map.

Assure that new water service lines are of adequate capacity to serve future demands.

Join forces with city and township leadership to identify comprehensive water needs and locations. Make a consolidated effort to influence decisions on rural water installations and obtain better coverage throughout the County.

**Implementation**

County Commissioners

Rural Water Board of Directors

City Leadership

Township Leadership

**Goal**

Protect the public from fire and hazardous materials at commercial and industrial developments.

**Objective**

Provide for fire protection and hazardous materials storage as required by building codes and fire codes.

**Policy**

Provide standards for developments which are places of employment and/or frequented by the public.

**Implementation**

- County Commissioners
- County Staff
- Rural Fire Districts
- Building Inspector (Future)
- State Fire Marshall

**Theme**

**Economic Development**

**Goal**

Encourage commercial services within McHenry County to meet the needs of County residents.

**Objective**

Identify local commercial service deficiencies and work with McHenry County Jobs Development Authority (JDA) to attract service providers.

Support programs to assist in the establishment of desirable services such as child day-care, automotive repair, and medical clinics.

**Policy**

Work with McHenry County JDA and interested service providers to identify funding resources to facilitate expansions of existing or attraction of new service sector businesses.

**Implementation**

County Commissioners

Service Providers

McHenry County Jobs Development Authority

Business Sector

Goal

Facilitate commercial and industrial growth.

Objective

Provide local employment with good-paying jobs.

Determine priority needs and deficits within the County to identify future businesses.

Policies

Periodically revisit the McHenry County 2013 Economic Development Strategic Plan prepared under the Vision West ND Program which identifies specific goals and strategies for implementing sustainable economic development in the county.

Consider temporary incentives, such as property tax rebates, for expansions of existing businesses and start-ups of new businesses.

Designate suitable commercial and industrial growth areas on the future land use map.

Encourage cities to develop an inventory of shovel-ready properties with available infrastructure that are currently zoned for commercial and industrial development.

Assess the availability and capacity of infrastructure at identified growth nodes in the county and promote rural water system expansions to designated growth areas.

Market McHenry County to prospective employers.

Implementation

County Commissioners

McHenry County Jobs Development Authority

County Tax Director

City Leadership



**Theme**

**Housing**

**Goal**

Promote infill development and utilization of vacant lots as home building sites.

**Objectives**

Encourage cities to prepare inventories of vacant properties.

Utilize lots with existing underground utilities.

**Policy**

Keep housing affordable by identifying buildable properties with existing infrastructure and residential zoning.

**Implementation**

County Commissioners

McHenry County Jobs Development Authority

City Leaders in McHenry County

**Goal**

Protect the public from improper installations of electrical, heating, and plumbing systems in new and remodeled buildings.

**Objective**

Adopt State Building Code.

Establish a building permit and inspection program.

Obtain services of a building inspector.

**Policy**

Provide the public with safe housing stock, protect future home buyers and workers, and establish uniform standards for contractors through a County building permit and inspections program.

**Implementation**

County Staff

County Commissioners

State Fire Marshall

**Theme**

**Costs and Effective Use of Taxpayer Dollars**

**Goal**

Avoid taxpayer subsidy of private-sector, for-profit development.

**Objective**

Establish permit fees which will cover the costs of the program.

Costs associated with new developments should be paid for by the developer.

**Policies**

Create and maintain a fee structure that is reasonable and justifiable.

Permit fees for development proposals can be based on administrative costs incurred.

Permit fees for buildings can be based on the square-footage and type of building.

Discontinue reliance upon builder-reported construction values to determine fee.

Periodically evaluate county expenditures on new developments to examine whether application fees are proportional to staff time spent on processing applications.

**Implementation**

County Staff

County Planning Commission

County Commissioners

**Goal**

New developments which increase the need for public services should be accountable for associated costs.

**Objective**

Compare property tax revenues to costs of county services needed to serve proposed developments.

Avoid taxpayer subsidies for private sector development.

**Policy**

If a large-scale development requires an increase in emergency services or other public services, create a mechanism to allow the development to contribute towards the cost.

**Implementation**

County Staff

County Planning Commission

County Commissioners

# Implementation Tables

Policies	Parties Responsible	New Costs/ Staff Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulate growth and development through the consistent application of the zoning regulations, comprehensive plan policies, the growth management plan, the issuance of zoning permits, and enforcement of zoning violations.</li> </ul>	<p>Zoning Board County Commissioners</p>	<p>Routine activity No new costs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a reasonable time-frame between application deadlines and commission meetings to allow for careful review and processing of development applications.</li> <li>Create a checklist for evaluating new development proposals.</li> <li>Provide commissioners with staff reports on development proposals which include “findings of fact” indicating comprehensive plan support or opposition to specific proposals.</li> <li>Routinely amend zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to improve and clarify.</li> </ul>	<p>County Staff County Planning Commission County Commissioners</p>	<p>Some additional staff time required</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt future land use map which designates growth areas at major road junctions and within and around existing communities.</li> <li>Locations of proposed developments should be evaluated for their impacts on agricultural lands, roads that serve farms, agriculture equipment, and farm to market routes.</li> </ul>	<p>County Staff County Planning Commission County Commissioners</p>	<p>Routine activity Minimal additional costs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report pollution and spills to the Rural Fire Department, First District Health Unit, ND Department of Health, and EPA.</li> </ul>	<p>Citizens of McHenry County</p>	<p>Periodic Citizen effort</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain appearances by using existing regulatory tools to abate junky areas and unsafe structures.</li> <li>Follow-up on citizen complaints of alleged zoning violations.</li> </ul>	<p>County Staff County Planning Commission County Commissioners</p>	<p>Additional time and effort required</p>

Policies	Parties Responsible	New Costs/ Staff Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet periodically with EMS providers, McHenry County Sheriff, and Rural Fire Districts; evaluate emergency response times and population growth to determine needs and identify optimum locations for future emergency facilities and expansions and improvements to existing facilities.</li> <li>• Use documentation about service calls to pursue outside funding sources for meeting the demands of residents, employers, and travelers in McHenry County.</li> </ul>	County Planning Commission County Commissioners County Emergency Manager County Sheriff Rural Fire Districts EMS Providers	Periodic reporting from staff and providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with the Rural Water System Boards; promote expansions to serve growth area locations as identified on the future land use map.</li> <li>• Assure that new water service lines are of adequate capacity to serve future demands.</li> <li>• Join forces with city and township leadership to identify comprehensive water needs and locations. Make a consolidated effort to influence decisions on rural water installations and obtain better coverage throughout the County.</li> </ul>	County Commissioners Rural Water Board of Directors City Leadership Township Leadership	Time & effort required for periodic meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For rural growth node developments, assure water supply provides adequate fire flows as required by codes. Check with State Fire Marshall and recommend water tank reservoirs if needed for sprinkler systems.</li> </ul>	County Commissioners County Staff Rural Fire Districts Building Inspector (Future) State Fire Marshall	Time required to assess proposed structures for fire safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with McHenry County JDA and interested service providers to identify funding resources to facilitate expansions of existing or attraction of new service sector businesses.</li> </ul>	County Commissioners Service Providers McHenry County Jobs Development Authority Business Sector	JDA may already have some information

Policies	Parties Responsible	New Costs/ Staff Time
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt future land use map which designates growth areas at major road junctions and within and around existing communities.</li> <li>Locations of proposed developments should be evaluated for their impacts on agricultural lands, roads that serve farms, agriculture equipment, and farm to market routes.</li> </ul>	<p>County Staff County Planning Commission County Commissioners</p>	<p>Routine activity Minimal additional costs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report pollution and spills to the Rural Fire Department, First District Health Unit, ND Department of Health, and EPA.</li> </ul>	<p>Citizens of McHenry County</p>	<p>Periodic Citizen effort</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a reasonable time-frame between application deadlines and commission meetings to allow for careful review and processing of development applications.</li> <li>Create a checklist for evaluating new development proposals.</li> <li>Provide commissioners with staff reports on development proposals which include “findings of fact” indicating comprehensive plan support or opposition to specific proposals.</li> <li>Routinely amend zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to improve and clarify.</li> </ul>	<p>County Staff County Planning Commission County Commissioners</p>	<p>Some additional staff time required</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt future land use map which designates growth areas at major road junctions and within and around existing communities.</li> <li>Locations of proposed developments should be evaluated for their impacts on agricultural lands, roads that serve farms, agriculture equipment, and farm to market routes.</li> </ul>	<p>County Staff County Planning Commission County Commissioners</p>	<p>Routine activity Minimal additional costs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report pollution and spills to the Rural Fire Department, First District Health Unit, ND Department of Health, and EPA.</li> </ul>	<p>Citizens of McHenry County</p>	<p>Periodic Citizen effort</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain appearances by using existing regulatory tools to abate junky areas and unsafe structures.</li> <li>Follow-up on citizen complaints of alleged zoning violations.</li> </ul>	<p>County Staff County Planning Commission County Commissioners</p>	<p>Additional time and effort required</p>



# Appendix A: Public Input

## Public Meeting #1: December 18, 2014

### Pratt Township

- Pratt Township recently (~April 2014) decided to exercise its own zoning authority.
- Pratt Township has both oil wells and access to natural gas.

### Housing

- Vacancy Rate impacted by the old and potentially inhabitable housing stock.
- Newer census data may review a decline in vacancy rate.
- Temporary housing is an identified issue for the county.
- Affordable housing is also an identified issue.
- Newer residents with greater financial resources are pushing out the low income.

### Deering + Granville

- New water resource infrastructure between these two cities is expected to begin construction in 2015.

### Agriculture

- Agriculture tracts are being used for hunting.
- Temporary/Renting on Agriculture land is becoming an issue.
- Large farm owners are buying out smaller farmers.
- Agriculture tracts might be under different names.
- Employment vs. Family Operated farm impacts the housing on farms.
- Size Requirements to control rural growth a possibility?
- Young people are coming back to farm.

### Miscellaneous

- People of McHenry County are discounting the presence of growth.
- There is a high demand for more services in McHenry County such as hospitals or mechanics.
- City parks in McHenry County have an issue of squatters during the spring and summer months.

## Public Meeting #2: October 26, 2015

### Purpose of the Meeting

- Obtain public input on the comprehensive plan and identify any revisions needed

### Purpose of Document

- To maintain consistency with NDCC requirement
- To prepare the county for future growth
- To provide a basis for decisions on where and how future development should occur

### Future Amendments

- To amend the adopted plan in the future, a two week of public notice is followed by a Zoning Board public hearing and recommendation. Final decision is by the County Board of Commissioners.

### Public Input Survey

- Concern was raised that the number of survey responses represent less than one percent of the population of McHenry County, and is therefore not statistically valid. And if the survey is statistically not valid, how can policies be derived from it.
- It was noted that the intent of the survey was voluntary, not intended to be statistically valid but to provide additional information as a supplement to information gathered at public meetings.
- A member of the steering committee noted that not all comprehensive plans utilize surveys; responses are proportional to public interest.
- A member of the public mentioned that regardless of the survey, the policies outlined in the plan are adopted and can be amended at any time by the elected county commissioners who represent the people.
- Another member of the public suggested that other forms of public input can be obtained in the future using the new county website.

### What happens after Adoption?

- The plan can be used to assess new development proposals by asking two questions:
  - Is the proposal consistent with the Future Land Use Map?
  - Is the proposal consistent with the policies?
- Because the plan formally documents needs in the county, it can be referenced in grant applications.

### Three Revisions to Draft Comprehensive Plan

- Three changes were requested:
  - Add two pipeline routes to maps
  - Add information on missile sites
  - Correct one typo

# Public Input Survey

## MCHEMRY COUNTY PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY

McHenry County is asking for your input. This is your opportunity to guide future changes in your county. We're asking you about your likes, dislikes, and opinions. This information will be used to develop new county policies. The survey can also be taken online at [mchenrycountynd.com](http://mchenrycountynd.com).

### QUALITY OF LIFE

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**1** From the list below, please select the two most positive social aspects that contribute to the good quality of life in McHenry County.

- Quiet, small-town atmosphere
- Scenic and pristine rural areas
- Friendly neighbors and family ties in the area
- Good Churches
- Fun community events and gatherings

---

**2** From the list below, please select three other positive aspects that contribute to the good quality of life in McHenry County.

- A wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities
- Feeling safe and secure due to good emergency services
- Job security/Financial security
- Good facilities for senior citizens
- Close to Minot for shopping, jobs, and services
- Affordable housing
- Good schools
- Good government services
- Reasonable taxes and cost of living
- Good roads, not too much traffic
- Local availability of good medical services

---

- 3 Pick three of the following issues that concern you the most about the quality of life and future of McHenry County:**
- Increasing Population
  - Housing Affordability
  - Jobs and Economy
  - Crime/Public Safety/Emergency Services
  - Conversion of agricultural land to residential/commercial/industrial
  - Quality of Roads
  - Availability of Rural Water
  - Pollution of the Environment
  - Lack of local shopping and services

**LAND USE, INCREASING POPULATION, AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**

- 4 In 2013, there were an estimated 3,000 people living in rural McHenry County. Our county-wide population can be expected to increase greatly in the coming years. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about an increase in the number of rural residents in McHenry County?**
- I think more residential growth should be allowed in the rural areas of the County
  - I think more residential growth should be directed to the cities
  - It doesn't matter to me

- 5 Where in McHenry County would you prefer to see new commercial and industrial growth? (choose all that apply)**
- In and around the cities
  - At the junctions of major roads and highways
  - In the rural areas
  - Prefer limited commercial/industrial growth
  - It doesn't matter to me

6	Please state your level of agreement with the following statements on land use and development:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	The county should have a stronger role in directing future growth and development to appropriate locations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Individuals and developers should be free to develop land without many restrictions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Farmland ( <i>productive agricultural and grazing land</i> ) should be protected from encroaching incompatible development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	The lack of affordable housing is a problem in McHenry County	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	We need more commercial areas to provide jobs, services, and shopping options	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Development should be encouraged in or near the cities, rather than in more rural areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Maintaining clean water, fresh air, and conservation of natural resources is a high priority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	There should be restrictions on keeping “junk” on property that is within public view	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	We need more areas for industrial and office parks to meet growing demands	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	The county should more actively enforce existing zoning laws	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	We need more land for county parks and recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- 7 **When new rural subdivisions are first developed, how should the improvements, such as roadways, be paid for?**
- The developer should pay for only improvements inside the development and pass these costs on to future lot owners
  - The developer should pay the full cost of improvements inside the development, and should help cover the costs of impacts outside the development, such as the increased need for emergency services
  - McHenry County citizens should help share the costs of new developments through property taxes
  - I don't know

**8 For a single, stand-alone, rural residence, McHenry County currently allows no more than one non-farm dwelling per 40-acres in the Agricultural Zoning District. Which statement do you agree with?**

This is an appropriately sized area to maintain rural population density

40-acres is not large enough; the size should be increased to keep rural population densities lower and allow open space in the rural areas

40-acres is too large; the size should be decreased to allow for higher rural population densities in the rural areas

No opinion

**9 For multiple side-by-side lots (subdivisions) in the county, the minimum lot size is 2-acres. Which statement do you agree with?**

The lot size should be increased (optional: to \_\_\_\_\_ )

2-acres is an appropriate size

This should be decreased (optional: to \_\_\_\_\_ )

No opinion

**SERVICES**

Please answer the following questions about community services.

**10 When the rural population of McHenry County increases, should there be an increase in emergency service facilities and providers? (sheriff, ambulance, fire)**

Yes, if there are more people living in the county, more emergency services will be needed

No, the current level of emergency services is adequate for serving future growth

We need better coverage now, the current level of emergency services is inadequate

Do not know

**11 Regarding child care, is there currently a need for more day-care facilities in McHenry County?**

Yes, more day-care facilities are needed

No, the current day-care facilities are adequate

Do not know

---

**12 If a bus service became available to serve rural residents in the county, would you be likely to use it?**

---

Yes

No

---

---

**13 Do you support having County incentives to attract new businesses to McHenry County?**

---

Strongly support

Moderately support

Moderately disapprove

Strongly disapprove

Don't know

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**14 What is your household's source of drinking water?**

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Rural water

City water system

Private well, and this is my preference

Private well, but I would prefer public water

I haul my drinking water

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**15 Should the rural water system be expanded in McHenry County to provide treated water throughout the rural areas?**

---

Yes

No

---

---

**16 If rural water service becomes available to a larger portion of the county, more people will be interested in living in the county. Do you agree with this statement?**

---

Strongly Agree

Moderately Agree

Moderately Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Not Sure

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---

**17** **Should new rural water lines be installed at locations decided by the rural water provider or should the County be more involved in planning growth locations and work closely with the rural water provider to influence where rural water lines should be installed?**

---

- Let rural water go wherever it needs to without county influence
  - The county should be involved in determining rural water line routes
- 

**18** **Would you like to see more public access for recreational activities?  
If so, where would you like to see more access (choose all that apply)**

---

- More public access is not necessary
  - Fishing, swimming, camping and boating access along rivers
  - Fishing, swimming, camping and boating access at lakes
  - Access to public hunting areas
  - Pedestrian walking trails
  - Trails for horseback riding
  - Trails for off-road vehicles (snowmobiles, motorcycles, ATVs)
- 

## HOUSING

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**19** **Of the following, which does McHenry County need more of (if any):**

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- Apartments
  - Duplexes
  - Condos
  - Senior Housing
  - Assisted Living
  - Subsidized, Public Housing
  - Single-Family Housing
- 

**20** **What is your level of agreement with this statement: More affordable housing options needed in the county?**

---

- Strongly Agree
  - Moderately Agree
  - Moderately Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
  - Not Sure
-



**21** Because of housing shortages in the Bakken, many oil workers live in their own RV or camper trailer, sometimes parking on farmsteads and hooking up to water, sewer, and electric services. Some farmsteads will have several camper trailers or 5<sup>th</sup> wheels parked there. In your opinion, is this acceptable for farmsteads in McHenry County?

Yes

No

---

**22** Should the county encourage the development of facilities for temporary housing such as RV parks and man camps?

Yes

No

---

**23** Which statement best describes your feelings about old, dilapidated, and unsafe buildings in the county:

The county should have a program to remove or require improvements to unsafe buildings

Only the property owners should decide what to do with the unsafe buildings they own

---

**24** Which statement best describes your feelings about properties with accumulations of junk and abandoned vehicles:

The county should have a program to get junky areas cleaned up

Only the property owners should decide what to do with the junk they have accumulated

## TRANSPORTATION

Please assign a priority level to the following transportation activities in McHenry County:

<b>25</b> Transportation Activities	High Priority	Moderate Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority
Provide dust control on unpaved county roads	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide regular re-grading/graveling of unpaved county roads	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pave higher volume county roads that are currently unpaved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide regular maintenance of paved county roads	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourage new walking pathways and trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Repair or replace bridges on county roads	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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**26 Are you concerned about safety with railroads?**

- Yes, I am concerned about possible accidents at railroad crossings
  - Yes, I am concerned about possible derailments of railroad tanker cars
  - No, I am not concerned
- 

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Please answer the following questions about public involvement in civic issues.

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**27 What are the best ways for you to receive public service announcements or government information from McHenry County? (Choose three)**

- County website
  - Mouse River Journal newspaper
  - Velvee Voice newspaper
  - KCJB radio Minot – 910 AM
  - KHND radio Harvey – 1470 AM
  - KZZJ radio Rugby – 1450 AM
  - By attending commission meetings or other public meetings
  - Social media
  - By email
  - By mail
- 

**DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Please answer the following questions about yourself.

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**28 How long have you lived in your current place of residence?**

- Less than 2 years
  - Between 2 and 5 years
  - Between 5 and 20 years
  - More than 20 years
- 

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**29 Do you have school-age children (elementary to high school)?**

- Yes
  - No
-

---

**30 Do you live in town or in the country?**

- In town
  - In the country
  - Within two-miles of town
- 

**31 Do you or anyone in your household farm or ranch?**

- Yes
  - Yes, but it is not our primary occupation
  - No
- 

**32 Do you own or rent?**

- Own
  - Rent
- 

**33 Which age group are you in?**

- Age 18 – 30 years
  - Age 31 – 45 years
  - Age 46 – 65 years
  - Over 65
-

# Public Input Survey Results

**Q1 From the list below, please select the two most positive social aspects that contribute to the good quality of life in McHenry County.**

Answered: 60 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses	
Friendly neighbors and family ties in the area	75%	45
Quiet, small-town atmosphere	72%	43
Scenic and pristine rural areas	30%	18
Good churches	15%	9
Fun community events and gatherings	8%	5
<b>Total Respondents: 60</b>		

**Q2 From the list below, please select three other positive aspects that contribute to the good quality of life in McHenry County.**

Answered: 60 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses	
Good schools	55%	33
Close to Minot for shopping, jobs, and services	48%	29
Reasonable taxes and cost of living	47%	28
Feeling safe and secure due to good emergency services	30%	18
A wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities	27%	16
Good roads, not too much traffic	25%	15
Job security/Financial security	23%	14
Affordable housing	23%	14
Local availability of good medical services	10%	6
Good government services	8%	5
Good facilities for senior citizens	3%	2
<b>Total Respondents: 60</b>		

**Q3 Pick three of the following issues that concern you the most about the quality of life and future of McHenry County:**

Answered: 60 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses	
Crime/Public Safety/Emergency Services	72%	43
Quality of Roads	63%	38
Increasing Population	43%	26
Housing Affordability	33%	20
Jobs and Economy	30%	18
Lack of local shopping and services	28%	17
Conversion of agricultural land to residential/commercial/industrial	12%	7
Pollution of the Environment	10%	6
Availability of Rural Water	8%	5
<b>Total Respondents: 60</b>		

**Q4 In 2013, there were an estimated 3,000 people living in rural McHenry County. Our countywide population can be expected to increase greatly in the coming years. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about an increase in the number of rural residents in McHenry County?**

Answered: 56 Skipped: 4

Answer Choices	Responses	
It dose not matter to me	41%	23
I think more residential growth should be directed to the cities	36%	20
I think more residential growth should be allowed in the rural areas of the County	23%	13
<b>Total</b>		<b>56</b>

**Q5 Where in McHenry County would you prefer to see new commercial and industrial growth? (choose all that apply)**

Answered: 56 Skipped: 4

Answer Choices	Responses
Incorporated Cities	50% 28
Junctions of Major Roads	48% 27
No Growth	9% 5
Rural Areas	7% 4
It Does Not Matter to Me	7% 4
<b>Total Respondents: 56</b>	

**Q6 Please state your level of agreement with the following statements on land use and development:**

Answered: 56 Skipped: 4

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure	Total	Weighted Average
There should be restrictions on keeping "junk" on property that is within public view	53% 29	33% 18	11% 6	2% 1	2% 1	55	1.61
Maintaining clean water, fresh air, and conservation of natural resources is a high priority	38% 21	52% 29	7% 4	4% 2	0% 0	56	1.77
The county should have a stronger role in directing future growth and development to appropriate locations	30% 17	41% 23	13% 7	7% 4	9% 5	56	1.96
We need more commercial areas to provide jobs, services, and shopping options	20% 11	53% 29	20% 11	0% 0	7% 4	55	2.00
Development should be encouraged in or near the cities, rather than in more rural areas	21% 12	54% 30	16% 9	4% 2	5% 3	56	2.02
Farmland (productive agricultural and grazing land) should be protected from encroaching incompatible development	25% 14	48% 27	11% 6	9% 5	7% 4	56	2.04
The county should more actively enforced existing zoning laws	15% 8	53% 29	13% 7	4% 2	16% 9	55	2.07
The lack of affordable housing is a problem in McHenry County	23% 13	43% 24	20% 11	5% 3	9% 5	56	2.08
We need more areas for industrial and office parks to meet growing demands	7% 4	52% 29	27% 15	2% 1	13% 7	56	2.27
We need more land for county parks and recreation	5% 3	23% 13	39% 22	7% 4	25% 14	56	2.64
Individuals and developers should be free to develop land without many restrictions	7% 4	20% 11	36% 20	34% 19	4% 2	56	3.00

**Q7 When new rural subdivisions are first developed, how should the improvements, such as roadways, be paid for?**

Answered: 56 Skipped: 4

Answer Choices	Responses
The developer should pay the full cost of improvements inside the development, and should help cover the costs of impacts outside the development, such as the increased need for emergency services	50% 28
The developer should pay for only improvements inside the development and pass those costs on to future lot owners	38% 21
I do not know	7% 4
McHenry County citizens should help share the costs through property taxes	5% 3
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

**Q8 For a single, stand-alone, rural residence, McHenry County currently allows no more than one non-farm dwelling per 40-acres in the Agricultural Zoning District. Which statement do you agree with?**

Answered: 56 Skipped: 4

Answer Choices	Responses
This is an appropriately sized area to maintain rural population density	32.14% 18
No Opinion	30.36% 17
40-acres is too large; the size should be decreased to allow for higher rural population densities in the rural areas	26.79% 15
40-acres is not large enough; the size should be increased to keep rural population densities lower and allow open space in the rural areas	10.71% 6
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

**Q9 For multiple side-by-side lots (subdivisions) in the county, the minimum lot size is 2-acres. Which statement do you agree with?**

Answered: 56 Skipped: 4

Answer Choices	Responses
2-acres is an appropriate size	66.07% 37
No opinion	19.64% 11
The lot size should be increased or decreased to (type in number of acres):	14.29% 8
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

**Q10 When the rural population of McHenry County increases, should there be an increase in emergency service facilities and providers?**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 5

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes, if there are more people living in the county, more emergency services will be needed	90.91% 50
Do not know	5.45% 3
No, the current level of emergency services is adequate for serving future growth	3.64% 2
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

**Q11 Regarding child care, is there currently a need for more day-care facilities in McHenry County?**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes, more day-care facilities are needed	68.52% 37
Do not know	25.93% 14
No, the current day-care facilities are adequate	5.56% 3
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>

**Q12 If a bus service became available to serve rural residents in the county, would you be likely to use it?**

Answered: 52 Skipped: 8

Answer Choices	Responses
No	73% 38
Yes	27% 14
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>

**Q13 Do you support having County incentives to attract new businesses to McHenry County?**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 5

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Support	Moderately Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove	Not Sure	Total	Weighted Average
Level of Agreement	25% 14	53% 29	9% 5	9% 5	4% 2	55	2.02



### Q14 What is your household's source of drinking water?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 5

Answer Choices	Responses
City water system	38% 21
Private well, and that is my preference	25% 14
Rural water	20% 11
Private well, but I would prefer public water	9% 5
I haul my drinking water	7% 4
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

### Q15 Should the rural water system be expanded in McHenry County to provide treated water throughout the rural areas?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 11

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	71% 35
No	29% 14
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>

### Q16 If rural water service becomes available to a larger portion of the county, more people will be interested in living in the county. Do you agree with this statement?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 5

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure	Total	Weighted Average
Level of Agreement	16% 9	55% 30	18% 10	4% 2	7% 4	55	2.10

**Q17 Regarding the direction of growth (which typically follows rural water line installations) should rural water be installed anywhere, based only on the requests of property owners or should the County be more involved in planning growth locations and work closely with the rural water provider to influence where rural water lines should be installed?**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses	
The county should be involved in determining rural water line routes	56%	30
Let rural water go wherever it needs to without county influence	44%	24
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>

**Q18 Would you like to see more public access for recreational activities? If so, where would you like to see more access (choose all that apply)**

Answered: 42 Skipped: 18

Answer Choices	Responses	
Fishing, swimming, camping and boating access at lakes	48%	20
Trails for off-road vehicles (snowmobiles, motorcycles, ATVs)	40%	17
Pedestrian walking trails	38%	16
Access to public hunting areas	26%	11
Fishing, swimming, camping and boating access along rivers	24%	10
Trails for horseback riding	12%	5
<b>Total Respondents: 42</b>		

**Q19 Of the following, which does McHenry County need more of (if any):**

Answered: 51 Skipped: 9

Answer Choices	Responses	
Single-Family Housing	49%	25
Senior Housing	47%	24
Apartments	45%	23
Assisted Living	33%	17
Condos	20%	10
Duplexes	16%	8
Subsidized, Public Housing	10%	5
<b>Total Respondents: 51</b>		

**Q20 What is your level of agreement with this statement: More affordable housing options needed in the county?**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 5

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure	Total	Weighted Average
Level of Agreement	27% 15	51% 28	9% 5	5% 3	7% 4	55	1.92

**Q21 Because of housing shortages in the Bakken, many oil workers live in their own RV or camper trailer, sometimes parking on farmsteads and hooking up to water, sewer, and electric services. Some farmsteads will have several camper trailers or 5th wheels parked there. In your opinion, is this acceptable for farmsteads in McHenry County?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
No	69%	38
Yes	31%	17
<b>Total</b>		<b>55</b>

**Q22 Should the county encourage the development of facilities for temporary housing such as RV parks and man camps?**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 5

Answer Choices	Responses
No	58% 32
Yes	42% 23
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

**Q23 Which statement best describes your feelings about old, dilapidated, and unsafe buildings in the county:**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 5

Answer Choices	Responses
The county should have a program to remove or require improvements to unsafe buildings	71% 39
Only the property owners should decide what to do with the unsafe buildings they own	29% 16
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

**Q24 Which statement best describes your feelings about properties with accumulations of junk and abandoned vehicles:**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 5

Answer Choices	Responses
The county should have a program to get junky areas cleaned up	73% 40
Only the property owners should decide what to do with the junk they have accumulated	27% 15
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>

**Q25 Please assign a priority level to the following transportation activities in McHenry County:**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

	High Priority	Moderate Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority	Total	Weighted Average
Provide regular re-grading /graveling of unpaved county roads	76% 41	22% 12	2% 1	0% 0	54	1.26
Provide regular maintenance of paved county roads	63% 34	30% 16	7% 4	0% 0	54	1.44
Repair or replace bridges on county roads	52% 28	44% 24	2% 1	2% 1	54	1.54
Pave higher volume county roads that are currently unpaved	36% 19	45% 24	17% 9	2% 1	53	1.85
Provide dust control on unpaved county roads	13% 7	26% 14	43% 23	17% 9	53	2.64
Encourage new walking pathways and trails	15% 8	15% 8	46% 24	23% 12	52	2.77

**Q26 If you are concerned about railroad safety, choose from the following:**

Answered: 45 Skipped: 15

Answer Choices	Responses	
I am concerned about possible accidents at railroad crossings	76%	34
I am concerned about possible derailments of railroad tanker cars	76%	34
<b>Total Respondents: 45</b>		

**Q27 What are the best ways for you to receive new information and communications from McHenry County?  
(Choose three)**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses
By email	67% 36
Mouse River Journal newspaper	57% 31
By mail	48% 26
Velva Voice newspaper	30% 16
County website	26% 14
Social media	26% 14
By attending commission meetings or other public meetings	22% 12
KCJB radio Minot -- 910 AM	15% 8
KZZJ radio Rugby -- 1450 AM	6% 3
KHND radio Harvey -- 1470 AM	4% 2
<b>Total Respondents: 54</b>	

**Q28 How long have you lived in your current place of residence?**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses
More than 20 years	59.26% 32
Between 5 and 20 years	31.48% 17
Between 2 and 5 years	7.41% 4
Less than 2 years	1.85% 1
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>

**Q29 Do you have school-aged children (elementary to high school)?**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses
No	72% 39
Yes	28% 15
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>

### Q30 Do you live in town or in the country?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses	
In the country	50.00%	27
In town	44.44%	24
Within two-miles of town	5.56%	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>

### Q31 Do you or anyone in your household farm or ranch?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses	
No	66.67%	36
Yes	25.93%	14
Yes, but it is not our primary occupation	7.41%	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>

### Q32 Do you own or rent?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses	
Own	96%	52
Rent	4%	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>

### Q33 Which age group are you in?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 6

Answer Choices	Responses	
Age 46 - 65 years	50%	27
Over 65	30%	16
Age 31 - 45 years	15%	8
Age 18 - 30 years	6%	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>

