

IMAGINE BELLEVILLE

Without leaps of imagination, or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.

- Gloria Steinem

ADOPTED
JUNE 16, 2014

SECTION 1

Introduction



Source: Belleville Historical Society

Imagine Belleville is a year-long planning and citizen involvement process resulting in the City's *Comprehensive Plan*. The plan's findings and recommendations focus on the physical and economic aspects of growth and development over a 20-year planning horizon. Many Belleville residents asked, "How can we plan more than five years into the future, let alone 20 years?" One goal of a comprehensive plan is to develop a unified vision, guiding principles, and "big picture" recommendations that provide overarching guidance for current and future decision-makers. The implementation section helps to ground these recommendations in reality by prioritizing short-, mid-, and long-term strategies - with an emphasis on near-term "catalysts" that activate desired change.

The timing of this plan coincides with the community's 200-year anniversary, a significant milestone that brings an increased level of attention and optimism to the planning process. This plan celebrates Belleville's rich history and traditions by building on the community's unique assets and accomplishments. It also identifies challenges and (mis)perceptions that hinder positive improvements. A balanced approach will enable the

community to leverage resources and achievements, while at the same time, establish realistic goals and expectations. Once adopted, the plan must operate as a "work in progress" that is regularly revisited to account for inevitable shifts in the community's physical, social, and economic makeup.

Both the planning process and adopted plan have the end result of:

- Unifying the City's vision and associated goals regarding the future growth and enhancement of the community;
- Strengthening partnerships, communication channels, and sense of unified direction across all public, non-profit, and private community stakeholders;
- Engaging widespread citizen involvement in the identification and prioritization of leading community issues and opportunities;
- Guiding regulatory strategies to ensure community values and desired outcomes are managed and promoted;



Imagine Belleville Themes

- Attractive
- Cohesive
- Collaborative*
- Compassionate
- Comprehensive
- Complementary
- Connected*
- Cooperative
- Distinctive*
- Educated*
- Efficient*
- Engaging
- Inclusive*
- Innovative
- Interdisciplinary
- Intergenerational
- Prepared*
- Prosperous*
- Ready to Grow
- Revitalized
- Safe
- Sustainable

* Indicates carryover themes from **OneSTL**, a three-year collaborative planning process led by the East-West Gateway Council of Governments. The final plan provides a framework for sustainable development that regional stakeholders, like the City of Belleville, can use to make better use of resources and better meet the aspirations and needs of the St. Louis region.

- Providing greater predictability for residents, land owners, developers, and potential investors; and
- Fulfilling the statutory requirements necessary to establish land use controls (e.g., *Zoning Code*, *Subdivision Code*).

How to Use this Plan

The plan ultimately functions as a guidance document for City officials and staff - and others - who must make decisions on a daily basis that will determine the future direction, financial health, and "look and feel" of the community. These decisions are carried out through:

- Targeted programs and expenditures prioritized through the City's annual budget process, including routine, but essential, functions such as code enforcement and park maintenance;
- Major public improvements and land acquisitions financed through the general fund and other public finance mechanisms;
- New and amended City ordinances and regulations closely linked to the plan's objectives (and associated review and approval procedures in the case of land development, subdivision, and zoning matters);
- Departmental work plans and staffing in key areas;
- Support for ongoing planning and studies that will further clarify needs and strategies, including the City Council's own strategic planning;
- Pursuit of external grant funding to supplement local funds and/or expedite certain projects; and
- Initiatives pursued in conjunction with other public and private partners to leverage resources and achieve successes that neither could accomplish alone.

It is important to distinguish between the function of this *Comprehensive Plan* relative to the City's development regulations, such as the *Zoning Code* and *Subdivision Code*. This plan recommends overall policy for future land use, roads, utilities, and other aspects of community growth and enhancement. The *Zoning Code* and official *Zoning Map* then implement policy in terms of specific land use, building, and site development standards. The *Subdivision Code* establishes standards in conformance with the plan for the physical subdivision of land, the layout of new streets and building sites, and the design and construction of roads, water and wastewater lines, and stormwater management.

Key Planning Considerations

This *Comprehensive Plan* is organized into sections according to the City's key planning functions. Many overarching themes - such as community perception, safety, and quality of life - are cross-referenced throughout the entire document.

Section 2, Growth Capacity and Infrastructure

The second section addresses the City's intent and policy regarding how growth and new development will be accommodated. This entailed an evaluation of existing infrastructure capacities and "planning-level" improvements to the City's core infrastructure systems (e.g., water, wastewater, stormwater) and public safety services (e.g., fire, police).

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (1999)

- Annexation of approximately 3,000 acres of land.
- Implementation of a \$44 million *Long-Term Control Plan* (LTCP) for the City's wastewater system, including plant expansion, combined sewer overflow (CSO) removal, and Belle Valley non-combined sewer separation.



Source: Belleville Historical Society

- Construction of a fourth firehouse, which includes an emergency command center and municipal office space. This investment resulted in an ISO rating improvement from 4 to 3.
- New construction of Bicentennial Park and Rotary Dog Park, plus several upgrades to existing parks.
- New construction of the City's Street Department facility on Freeburg Avenue. Also, renovation and relocation of several City departments to 510 West Main Street.
- Awarding of a \$180,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to complete energy efficiency retrofits in several City buildings.
- Adoption of the *2008 Parks, Recreation and Greenways Master Plan*.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Annexation Policies and Incentives.** Under what circumstances should the City extend its corporate limits (and 1.5-mile planning jurisdiction) and enter into pre-annexation agreements, including the unincorporated land fully encircled by the City ("donut holes")? How and when should the City use infrastructure connections and other infrastructure incentives to encourage annexation?
- **Outdated Utility Infrastructure.** How can the City fund and incrementally update the community's utility infrastructure systems (e.g., sewer and storm systems) to provide continuous, high-quality services to older neighborhoods?
- **Community Definition.** How can future growth develop in a more compact shape and geographic pattern that is cost-efficiently served by the City's existing infrastructure systems and public safety providers?

Historic Context

- 1814** City of Belleville incorporation
- 1818** Illinois statehood
- 1830s** Town of West Belleville platting
- 1836** Establishment of the City's public library
- 1880** Establishment of St. Elizabeth's Hospital
- 1882** Town of West Belleville incorporation into the City of Belleville
- 1917** Establishment of Scott Air Force Base
- 1958** Establishment of Memorial Hospital
- 1971** Establishment of Southwestern Illinois College - Belleville
- 1974** Formation of the Old Belleville Historic District
- 1991** Formation of the Hexenbuckel Historic District
- 1995** Formation of the Oakland Historic District
- 1997** Establishment of MidAmerica St. Louis Airport
- 2003** Establishment of Lindenwood University - Belleville

- **First-Class Recreation Facilities.** How can the City leverage grants, public-private partnerships, and other funding mechanisms to construct and maintain such amenities as a municipal pool, splash pads, athletic fields, environmental conservation areas, and other improvements that enhance the quality of life for Belleville residents (while generating economic benefits from regional visitors)?

Citizen Engagement

“EARLY AND OFTEN”

The ability to implement this plan is directly correlated to the amount of citizen participation and the sense of ownership derived from the year-long planning process. The City hired a multi-disciplinary consulting team of planners, designers, and civil engineers to spearhead the overall planning effort. The project team designed public involvement events to engage a wide variety of citizens at frequent check-in points and across multiple platforms. This engagement process provided opportunities for two-way communication between citizens and local government officials. *Imagine Belleville 2035*, a handout at the end of this section, presents the community’s vision statement, priorities, and guiding principles derived from the community engagement process.



Listening Sessions were useful in identifying preliminary issues and opportunities at the beginning of plan development. Approximately 80 individuals representing a wide variety of community interests participated in small group discussions in August and November 2013. One session was held on-site at Memorial Hospital to include local and commuter employees.

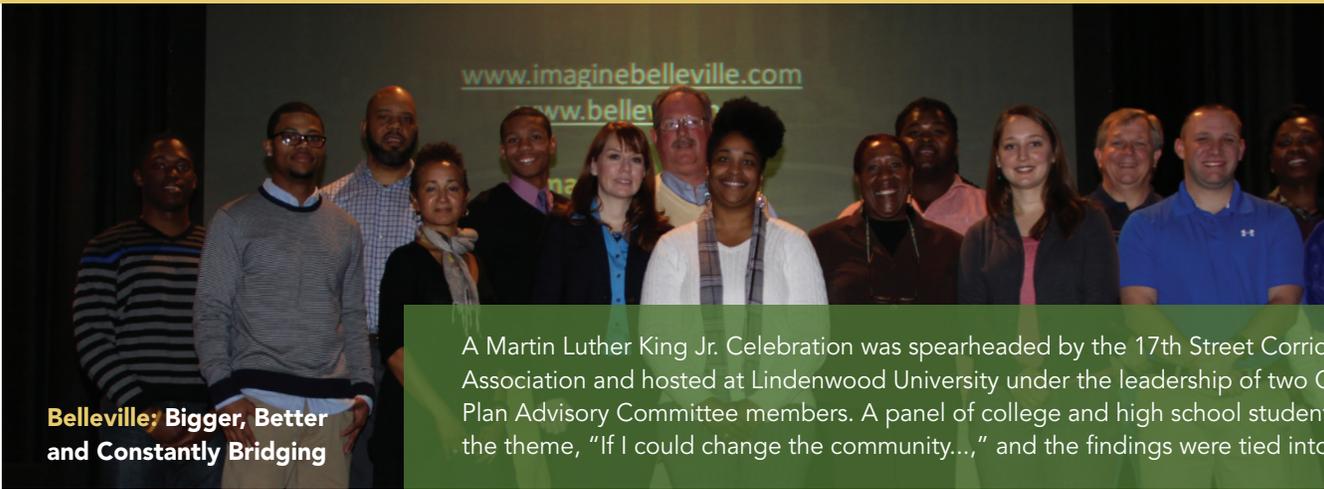


Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) Meetings provided immediate feedback on the emerging plan content. Participants represented a diversity of community interests and areas of professional expertise, effectively serving as the “eyes and ears” of the community. The group met seven times in independent and joint workshop settings to engage in visioning, mapping, ranking, and discussion exercises.



Joint Workshops were essential to broadening the planning conversation and building consensus among community leaders. At the beginning and end of the planning process, the City Council, Planning Commission, and CPAC met together to identify issues and needs, evaluate policies, and prioritize implementation strategies. A mid-point briefing also served as an interim check-in point to ensure consistency with the community’s vision.





Belleville: Bigger, Better and Constantly Bridging

A Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration was spearheaded by the 17th Street Corridor Neighborhood Association and hosted at Lindenwood University under the leadership of two Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee members. A panel of college and high school students reflected on the theme, "If I could change the community..." and the findings were tied into this plan.



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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN • OPEN HOUSE



Community Workshops were hosted at convenient times and locations scattered throughout the City to optimize public input. These events were designed to bring the community's "big picture," long-range planning effort down to a more neighborhood-oriented level while still focusing residents' attention on citywide issues. Three rounds of workshops (six total meetings) were scheduled at the beginning, middle, and end of the planning process to obtain input and feedback at key project milestones.



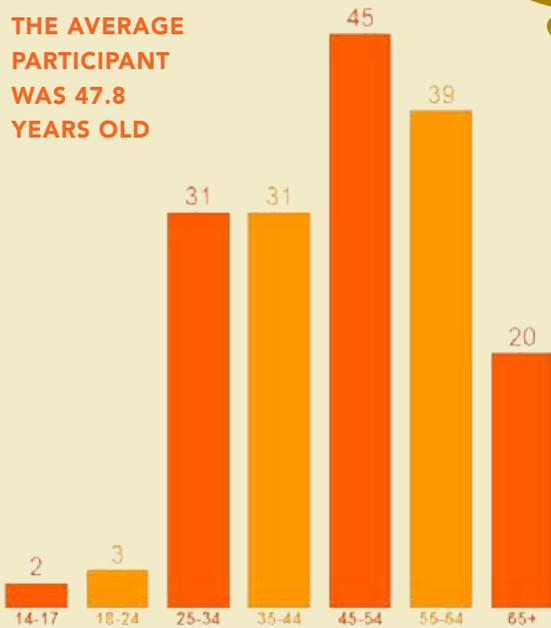
ONLINE DISCUSSION

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The *Online Discussion Forum* generated a wide range of thoughtful responses that are quoted throughout this plan (when indicated by the icon above) and integrated into the findings and recommendations.

As part of the comprehensive planning process, the City hosted an *Online Discussion Forum* to identify community needs and innovative approaches to improve Belleville’s prosperity and quality of life. This ongoing, “24/7” dialogue helped to guide the plan’s findings and recommendations by soliciting input from citizens who do not typically attend or voice opinions at traditional public meetings. Approximately 170 citizens participated on the website. This forum also complemented other engagement activities by providing an outlet to continue ongoing conversations. The website was organized as a series of question prompts introduced at various points amid the planning process.

THE AVERAGE PARTICIPANT WAS 47.8 YEARS OLD



EXAMPLE

What types of jobs are most important to Belleville’s future prosperity?

The jobs that will attract young people into the community and revitalize it are research and development/technology (because this is a growing field for the under 30 crowd), business services (to attract entrepreneurs and other small business owners who care more about the local economy/growth than large corporations or franchises), and the other category which I think should be family services. Many local child cares are full and I think we need more services and businesses geared towards young people with young children. A lot of Belleville is for the older crowd, and this is not where you will see the most growth.



Bicentennial Park

- **Balanced Park System.** How can the City balance the development of regional parks, while at the same time, maintaining and preserving neighborhood and pocket parks - a major source of community and neighborhood pride?

Section 3, Mobility

The third section focuses on orderly development of the community's transportation system. This includes "complete streets" considerations for pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety, existing and future public transportation needs (as addressed by MetroBus and MetroLink), freight movement in and through the community (including truck traffic and railroad corridors), and the outlook for MidAmerica Airport. This section is closely tied to growth and infrastructure planning, including the *2012 Long Range State Transportation Plan*, and future land use planning to evaluate the impacts of different transportation investment decisions on future development and community character. The section includes a *Functional Classification* map, which corresponds with community character objectives and transportation initiatives of other regional entities (e.g., St. Clair County, Metro Transit, Illinois Department of Transportation, etc.).

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (1999)

- \$7 million Downtown streetscape improvement project. Received state recognition from the American Civil Engineering Council of Illinois. Led to \$1 million West Main streetscape expansion from 6th Street to 17th Street.
 - Ongoing bike trail extensions funded by the City of Belleville, St. Clair County, Metro Transit, and the Illinois Department of Transportation.
 - Construction of a "Welcome to Belleville" sign on Illinois Route 15 west at Eagle Point Business Park.
- New developments increased the importance of Illinois Route 15 as a community gateway.
 - Major road improvements, including the extension of 17th Street from just west of the downtown core to Illinois Route 15, Belleville Crossing Road, and Frank Scott Parkway West (among many others).
 - Ongoing road improvement and resurfacing projects, with an emphasis near community schools.
 - Replacement of the Cleveland Avenue bridge.
 - Adoption of the *2012 Long Range State Transportation Plan* and *2002 South Illinois Street Corridor Study*.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Cross-Town Congestion.** How can the City, St. Clair County, and Illinois Department of Transportation continue to systematically improve the arterial and collector road network to efficiently convey traffic within and through the community, especially near major traffic generators (e.g., 17th Street, Green Mount Road, Frank Scott Parkway)?
- **Outdated Road Infrastructure.** What financing tools are available to incrementally update the local road network to meet the needs of all neighborhoods and neighborhood commercial centers, despite the City's large and spread-out service area?
- **Streetscape Improvements.** Where and in what sequence should the City extend streetscape improvements (e.g., sidewalks, lighting, banners, signage, outdoor furniture) to other commercial and mixed-use nodes outside of Downtown?
- **Corridor and Entranceway Appearance.** How can the community improve the appearance of major roadway corridors (arterials and collectors) and entrances to the City through public investments,



Belleville MetroLink and MetroBus Station



New Bike Trail Near SWIC

public-private partnerships, regulatory controls, and multi-jurisdictional coordination (St. Clair County, Metro Transit, Illinois Department of Transportation)?

- **Metro Transit Development and Connectivity.** How can the community improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and encourage compatible, transit-oriented development patterns surrounding the City's three MetroLink stations: Memorial Hospital, Belleville, and College?
- **Traffic Barriers.** What tools are available to mitigate traffic barriers and associated nuisances (e.g., railroad crossings, school zones, construction zones, cut-through traffic) that negatively impact residents, business owners, and visitors?

Section 4, Housing and Neighborhoods

The fourth section evaluates the design of neighborhoods within the framework of the City's current development regulations and the resulting impact on housing construction, community form, land use compatibility, and connectivity. The underlying premise of this section is to ensure that there is a wide range of housing options to accommodate persons desiring to relocate within or to the community. Housing and neighborhood integrity are core issues in Belleville given the age of the City's housing stock and high vacancy rates. Therefore, the section emphasizes policies and initiatives for sustaining Belleville's value as an attractive place to live through housing improvements, targeted reinvestments, diligent code enforcement measures, subdivision and zoning regulations, and other neighborhood conservation strategies.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (1999)

- Development of 10 new residential subdivisions primarily to the east.

- New construction of Belleville West High School. Belleville East High School ranked as one of America's top high schools by *U.S. News & World Report*.
- Establishment of the *Belleville Neighborhood Partnership Program*.
- Construction of a new senior independent living center at 29 North 64th Street and \$1.5 million renovations to the Atrium of Belleville, a senior living facility, at 201 South Belt West.
- \$27 million expansion to St. Paul's Home on West 'F' Street.
- Adoption of a City leaf burning ordinance to improve air quality.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Neighborhood Integrity.** How can the City design the *Belleville Neighborhood Partnership Program* to improve safety, help strengthen identity, embrace diversity, and mobilize leadership in Belleville's neighborhoods?
- **Regulation and Code Enforcement.** How can the City update and increase its capacity to enforce zoning, subdivision, health, housing, and building regulations to address issues with absentee landowners, building and property maintenance, public and private nuisances, and perceived/actual crime?
- **New Housing Stock.** How can the City continue to attract new subdivision developments (and their positive economic impacts), which are currently drawing young professionals and families seeking "move up" opportunities to neighboring communities?
- **Infill and Adaptive Re-Use.** How can the City encourage development or re-use of vacant



Housing Renovation



New Subdivision Growth to the East

residential and neighborhood commercial properties concentrated in the community's older neighborhoods?

Section 5, Economic Development

The fifth section addresses ways to strengthen and diversify the local economy. This strategy includes reviewing current conditions and initiating action steps for growing the community in a way that is both feasible and compatible with Belleville's character. These policies outline ways to support and retain existing businesses, attract and grow new job-creating businesses, and train the community's workforce for current and future labor needs - all with a view toward achieving an improved living environment. Of particular importance to this plan section are the physical planning components that contribute to Belleville's readiness to accommodate new development and reinvestment.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (1999)

- Recipient of the All-America City Award from the National Civic League.
- Development and expansion of Lindenwood University - Belleville (LU-B), including relocation to the former west high school site, construction of new student dorms, renovation of homes in "buy zone" into student housing, and reconstruction of the old Township Stadium.
- Expansion of Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC), Belleville campus, with a \$20 million, 80,000-square-foot liberal arts complex.
- Construction of a \$35 million State Police Crime Lab across the street from LU-B.
- Construction of a \$24 million Memorial Hospital orthopedic and neurosciences building.
- Campus expansion of Governor French Academy into Downtown on the former O. C. Joseph Chrysler property.
- Ongoing Belle Valley Industrial Park development and expansion.
- Frequent recognition for "Art on the Square" (ranked #1 art show in U.S. in 2008, 2010, 2011, and 2012 by the Art Fair Source Book) and other festivals and community events.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Quality Jobs.** How can the community translate the success of LU-B and SWIC to economic development opportunities that result in quality jobs with a living wage?
- **Business Parks.** How can the City leverage Belleville's existing and prospective business parks to attract more industrial development, a competitive advantage that Fairview Heights, O'Fallon, and many other neighboring communities do not offer?
- **Support for Businesses.** How can the City continue to expand its tax base at major shopping centers (e.g., Belleville Crossing, Green Mount Commons), while concurrently supporting small businesses through programming, funding, and consumer spending?
- **Unique City Brand.** How can the community differentiate its neighborhoods, retail stores, industrial parks, business districts, recreational parks and trails, and other community amenities to compete for residents and businesses within the Metro East region and across the Mississippi River?
- **Community Image.** How can the community counteract negative perceptions and misperceptions of Belleville within the City

Representative findings from the 2012 - 2013 TOKY Branding Study



Building on Past and Current Planning Efforts

This plan is an update to the City's 2000-2020 *Comprehensive Plan*, which was completed in 1999. The plan's six core policy areas - housing, annexation, economic development, community development, code compliance, and development tools - are still relevant today. This *Comprehensive Plan* assesses the applicability of past findings, while tying in regional, sub-area, functional, and departmental plans to eliminate redundancies and facilitate integrated solutions.

One of the community's most recent plans is the 2012-2013 *TOKY Branding Study*. The Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce commissioned TOKY Branding + Design of St. Louis to develop a new brand and strategic marketing plan for Belleville. The firm conducted individual and focus group interviews to assess current community perceptions. These outcomes carried over to this comprehensive planning process, as demonstrated by the relevance of the study's S.W.O.T. analysis:

Strengths

- A "Volunteering" City
- An Arts Community
- An Active Community
- Lots of Positive Growth
- A Neighborhood for Every Taste
- Great Public Schools
- Lindenwood University - Belleville/SWIC
- Shopping Centers
- A Historic City

Weaknesses

- Lack of Interstate
- Old Infrastructure

- Past Bad Press
- Sprawling Size

Opportunities

- Brand Neighborhoods
- Define Borders
- Unique Shopping
- Market Beyond Our Borders
- Embrace Diversity

Threats

- Perception: Complex
- Perception: Crime
- Influx of Poor Citizens
- Bad Press
- Business Flight to Interstate 64
- Infighting





2011 National Recognition

Belleville is known throughout the region for its strong volunteer spirit and ability to come together to overcome barriers. This trait is both rooted in and reinforced by the character awareness campaign championed by the schools and business community. These attributes were recognized in 2011 as Belleville was honored with the “All-America City” award by the National Civic League.

Source: City of Belleville



and St. Louis metropolitan area? How can the community increase awareness of accomplishments through continued marketing, event programming, advocacy, and intergovernmental coordination?

- **Scott Air Force Base and MidAmerica St. Louis Airport.** In context of national base realignment and closures, how can the community support the continued operation and success of Scott Air Force Base, the region’s largest employer with annual economic impacts exceeding \$3 billion for the region? How can Belleville increase its share of positive economic impacts from the presence of Scott Air Force Base and MidAmerica St. Louis Airport?
- **Hotels and Event Facilities.** How can the community build on its success with festivals, programs, and sport clubs to attract and sustain hotels, recreation complexes, and convention centers necessary to host large-scale events?

Section 6, Land Use and Character

The sixth section assesses Belleville’s long-range development outlook and establishes the necessary policy guidance for making decisions about the compatibility and appropriateness of individual developments - and proposed redevelopment and infill projects - within the context of Belleville and its 1.5-mile planning jurisdiction. The *Future Land Use Plan* illustrates the City’s policy for directing ongoing development and managing future growth, preserving valuable land, and protecting the integrity of neighborhoods. Additionally, this section suggests potential development code adjustments and other action strategies to protect and enhance Belleville’s connectivity, functionality, and appearance.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (1999)

- \$7 million Downtown streetscape improvement project. Helped to generate more events and activities, attract new retail and office tenants, and initiate a new wave of revitalization.
- New construction and expansion of the Green Mount Commons (500,000 SF) and Belleville Crossing (600,000 SF) shopping centers.
- Awarding of a \$15,000 grant for the ongoing formation of a second National Register Historic District centered on the original Town of West Belleville.
- Renovations to major entertainment venues, including the Lincoln Theater (digital projection, concessions), the EDGE (movie theaters and interior renovations), and Eckert’s Orchard (new country store, expanded restaurant).
- Adoption of the *Belleville Historic Districts Design Guideline/Policy and Procedures Manual* and the *West Belleville, Stookey Township, and Centreville Township Strategic Development Plan*.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Commercial and Residential Infill.** How can the City promote development of vacant lots and/or adaptive re-use of vacant or substandard buildings and properties, especially in concentrated areas visibly demonstrating blight (i.e., to prevent “broken window” syndrome and accelerating decline)?
- **Historic Preservation.** How can Belleville property owners and investors preserve the community’s historic fabric (e.g., building facades, landmarks, districts), while at the same time, recognizing

Planning Authority

The State of Illinois allows Belleville’s Planning Commission and Economic Development and Planning Department to create a comprehensive plan as an advisory document to the City Council. It is to be used when creating municipal regulations by stating policies or establishing a rational basis for decision-making.

The Illinois Municipal Code allows the commission or department:

“To prepare and recommend to the corporate authorities a comprehensive plan for the present and future development or redevelopment of the municipality. Such plan may be adopted in whole or in separate geographical or functional parts, each of which, when adopted, shall be the official comprehensive plan, or part thereof, of that municipality. This plan may include reasonable requirements with reference to streets, alleys, public grounds, and other improvements hereinafter specified. The plan, as recommended by the plan commission and as thereafter adopted in any municipality in this state, may be made applicable, by the terms thereof, to land situated within the corporate limits and contiguous territory not more than one and one-half miles beyond the corporate limits and not included in any municipality. Such plan may be implemented by ordinances

- (a) establishing reasonable standards of design for subdivisions and for resubdivisions of unimproved land and of areas subject to redevelopment in respect to public improvements as herein defined;
- (b) establishing reasonable requirements governing the location, width, course, and surfacing of public streets and highways, alleys, ways for public service facilities, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, street lights, parks, playgrounds, school grounds, size of lots to be used for residential purposes, storm water drainage, water supply and distribution, sanitary sewers, and sewage collection and treatment; and
- (c) may designate land suitable for annexation to the municipality and the recommended zoning classification for such land upon annexation.”

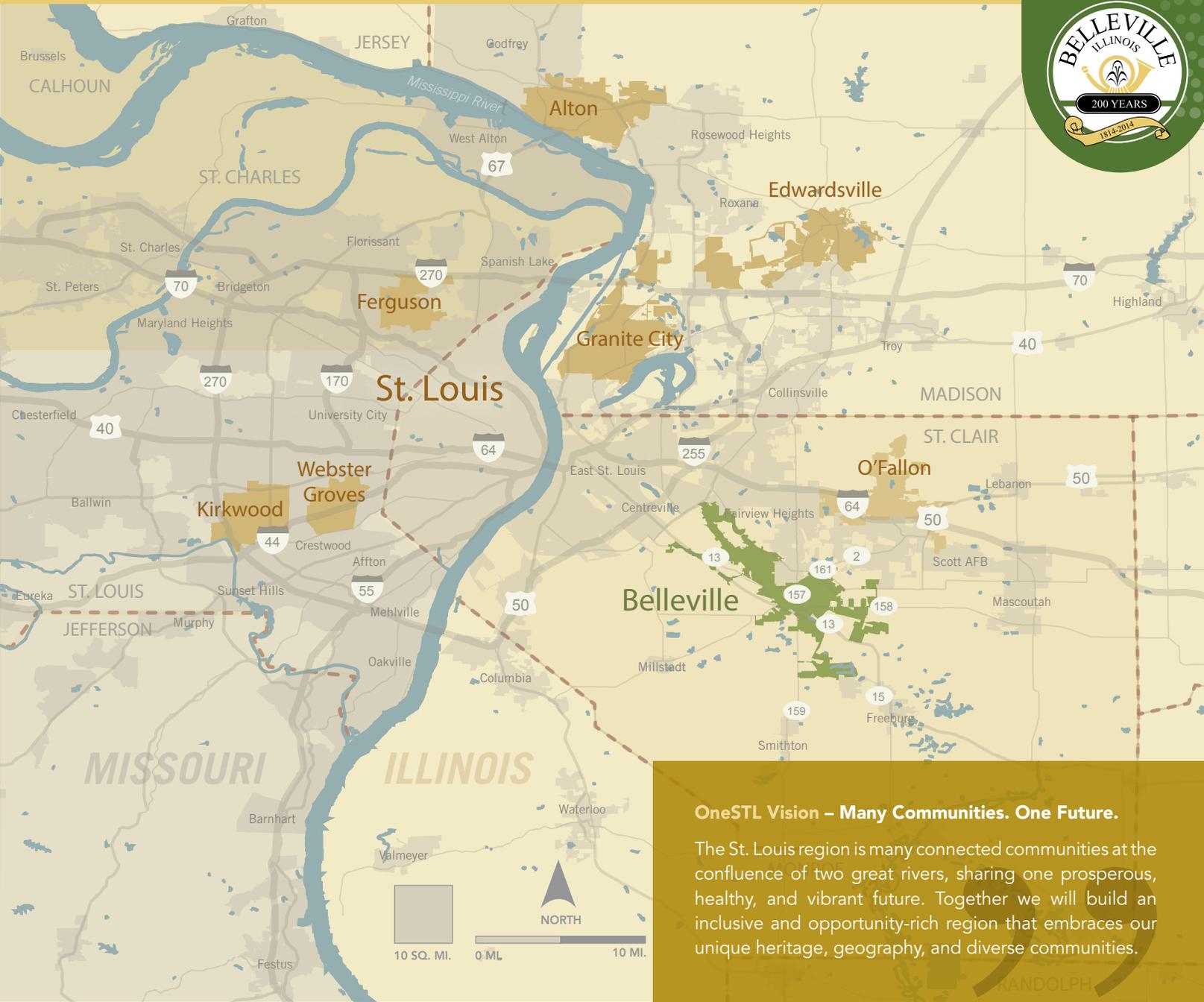
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the need to balance preservation with new construction.

- **Downtown Revitalization.** How can the community continue to support Downtown’s role as a local and regional destination? How can the success of Downtown’s upgraded appearance and programming be used to improve the community’s image, expand its tax base, “recruit” new residents, and lead to more widespread improvements?
- **Development Guidelines and Regulations.** What updates are needed to the City’s land development regulations, design standards, ordinances, and other tools to ensure new development and redevelopment projects are compatible with the existing and preferred character of the community?

Section 7, Implementation

The final section uses the recommendations of the individual plan elements to consolidate an overall strategy for implementing the *Comprehensive Plan*, particularly for the highest priority actions. This section also outlines crucial procedures for monitoring and revisiting the plan policies and action priorities every year, and for completing future plan updates at appropriate milestones. These processes provide an essential “feedback loop” into the City’s long-range planning and strategic decision-making, leading to necessary plan adjustments based on implementation successes, challenges, and ongoing changes in physical, economic, and social conditions.



OneSTL Vision – Many Communities. One Future.

The St. Louis region is many connected communities at the confluence of two great rivers, sharing one prosperous, healthy, and vibrant future. Together we will build an inclusive and opportunity-rich region that embraces our unique heritage, geography, and diverse communities.

Community Overview

The following section summarizes Belleville’s demographic and socioeconomic profile. These characteristics and trends pertain to income, age, education, employment, and housing. Although this summary is only a snapshot in time, it provides insight to the community’s challenges, opportunities, and perceptions.

Seven Illinois and Missouri communities were selected as “comparables” based on several considerations, including historic growth and population trends, demographic composition,

arts and cultural heritage, industrial mix, and strong collegiate presence. In addition to the United States and St. Clair County comparisons, the following cities were evaluated:

- Alton, Illinois;
- Edwardsville, Illinois;
- Ferguson, Missouri;
- Granite City, Illinois;
- Kirkwood, Missouri;
- O’Fallon, Illinois; and
- Webster Groves, Missouri.



Figure 1.1, Change in Population

Between 2000 to 2011, Belleville's population grew from 41,410 to 44,445 residents. Many other comparable communities decreased in size, especially in context of the 2007 to 2009 national recession.



The greatest resource that the St. Louis region possesses is its **citizens**. Addressing changing demographics, meeting a diverse set of needs, and encouraging entrepreneurship are keys to ensuring that all citizens have the opportunity to participate in current and future regional success.

- OneSTL

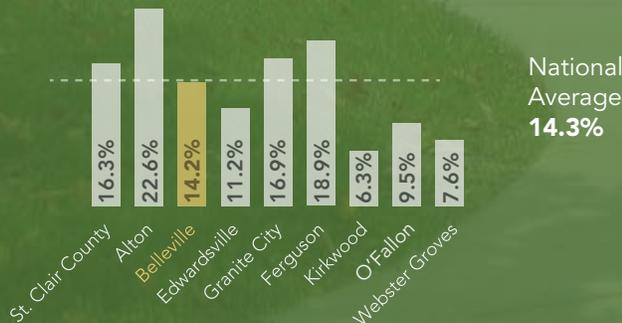
Figure 1.2, Proportional Change in Population by Age Groups

Belleville has increased its percentage of college students, young professionals, and families over the last decade. This has resulted in a lower median age, decreasing from 37.2 to 36.5. The opposite trend is occurring at the national level as baby boomers reach retirement age.



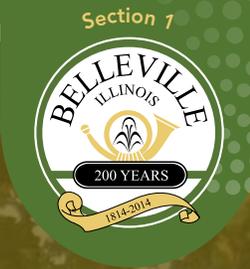
Figure 1.3, Poverty Level

The percentage of Belleville residents below the poverty level is on par with the national average and falls in the middle among comparable communities.



63.2% INCREASE

in the number of students enrolled in college or graduate school between 2000 (2,660 students) to 2011 (4,340 students), according to the U.S. Census. This trend reflects the growing presence of Lindenwood University and Southwestern Illinois College.



1.4% DECREASE

in the percentage of renter-occupied units between 2000 and 2011. Belleville's housing stock is 62.6 percent owner-occupied and 37.4 percent renter-occupied, only 3.5 percent higher than the national average.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL HOUSING TRENDS

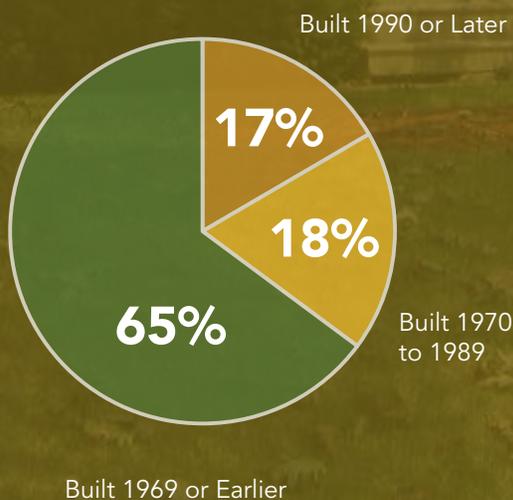
The percent increase for cost of housing (ownership and rental) between 2000 and 2011 is significantly higher than the percent increase of median household income.

Table 1.1, Housing Trends

	Average Household Size	Median Household Income	Median Home Value	Median Gross Rent
Belleville	2.37	\$ 48,582	\$108,400	\$707
		+ 35%	+ 54%	+ 42%
PERCENT CHANGE 2000 - 2011				
Alton	2.42	\$ 35,300	\$ 87,000	\$ 743
		+ 13%	+ 54%	+ 73%
Edwardsville	2.49	\$ 71,600	\$ 194,000	\$ 889
		+ 41%	+ 96%	+ 60%
Granite City	2.4	\$ 39,120	\$ 81,900	\$ 630
		+ 10%	+ 43%	+ 47%
Ferguson	2.54	\$ 36,923	\$ 94,900	\$ 831
		+ 4%	+ 47%	+ 46%
Kirkwood	2.34	\$ 76,295	\$ 236,000	\$ 939
		+ 38%	+ 47%	+ 40%
O'Fallon	2.79	\$ 74,814	\$ 208,200	\$ 1,049
		+34%	+ 71%	+ 59%
Webster Groves	2.44	\$ 83,953	\$ 251,500	\$ 1,122
		+ 39%	+ 57%	+ 56%
St. Clair County	2.57	\$ 49,559	\$ 127,000	\$ 766
		+ 27%	+ 63%	+ 52%
United States	2.62	\$ 51,484	\$ 179,500	\$ 878
		+ 23%	+ 50%	+ 46%

Figure 1.4, Age of Housing Stock

Two-thirds of Belleville's housing stock is older than 40 years old.



Key Industry Sectors in which Belleville Residents are Employed*

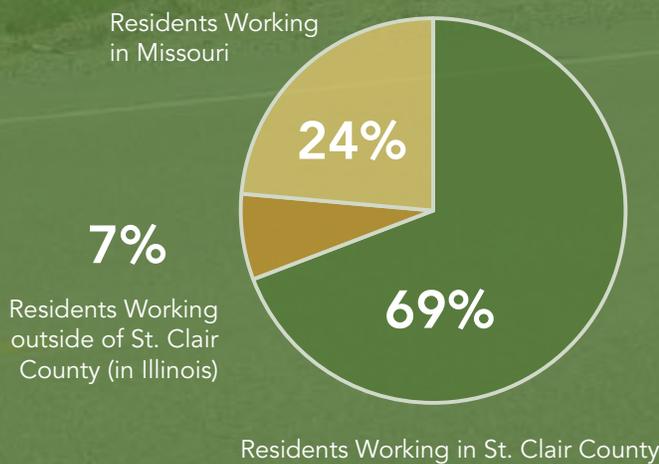
- Educational services, health care, and social assistance (28.8% of residents)
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (11.0% of residents)
- Retail trade (10.4% of residents)
- Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services (9.3% of residents)
- Transportation, warehousing, and utilities (7.8% of residents)

Highest Job Growth in Key Sectors that Employ Belleville Residents*

- Educational services, health care, and social assistance (2,006 person increase between 2000 and 2011)
- Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste (446 person increase)
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (445 person increase)
- Public administration (403 person increase)
- Transportation, warehousing, and utilities (369 person increase)

*Both in Belleville and elsewhere in the region.

Figure 1.5, Commuting Patterns



INCREASE

The number of residents traveling by **bicycle**, motorcycle, or taxicab to/from work between 2000 and 2011 increased from 109 to 320 residents. Belleville also experienced an increase in the number of residents commuting by **public transit**, increasing from 559 to 787 residents.

The mean travel time to work for Belleville residents decreased from 23.7 to 22.3 minutes between 2000 and 2011.