Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs

Making a Difference in Rural Illinois

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MAPPING

the Future of Your Community

Frequently Asked Questions

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for Rural Affairs

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Table of Contents

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What is the MAPPING the Future program?

The **MAPPING** (Management and Planning Programs Involving Nonmetropolitan Groups) **the Future of Your Community** program is a strategic visioning, planning and doing process whereby local residents of rural communities create an action plan for creating the community they envision. The community identifies the goals, strategies and projects necessary to move the community forward as well as a plan for implementation.

The MAPPING program was created in 1991 at the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, located at Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois. With initial support from the Office of the Lt. Governor and the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, the MAPPING program was designed to help leaders in small rural communities improve their decision-making process for community and economic development. Since 1996, the support for this program has been transferred to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO).

How is the MAPPING program structured?

The MAPPING journey begins with the formation of a community steering committee. This committee is responsible for working with MAPPING staff to plan the program logistics, invite participants, conduct initial marketing, and so forth. MAPPING staff provide detailed, step-by-step guidance to facilitate the effective planning of the program.

The core of the MAPPING program is a series of five visioning sessions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How are we going to get there?
- Making it happen! (part 1)
- Making it happen! (part 2)

During this process, the participants identify high-priority goals for community & economic development, develop a workable action plan, and become organized to begin the implementation of projects. Once the initial MAPPING sessions have been completed, participants plan and host a community-wide town meeting. The town meeting is designed with the assistance of the MAPPING staff to give participants an opportunity to present their ideas, receive public comments, and invite additional volunteers to become involved.

Three to four weeks after the completion of the MAPPING program, communities participate in a "Maintaining the Momentum" session, to gauge their progress toward preparing for their town meeting and initial progress toward goals.

To increase the success of the MAPPING program, it is recommended that approximately five years after the completion of the MAPPING program, communities schedule a MAPPING update program. This program reviews the goals set forth in the original program, evaluates progress, and updates goals accordingly.

How much time is needed?

The MAPPING program itself is typically held in five, three-hour sessions over the course of 5-8 weeks. After the conclusion of the MAPPING program is when the real work of tackling the community's goals begins. MAPPING participants will join action teams and work toward implementing the goals they have set forth for themselves. This is designed to be an ongoing cycle of achieving and refocusing to generate continuous community improvement.

What are the benefits of a community participating in the MAPPING program?

By participating in the MAPPING program, communities clearly define their goals and set a road map to their desired future. Many rural communities are facing a myriad of challenges, including declining population, loss of manufacturers, and a declining tax base. By having a plan in place that has the support of community members and maximizes community strengths, rural communities are able to more effectively combat these challenges and make positive change in their communities.

Who should participate in the MAPPING program?

The MAPPING process should be as inclusive as possible, allowing anyone who believes they have a stake in the community to participate. Inclusivity ensures that the community will embrace the plan as theirs rather than something imposed upon them. To begin the visioning and planning process, a minimum of 25 participants is required. The success of the MAPPING program depends on this group representing a cross-section of constituent groups within the community. In addition, this group should be made up of leaders and volunteers throughout the community who will subsequently remain active in the process of implementing the action plan. Try to invite people who aren't currently maxed out - invite young people and those new to the community who might have the time and energy to get involved! The CEOs, presidents, and directors of local businesses and organizations might seem like the best representatives, but they might also not have the time to carry out the work.

What is the cost for the MAPPING the Future programs?

Other than time and motivation, there is no charge to individuals participating in the MAPPING sessions. There is, however, a community sponsorship fee that is based on the population of the community (based on Census data) and the distance from Macomb, Illinois. In order to take into consideration the different economic levels in communities, we offer a sponsorship fee reduction based on a community's median household income (based on Census data). For example, if your community's median household income is 20 percent less than the Illinois state average for median household income, we will reduce your sponsorship fee by that percentage.

Although many communities may request that their city fund the costs of the MAPPING program, this is strongly discouraged. Instead, we recommend that the steering committee raise donations toward the sponsorship fee through approaching local businesses, civic organizations, church groups, and the local utility company, in addition to a donation from the city. It is crucial to the success of the program that there be widespread knowledge of and investment in the program prior to its beginning.

Fees are set according to a formula based on community population, distance from Macomb, and median household income.

Population: The minimum base fee is $3,000 for communities with populations of 1,000 or less. For communities over 1,000, the base fee increases on a per capita rate as follows:

$0.50 per capita additional for populations between 1,000 - 9,999
$0.33 per capita additional for populations over 10,000

– Less any discount based on your median household income

+ Plus travel for six round trips from Macomb to your community at $0.505 per mile

How many communities have participated in the MAPPING program?

As of May 2018, the MAPPING the Future of Your Community Program has been conducted in 133 rural Illinois communities in 62 different counties. Communities have ranged in size from 313 to 18,441 in population. In addition, numerous county/regional programs, health and school MAPPING programs, update programs in previous MAPPING communities, and customized programs for organizations or specific community sectors have been completed.

Can the MAPPING program be applied on the regional level?

The MAPPING program is primarily implemented in rural communities; however, MAPPING staff can also design and facilitate programs for the county or regional level as well as for non-profit organizations or specific sectors of the community such as health, education or business. The MAPPING program is also willing to partner with other groups such as regional planning commissions, chambers of commerce and Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) organizations on specialized planning applications for comprehensive plans, Overall Economic Development Plans (OEDP) or other development initiatives.

Is technical assistance available to MAPPING communities?

To help MAPPING community participants sustain the efforts outlined in their action plan, the MAPPING staff, in collaboration with other IIRA units, provide a variety of follow-up services and technical assistance. The MAPPING program also sponsors workshops throughout the year on a variety of topics of interest to communities involved in redevelopment efforts.

IIRA units available to provide assistance to MAPPING communities include:

- **Peace Corps Fellows:** The Peace Corps Fellows Program at Western Illinois University is a program for returned Peace Corps volunteers (RPCVs) committed to pursuing a graduate degree with an emphasis on rural community and economic development. Fellows are enrolled as full-time AmeriCorps members assigned to community-based internships during the second year of the program.

  During their 11–month full-time internship, Fellows assist rural towns with the implementation of community projects, such as downtown revitalization, business retention and expansion, entrepreneurship development, tourism development, and community housing. Bringing a Peace Corps Fellow (PCF) in to coordinate the implementation of a community's MAPPING Action Plan enables a community to move forward with their plan more quickly and effectively. PCFs coordinate projects, mobilize people and resources, and implement action plans. Recent examples of MAPPING/PCF communities include: Shelbyville (2012), Martinsville (2012), Findlay/Windsor (2012), LaSalle (2013), Petersburg (2013), Durand (2014), Neoga (2015), and Rushville (2015), Lanark (2015), Shelby County (2015), Hillsboro (2016), Savanna (2016), Stockton (2017).

- **Data Analysis and Technical Assistance (DATA) Center:** The DATA Center consists of three service units located at the IIRA. The units are: The Rural Economic Technical Assistance Center (RETAC), which provides services such as data analysis, economic impact and retail sector analysis, assistance with international marketing, and skills training; the Business and Geographic Information Services (BGIS), which provides value-added statistical projects for rural communities; and the Survey and Data Analysis Unit, which provides support through survey research and database management.

- **Illinois Small Business Development Center:** The Illinois Small Business Development Center provides confidential business counseling and training to help entrepreneurs start, grow, and sustain their businesses. Counseling appointments may be scheduled at various locations throughout a 12-county service area (Adams, Brown, Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, Mason, McDonough, Pike, Schuyler, Scott, and Warren).

- **Illinois Value Added Sustainable Development Center:** IVASDC educates agriculture producers and economic development professionals regarding value-added agricultural opportunities for their area. Additional technical assistance is provided to these groups as they organize business ventures that will increase their income as well as expand employment opportunities in rural Illinois.

- **Rural Transit Assistance Center:** The Rural Transit Assistance Center (RTAC) mission is to promote the safe and effective delivery of public transportation in rural areas and fulfills its mission through providing the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) for the State of Illinois.

What are examples of MAPPING outcomes and success stories?

Results from MAPPING community visioning and planning projects have been impressive, spanning the range of economic and community development initiatives. The achievements include improved housing, small business development, park and recreation improvements, changes in educational systems, increased access to health care services, transportation, and telecommunications, and other widespread, organized efforts for community and economic development. Below are a few specific examples.

Hillsboro, IL (pop. 6,207)

- Organize a cardboard boat regatta each summer.
- Established a program to connect elementary school teachers with regular, in-class, community volunteers.
- Each fall, Hillsboro hosts a European Style Harvest Market with a variety of vendors and entertainment.
- Hosted a pop up coffee shop that spurred the development of a bricks and mortar coffee shop.
- Created an adopt-a-pot program and decorate the flower pots for each season.
- Developed an educational video on the common core being implemented at area schools.
- Hosted a Peace Corps Fellow.
- Established the "awww yeah!" campaign to highlight the positive things happening at Hillsboro Schools in the newspaper, on radio and on the Facebook page.
- Cleaned and remodeled a local stage and began offering a summer concert series each summer.
- Crafted a promotional website at imagine-hillsboro.com.
- Hosts an annual back-to-school Luau and pool party.
- Organized a very popular holiday celebration 'A Storybook Christmas' featuring a new holiday book each year with volunteers dressed up as characters from Christmas books.
- Volunteers planted 22 trees in Challacombe Park.
- Organized a chili cook-off with a grand prize of $1,000 for the Harvest Market.
- Working with area schools to provide training for teachers and students in computer coding.
- Developed a community garden.
- Worked with the City and MCEDC to bring fiber connectivity direct to homes in Hillsboro and add free wifi throughout downtown.
- Hillsboro initiated the Hillsboro Community Development Corporation, a for profit group focused on housing development.
- Recieved $370,000 in Housing Rehabilitation Community Development Block Grant funds from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Durand, IL (pop. 1,443)

- Created a community theme of "Discover Durand Charm" and created a logo as well as a community website.
- Started Friday Night Frenzy, which is held the first Friday of each month and encourages shopping and socialization downtown. Businesses stay open until 8:00 pm and family friendly entertainment is provided.
- Filled empty storefront windows with information about community events & installed Durand Business District signs.
- In order to increase school and community collaboration, they partnered with the local paper to include a story about the local school in each weekly edition.
- Held an alumni football game as a fundraiser and generated more than $4,300 for community projects.
- Hosted a Peace Corps Fellow to help with implementation of MAPPING goals and hired him in 2015 to continue working with Durand Charm.
- Implemented an adopt-a-pot program to beautify downtown.
- Fulfilled the need for a public library, by staffing the school library and expanding hours and programming to utilize it as a public library as well.
- Received a grant of $15,815 to establish a sound garden in a local park.
- Successfully attracted a tele-pharmacy to Durand.
- Raised funds and commissioned a mural for downtown Durand with midwest artist Matt Sharum.
- Recieved a RBEG grant from USDA for $85,000 and matching funds from the city for a major overhaul of dowtown Durand.
- Received a $1,300,000 ITEP Grant from IDOT to complete a downtown streetscaping project.

Additional MAPPING community successes:

- Kewanee organized a city wide clean up that removed 75,000 lbs of garbage and debris. (pop. 12,944)
- Kewanee hosted a 4 day event entitled "A Hog in Dog Heaven" in which the Illinois Walldogs and community volunteers completed 15 murals around town. (pop. 12,944)
- Lewistown holds 'Music in the Park' twice a month every summer from July to September. (pop. 2,384)
- Martinsville won a 2012 Governor's Hometown Award for their population recognizing the community development projects they have undertaken. (pop. 1,161)
- Martinsville raised over $140,000 for the major project of building an amphitheater, which was constructed in Spring 2014. (pop. 1,161)
- Shelbyville applied for and was awarded a $1,041,630 ITEP Streetscape grant in 2013 for improvements to downtown Shelbyville. (pop. 4,971)
- Strasburg created a TIF district, which helped them attract a new convenience store and Subway restaurant. A new gym and daycare also opened in the TIF district in the fall of 2009. (pop. 603)
- Strasburg created a new housing subdivision. (pop. 603)
- Carthage implemented CEO (Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities) classes at Hancock County High Schools to encourage youth entrepreneurship. (pop. 2,605)
- Carthage established Thursday Night Lights events, which draw people downtown to the historic business district for shopping, dining, and events such as tours of historic buildings, and live entertainment. (pop. 2,605)
- Elizabeth renovated an unused gym, and now have a very active recreation program offering classes, sports teams, and events. (pop. 761)
- Elizabeth organizes an annual 'Paint the Barnyard' 5K and 'Santa Dash and Elf Shuffle' 1 mile walk/run. (pop. 761)
- McLean organized a annual 'Get your 6.6 on Route 66' fun run. (pop. 799)
- Love LaHarpe organizes an annual farmers market. (pop. 1,235)
- Findlay and Windsor collaborate on a annual 'FLIP N' WHAT' golf outing. (pop. 723 and pop. 1,029).
- Manito funded through generous donations and fundraisers the $120,000 renovation of the Veterans Memorial Park's sidewalks, patio and playground. (pop. 1,642)
- Stockton hosts the NW IL Art Fest each summer and has commissioned a mural to be painted each year during the festival. (pop. 1,862)
- Argenta organized an Ice Festival featuring the work of a local ice sculptor. (pop. 974)
- Neoga raised over $80,000 to expand and improve the Veterans' Memorial. (pop. 1,636)
- Oregon organized a 'Rockin' River Fest' with a wide variety of entertainment, food and fun activities. Approximately 1,000 people attended and they raised $20,000 in sponsorships to hold the event. (pop. 3,721)
- Pana organized having trees planted in the downtown to improve the curb appeal of the community. (pop. 5847)
- Walnut raised $30,000 with a mattress fundraiser, a donation from a local non-profit and proceeds from a community event for the purchase and renovation of a downtown building. (pop. 1,416)

Who are the MAPPING program facilitators?

Gisele Hamm, Program Manager - Gisele earned a B.S. in Agricultural Business and a M.A. in Economics from Western Illinois University. She joined the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs in 2003 to manage a study of brownfields in Illinois municipalities. Gisele manages the IIRA AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program, as well as other technical assistance grant projects. Previously, she worked as a Rural Technology Specialist in the Rural Information Planning Project (RITPP). She has published several articles in national and state outlets on various community development issues and has made numerous presentations to state and national conventions.

Linda Lee Blaine, Community and Economic Development Outreach Specialist - Linda Lee earned a B.A. in Spanish and completed the William O. Douglas Honors College at Central Washington University in 1998. She received an MBA through the Peace Corps Fellows Program in Community Development from Western Illinois University in 2004. Prior to joining the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Linda Lee worked as a Community and Economic Development Program Coordinator for the University of Illinois Extension.

MAPPING Community Site List

Community	Population	Year
Abingdon	3,597	1996
Alpha	753	1996, 2005*
Altamont	2,319	2012
Annawan	802	1998
Arcola	2,652	2007
Argenta	974	2016
Arrowsmith	313	1994
Arthur	2,203	2002
Ashland	1,250	1997
Assumption	1,168	2016
Astoria	1,205	1999
Athens	1,726	2004
Atlanta	1,616	1993
Auburn	3,730	1995
Beecher City	437	1998
Bement	1,784	2003
Bethany	1,369	1999
Bradford	678	1996, 2000*
Bushnell	3,321	2004, 2010*
Cambridge	2,214	1994
Canton	13,959	1998, 2002*
Carbon Cliff	1,492	1998
Carterville	3,630	1992
Carthage	2,657	1991, 2013*
Colchester	1,493	2004, 2005*
Colfax	854	1994
Colona	5,099	2012
Crescent City	541	1994
Creve Coeur	5,451	2016
Danvers	981	1993
Delavan	1,825	2006
Dieterich	591	1992, 1998, 2004, 2011*
Divernon	1,178	1996
Downs	1,005	2018
Durand	1,443	2013
Dwight	4,363	2009
Elizabeth	761	2013
Elkhart	443	2001
Fairbury	3,643	1996
Farmington	2,535	1993
Findlay	723	2011
Fisher	1,647	2006
Fulton	3,481	2014
Gardner	1,237	1993

Community	Population	Year
Geneseo	6,437	2010
Girard	2,103	2014
Grayville	2,043	1995
Greenville	6,438	1995
Havana	3,577	1996, 2005*
Henry	2,540	2003
Hillsboro	6,207	2015
Hinckley	1,682	1999
Hoopeston	5,965	2002, 2007*
Hopedale	805	1993
Kewanee	12,944	2002, 2011*
Kingston	980	2001
Ladd	1,313	2002
LaHarpe	1,235	2015
Lanark	1,457	2014
LaSalle	9,796	2011
Lewistown	2,384	2012
Lincoln	15,418	1992
Litchfield	6,815	2001
Mt. Carroll	1,717	2015
Mt. Morris	2,919	1993
Mt. Sterling	1,922	1993
Mackinaw	1,331	1993
Manito	1,642	2012
Manlius	355	2007
Maquon	331	1997
Maroa	1,602	2000, 2012*
Marseilles	4,655	2002, 2009*
Martinsville	1,161	1996, 2012, 2017*
Mason City	2,558	2006
Mattoon	18,441	1994, 2017*
McLean	799	2010
Mendota	7,272	1998, 2005*
Meredosia	1,134	1994
Metamora	3,093	2006
Millstadt	2,566	1994, 2008*
Minier	1,155	1993
Momence	2,968	1995
Monmouth	9,489	1993
Morrison	4,447	2007
Murphysboro	9,176	1995
Nauvoo	1,063	2009
Neoga	1,636	2013
New Boston	632	2005

Community	Population	Year
Ogden	671	1997
Oneida	752	2003
Oregon	3,721	2016
Pana	5,847	2016
Paris	8,987	1995
Payson	1,066	2002
Petersburg	2,299	2011
Pleasant Hill	1,047	2003
Pleasant Plains	777	2008
Polo	2,514	2000
Pontiac	11,428	1994
Princeville	1,421	1997
Roodhouse	2,139	1993
Rushville	3,229	1991, 2001, 2013*
St. Elmo	1,426	2013
St. Joseph	2,052	1998, 2011*
San Jose	696	2005
Savanna	3,542	2003, 2013*
Saybrook	767	1994
Seneca	2,053	2002, 2009*
Sheffield	951	1998
Shelbyville	4,971	2011
Sheldon	1,109	1996
Sherman	2,871	2006
Spring Valley	5,246	1995
Stanford	670	2007
Stewardson	716	2010
Stockton	1,862	2014
Strasburg	603	2007, 2017*
Sun River Terrace	620	1994
Table Grove	408	1994
Tiskilwa	830	1995
Toulon	1,328	1999
Walnut	1,416	2017
Washburn	1,075	1995
Watseka	5,424	1996, 2002*
Wenona	950	1993
West Peoria	4,762	2006
Williamsfield	578	1991, 2013
Williamsville	1,140	1995
Winchester	1,769	1997, 2018*
Windsor	1,029	2011
Woodhull	808	1996
Yates City	760	1996

MAPPING County/Regional Site List

Community	Population	Year
Calhoun County	5,084	2007
Cass County	13,695	2002
Greene County	14,761	2007
Jersey County	21,668	2007
Macoupin County	49,019	2007

Community	Population	Year
Montgomery County	30,652	2007
Stark County	6,252	2009
Warren County	18,735	2002
Whiteside County	60,653	2001

Customized MAPPING Programs List

Entity	Year
Carroll County Area Artisans & Craftsmen	2009
Central Illinois Regional Planning (Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, and Montgomery Counties)	2008
Dallas Rural Water District	2011
Downtown Le Roy	2011
Eagle View Community Health Systems	2016
Galesburg Regional Economic Development Assoc.	2013
Havana Area Business Community	2008
Havana Chamber of Commerce	2007
Macomb Area Economic Development Corporation	2008
Moss-Bradley Neighborhood Association	2007

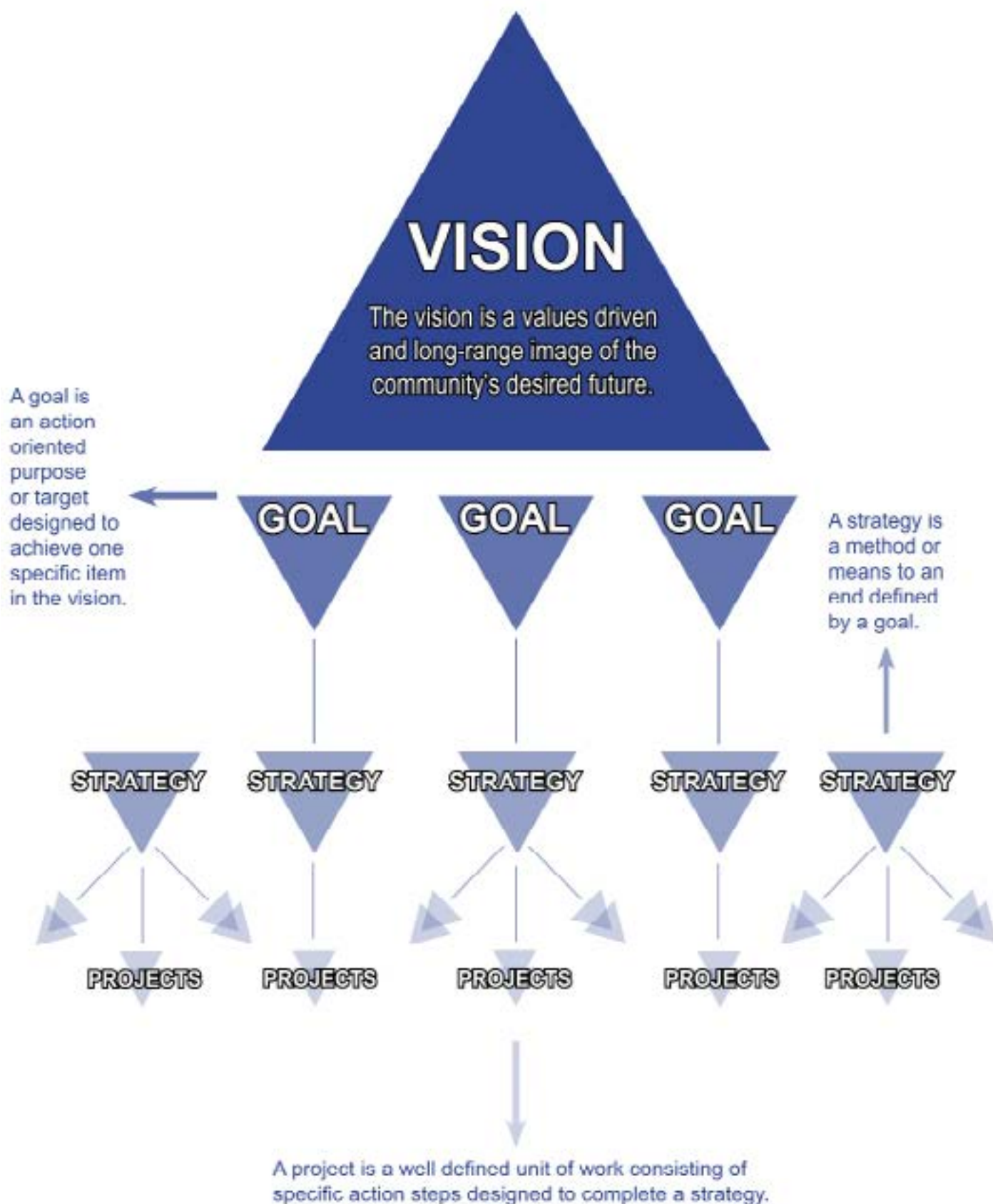| Entity	Year
Prairie Tech Learning Center	2008
Princeton Main Street	2016
Rock Falls Community Development Corporation	2006
Savanna Chamber of Commerce	2006
Savanna Museum and Cultural Center	2016
Schuyler County Board	2009
Southernmost Illinois Delta Empowerment Zone	2006
Western Illinois Museum	2011

Health MAPPING Community Site List

Community	Population	Year
Alpha	753	2004
Bushnell	3,321	2004
Calhoun County	5,084	2007
Greene County	14,761	2005
Hamilton County	8,621	2001, 2005*
Hancock County	20,121	2001
Henderson County	8,213	2003, 2007*

Community	Population	Year
Hoopeston	5,965	2002
Mendota	7,272	2005
Mercer County	16,957	2006
Pleasant Hill	1,047	2003
Warren County	18,735	1995, 2004*
Washington County	15,148	2001

Indicates community has participated in MAPPING update program.

Vision - Goals - Strategies - Projects
Components of an Action Plan

VISION

The vision is a values driven and long-range image of the community's desired future.

A goal is an action oriented purpose or target designed to achieve one specific item in the vision.

GOAL   GOAL   GOAL

A strategy is a method or means to an end defined by a goal.

STRATEGY   STRATEGY   STRATEGY   STRATEGY   STRATEGY

PROJECTS   PROJECTS   PROJECTS   PROJECTS   PROJECTS

A project is a well defined unit of work consisting of specific action steps designed to complete a strategy.

The MAPPING Process

MAPPING the Future of Your Community
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle - Stipes 524
Macomb, IL 61455

For further information contact:

Gisele Hamm, Program Manager
800-526-9943 or email GF-Hamm@wiu.edu

www.mappingthefuture.org

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