

Chapter 1



INTRODUCTION

The city of Chenoa is located in McLean County, Illinois, approximately twenty-five miles northeast of Bloomington-Normal on Interstate 55 and Illinois Route 24 (see Map 1.1). Roughly midway between Chicago and the state capital of Springfield, Chenoa sits at the heart of the state's most productive agricultural region. Chenoa exemplifies the small cities found in central Illinois, which continue to serve their own residents and the surrounding rural areas.

Kickapoo and Pottawottamie Native American tribes were among the first inhabitants of the area in the 1820's. European settlers did not arrive until the 1840's. Matthew T. Scott is credited with being one of the region's leading businessmen. His purchase of over 16,000 acres of land positioned the future city of Chenoa in becoming an agricultural and commerce center assisted in later years by the establishment of the first railroad lines. Since then, Chenoa has long depended on agriculture, small industry and the service sector for its economic base. City growth was not significant until the late 1960's when Chenoa realized its first notable population increase (337 people) in decades. After the 1970's, the population of Chenoa remained relatively stagnant until the late 1990's when the population increased almost 6.5 percent. In 2000, Chenoa's population was approximately 1,845.

The City of Chenoa has already taken steps to encourage future growth. In 2007, the City established a Tax Increment Financing District and developed a plan for city redevelopment. The Chenoa school district was consolidated into the Prairie Central School District in 2004, and the former Chenoa High School currently serves the consolidated district as an elementary school. The city also has two community parks and other open space that provide its citizens public recreational opportunities.

As Chenoa prepares for the future, a comprehensive plan is needed to serve as a guide for community growth. A comprehensive plan guides the city when making decisions about future economic development, housing, trans-

portation, land use and community facilities. The plan ensures that coordinated growth and development will occur, thereby enhancing the quality of life in Chenoa.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The *City of Chenoa Comprehensive Plan* is intended as an advisory document for future community development. The plan is written to be an interpretive and flexible report. Future development proposals should be evaluated within the intent of the plan and not be subject to a strict interpretation of the plan. Although the document is intended to guide a lengthy planning period, it should be periodically reviewed for updating as the long-range plan is implemented. The plan also examines past and present growth trends and provides a vision for the future.

SCOPE OF PLAN

Chenoa and areas within its mile-and-a-half planning jurisdiction were included in the study area for this plan (see Map 1.1). The comprehensive plan addresses issues related to the potential growth of the city through the year 2035. Plan components include natural environment, community history, population, economy, housing, land use, transportation, community facilities and implementation.

Recommendations are made for the planning of streets, land use, public and private buildings, recreation facilities, and community operations. The plan also addresses recommendations for plan implementation.

METHOD OF APPROACH











Field surveys, reports, historical accounts and existing land use and census data were used to analyze the variety of information contained in this report. This information was also used to assess existing conditions, project future community needs and formulate plans

for the future. The process also included input from city officials, community leaders and professional civil engineers.

LIMITATIONS OF THE PLAN

A comprehensive plan serves as the first step in the planning process. It should not be mistaken as the only item necessary for successful community planning. The purpose of the plan is to summarize research and present local goals and objectives and suggest plans of action for implementation. To succeed, community leaders need to aggressively carry out the plan and make sure it is periodically updated to reflect changing community wants and needs.

Legend

-  Corporate Limits - 2008
-  Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
-  McLean County
-  Streams
-  Lakes and Detention
-  Streets and Roads
-  State Highway
-  U.S. Highway
-  Interstate Highway
-  Railroad

Map 1.1

Regional Perspective

City of Chenoa Comprehensive Plan

