

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter provides the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan, outlining why and how it was funded and developed. It also provides basic community information and the groundwork on which this plan was built.

1.1 The Plan as a “Living Guide” | 2

1.2 A Snapshot of Tuscola | 6

1.3 Existing Plans | 14

2

3

4

5

A

B

C

Why a Comprehensive Plan?

It is difficult to know what the future may bring for Tuscola, or for any community. As residents and businesses come and go, and economic trends rise and fall, changes will occur. The purpose of this plan is to establish a *shared vision* for Tuscola to guide future actions and decisions. This guidance provides predictability and consistency over time, which encourages investment. We plan so that we can act and react in a changing world with a confident understanding of our common values and goals.

In order to best serve Tuscola and its needs, this plan gives a solid analysis of each of the following subject areas: Housing; Public Infrastructure; Municipal Government / Intergovernmental Collaboration; Transportation; Community Facilities; Economic Development; Agricultural & Natural Resources; and Zoning. These areas are all critical elements to analyze and consider when looking toward the long-term social and economic vitality of the community.

Plan Maintenance

This planning document is a “living” guide for growth and change in the City of Tuscola. The plan represents the City’s best effort to address current issues and anticipate future needs; however, it can and should be amended from time to time if conditions warrant reconsideration of policies in this plan. If decisions are being made that are not consistent with this plan, then the plan has lost its relevance and should be amended. The process of amending the comprehensive plan should not be onerous, but it should trigger a brief pause to consider again the long term vision for the community. This plan’s value is dependent upon frequent use and occasional updates.



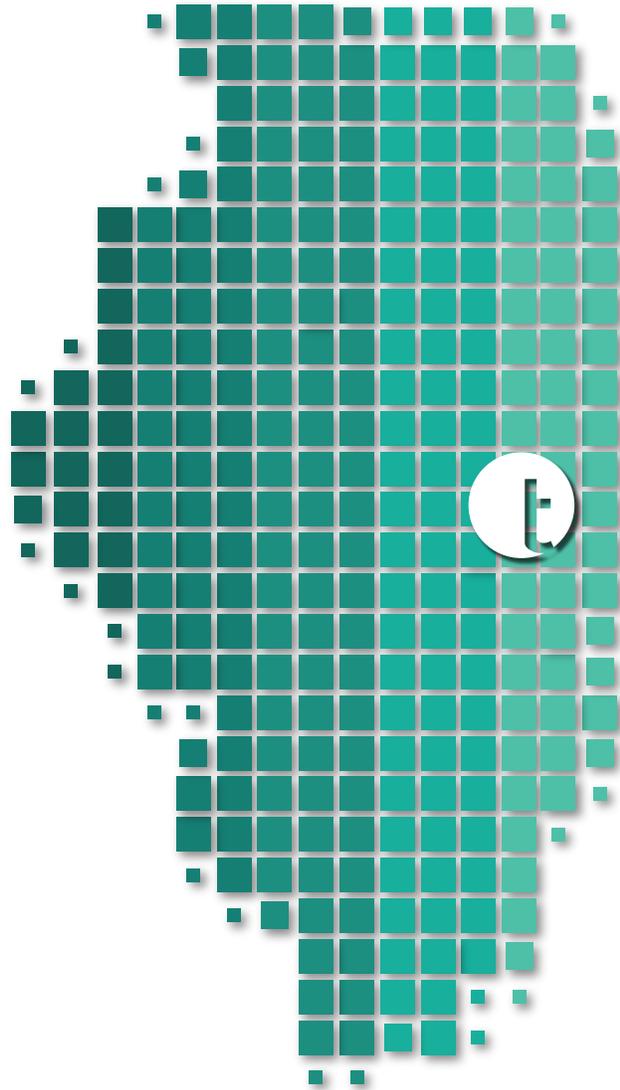
Illinois Comprehensive Planning

Comprehensive plans are defined in the Illinois Local Planning Technical Assistance Act (Public Act 92-0768, Sec. 5). Here, the common elements addressed in a comprehensive plan are:

1. Land Use
2. Natural Resources
3. Historic Preservation
4. Transportation
5. Economic Development
6. Housing
7. Utilities & Community Facilities
8. Urban Design / Community Character
9. Agricultural & Forestry
10. Intergovernmental Cooperation

All comprehensive plans include:

- **A statement of authority** to prepare and adopt the plan.
- **Background data and analysis** - including area history, a description of existing social, economic and physical (natural and man-made) conditions and trends, and economic and demographic projections.
- **Documentation of stakeholder's interests and involvement** - these include interests of residents, public officials, the business community, and developers.
- **Vision statement** (or statement of desired goals and objectives) - desired outlook, generally 20 years from now.
- **Future plan map or maps** - these maps depict various components, including land use, transportation, community facilities, and housing areas.
- **Plan Implementation** - framework or schedule that describes specific measure to carry out the plan, the time frame to execution, and potentially cost ranges.



Plan Organization

1-4

The plan is divided into five chapters plus several important appendices, as described below:

Chapter 1 | Introduction

Chapter 1 discusses the role of the plan, planning in Illinois, the planning area boundaries and regional context, and Tuscola’s previous planning efforts.

Chapter 2 | Planning Process & Public Participation

Chapter 2 outlines the planning process, including a description of the public participation methods and feedback as well as a summary of Tuscola’s assets and liabilities.

Chapter 3 | Goals, Objectives, & Strategies

Chapter 3 includes a vision for the future of the City, as desired in 2045, and goals, objectives, strategies, key indicators, and action steps for each element of the plan, including:

Municipal Government/Intergovernmental Collaboration
Transportation
Community Facilities
Public Infrastructure
Economic Development
Housing
Agricultural & Natural Resources
Zoning Ordinance Recommendations

Chapter 4 | Land Use

Chapter 4 describes current land use characteristics, defines future land use categories and policies, and presents the future land use map.

Chapter 5 | Implementation & Action Plan

Chapter 5 describes the tools and procedures by which the plan will be implemented and provides a detailed time line of action steps for successful implementation of the plan.

Appendix A | Community Indicators

Appendix A is a compilation of data that describes the existing conditions, trends, and projections for the City of Tuscola. This data informs the planning process and should be updated from time to time to track progress and change in the City.

Appendix B | Public Input

Appendix B is a compilation of complete results from the public input process.

Appendix C | Plan Area Maps

Appendix C is a complete index of all the maps created for the Comprehensive Plan in one easy and printable reference.

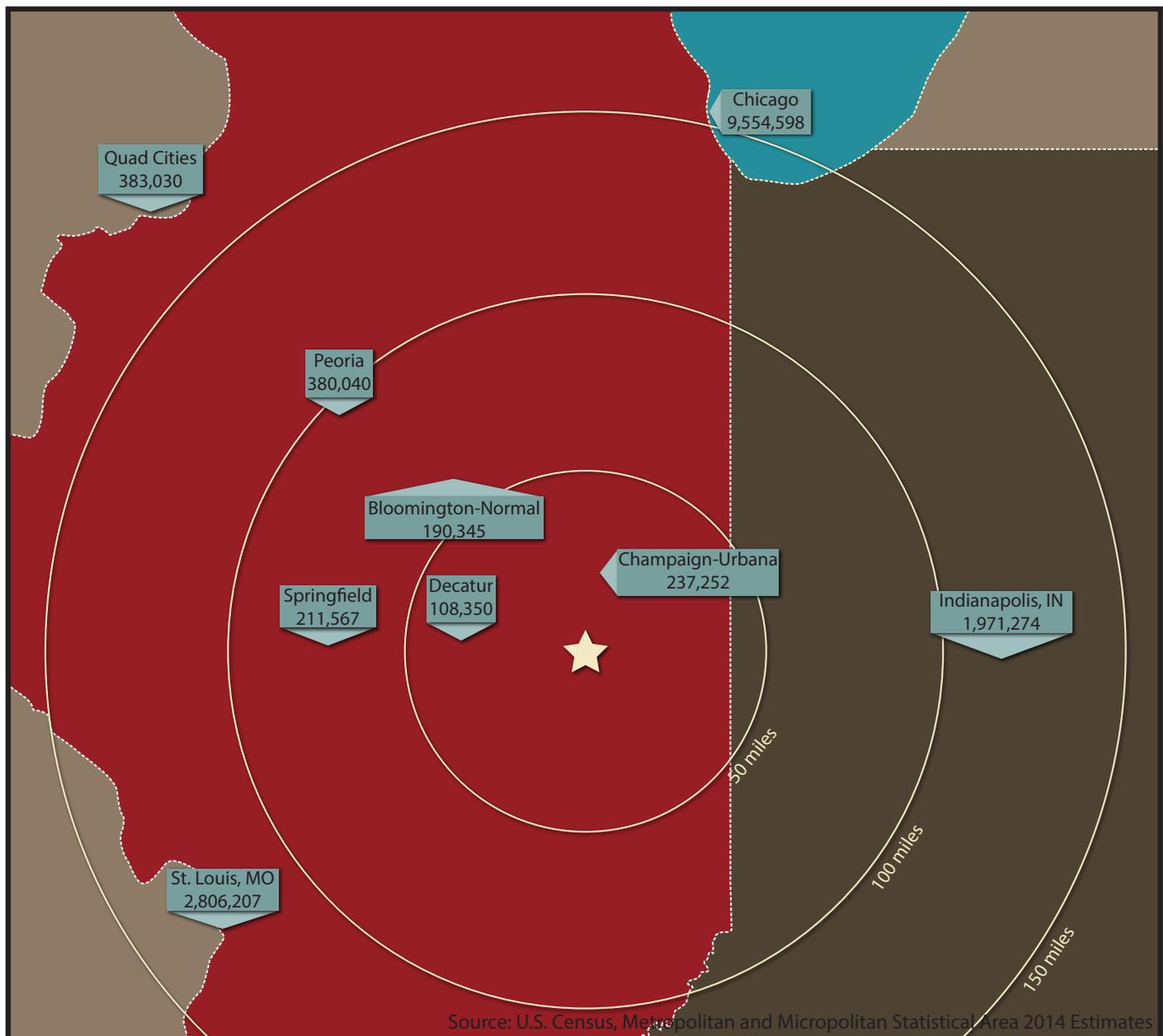


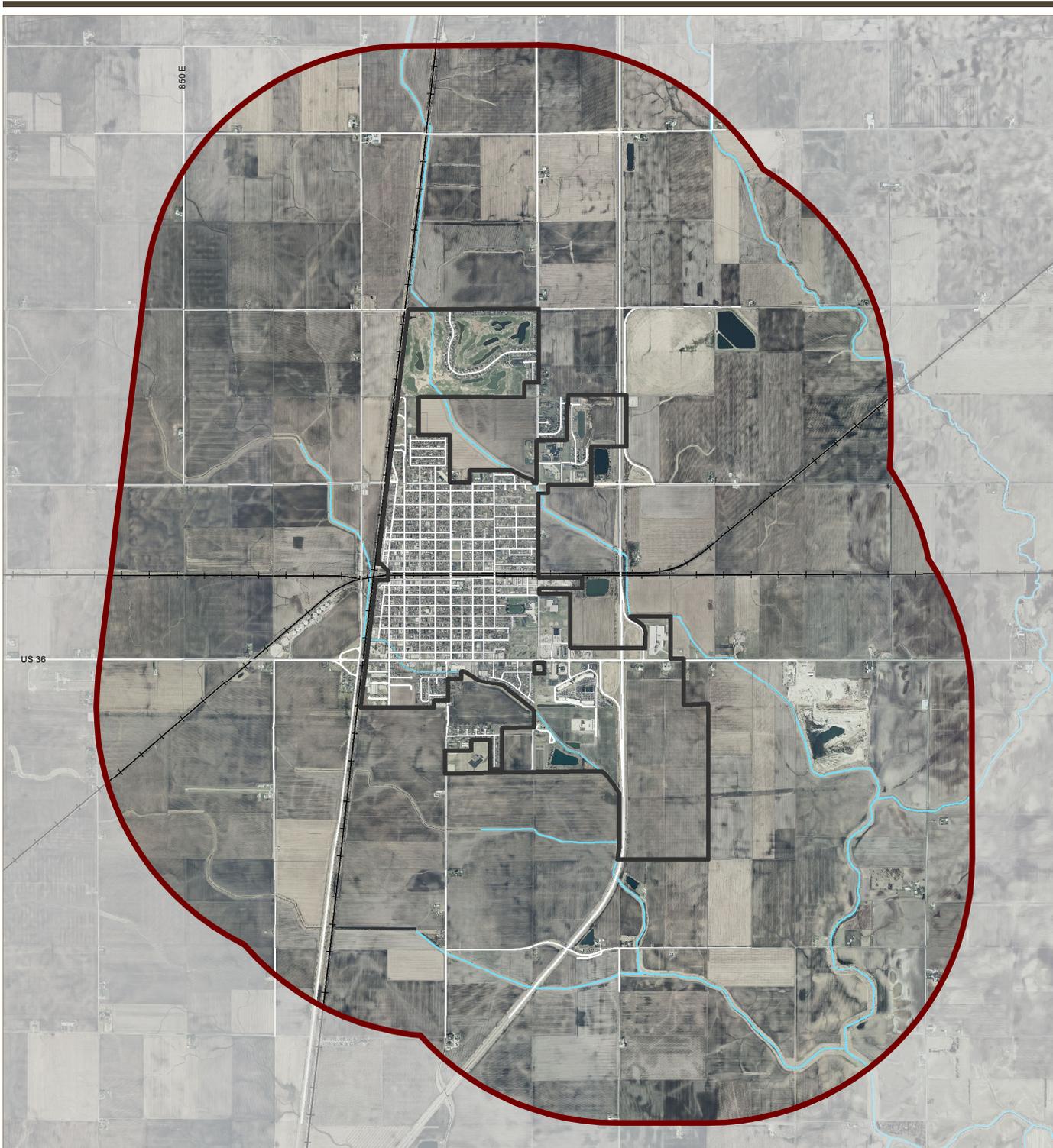
Planning Area

The study area for this Plan includes all lands in which the City has both a short- and long-term interest in planning and development activity. As shown on the following page, the Planning Area includes all lands within the current municipal limits and within the City's potential 1.5-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. The City is approximately 1,850 acres (2.89 square miles). The entire Planning Area is approximately 15,600 acres (24.4 square miles). *See map on opposite page.*

Regional Context

Tuscola is located along Interstate 57 in Central Illinois. It is within 50 miles of the Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) of Champaign-Urbana and Decatur; within 100 miles of the MSA's of Springfield, Bloomington-Normal, and Peoria; and around 150 miles of the MSA's of Indianapolis, St. Louis, Chicago and the Quad Cities. *See figure below.*





BASE MAP - PLANNING AREA

CITY OF TUSCOLA
DOUGLAS COUNTY, ILLINOIS

-  PLANNING AREA (1.5-MILE BUFFER OF THE CITY)
-  CITY OF TUSCOLA
-  PARCEL
-  STREAM

DATA SOURCES:
 BASE DATA PROVIDED BY DOUGLAS COUNTY, ILLINOIS.
 AERIAL IMAGERY PROVIDED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN,
 PRAIRIE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, ILLINOIS GEOSPATIAL DATA CLEARINGHOUSE,
 2011 ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ORTHOPHOTOGRAPHY



History

1834 | Earliest settler, William Brian, moved to the township.

1857 | Tuscola was first laid out by surveyor Henry Clay Niles.

1859 | Tuscola becomes the County Seat in Douglas County.

1876 | Niles publishes complete Douglas County history.

1869 | March 11, 1869, the City was officially Chartered.

1903 | Joseph G. Cannon, “Uncle Joe”, was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives where he served as the Speaker from 1903-1911.

1913 | The Douglas County Courthouse was dedicated on June 12, 1913. In the Douglas County Courthouse is the original Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Room which was set aside upon the building’s dedication as a meeting place for members of the G.A.R. and other patriotic veterans organizations. County officials have been told this room is unique in that it is only one of five remaining original G.A.R. meeting rooms in the United States.

1916 | Nathaniel G. Ervin leaves 20 acres of land to the City for the sole use of a City Park.

1957 | A pool was added to Ervin Park.

1974 | Wimple Park was dedicated. The Land was part of a donation from the Raymond Wimple farm.

Key Community Indicators

The subsequent pages analyze the over arching population and demographic trends for Tuscola. Examination of these trends provide a foundation for the planning process and implementation of the plan. The data was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau, the American Community Survey (ACS), and local, regional and state sources. See **Appendix A** for a full report on Tuscola's Community Indicators.

Population Trends & Projections

Historically, population trends for the City of Tuscola show a meager, but steady increase in population. Then, between 1990 and 2000, the City experienced a mini 'boom' with a 6.82% jump in the population. The boom was short lived as the following decade brought Tuscola only a 0.72% resident increase. A similar pattern occurred in both Douglas County and Illinois.

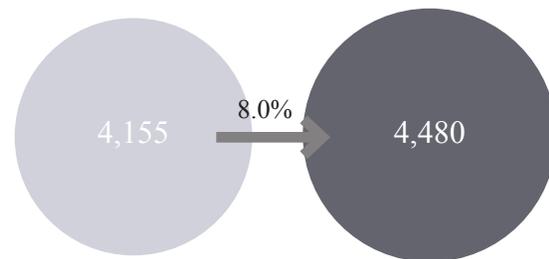
There are many factors to consider and weigh when looking into population forecasts. Illinois provides population forecasts at the State and County levels into the year 2025. According to the State, Illinois is anticipating a modest 1% population percent increase every five years through 2045. Illinois is also expecting Douglas County to lose less than 1% in its population every five years through that same period. These two forecasts, in addition to local social, economic, and environmental factors must be considered when projecting the population of Tuscola over the next 20-30 years.

To help combat the challenge of population forecasting, three scenarios were created. The first is a 'Conservative Growth' scenario in which Tuscola grows at a 0.5% rate which is half that of the State, but more than the County giving the City a population of 4,639 residents by the year 2045. The second scenario is a 'Moderate Growth' projection in which Tuscola is more in line with the projected growth of Illinois at 1% every five years, or a projected population of 4,803. The third is a

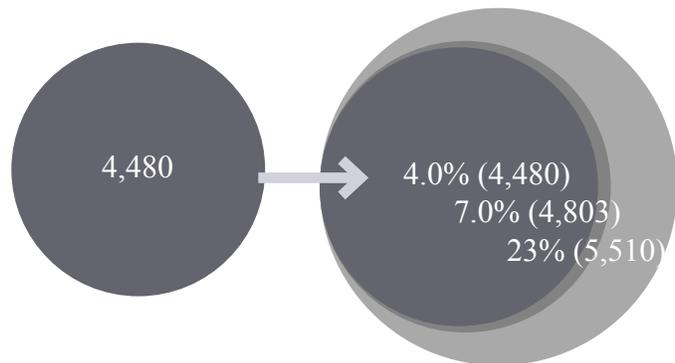
more arbitrary 'Robust Growth' in which Tuscola would experience a 3% growth in population every five years, or reach a population of 5,510 residents by 2045.

30-YEAR POPULATION CHANGE

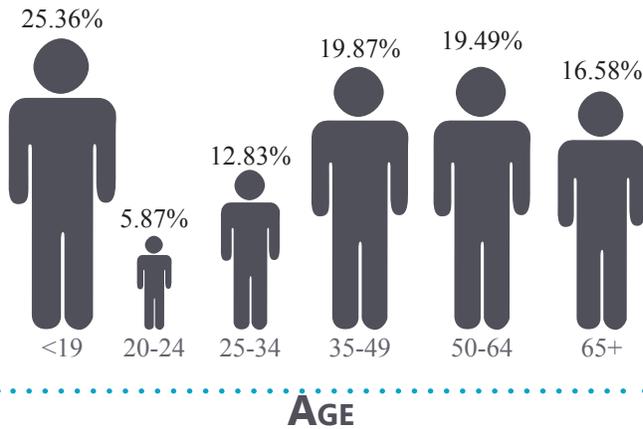
1980 - 2010



35-YEAR POPULATION PROJECTION



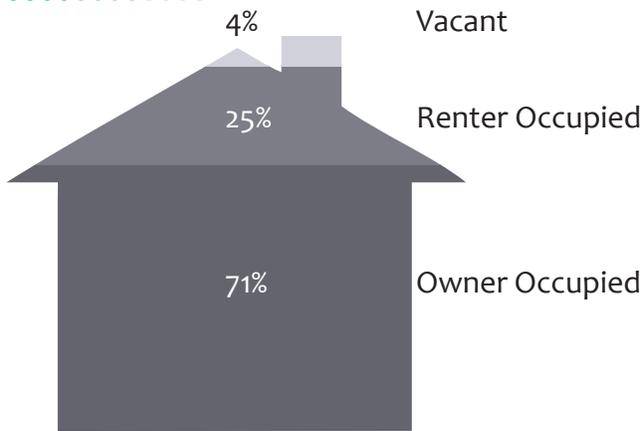
People



AGE

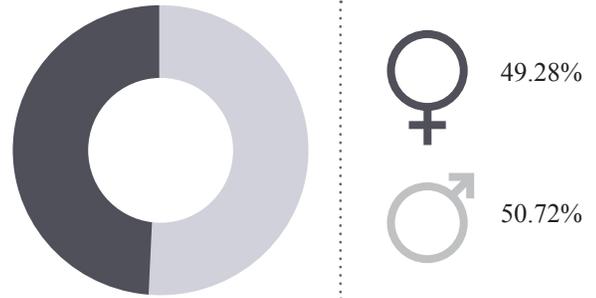
The distribution of age cohorts in Tuscola show an aging population consistent with Central Illinois. The smallest cohort is that of those aged 20-24. The assumption here is that this age range is typically away receiving a higher degree of education and/or training outside of the community.

Housing



2010 OCCUPANCY

Nearly three-fourths (71%) of the City residents live in owner-occupied housing. This percentage held steady over the last decade, despite the 2008 housing market crisis, suggesting a resilient local housing market. The vacancy rate (4%) is just below what is considered the healthy range of 5% to 6%. This rate of vacancy allows for movement within the market. However, only a quarter of those vacancies are for homes, the other three-quarters are rentals.



GENDER

The breakdown between female and male residents in the City is average with an almost even split, with a slight edge to the females.



AVERAGE MEDIAN VALUE

The value of a home is also an indicator to the strength of the housing market and in turn, the vitality of the community. Tuscola's housing market appears to be holding on as the five year average median value of a home in the City, \$94,900, is slightly less the County's average value of \$99,300, and well below the State's of \$182,300.



Housing



2010

1,935 units

2.31 persons per

HOUSEHOLD COUNTS

Household trends for the City of Tuscola show a 2.7% increase in households between 2000 and 2010, which was similar to that of the County (2.8%) but below the State (10.1%) for that same time period.

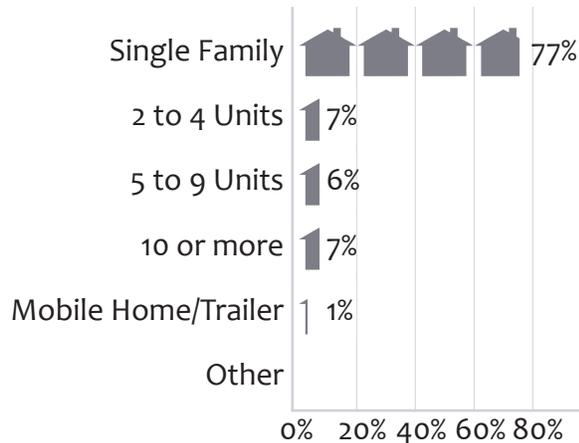
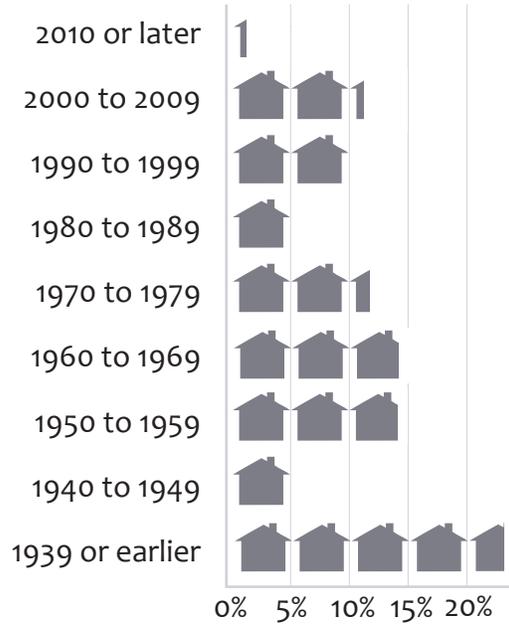
Nationally, the number of persons per household has been declining in recent decades which has been explained several ways, including fewer children per family, an increase in single parent households, and an increase in life expectancy. In 2010, Tuscola was below the National Average of 2.59 persons per household with 2.31 persons per. Douglas County had an average of 2.59 person per and Illinois was at 2.63.

UNIT TYPE

Over three-fourths (77%) of the City residents live in single-family housing. Multi-family housing in the City has a good mix in the number of units per dwelling with 7% have 2 to 4 units, 6% having five to nine units, and 7% having dwelling greater than ten units. However, quality, price and location are not factored in this assessment.

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

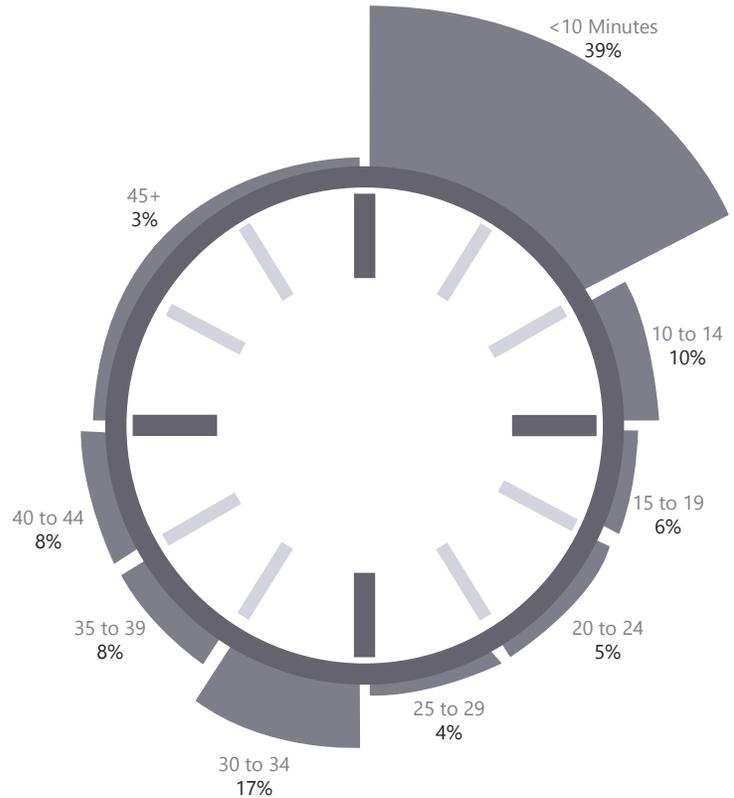
Tuscola can showcase a large variety in housing stock through the decades. Housing built in each decade adds variety to the housing stock while new housing will help accommodate the projected population increase in the upcoming decades as well as changes in housing preferences.



Transportation

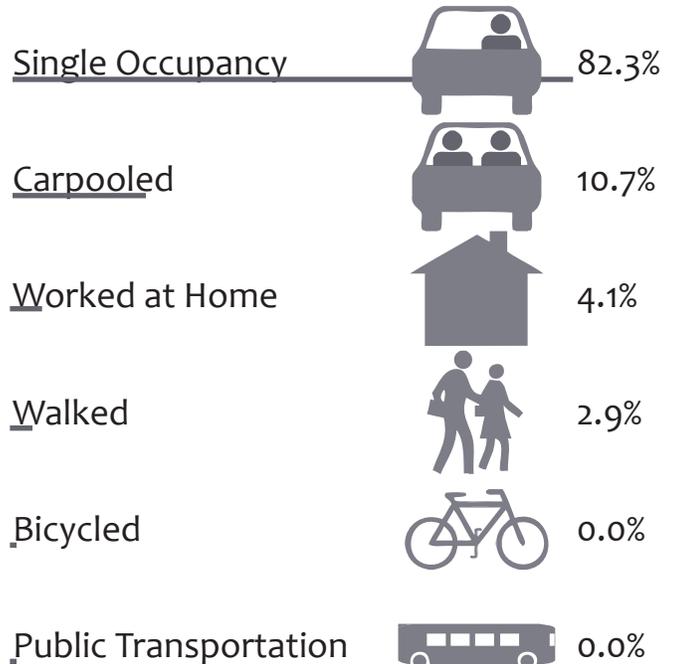
COMMUTING TIME TO WORK

Nearly 50% of the City's commuters age 16 or older work within 14 minutes of their place of employment. Both Tuscola and Douglas County commuters, on average, have a travel time to work of 20.8 minutes, which is eight (8) minutes shorter than the State average commute. A large percentage (64%) of Tuscola workers have a commute that is less than 29 minutes. These times suggest most residents work in the City or in nearby areas.

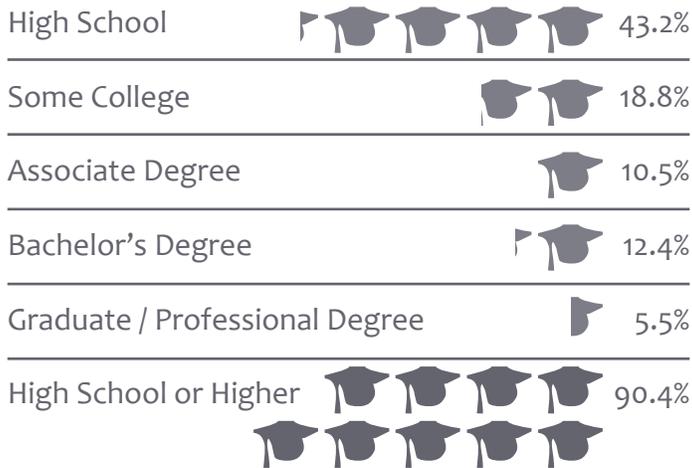


COMMUTING METHOD TO WORK

Commuting in Tuscola is mostly done by car, with 84.3% of commuters traveling in a single occupant vehicle. This number is about 10% higher for Douglas County (74.7%) and Illinois (73.6%). Additionally, 11.3% of commuters in Tuscola carpooled to work, 0.0% walked, 1.6% biked, and 2.8% worked from home.



\$Economic Prosperity



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The percentage of Tuscola residents 25 years or older who have at least a high school diploma (90.40%) is higher than both Douglas County (83.8%) and Illinois (87.3%). The percentage of residents who have obtained a bachelor's degree (12.4%) is lower than the State (19.5%). This percentage also saw a decrease over the two reporting periods, from just 16.7% in the 2005-2009 sample. While this could be sampling error in the data, it is generally inconsistent with regional and national trends, in which the recession economy encouraged more people to seek and complete post-secondary degrees.

INCOME INDICATORS

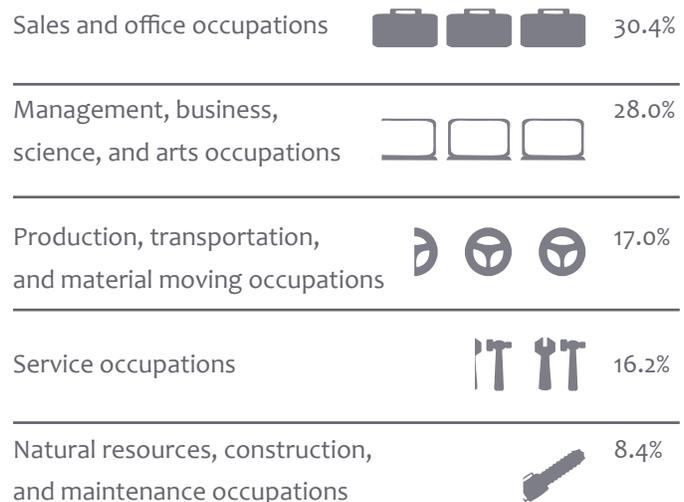
Income is another way to look at the economic vitality of a community. For Tuscola, the per capita income at \$25,282 is higher than the County's \$23,732. The median family (\$66,349) and median household (\$49,865) incomes for Tuscola are roughly the same as the County, but under performing the State as a whole. These lower averages are certainly related to the level of educational attainment and percentage of individuals living below the poverty level. In the City, 10.9% of the population is estimated to be below the poverty level.

OCCUPATIONS

Not surprisingly Tuscola's unemployment rate increased since 2000 alongside the County and State.

Over 80% of workers in Tuscola earn a private wage and salary. And nearly a sixth (13.8%) of the labor force in Tuscola is employed by a Governmental (Local, State or Federal) entity.

The most common occupational category among Tuscola's residents is "Sales and office occupations" (30.4%) and is closely followed by "Management, business, science, and arts occupations" (28.0%). "Production, transportation, and material moving occupations" (17.0%) and "Service occupations" (16.2%) follow next, respectively. In this regard, Tuscola more closely resembles the State than Douglas County.



City of Tuscola Comprehensive Plan

Adopted October 2001

In addition to goals and objectives for the areas of municipal government, natural environment, land cover, land use, transportation, and community services and public facilities, the Plan created a vision for the community in 2020.

We envision that in 2020 Tuscola will:

- ...offer small town quality of life.,
- ...be a center for commercial and civic activities,
- ...be a community with a strong and diverse economic base,
- ...offer a rich cultural environment with parks and open space and recreational and enrichment activities, and
- ...be a community that successfully balances community growth with the natural environment.

The Plan also conducted a community survey and provided implementation strategies to meet the set goals.

Route 36 Corridor Development Plan

Adopted August 2003

This plan outlined a program for rehabilitation, redevelopment and stabilization of the Route 36 Corridor as a way to combat disinvestment as well as signs of age and deterioration.

Recommendations include:

- Promotion of unified development around the Outlet Mall.
- Consolidation of irregular sized lots and removal of some of the ingress / egress
- Investment in pedestrian friendly access points.
- Installation of enhancements at both ends of

the corridor.

- Enhancement of the intersection of Route 36 and Main Street and create a “gateway” district into the Downtown.

Amishland TIF

Adopted August 1986, Amended 1990, 1996

- Encompasses an area of approximately 35 blocks which include the Downtown and businesses developments along Route 36.
- The redevelopment plan sets forth objectives to reduce, eliminate and prevent blighted conditions of the area.
- It provides policies for assistance with economic development and redevelopment.
- Sets forth goals for both public and private development.

Area 1 Redevelopment Plan

Adopted 2003

Extended the life of the TIF to cover the costs of the proposed projects.

Barker/Prairie Streets Redevelopment Plan

Adopted 2011

Redevelopment plan for a blighted and vacant area (13.5 acres) of Tuscola which includes an abandoned waste water treatment plant. A majority of the land is subject to flooding.

Downtown Master Plan



- Identified existing conditions such as under utilized/unsightly properties and connections from the downtown to other areas of Tuscola.
- Identified potential areas for improvement and redevelopment from both the private and public sectors.
- Introduced the creation of the a historic restoration district.
- Provided a streetscape and facade restoration plan.