

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

# 9

Community facilities include public buildings, parks, schools, utilities and similar facilities essential to everyday community life. These facilities have a direct effect on the appearance and livability of a community, and greatly affect the community's ability to attract and guide future growth. They will, therefore, be developed within the framework of the land use and major street plan and will reflect the goals and objectives of the community. Since community facility improvements often require considerable capital expenditures, it is important that planning be done well in advance so that appropriate capital improvements programming can be completed.

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The overall goal of the community facilities plan is to provide adequate public utilities and community services at a level which will guide and promote compact urban development. To achieve this, certain design principles and objectives will be kept in mind. First, certain community facilities such as public buildings and parks will be grouped together at appropriate locations to form activity centers easily accessi-

ble to and from all parts of the community. The grouping of these facilities in the downtown can enhance the viability of the downtown area. Care will also be taken to ensure that adequate schools and park and recreation facilities are available to meet the present and anticipated future needs of the

## PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Public buildings include such structures as the city hall, post office and fire station, which generally provide community-wide services. They will therefore be situated in areas conveniently accessible to and from all parts of the community. This



Exhibit 9-A. Lexington Community Building

community, in terms of both size and location of facilities. Cost effective water supply and waste water disposal systems will be developed to adequately serve existing and future populations of the community. More specific design principles for community facilities are presented later in this chapter by type of facility.

usually requires that public buildings be grouped near the center of town in a location of major traffic flow. Since the construction of public buildings requires considerable public expenditures, they will also be situated in an area which allows for future expansion whenever possible.

## Existing Buildings

Public buildings discussed here include the City Hall, community center, library, and fire station. The locations of these structures are shown in Figure 8. The City's existing public buildings are described in the following paragraphs.

### *City Hall*

The City Hall serves as the center of municipal government and is located downtown on Main Street at Vine. It contains the City Council meeting room, police department, zoning, public works and ESDA, as well as the administrative offices for the City. This structure was constructed in 1949 and upgraded in 1994. The structure's downtown location is well situated near the center of the community. The parking lot to the east of the facility could provide space for expansion if conditions warrant. This structure will be adequate for the foreseeable future, but expansion may eventually need to be considered if the City's anticipated growth is realized.

### *Community Center*

The Lexington Community Center was built in 1991 and is located on Main Street at Pine in the downtown. Although used by the public, the center is pri-

vately owned. Its primary function is to host community and private events for the citizens of Lexington. It is the downtown's newest construction and a focal point of community pride and a gathering place for city residents. The facility is available for rent and has banquet seating for 300. It is equipped with a full kitchen. Other amenities include state-of-the-art sound system, bar and catering service, portable dance floor, and private conference room. Peace Meal, the locally based community lunch program, utilizes the kitchen on weekdays. It is likely this new facility will be able to adequately serve Lexington for the life of this planning period without significant alterations.

### *Fire Station*

The City of Lexington has a volunteer fire department and ambulance service. It is located on Parkway Street across from the downtown city Park. On average, the facility answers 110 calls per year and has a volunteer staff of 42. The staff has at its disposal four fire trucks and one ambulance. As the City grows, the facility may need to be expanded.

A somewhat more westward location would better serve developing areas to the west while maintaining adequate service capabilities to the older eastern part of

the City. Although a central location is sometimes advantageous, the most critical factors determining specific fire protection needs include population density, travel time, and the type and intensity of community development. The following criteria are frequently used as a guide for determining fire protection requirements: (1) one engine company should be located within  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 mile of a high-value district; (2) one engine company should be located with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 miles of a densely-developed residential district; and (3) one engine company should be located within 3 to 4 miles of a sparsely developed residential district. Thus, a future fire station site located slightly further to the west could more effectively serve both existing and future areas of development.

### *Public Library*

The Lexington Public Library is located at the corner of Cedar and South Streets. It was originally established as a reading room in 1895. In 1951, the library district was formed and the name was changed from the Smith Library to the Lexington Public Library. Present programming includes public internet access, youth summer reading programs, children's story hour and book discussions. The building has a small auditorium on the third floor





# FIGURE NO. 8 COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

## LEGEND






### Existing Community Facilities

- 1 City Hall
- 2 Library
- 3 Community Center
- 4 Fire Department
- 5 Public Works
- 6 Schools
- 7 Parks

### Future Community Facilities

-  Proposed Sewage Treatment Plant & Pump Stations (PS)
-  Potential Water Treatment Plant Site
-  Potential Park Site
-  Potential Fire Station Site


### Generalized Land Use Plan

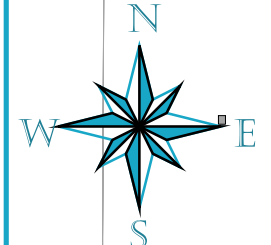
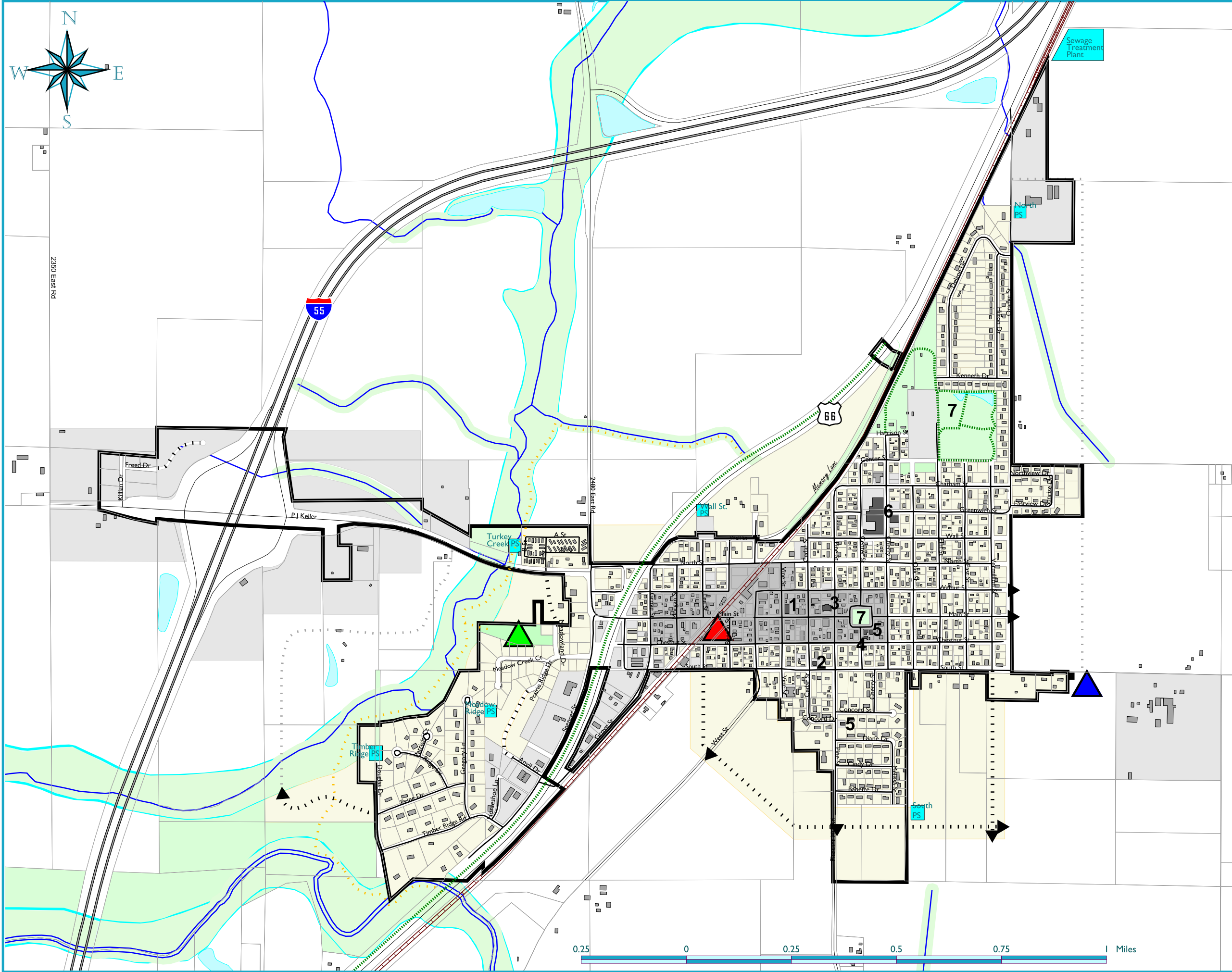
-  Greenways and Open Space
-  Residential
-  Non-residential
-  Mixed Use
-  Vacant or Agricultural

### Generalized Transportation Plan

-  Existing Streets
-  Interstate Highway
-  Proposed Streets
-  Railroad
-  Existing Trails
-  Proposed Historic Route 66 Bikeway
-  Other Potential Trails

### Other Features

-  2004 Corporate Boundary
-  Lakes
-  Streams



that was previously used for meetings and is no longer used for this service. The current facility and the services it provides are adequate for the population it serves. Library services and viability of the structure will need to be periodically re-evaluated as the City grows. According to library officials, an expansion of library space may be necessary in the future. This could involve an expansion of the current facility or merit a new location or new construction.

### **Future Buildings**

The objective for future public buildings is to preserve and enhance existing structures and provide additional structures as needed to serve anticipated growth. The public buildings plan recommends the construction of a new fire station and the preservation of other public buildings within the City (see Figure 8). The recommended location of the fire station is the downtown area approximately six blocks west of the current station as is presently under consideration. This site offers a more central location and a slightly faster response time to the developing west side. While priority will be given to the fire station, the condition of other public buildings will be monitored and improvements made as conditions warrant.

## **SCHOOLS**

The importance of adequate schools in a community cannot be overemphasized. Adequate schools must be available if a community is to continue to grow and prosper. In addition to the primary function as an educational facility, the modern community school often serves as a common neighborhood activity center by providing a variety of recreational facilities. Therefore, the continued provisions of adequate schools is essential.

Local comprehensive plans provide an important framework for consideration by school districts in developing detailed plans and projections of individual district needs. School districts should consider how the maintenance and development of school facilities will impact the overall community. Schools can function as a neighborhood center depending on its location and its availability to the community when school is not in session. Districts must also continue to maintain high standards of public education for increasing student numbers. Districts in stable or declining population areas can also be faced with a stagnant or declining tax base to support public education.

### **Design Principles**

Schools should be designed within the framework of certain basic princi-

ples, and according to local needs and conditions. It is often desirable to locate a school as closely as possible to the center of its service area. The school should also, where feasible, be developed adjacent to a neighborhood park or playground, thus allowing the two facilities to function together as a neighborhood center. In order to reduce safety hazards, elementary schools should not be located adjacent to major streets.

The State of Illinois Department of Education recommends that elementary school enrollments should not exceed 1,200 students at any one building. According to the department, average elementary enrollment per school building should average 800 students to provide for appropriate teacher/student ratios. An acceptable class size is thirty students, although there appears to be an effort among educators to lower these numbers.

### **Existing Schools**

The City of Lexington's school system has been a long-standing source of pride for the community. As many rural schools are forced to consolidate, the Lexington Community District #7 remains relatively strong. In 2003, Lexington had approximately 160 students enrolled in its high school and 438 students enrolled in classes

kindergarten through junior high. Due to its strong history, the Lexington School District has been contacted in the past about consolidating with other rural districts in the area. Up to this point, the District has expressed a desire not to absorb any additional students or districts into its system.

Average class size for the high school is thirty-eight and for the elementary school, twenty-three. The high school has fifteen classrooms and the elementary school has twenty-five. The high school and elementary school are located on the same campus.

The current elementary and high school structures seem to comfortably accommodate the student population. In the spring of 2003, the high school suffered structural damage from a fire that damaged several areas of its building. However, those areas have been repaired without displacing students. At present, the Lexington School District does not have any contingency plans for brick and mortar additions to its structures. However, any future growth in the area could put pressure on the elementary and high school's current space. If merited, school officials are confident an expansion could be done on its present campus site.

### **Future Schools**

The objective is to continue to provide schools that are well equipped, properly staffed, and effectively located to function jointly as centers of education, recreation and community activity. Because of the growth projected in the community, school enrollments and projections will need to be closely monitored. A growing population in the southern and western portions of the City could put a strain on existing school facilities, especially the grade school and its ability to conveniently serve new development. School administrators seem comfortable that any expansion of facilities can be accommodated on its present campus.

### **PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

The importance for local governments to provide adequate park and recreational space for residents has become increasingly apparent in recent years. Park and recreation considerations have become not only a quality of life issue but a mental and physical health issue for many communities. Recreation has become an integral and necessary element in daily life. The City of Lexington, Lexington Community Unit School District #7, and the

Lexington Park District share the responsibility of providing these facilities for residents of the City.

### **Design Principles**

National standards suggest a community should have ten acres of parkland or other public open space for each 1,000 persons in a community. It is suggested at least 25 percent of any new development be dedicated to recreational use of some type. Parks and recreational areas (including natural areas) should be located within a half mile of residential areas when possible and be accessible to all community residents. The National Recreation and Park Association recommends that "mini-parks" should be located within a quarter mile of every dwelling in a community and that these parks should contain at least one acre of land. These mini-parks should have a picnic area, playground equipment and an all-purpose play area. Neighborhood parks, which are now becoming part of many new residential developments, should be located within a half mile of each residential dwelling and contain approximately fifteen acres. Youth ball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts and picnic areas are some of the amenities suggested for neighborhood parks.

## Existing Parks

Currently, Lexington has approximately twenty-one acres of parkland. The P. J. Keller Park is a well maintained facility on the City's northeast side and accounts for the majority of this (see Figure 8). This park contains a wide range of facilities including a swimming pool, playground, ball fields and walking trails, two lighted tennis courts, basketball courts, volleyball pit, large picnic shelters, the Patton Cabin, batting cage, golf cage, and concessions, all of which complement the adjacent school athletic and play fields. A small city park near downtown accounts for about one acre and a small picnic area on the City's north side at the entrance to "Memory Lane" accounts for the balance of the community's parkland. With a 2000 population of 1,912, the City's twenty-one acres of parkland slightly exceeded the ten acre per thousand people national standard for parkland. In addition, the high school athletic fields are sometimes used by community residents, thus providing additional recreation opportunities and open space in excess of the standard. However, none of the City's existing parkland is in the vicinity of existing and planned growth areas in the western part of the community.

The Lexington Park District has done an

admirable job in providing and encouraging local recreational opportunities. It has organized many youth recreational activities and will continue its efforts in that direction. It is likely that the need for these types of activities will only increase as the City attracts younger families with children.

## Future Parks

The objective for future parks is to ensure the provision of properly sized and adequately equipped local parks to meet future as well as present needs. Projected growth suggests the need for an additional ten to twenty acre park in the western part of the City. The projected 2025 population of 2,900 residents will require an additional eight to nine acres above current park acreages in order to maintain the standard of the ten acres per thousand population. An adequately sized new park facility located on the western edge of existing and projected development could not only meet this standard and serve the western part of the community, but could also serve the long range growth areas designated as "residential reserve" on the land use plan. The general location of such a facility is identified on Figure 8, adjacent to the potential school site, proposed new street, and proposed Turkey Creek Greenway. A connection to

the proposed Turkey Creek Trail is also illustrated.

## WATER AND SEWER SYSTEMS

Water and sewer systems are essential components of a community's infrastructure. The water system maintains the purity of the drinking water and supplies it to the community, while a sewer system disposes of sanitary and industrial wastes. Since the availability of these services often generates development, well-planned water and sewer systems can contribute to orderly growth. The following discussions are based on studies carried out by the City's consulting engineering, the Farnsworth Group.

### Existing Water System

The existing water treatment plant was constructed in 1950 and upgraded in 1978. Water softening, precipitation and filtration devices were refurbished in 2001. The plant operates at 150 or 300 gallons per minute (GPM) depending on community water usage requirements. The treatment plant, components and elevated storage tank are located near the center of the City at the corner of Center and Chestnut Streets. The original treatment plant is aged. The plant is operating at approximately 60 percent of its maximum capacity. It is capable

of serving an additional 600 persons before major expansion would be needed. A 200,000 gallon above ground storage tank was installed in 1970. The tank is in good condition and was cleaned and repainted in 2003. The above ground tank will be able to store a day's water supply. The water distribution system has been upgraded to include fire loops and fire flows to serve the entire community. Other recent upgrades include a 2002 water distribution extension system to serve the Timber Ridge subdivision and a 10-inch water main to serve Highpoint Hill commercial subdivision near the I-55 interchange.

### **Future Water System**

The objective for future water service is the timely provision of safe, reliable and efficient service to existing and future residents of the community. When additional water treatment capacity becomes necessary, a new water plant will need to be constructed and the existing plant retired from service. The replacement could be located just west of the existing plant, space permitting, or more likely southeast of the City near Well #6 as illustrated on Figure 8. Engineers have determined that a new storage tank will be needed when average daily water usage for the City approaches 300,000 gallons,

or if additional fire protection is needed. Plans are for the new water tank to be located near the Interstate 55 Interchange. A regional water needs assessment study done by Farnsworth and Wylie Engineers (The Farnsworth Group) in 1994 indicated that Lexington should consider connecting to the Lake Bloomington water treatment plant if and when a regional water supply system is developed.

### **Existing Wastewater Treatment**

Currently, the City of Lexington does not have a sewage collection system and wastewater treatment plant. Wastewater generated in homes and businesses is discharged into individual septic tanks. Wastewater then drains into a drain tile system that carries the wastewater out of the City and into local waterways. The individual septic tanks, with sand filters, are installed in accordance with McLean County Health Department regulations. However, the lack of a central sewer system has been and remains a major constraint on the City's growth and development

### **Future Sewer System**

The City recognizes the need to provide wastewater collection and treatment facilities in accordance with

the federal and Illinois Environmental Protection agency requirements. Planning is underway to build a separate sanitary sewer collection system and a sewage treatment facility.

The objective is the provision of safe and cost-effective sewer service for existing residents and to support planned growth and development. Thus, the sewer system will be designed to serve the existing developed area of the City as well as the areas identified for future development in the land use plan.

The new sanitary sewer collection system will include seven pumping stations and provide replacement sanitary sewer service connections to each residence and commercial establishment. Present septic tank, seepage bed/or sand filter systems will be disconnected and abandoned. After the new facilities are made available to all City residents and businesses, the need for sewage system permits from the McLean County Health Department will be eliminated. Plans are for the existing drain tile system to remain and serve the City as a storm water discharge system thereafter. Provisions have been made for wastewater to be treated at a new treatment plant to be constructed to the immediate northeast of the City.