

2019-2024 CEDS *for* NORTHWEST ILLINOIS

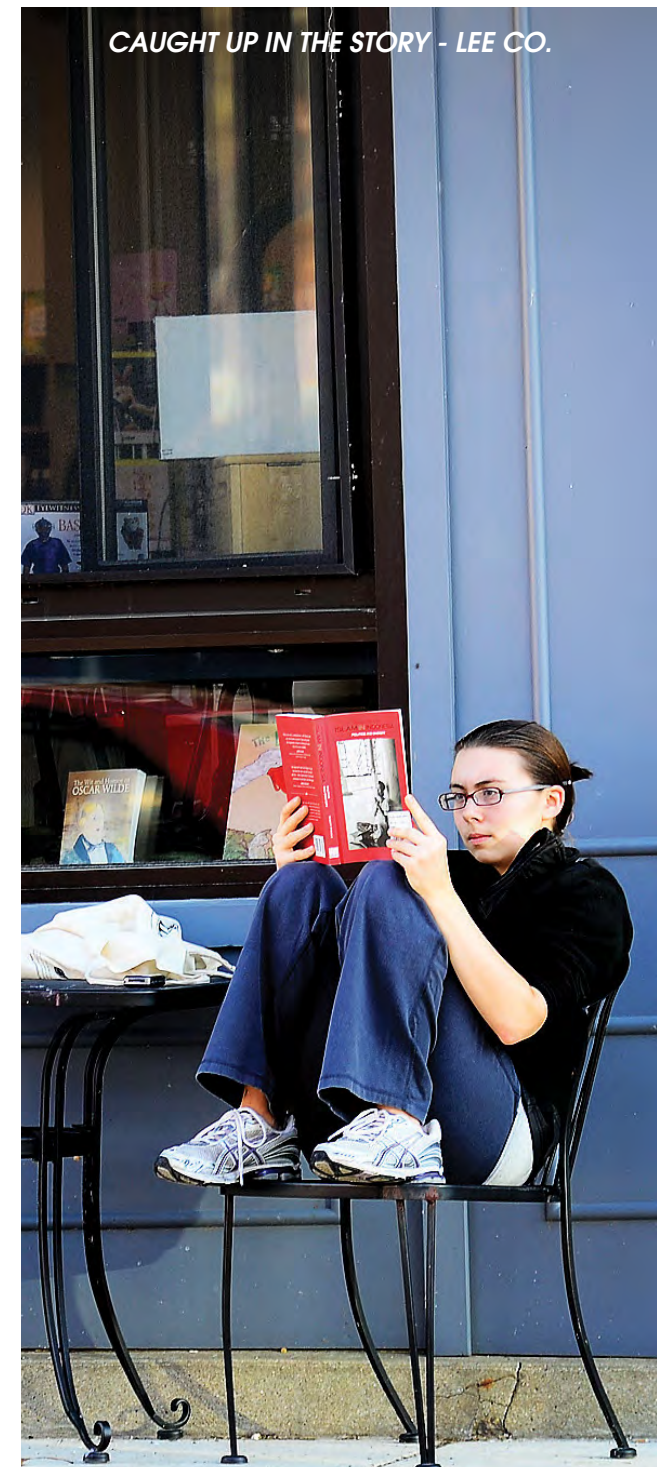


A winter landscape of Franklin Creek. The top half of the image shows a wide view of the creek winding through a snowy, wooded area. The bottom half is a closer view of the creek's edge, showing snow-covered banks and bare, tangled branches. A horizontal bar with three colored segments (teal, light green, and yellow) is positioned behind the title text.

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FRANKLIN CREEK AT FRANKLIN CREEK STATE NATURAL AREA - LEE CO.

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PLANNING PROCESS

STERLING STEEL WORK FLOOR - WHITESIDE CO.

About

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the over-arching community and economic development plan for the counties of Northwest Illinois. This CEDS is developed using the guidelines of the Economic Development Administration (EDA), a federal agency of the Department of Commerce. The process involves various participants, including the Regional CEDS (RCEDS) Committee, Blackhawk Hills Regional Council (BHRC)* staff and Board, and the public.

Local Process

Kick-Off Meeting

On October 27, 2017, the Northwest Illinois RCEDS Committee began work on the CEDS update before BHRC's annual fall development summit. The RCEDS Committee discussed strengths and weaknesses included in the previous CEDS

and reflected on the changes occurring throughout the region since the 2014 document was published.

County-Level CEDS Forums

BHRC scheduled county-level CEDS forums for late winter/early spring 2018 in each of the Economic Development District's counties. We invited leaders from public, private, and not-for-profit sectors to discuss development issues important to the region's stakeholders. Forums were held on the following dates:

- Ogle County in Oregon: January 17, 2018 @ 6 pm
- Jo Daviess County in Elizabeth: January 18, 2018 @ 6 pm
- Stephenson County in Freeport: April 5, 2018 @ 6 pm
- Lee County in Dixon: April 10, 2018 @ 6 pm
- Carroll County in Savanna: April 11, 2018 @ 6 pm
- Whiteside County in Morrison: July 24, 2018 @ 6 pm

Each two-hour forum included SWOT** and asset mapping exercises, as well as a goals and objectives discussion.

Overall, about 140 people attended the county-level forums - roughly 15 to 30 participants at each event. Attendees included K-12 superintendents, community college leaders, municipal and county officials, tourism representatives, and local business owners, among others.

Call for Projects

BHRC solicited projects, programs, and policies from various persons and organizations over the course of the process.

RCEDS Committee, BHRC Staff Meetings and Public Comment

The RCEDS Committee met additional times following the kick-off meeting (on 10/2018, 2/2019, and 5/2019). In April 2019, BHRC opened the CEDS' thirty-day public comment period. On June 3, BHRC's Board approved the new/updated plan.



*BHRC is Northwest Illinois' EDA-designated Economic Development District; it serves Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside counties

**SWOT = Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats



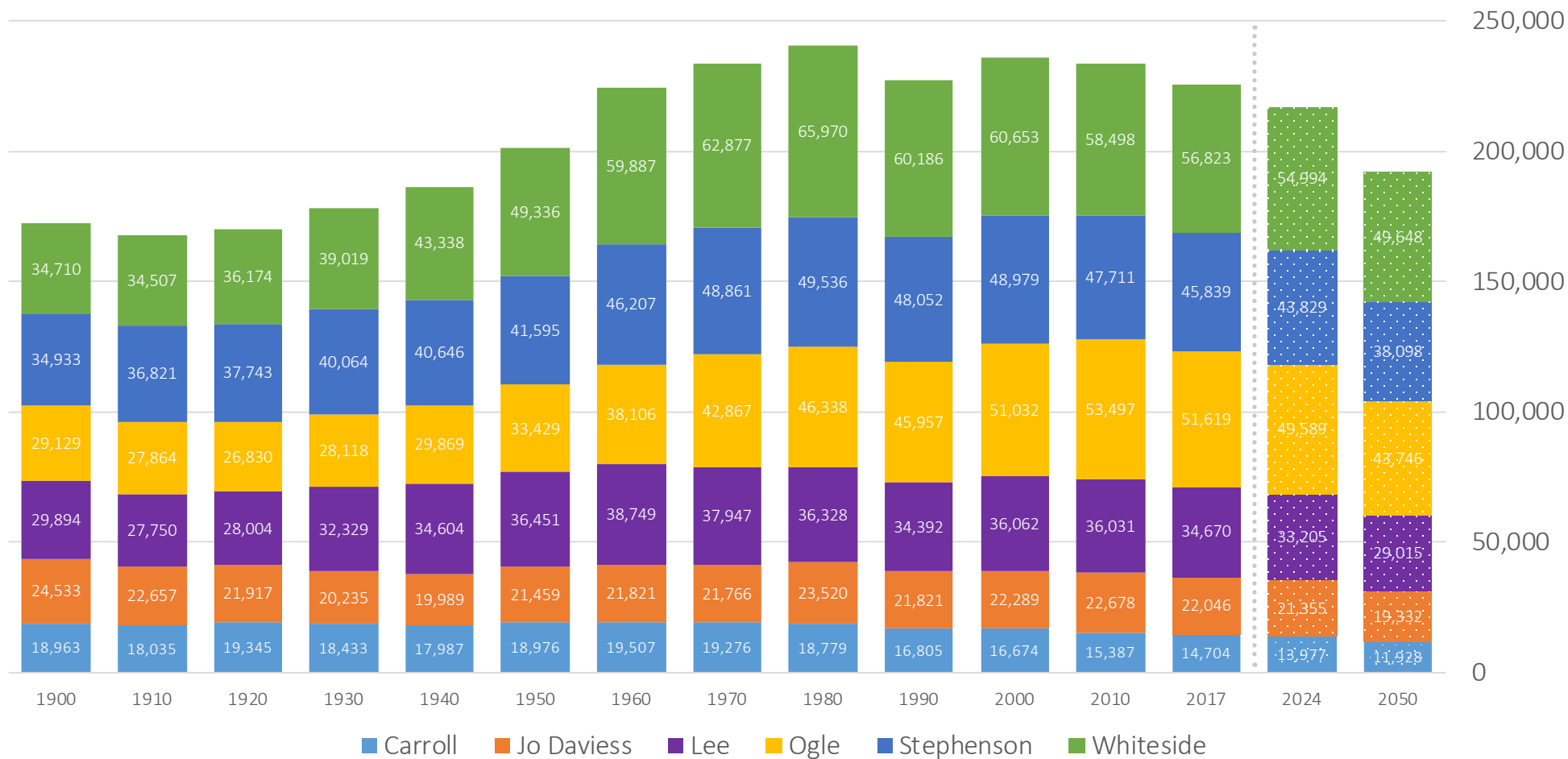
DATA & RESEARCH

BISON ROAMING THE NACHUSA GRASSLANDS - LEE CO.

Population

The combined total population of Northwest Illinois' six counties peaked in 1980, rising to just under 250,000 people. Following 2000, population declined across the region, excepting for slight upticks in Jo Daviess and Ogle counties in 2010. Given domestic migration patterns, an aging population, the trend of smaller family sizes, and barriers to immigration, one might reasonably expect that the combined total population for the region will drift between stagnation and decline in the years to come.

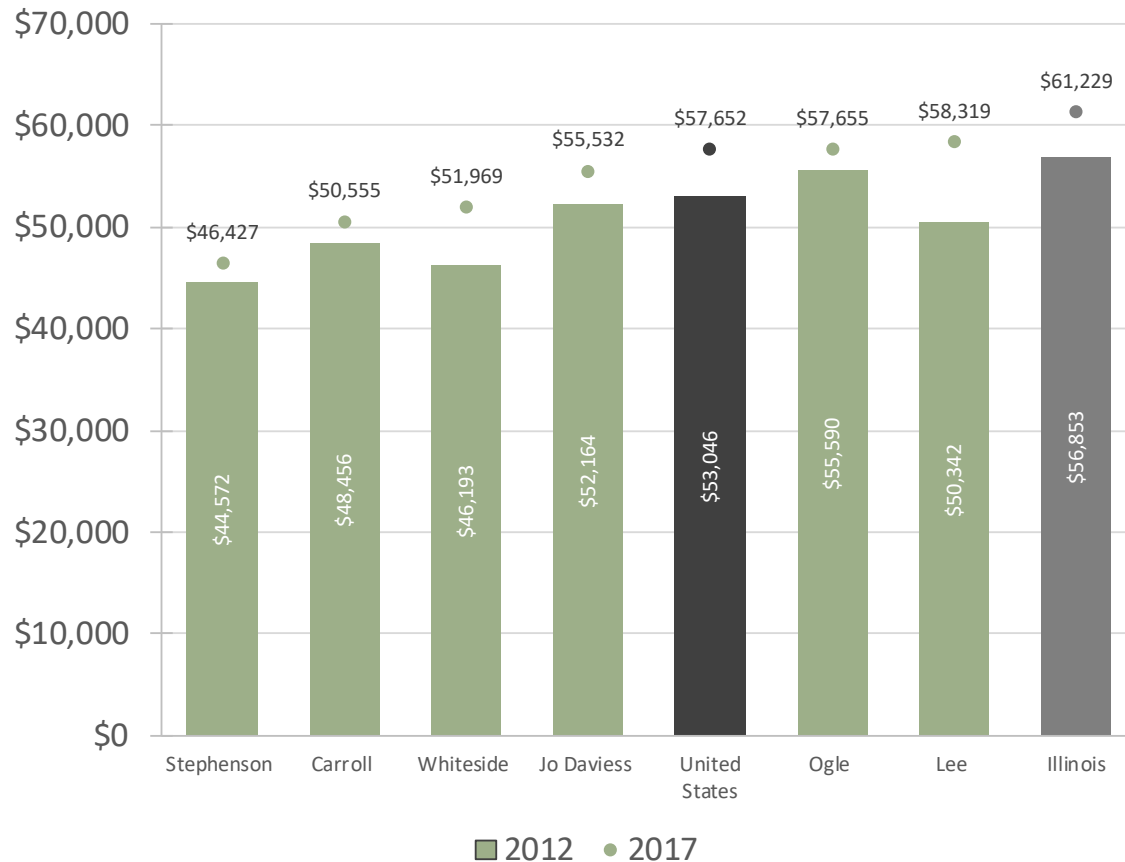
Northwest Illinois - Population: 1900-2017
Projections: 2024, 2050



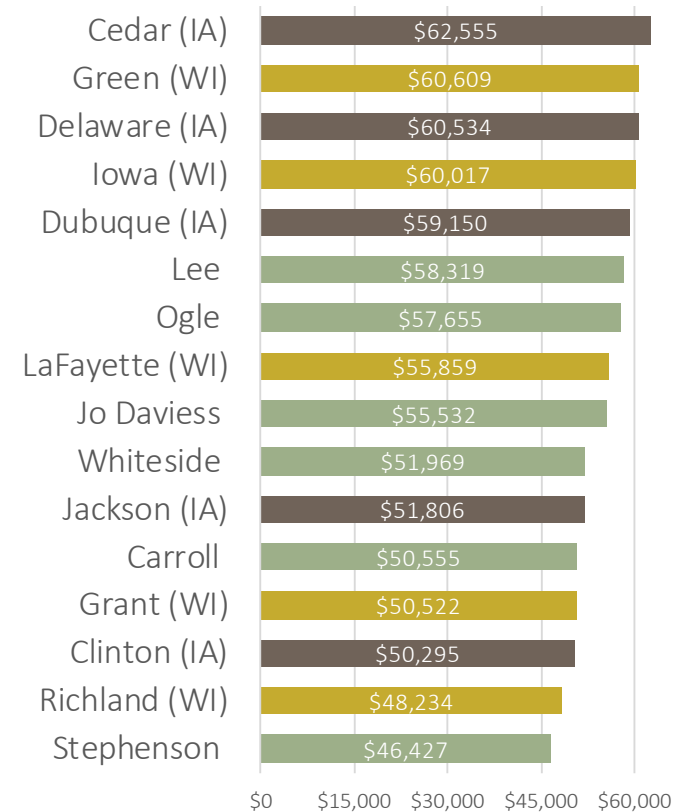
Income

Two-thirds of BHRC Economic Development District (EDD) counties have a median household income (MHI) below \$57,652 (the United States' MHI); all six BHRC EDD counties fall short of Illinois' MHI of \$61,229. When compared with the counties of nearby EDDs in Iowa (ECIA) and Wisconsin (SWWRPC), Lee and Ogle fair the best, ranking sixth and seventh, respectively. Out of sixteen counties, Stephenson County places last. Jo Daviess, Whiteside, and Carroll fall in between (in that order).

Median Household Income



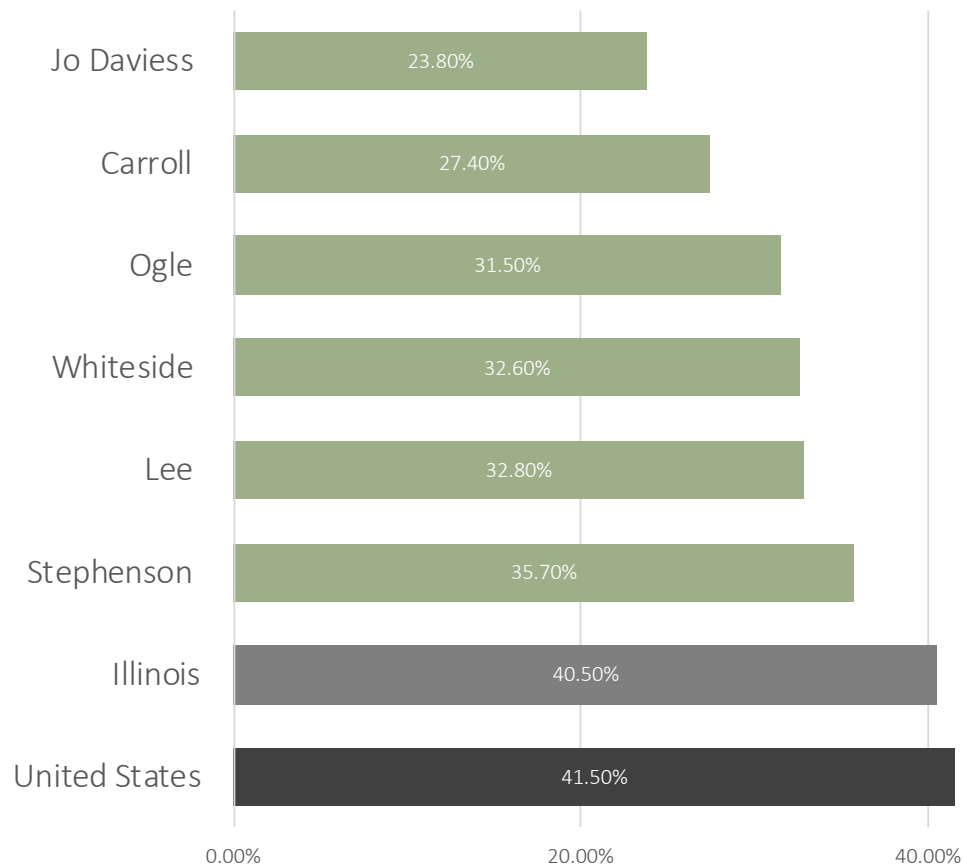
Median Household Income - Tri-State Comparison: 2017



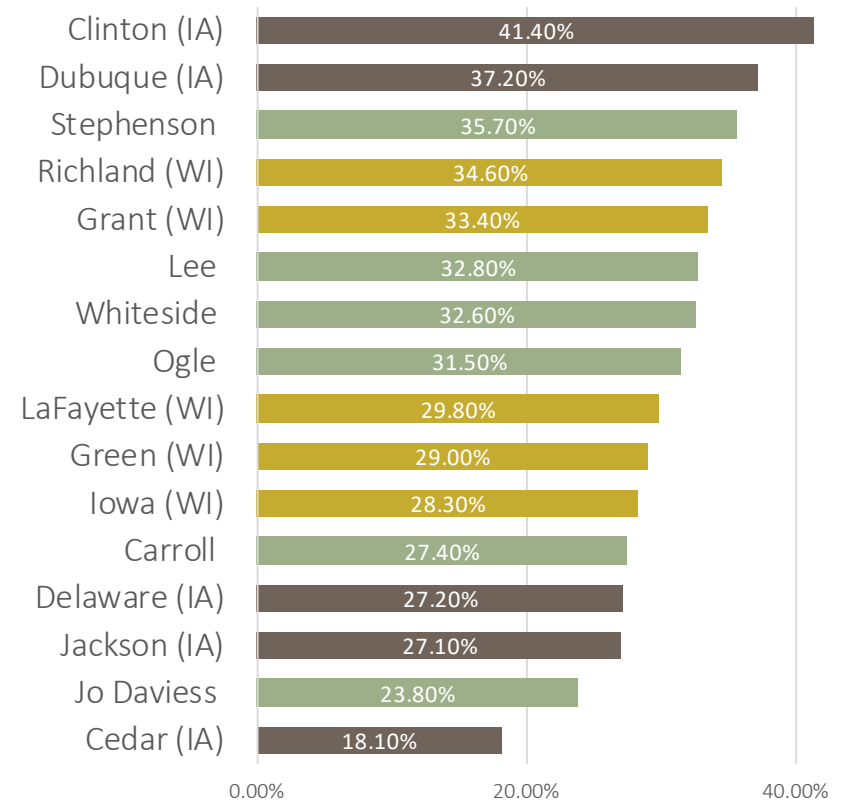
Housing

The US Census defines GRAPI (Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income) as “a computed ratio of monthly gross rent to monthly household income.” Renters in counties with higher GRAPI may have fewer resources to invest in education, pay for childcare, or make any sort of discretionary purchase. While GRAPI is lower in the BHRC counties compared to state and national GRAPI, large fractions of local incomes are still dedicated to rent payments.

GRAPI - 35% or More: 2017



GRAPI - 35% or More -
Tri-State Comparison: 2017



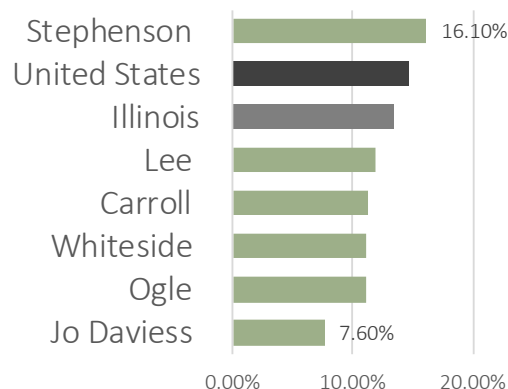
Poverty

Persons and families experiencing poverty are less likely to remain resilient through economic and other disruptions. All BHRC EDD counties (excepting for Stephenson) fare better than the US and Illinois with respect to the percentage of persons below the poverty level (as defined by the US Census).

access to resources, etc.). All BHRC EDD counties, excepting for Stephenson, exhibit comparatively lower percentages of poverty (within the under 18 years old age range) versus the US and Illinois.

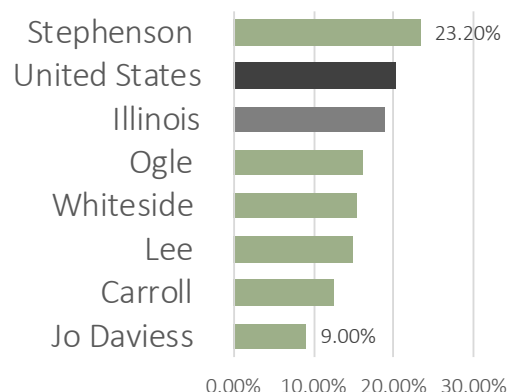
ranks second overall, with Lee, Carroll, Whiteside, and Ogle falling near the middle. Stephenson County ranks last among the sixteen counties compared.

**% Below
Poverty Level: 2017**



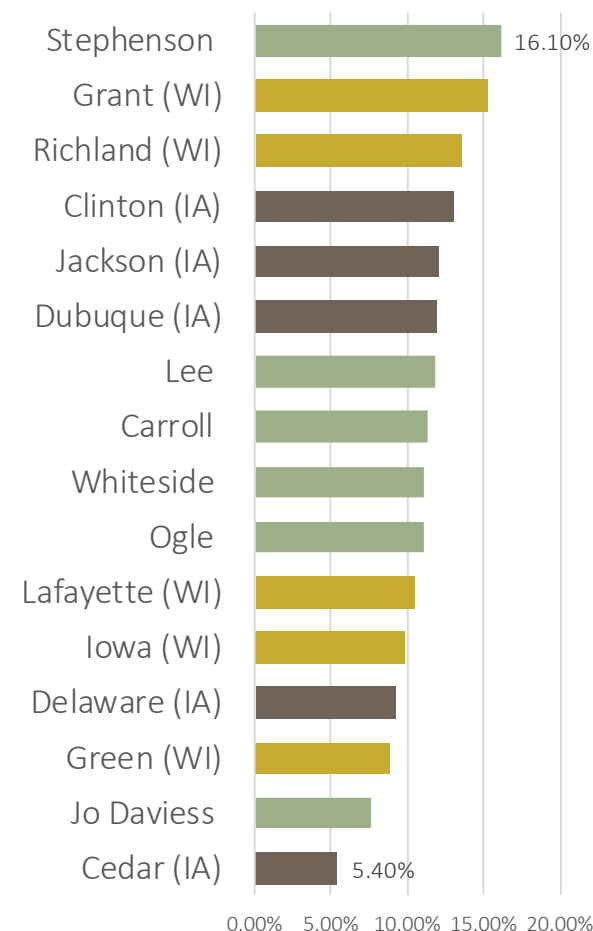
Furthermore, impoverished children are less likely to succeed in school for numerous reasons (hunger, parent availability,

**Under 18 Years
% Below
Poverty Level: 2017**



On the following chart, BHRC EDD counties are compared to the counties of neighboring EDDs in Iowa (ECIA) and Wisconsin (SWRPC). Jo Daviess County

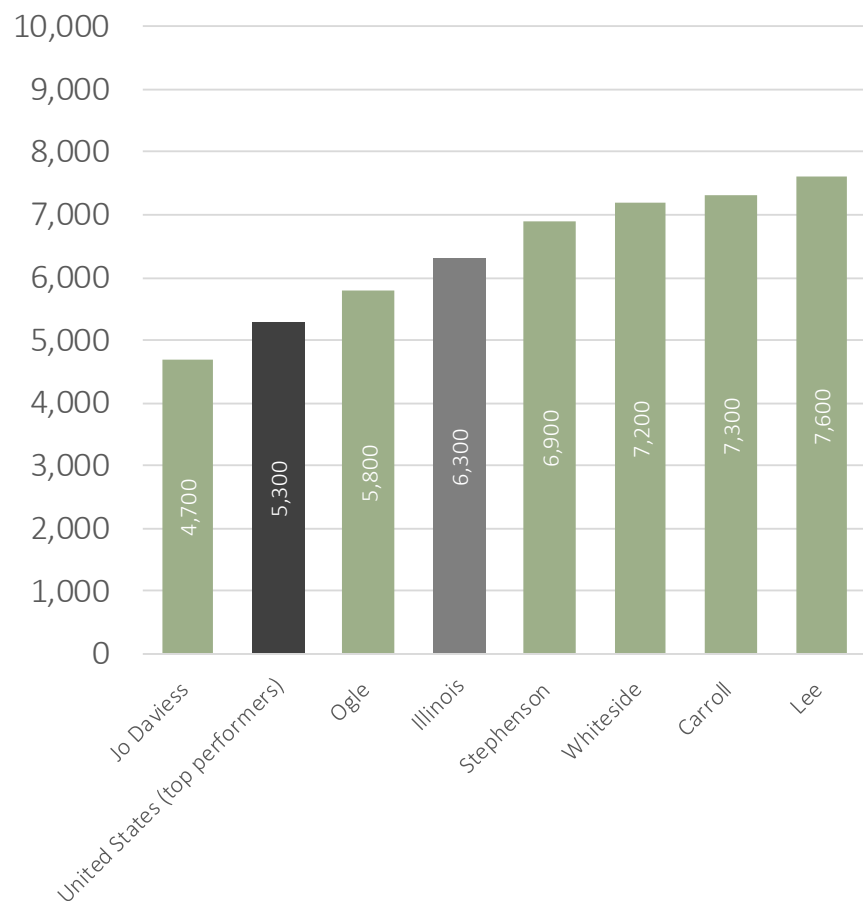
**% Below Poverty Level -
Tri-State Comparison:
2017**



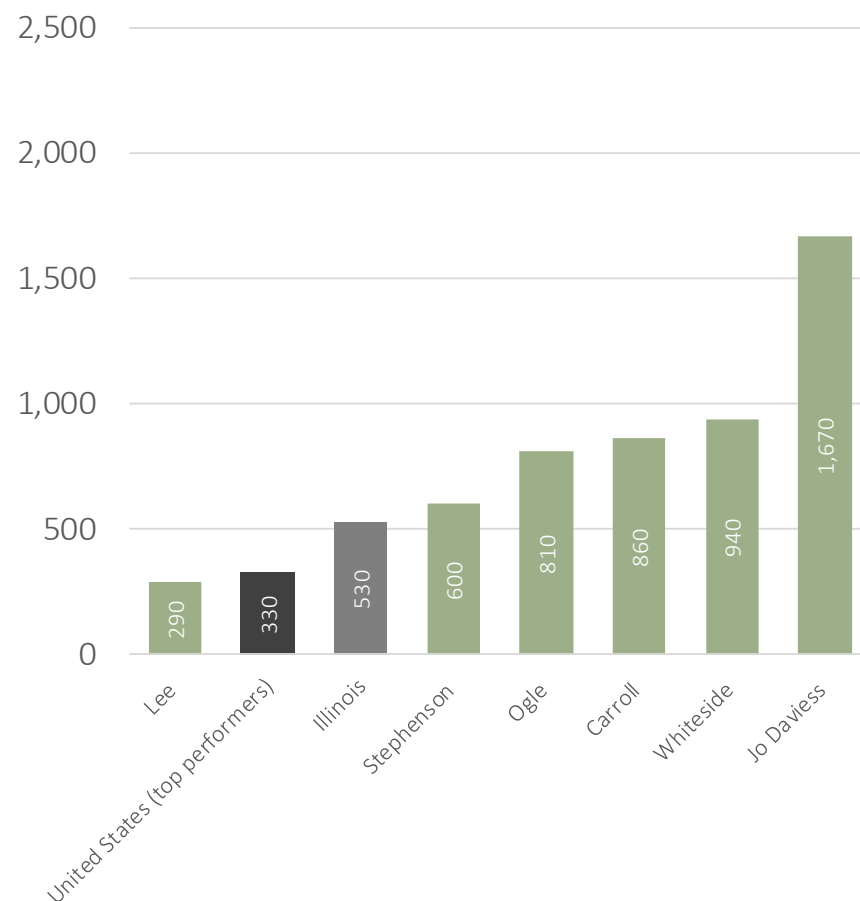
Health

Figures on premature death and mental health are included below. Premature death may be exacerbated by economic conditions. Furthermore, a dearth of mental health providers may reduce the chance that an individual will receive the help he or she needs to thrive and participate in community and family life. When compared (locally or elsewhere), the number of persons per provider in Lee County stands out as highly favorable.

Premature Death -
Years of Potential Life Lost*



Mental Health Providers -
Persons per Provider

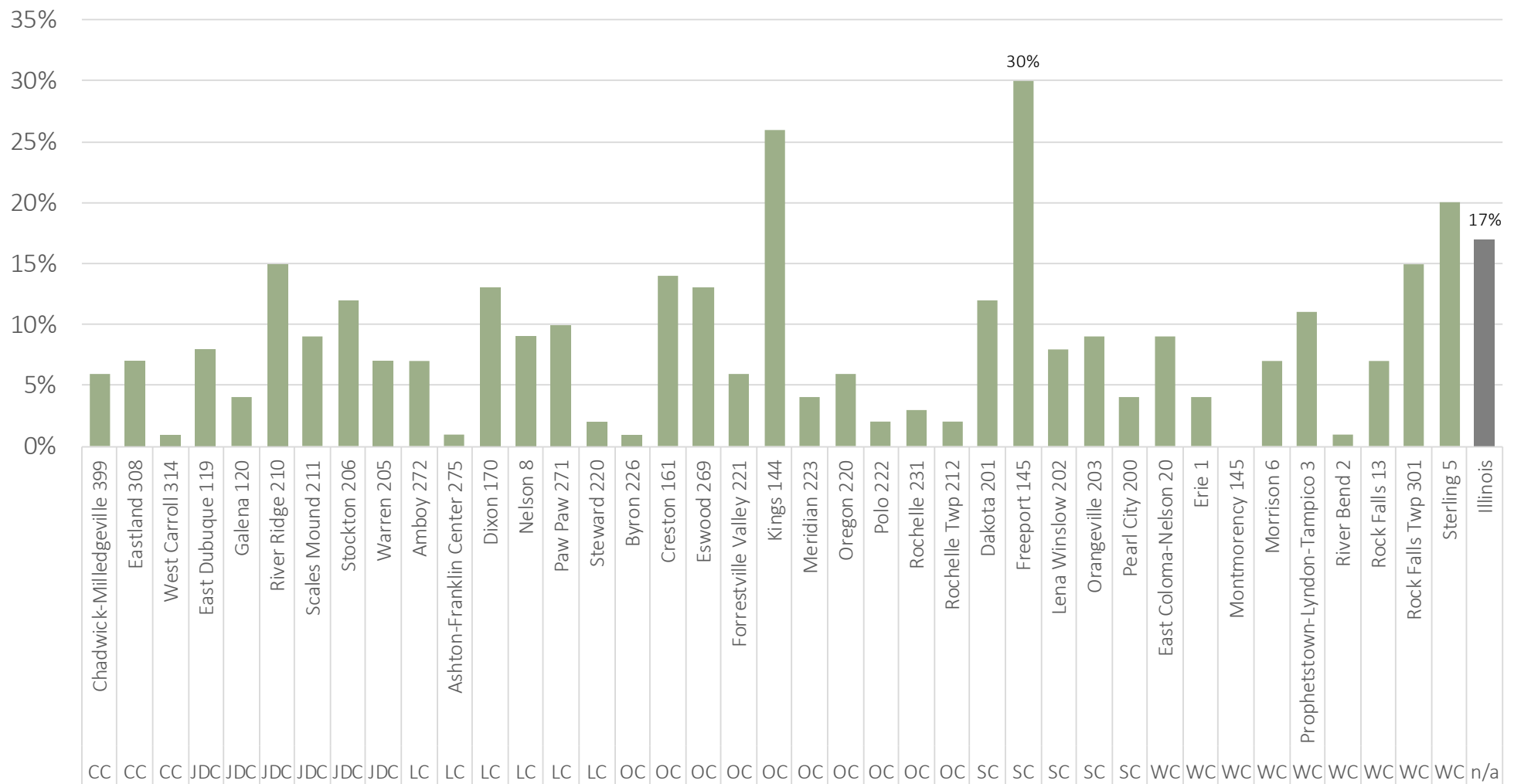


*YPLL emphasizes deaths of younger persons, whereas statistics that include all mortality are dominated by deaths of the elderly... Using YPLL-75, a death at age 55 counts twice as much as a death at age 65, and a death at age 35 counts eight times as much as a death at age 70. - RWJ Foundation

Education

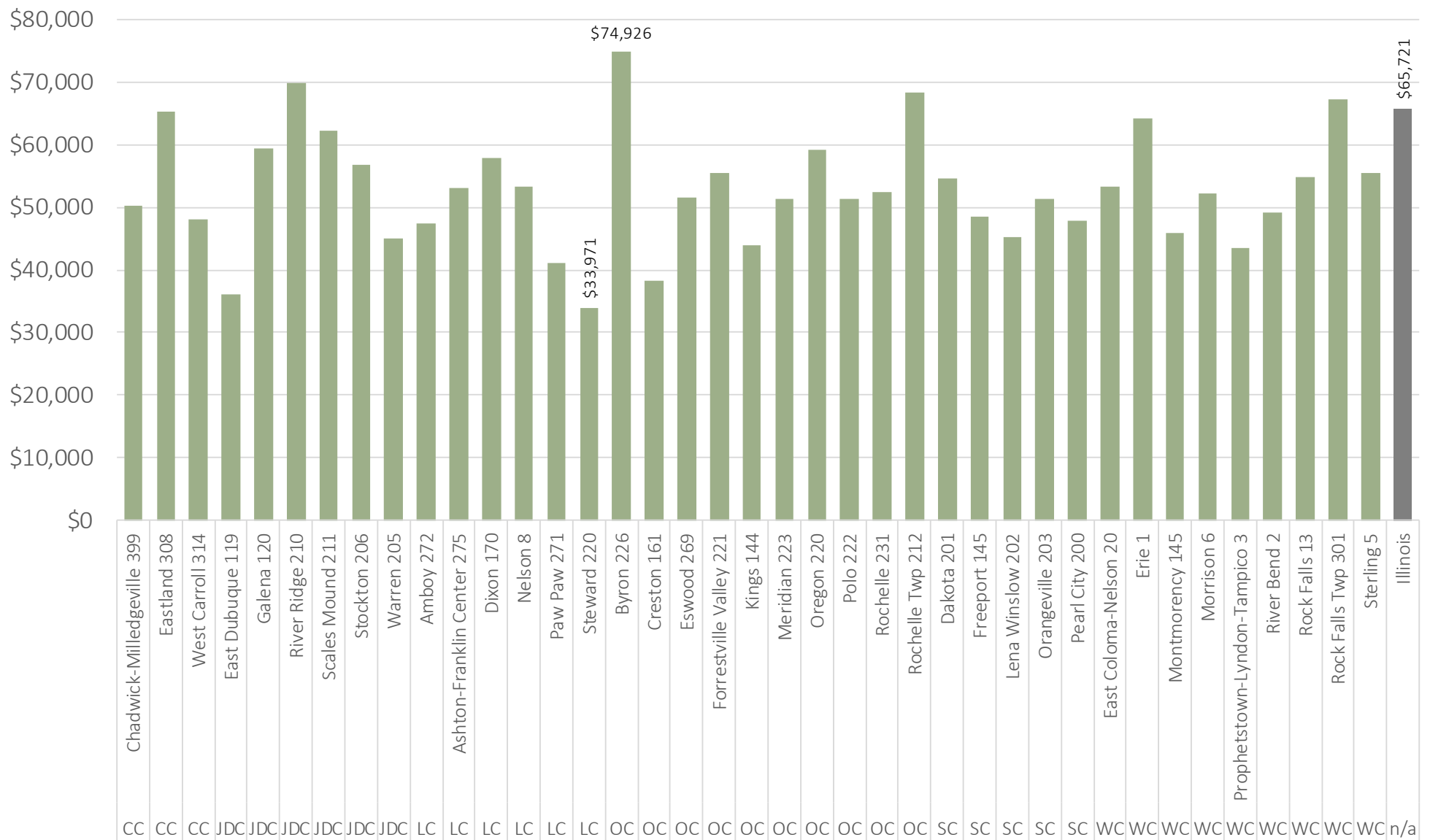
Figures on chronic absenteeism, starting teacher salary, and educational attainment are included here. Chronic absenteeism is important because it may predict future success in higher education, the workforce, and life in general. Additionally, retaining quality educators that children respect requires - among other forms of compensation - paying those educators (and also support staff) well.

Chronic Absenteeism Rate



Although benefits, administrative and peer support, community amenities and support, and other factors influence retention rates, salary is arguably a paramount consideration. Those schools with sufficient resources to pay teachers competitively (teachers that, in turn, would be more inclined to invest in schools and communities) may see students achieve at greater rates.

Average Teacher Salary



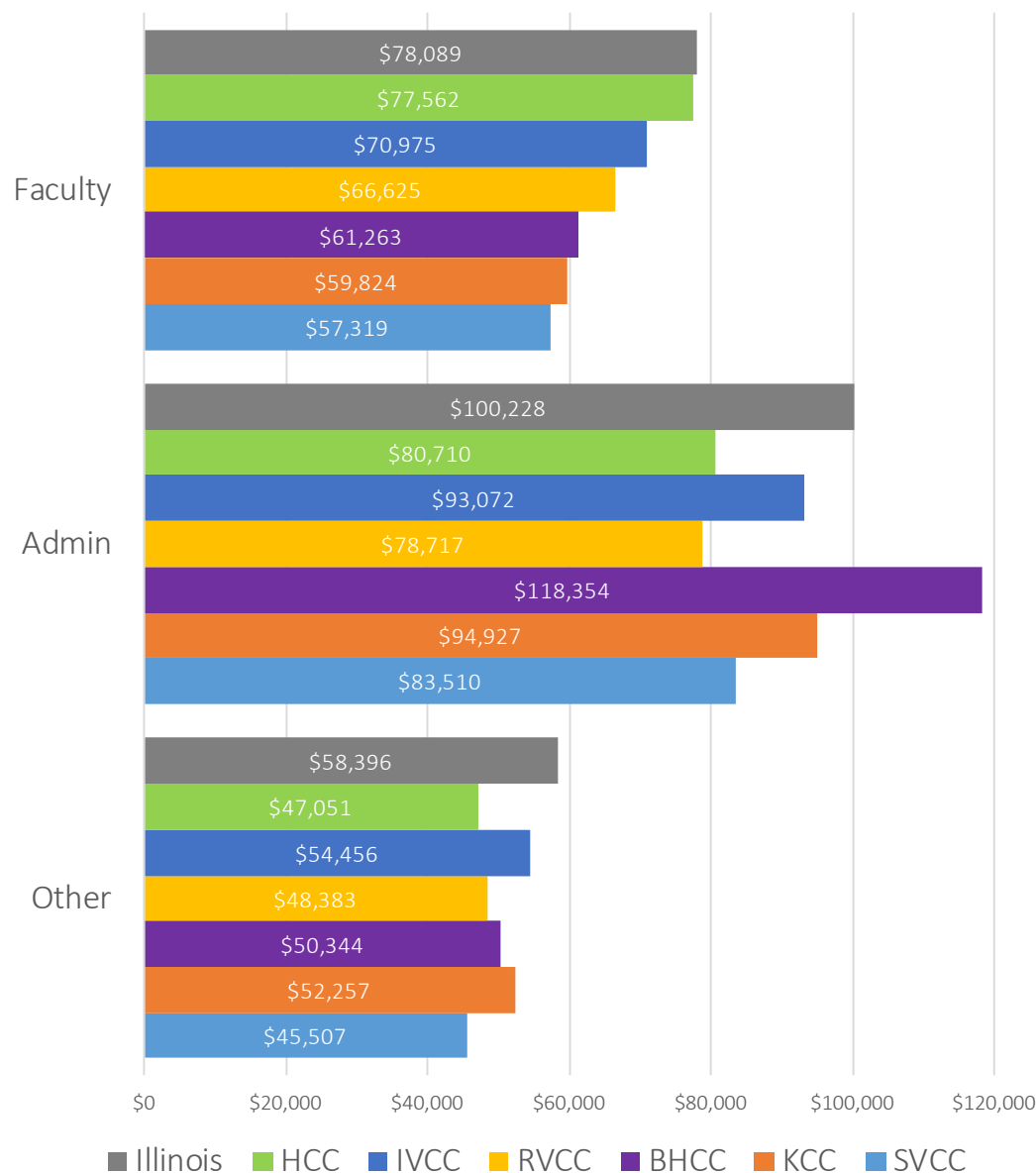
Education (cont'd)

In the first chart, base salaries for community college districts (including the base salaries of faculty, administration, and other employees) are compared. Highland Community College (HCC) appears to offer the most competitive faculty compensation (and its average is only slightly below Illinois' average).

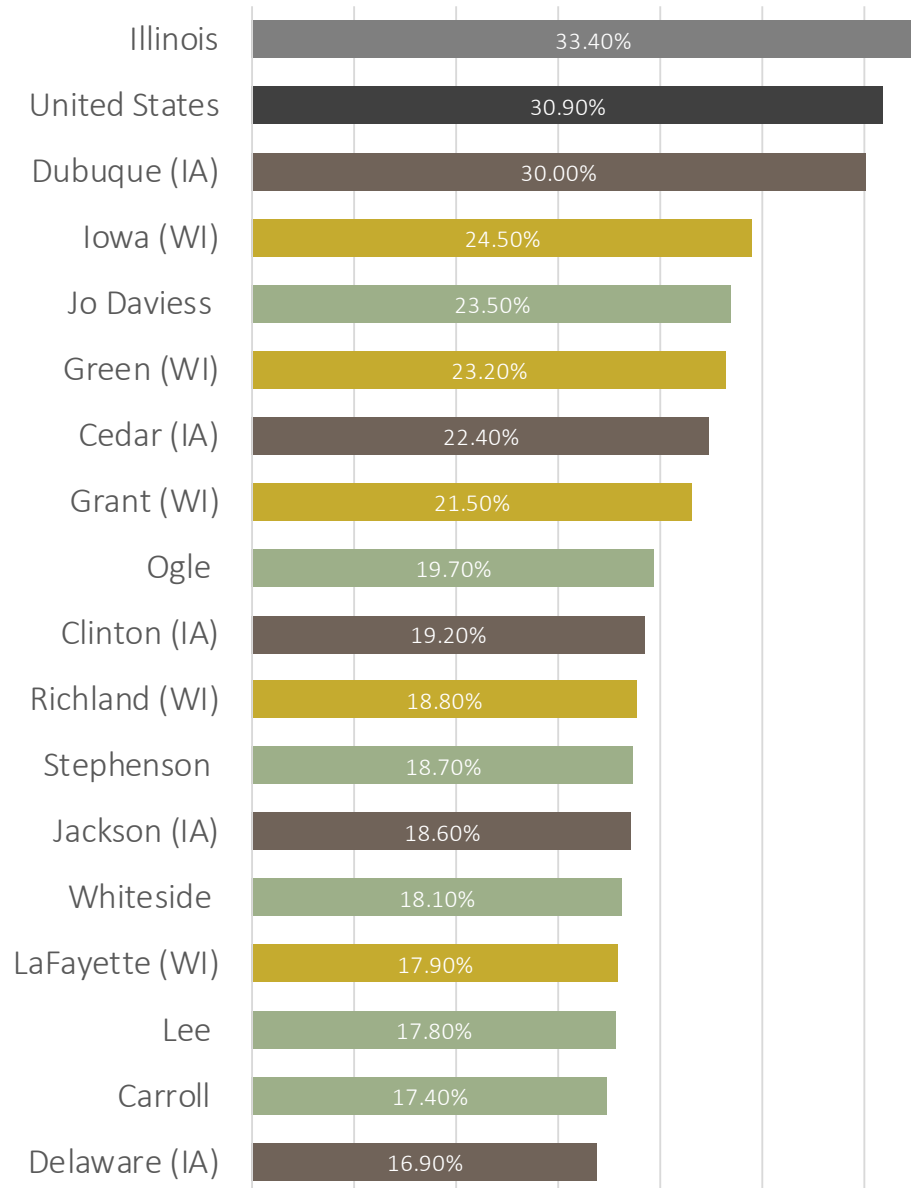
Educational attainment can predict individual success - in school and beyond. While it is important to recognize that the trades and similar career fields have been undervalued by parents and policy makers, one must also acknowledge that individuals with two and four-year degrees or higher (particularly the latter) are still more likely to find higher-paying jobs and maintain financial stability.

The final two charts illustrate that educational attainment is highest in Jo Daviess County, with Carroll County sitting at the bottom for the BHRC EDD Counties.

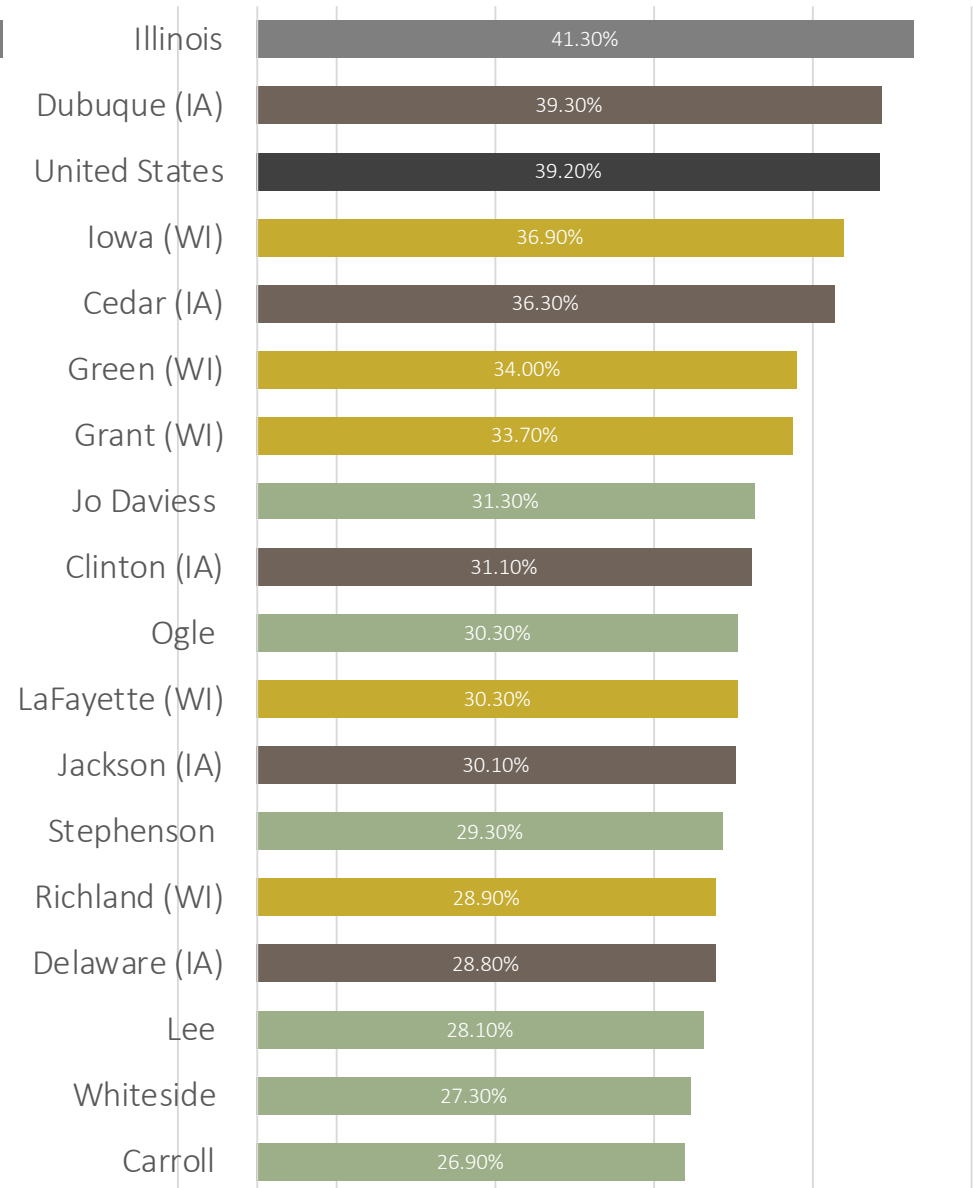
Higher Education - Average Contractual Base Salaries



Educational Attainment - Bachelor's Degree or Higher - Tri-State Comparison: 2017



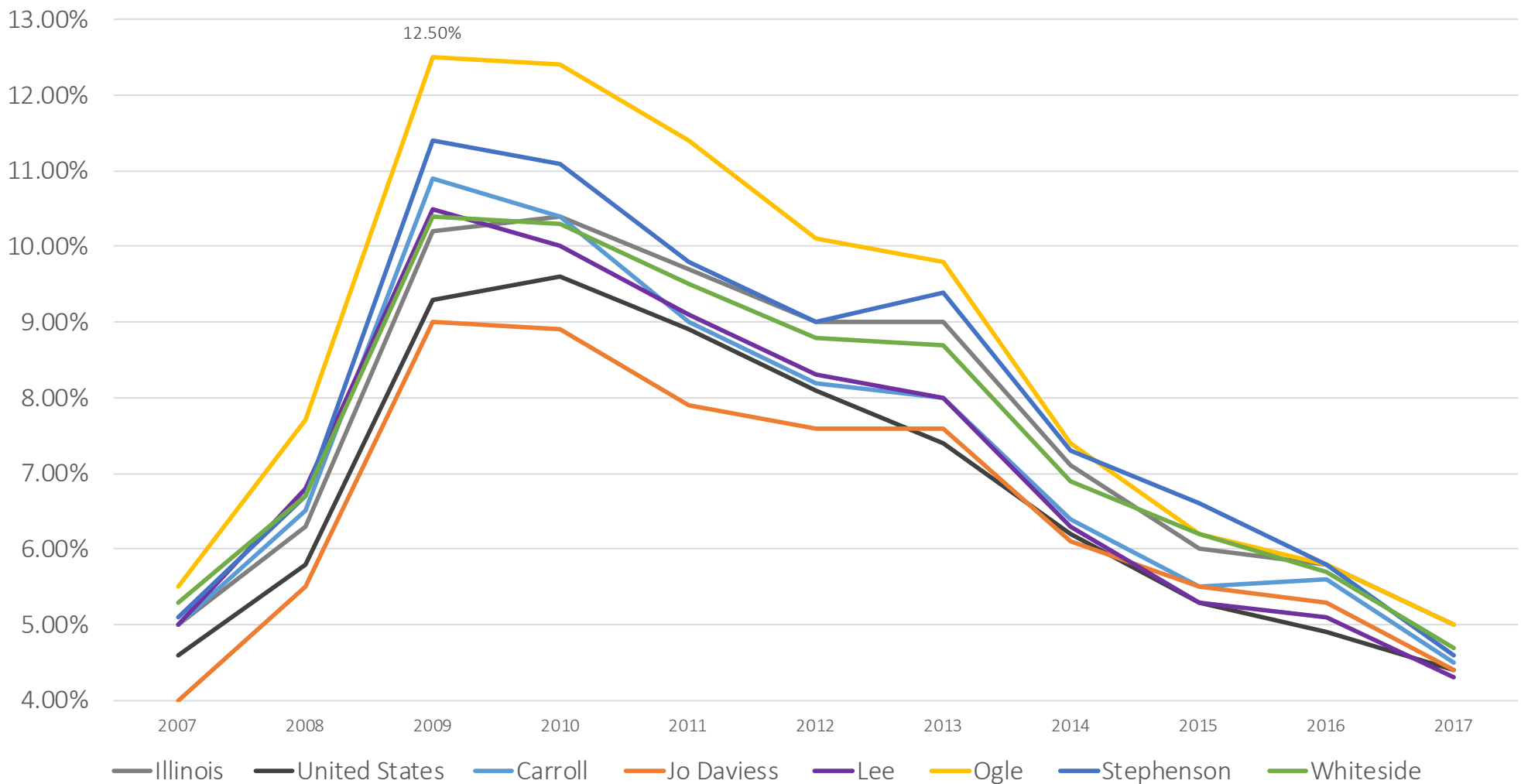
Educational Attainment - Associate's Degree or Higher - Tri-State Comparison: 2017



Workforce

Unemployment rates have returned to pre-recession levels, although the following chart may not fully describe the employment picture. Additional workforce issues in Northwest Illinois include: unfilled job openings, regulatory (or perceived regulatory) hurdles, underemployment, real wage growth, shrinking labor force, immigration/visas, targeted populations (such as the incarcerated), border county issues, etc.

Northwest Illinois - Annual Average Unemployment Rate: 2007-2017



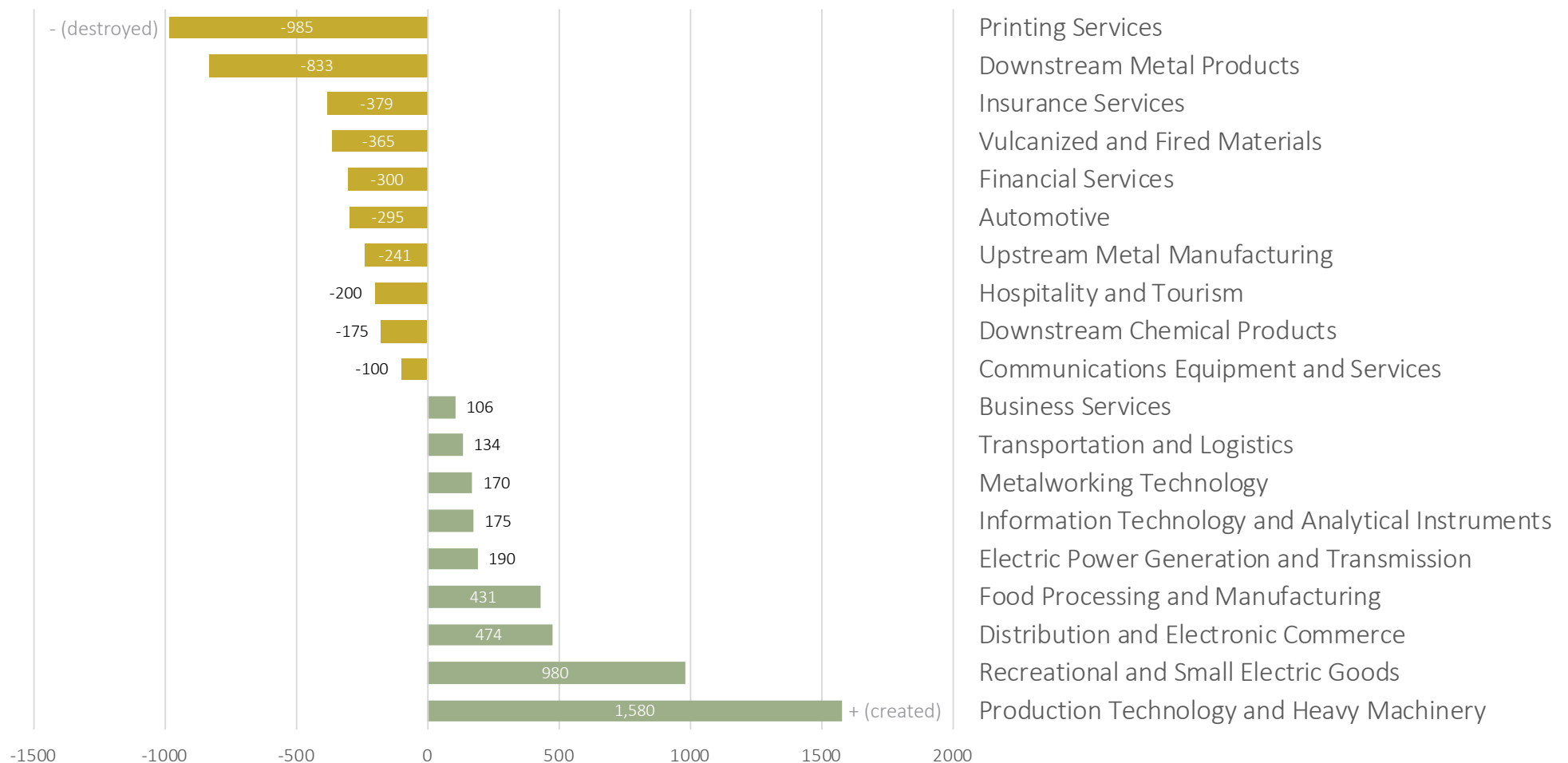
BHRC EDD counties bordering Iowa and Wisconsin have higher percentages of workers commuting outside of their state of residence; nearly 1/3 of Jo Daviess County workers cross state lines to work. And yet, commuters in Northwest Illinois experience shorter mean travel times when compared to commuters across Illinois and the US. Use of public transportation for work is low (perhaps unsurprising in a rural area with fewer options), and work-from-home may be relatively less robust in Whiteside County.

	KEY		% Worked Outside County of Residence	% Worked Outside State of Residence	Mean Travel Time to Work (min)	% Taking Public Transportation	% Working from Home
	Lowest	Highest					
Carroll			31.1%	13.3%	24.7	0.9%	5.2%
Jo Daviess			9.5%	31.4%	21.5	1.0%	6.4%
Lee			38.8%	0.9%	21.5	0.5%	4.2%
Ogle			48.4%	2.2%	26.0	0.3%	5.2%
Stephenson			18.3%	8.5%	20.5	0.5%	5.0%
Whiteside			21.4%	11.1%	19.4	0.4%	2.8%
Illinois			23.3%	3.5%	28.7	9.4%	4.5%
US			23.9%	3.7%	26.4	5.1%	4.7%

Industry

The following Job Creation and Destruction chart illustrates significant disruptions in once prominent industries - such as printing. Furthermore, the hospitality and tourism cluster - an important one for NWIL, actually lost jobs between 2010 and 2016. A somewhat diverse handful of clusters continues to create jobs for the region. Included in this mix are small electric goods, distribution/e-commerce, food processing, and electric power generation/transmission.

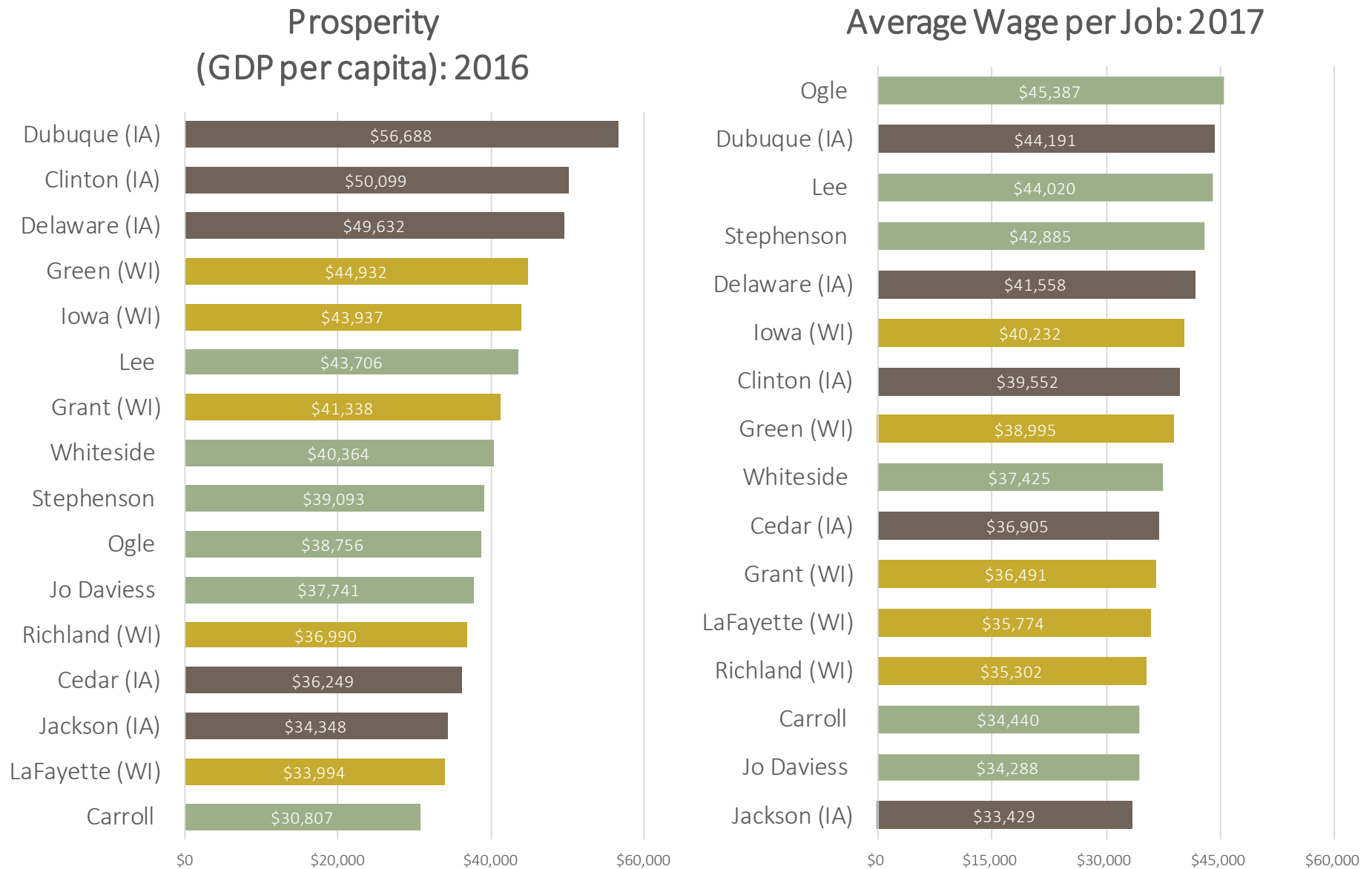
Northwest Illinois - Job Creation and Destruction - 100 or More: 2010-2016



Pg 18 data source: clustermapping.us (note: private employment only)

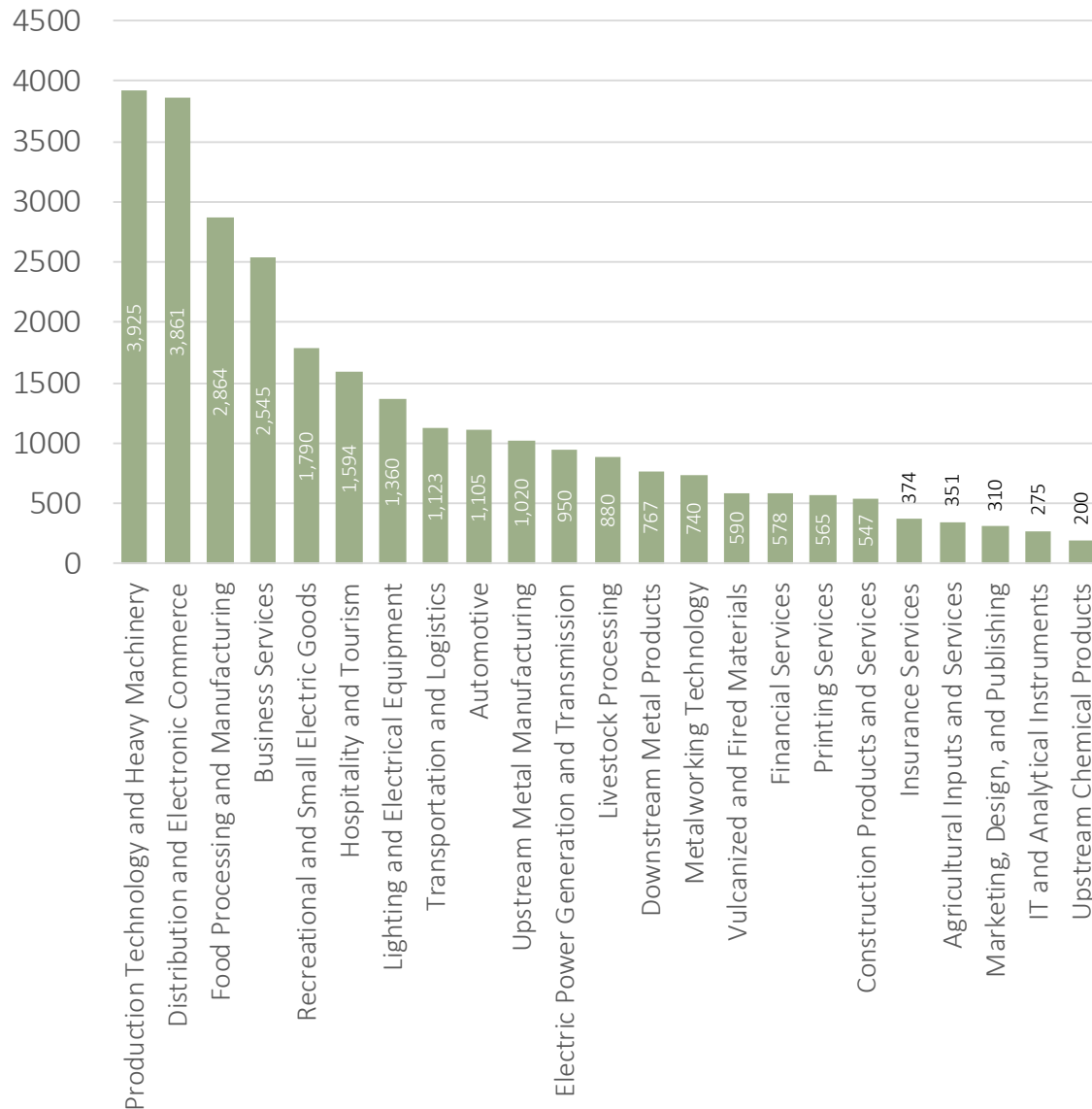
Note: for cluster definitions, see clustermapping.us/content/cluster-mapping-methodology

In NWIL, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita - a measure of prosperity - ranks highest in Lee County and lowest in Carroll County. As concerns wages, Ogle County workers appear to enjoy a higher average wage per job - in fact, higher than any of the sixteen counties compared.



Industry (cont'd)

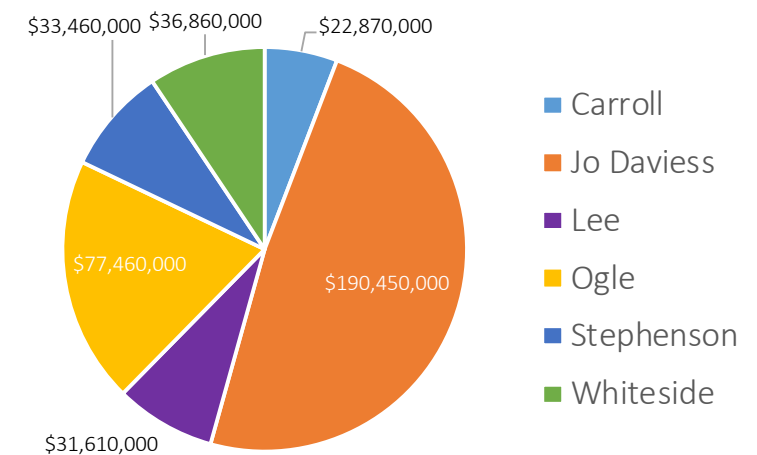
Top Traded Clusters (employment): 2016



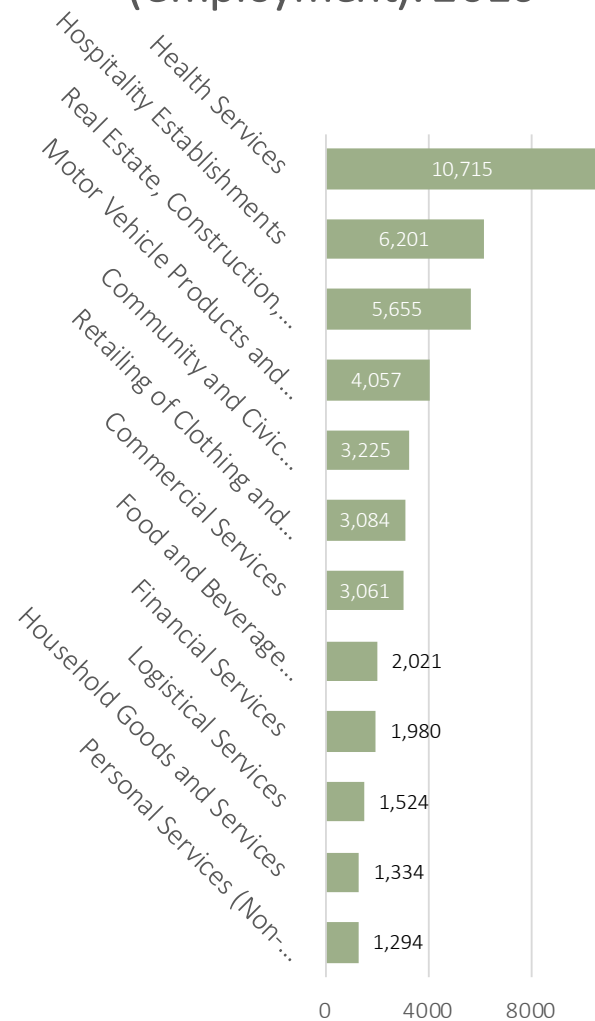
Top traded clusters - by number of employees - are illustrated on the left. The total number of jobs for the top five traded clusters is greater than the remaining eighteen top traded clusters combined (more information on traded clusters is available on page 36)

The following chart demonstrates the financial impacts of domestic travel to the region. Nearly half of the total domestic travel-related monies flowing into Northwest Illinois flowed into Jo Daviess County. Ogle County ranks second, with the other BHRC EDD counties occupying smaller portions of the pie.

Domestic Travel Impact: 2016



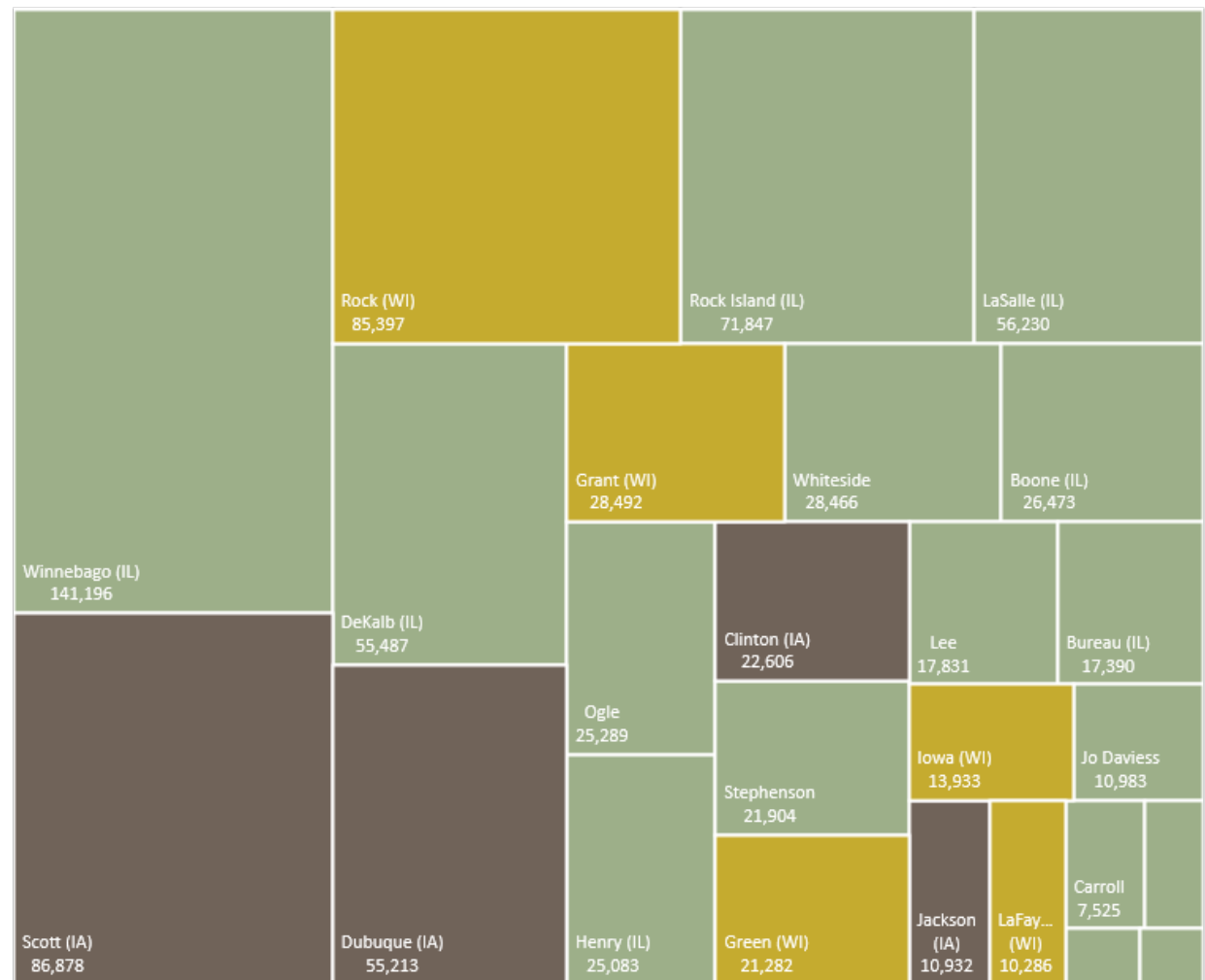
Top Local Clusters (employment): 2016



Top local clusters (again, by number of employees) are illustrated above. Health services has nearly double the number workers as the next highest local cluster - hospitality establishments.

Northwest Illinois' laborshed has a civilian labor force (defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics as the "noninstitutional population ages 16 and older classified as either employed or unemployed") of 851,860 (2018). This laborshed, from which the labor force is counted, includes the BHRC EDD counties, as well as adjacent counties in Iowa, Wisconsin, and elsewhere in Illinois. It is a particular challenge to engage those outside of the counted labor force; however, this engagement becomes more important as the population in the laborshed dwindles.

Northwest Illinois - Laborforce in Laborshed



Infrastructure

Many site selector or company preferences make it difficult for communities to make reasonable uses of resources (for example, by requiring shovel ready, certified land), ensuring up front payments with no guarantee of future investment, let alone fiscal sustainability. In addition, the use of incentives may tie up funding that could otherwise be used to pay for badly needed brick and mortar-type work within the existing community footprint. Furthermore, the State of Illinois faces particular challenges in raising funds for new or existing infrastructure. This places a strain on local governments, who must consider alternative approaches, like public-private partnerships, managed decline/deferral, and other arrangements.

KEY		---- ALL GOVERNMENTS WITHIN A COUNTY ----						
Lowest	Highest	MYP Projects/ Cost in Millions	Structurally Deficient Bridges	Fatal Crashes*	Long-Term Debt/Resident	Spending by Purpose (1st)	Spending by Purpose (2nd)	House Built 1939 or Earlier
Carroll		5 \$1.85	33	3	\$244	Transport & Public Works	Public Safety	37.4%
Jo Daviess		16 \$50.37	30	5	\$311	Transport & Public Works	Public Safety	32.4%
Lee		7 \$8.58	47	8	\$538	Public Safety	Capital	35.7%
Ogle		15 \$22.21	18	7	\$910	Utilities & Sanitation	Public Safety	25.7%
Stephenson		10 \$11.78	27	3	\$432	Public Safety	Health, Housing, & Social Serv.	35.8%
Whiteside		19 \$10.08	24	4	\$457	Health, Housing, & Social Serv.	Utilities & Sanitation	23.0%





SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Currently manageable population decline (most EDD counties)
- Relatively low poverty rates (most EDD counties)

WEAKNESSES

- Median household incomes (MHI) of EDD counties generally below state and national MHIs
- Stagnant/downward trending population totals (all counties and municipalities)

Population & Demographic Trends

- There is time to respond to population/demographic trends and forecasts
- Tools for assessing current states of affairs exist (example: NIU's Local Government Efficiency Assessment Dashboard)
- Contributions by immigrants, visitors, and retirees
- Those native to the region returning to it, including individuals with young families

- Inadequate staffing (causing governmental inefficiencies and service declines, etc.)
- Technological complexity impacting older individuals and businesses
- Board vacancies and volunteer availability
- Lack of leadership expertise, experience, understanding, etc.
- Inflexible or broken international immigration and visa policies

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

STRENGTHS

- Diversity of public and private employers
- Industries with strong connections to local communities
- Productive farmland
- Number two tourism destination in Illinois (Galena)
- Tourism, hospitality, and recreation economies supported by unique architectural, geological, and historical assets
- Attention to economic development not solely focused on attraction (NWILED Build It/Grow It, etc.)
- Cost of moving water and rail freight
- Industry interest in on roll-on/roll-off (RORO), break bulk, and project cargo over water

WEAKNESSES

- Heavy reliance on industries like manufacturing and food processing and, in some locations, tourism
- Monolithic approaches to farming
- Transportation costs and distance from intermodal facilities
- Commuting distance and limited transportation alternatives access
- Lax business-succession planning and implementation
- Open positions outnumber available workers/labor availability
- Informal incentives untied to performance measures or clawbacks
- Cost of moving truck freight
- Unrecovered housing market
- Underdeveloped assets (JoCarroll Depot, etc.)

Workforce & Economic Resiliency

- Retiring Boomers and metropolitan dwellers
- Proximity to major metropolitan regions, including Chicago, Madison, the Quad Cities, and Dubuque
- Alternative energy investments
- Indoor farming, niche farming, local foods (including beer, cider, wine, etc.)
- Hemp and the legalization of other crops
- Urban and suburban consumer habits and preferences

- Local Boomers retiring outside of Illinois
- Out-migration from Illinois in general
- Neighboring state investments in intermodal facilities
- Automation or outsourcing of existing industries
- Newly created blue-collar jobs tend to be lower paying or in lower paying industries (e.g., retail, services, etc.)
- Urbanization
- Border county disadvantages
- Planned and unplanned Mississippi River lock outages
- Lack of parity between states with respect to permitted freight weights and other regulations
- Uncertainties associated with new minimum wage law

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

STRENGTHS

- High quality, modestly priced higher education
- Higher education willingness to retool curriculum
- Community interest and investment in K-12 and higher education
- Entrepreneurship education (CEO program, etc.)
- Collaborative efforts between educational institutions and businesses (MORE, SVCC Multicraft Technology, HCC Hospitality Management, OCUSD 220 Welding Lab, etc.)
- Access to art, music, and other forms of education (at many schools and not-for-profits)
- Access to vocational training in high school
- Investments in technology (Morrison Tech Innovation Center, WACC Machining Tech Center, etc.)
- Leadership and life-long learning classes

WEAKNESSES

- Declining student enrollment
- Educator pay, including starting pay
- Overall educational attainment (with respect to individuals with Bachelor's degrees) comparatively lower than the US or Illinois
- Educational barriers for single and working parents
- Access to a variety of coding and language courses

Education & Leadership

- Renewed focus on alternative career pathways
- Realization of the need to clearly define and develop scientifically-vetted approaches to soft skills transmission

- Failure to recruit and train the next generation of leaders (for government, not-for-profits, business, etc.)
- Failure to introduce alternative career pathways at an earlier age
- Less investment of all-encompassing curriculums (arts, humanities, etc.)
- Reduced state support

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

STRENGTHS

- Access to quality health care/public health services
- Air quality and water availability
- Public access to rivers and some lakes
- Access to fiber optic broadband
- Abundance of state and federal natural assets, as well as local parks, preserves, and natural areas
- Established bicycle/pedestrian trails
- Burgeoning niche retail and farmers' markets
- Compact traditional central business districts
- Well-established professional and community-based arts, culture, and music events or venues
- Proximity to libraries and cultural institutions
- Active civic, fraternal, and other not-for-profit organizations
- Relatively stable geology

WEAKNESSES

- Mixed water quality
- Deferred maintenance within parks, etc.
- Unreliable phone/Internet service in many unincorporated areas and some municipalities
- Fewer mental health resources
- Mixed history of historic preservation
- General community walkability
- Round-the clock childcare availability
- Limited long-term resources for special needs populations
- Poor public service offerings on websites
- Extreme weather events, especially flooding
- Summer education, recreation, and work options/pathways for youth

Quality of Life & Recreation

- Bicycling popularity
- All-terrain/utility-task vehicle popularity
- Interest in alternative living structures, including lower square foot homes
- Increasing number of remote work-based jobs

- Migration to cities, including youth
- Resources unable to keep up with public needs, social service, etc.

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

STRENGTHS

- Primary Highway Freight System (I-39)
- Interstate Highway System (I-88)
- Abundance of Class I railroads throughout the EDD
- Ports and Mississippi River access
- Relatively reliable and affordable electric and natural gas sources
- Relatively affordable housing

WEAKNESSES

- Transportation maintenance funding inadequate
- Distance from intermodal and port facilities
- Idling of significant intermodal ramp (Global III)
- Overabundance of airports
- Funding scarcity for US-20 safety or capacity investments
- No Amtrak access
- Limited consideration for the fiscal impacts of new development
- Sprawling subdivision development adjacent to municipal jurisdictions
- Availability of quality rental and so-called workforce housing
- Abandoned and blighted housing

Infrastructure

- State capital bill
- Compact and conservation subdivision development
- Granny flats and small-footprint single-family housing
- Environmentally responsible and context-aware infrastructure initiatives
- Infrastructure match programs available from IDOT, US DOT, FEMA, etc.
- Development of local plans that are integrated into other local plans and then used in decision-making

- Neighboring state investments in infrastructure, especially transportation (e.g., Iowa)
- Increased cost of public utilities as infrastructure ages out and is replaced
- Failing septic systems

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS



REGIONAL VISION

GRANT PARK OVERLOOK - JO DAVIESS CO.

Vision

*A rural region with resurgent main streets
- one attuned to demographic and
economic change. Its people invest, invent,
and adapt; they live in communities that
support planning, education, businesses
(including tourism), and workers. Projects,
programs, and policies expand and diversify
the region's economy. They also preserve
public health, the built environment, natural
resources, and history, benefitting everyone.
- RCEDS Committee*



RESILIENCY



"Economic resilience (is) inclusive of three primary attributes: the ability to recover quickly from a shock, the ability to withstand a shock, and the ability to avoid the shock altogether." – EDA

Northwest Illinois (NWIL) Resiliency

Meaningful community and economic development support the regional resiliency of people and the places they use. Resiliency that strengthens a community is influenced, in part, by progress stemming from active partnerships, projects, programs, and policies. These "4 Ps" can lead to opportunities created, people supported, and places improved. For instance, imagine a newly established training/mentorship class on entrepreneurship offered by a local community college. This is a program that might encourage startup culture, lead to the creation of previously unimagined jobs, and fill vacant storefront. In this instance, a new idea and home-grown enterprise leads to economic diversification and local ownership, things likely



to help a region weather future economic shocks. Moreover, the progress made towards resiliency may also enhance quality of life, resulting in a future where the regional vision is more thoroughly realized.



STREET CHALKING IN DIXON - LEE CO.

NWIL Scenarios

Resiliency initiatives should be developed by anticipating the future. However, we do not know what the future will bring, only that it will be impacted by the goings on of today. Scenario planning "is a structured way for organizations to think about the future," beginning with a long discussion about how the participants think that big shifts (will impact them, followed by an establishment of priorities) that eventually "form the basis for sketching out rough pictures of the future" ("Scenario Planning," The Economist, 2008). These scenarios imagine different scenes and multiple outcomes for Northwest Illinois. In particular, the "Expanding, diversifying" scenario represents a future that most would prefer. Although this scenario presents its own challenges (say, the need to accommodate more people), inhabitants generally desire to see the region with a stable population, where industry is diversified and the quality of life for all persons is assured.

Expanding, sameness

Regional population is stable
- between 0-1% growth;
outsiders are unwelcome.
Traded industry clusters are

expanding but communities do not plan for Exelon or other plant closures, making the region far more vulnerable to recessions. Independent shops and start-ups are rarer; retirements and private equity acquisitions have eliminated many locally-owned firms and housing. Leadership is stagnant and fixates on pet projects. Despite increased revenues from expanding industry clusters, low-density/decentralized development has depleted communities, resulting in taxes that are both onerous and unable to support existing, let alone new, public infrastructure and services. Having failed to adapt to changing tastes, tourism and recreation industries are in decline.

Expanding, diversifying

Regional population is stable
- between 0-1% growth.
Traded industry clusters
are expanding and the

economy is diversifying. Planning is underway - ahead of anticipated disruptions and anticipated plant closures. Entrepreneurship thrives and is responsible for creating jobs and attracting new talent to the region; outsiders are welcome. Leadership approaches regional and local problems incrementally and constructively, receiving input from diverse quarters. Developers seek to reuse brownfields and infill sites; taxes stabilize. Public officials reinvest in existing buildings and address infrastructure/service challenges bit by bit. Tourism and recreation industries pay attention to regional and nationwide tastes and reinvent themselves accordingly.

Shrinking, sameness

Regional population declines
at a rate of 1-3% or more;
outsiders are unwelcome.
Manufacturing, value-added

agriculture, and transportation/warehousing industry clusters are monolithic and in decline; communities do not plan for Exelon or large-scale plant closures. Independent shops and start-ups are rare; retirements and private equity acquisitions have eliminated many locally-owned firms and housing. Leadership is stagnant and fixates on pet projects. Low-density/decentralized development has depleted communities, resulting in taxes that are both onerous and unable to support existing, let alone new, public infrastructure and services. Having failed to adapt to changing tastes, tourism and recreation industries are in decline.

Shrinking, diversifying

The economy diversifies even
as the regional population
declines at a rate of 1-3% or
more. Planning is underway

- well ahead of anticipated disruptions and anticipated plant closures. Entrepreneurship thrives, although optimal growth is hampered by a shrinking population. Leadership approaches regional and local problems incrementally and constructively, attempting to obtain input from diverse quarters. Developers seek to reuse brownfields and infill sites. Public officials reinvest in existing buildings and address infrastructure/service challenges bit by bit. Tourism and recreation industries pay attention to regional and nationwide tastes and reinvent themselves accordingly, although workforce shortages produce strains.

Key Traded Clusters in NWIL

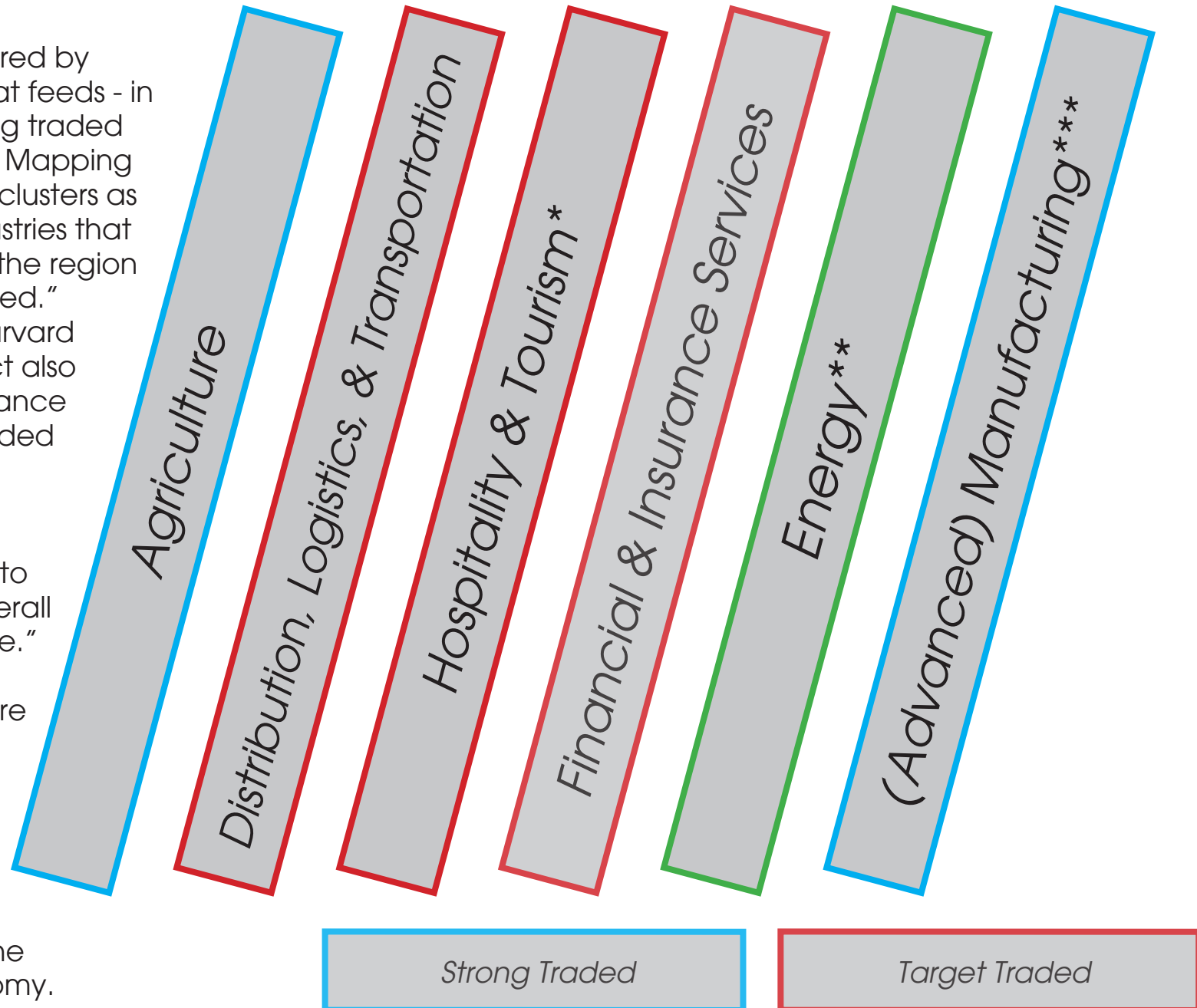
*Including arts, culture, and recreation

**Including renewable energy

***Including aerospace, food processing, etc.

About Traded Clusters

Resiliency is better assured by nourishing the hand that feeds - in particular, by supporting traded clusters. The US Cluster Mapping Project defines traded clusters as "groups of related industries that serve markets beyond the region in which they are located." The EDA-supported, Harvard University-based project also emphasizes the importance of so-called "strong traded clusters," arguing that "without strong traded clusters(,) it is virtually impossible for a region to reach high levels of overall economic performance." The following traded clusters - from agriculture to manufacturing, are critical in the economy of Northwest Illinois - with respect to jobs, wages, the generation of wealth, and diversification of the Northwest Illinois economy.



Note: State of Illinois or other targeted clusters and subclusters may be important to certain localities; exclusion should not necessarily imply unimportance or that a particular industry is not targeted

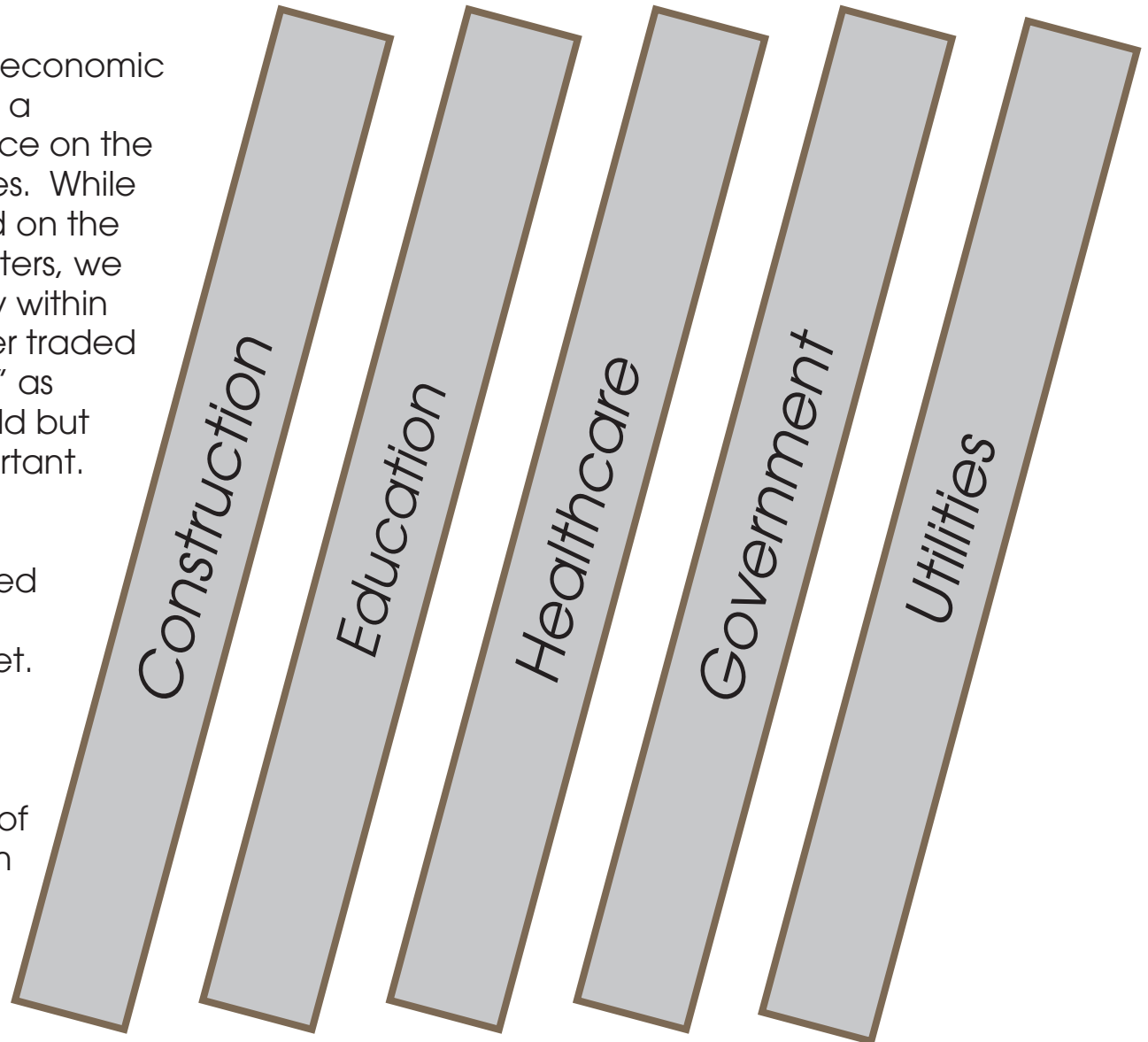
Key Local Clusters in NWIL

Diversifying and Targeting

Agriculture and manufacturing, as economic standouts in Northwest Illinois, have a disproportionate amount of influence on the well-being of our EDD's communities. While it is important for the region to build on the aforementioned strong traded clusters, we also recognize the need to diversify within these groups, as well as target other traded clusters. We define "target traded" as industry clusters with a local foothold but with the potential to be more important.

About Local Clusters

In contrast to traded or strong traded clusters, local clusters "consist of industries that serve the local market. They are prevalent in every region of the country, regardless of the competitive advantages of a particular location... (T)he majority of a region's employment comes from (these)." While typically smaller, local cluster businesses are key to the future of the many who work in them.



Strong & Target Traded

Local



ACTION PLAN

LEGO STRATEGY AT ST. MARY SCHOOL - WHITESIDE CO.

Action Plan

Principles

The following principles should guide Northwest Illinois stakeholders with respect to the establishment of projects, programs, and policies for the region:

"When people (muse) about traveling to the past, they worry about radically changing the present by doing something small, but barely anyone in the present really thinks that they can radically change the future by doing something small." - Unknown

Goals and Objectives

This portion concerns itself with aspiration and execution. Generally, goals establish rough aim towards desirable outcomes; objectives are pulls of the trigger. The latter tends to be tangible and the former less so.

In summary, NWIL's CEDS goals for the next five years are:

1. Position & promote Northwest Illinois as an interconnected region
2. Preserve, expand, & invest in the workforce
3. Preserve, expand, & diversify the local economy
4. Support & develop initiatives that enrich quality of life for all persons

The above build on previously established CEDS goals, while also better encapsulating the region's needs and wants.

1

Investment Prioritization...

Our communities have limited resources. Avoiding complacency, we must start with smaller bets and investment incrementally

2

based on Planning...

Professional planning, supported by public participation, is key. Plans should be comprehensive and interconnected.

3

leading to local and regional Resiliency...

The region should exhibit some measure of independence without forgoing opportunities for support or partnerships.

4

and Opportunity for all persons...

Including for white collar and blue collar, haves and have nots, young and old, new and established, and so on.

Goal 1

Position & promote Northwest Illinois as an interconnected region

Who are we? What can we do together?

Summary: *gaining traction (in the national media, on the pages of niche publications, among site selectors, etc.) as a single municipality or lone county is an arduous enterprise. With the exception of Galena, few places in Northwest Illinois have name recognition beyond the EDD. Consequently, it seems advantageous to approach certain challenges cooperatively, as well as balance competing needs and wants. At the same time, stakeholders must continually recognize the unique contributions and needs of local populations, especially the underserved.*

"You wouldn't have won if we'd beaten you."

- attributed to Yogi Berra

1. Establish what makes Northwest Illinois unique

- Do so within the geographic scope of the EDD
- Identify key places, corridors, identities, etc.
- Develop a consensus among stakeholders about what cooperative initiatives are desirable and merit prioritization

2. Brand Northwest Illinois apart from other regions

- Explore identity concepts and naming conventions, such as brands built on "Chicago Metro West" or "Galena Country"
- Identify whether subregions or multiple tiers of branding could/do exist and can be marketed
- Connect the region through various means, including coordinated ad buys, wayfinding, etc.

- Balance use of local and regional brands

3. Become a tourism-ready region

- Explore what it means to be a tourism-ready region
- Create a tourism-ready region implementation plan

4. Schedule events that promote networking and relationship-building

- Continue to partner with neighboring EDDs, Tourism Bureaus, Economic Development Organizations, Regional Planning Organizations, Resource Conservation & Development Councils, and other local partners on project, program, and policy development
- Host roundtables, workshops, and summits that address the region's issues

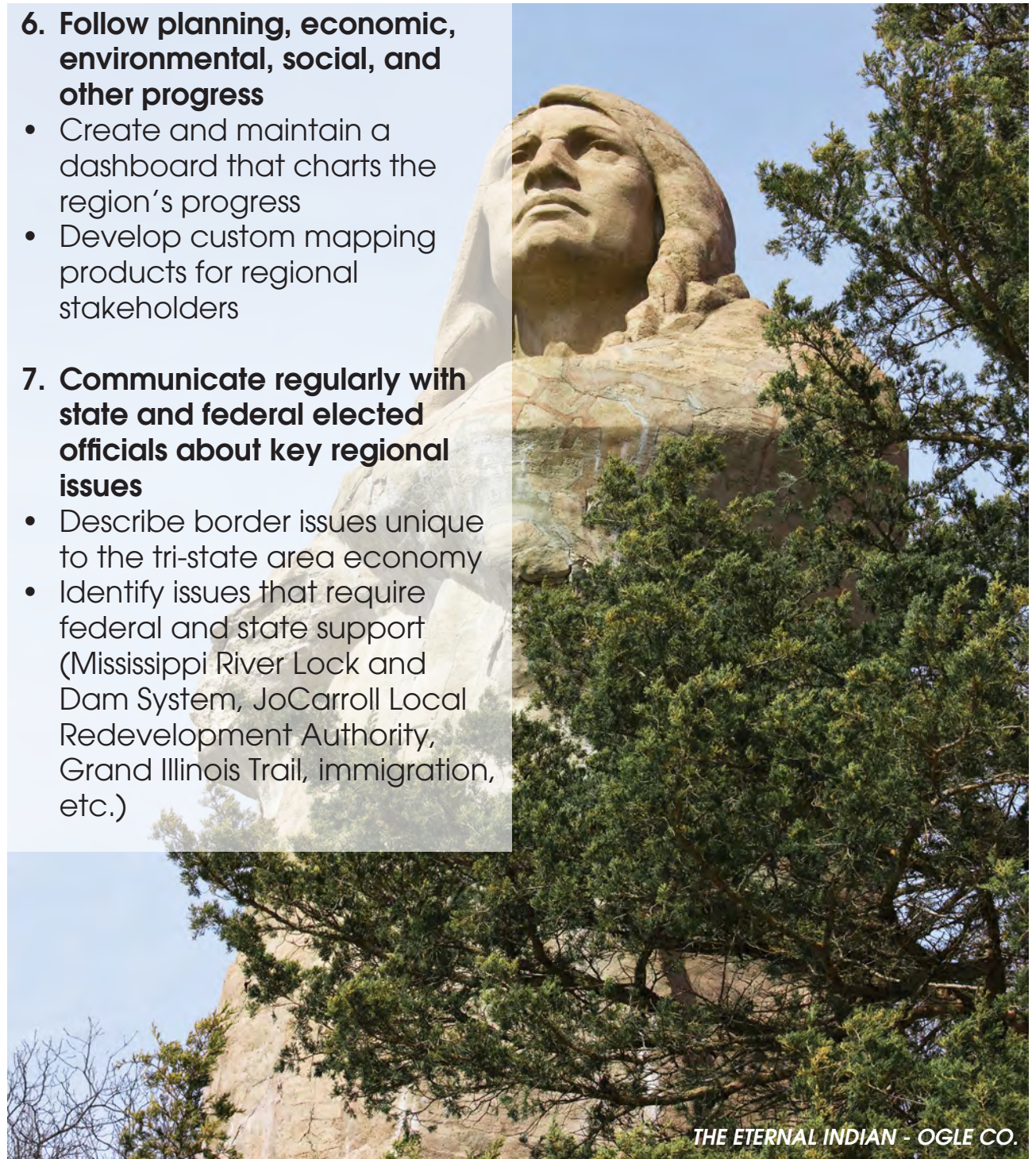
- * When appropriate, use existing planning frameworks and national programs for support (examples include Orton's Community Heart and Soul, EPA's Smartgrowth programs for rural areas, Purdue's Strategic Doing, etc.)
 - Work closely with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Department of Transportation, US Bureau of Prisons, and other key state and federal agencies to address challenges that single jurisdictions cannot take up alone
- 5. Discourage race-to-the-bottom approaches to economic development**
- Establish intergovernmental agreements or memorandums of understanding that cover permitted activities and blacklist others (including between BHRC EDD counties)
 - Work with border counties and states to do the same (including with counties in Iowa, Wisconsin, and elsewhere in Illinois)

6. Follow planning, economic, environmental, social, and other progress

- Create and maintain a dashboard that charts the region's progress
- Develop custom mapping products for regional stakeholders

7. Communicate regularly with state and federal elected officials about key regional issues

- Describe border issues unique to the tri-state area economy
- Identify issues that require federal and state support (Mississippi River Lock and Dam System, JoCarroll Local Redevelopment Authority, Grand Illinois Trail, immigration, etc.)



THE ETERNAL INDIAN - OGLE CO.

Goal 2

Preserve, expand, & invest in the workforce

*From where will the
workers come?*

Summary: achieving economic resiliency through commercial and industrial diversification is a difficult task to accomplish without laborers or entrepreneurs. Additionally, present day low unemployment rates (ranging, in the six EDD counties in 2017, from a seasonally adjusted 4.3% to 5.0%) have strained the region's human resources departments. Workers with technical skills are desirable but often difficult to find. Locally-grown businesses may especially struggle with recruiting highly-desirable prospects. Although technological innovations will undoubtedly re-shape employer needs, gaps in labor availability require filling now. Some efforts

"Lower unemployment rates are... good news. But the problems with the labor market run deeper, and must be addressed if our economic fortunes are to be seriously improved." - Krause & Sawhill, Brookings

are underway to retain students, educate and train apprentices, and recruit workers with less traditional backgrounds. Moreover, the region's workforce stakeholders recognize the prominent position that education - in partnership with government, business, labor, etc. - occupies. Importantly, many also realize that wages and benefits may not always meet worker expectations or even basic needs, given commuting distances and other considerations. Any actions taken must be mindful of both employer and employee needs.

1. Promote workforce continuity planning

- Identify likely skills gaps arising in the wake of Baby Boomers and GenXers exiting the workforce

- Develop worker recruitment, retention, and advancement guides/templates
- Encourage businesses to create vertical and horizontal pathways for workers



2. Accommodate and support various populations attempting to enter the workforce

- Study obstacles to hiring the formerly incarcerated, special need individuals, veterans, etc. (targeted populations)

- Enumerate barriers to women to participating in the workforce, especially in manufacturing and the trades
- Understand the needs of trailing spouses, children, etc.

3. Review institutional programs

- Assess educational/training programs with respect to current workforce needs
- Track apprentice and graduate experiences

4. Identify workforce issues in arts, culture, recreation, hospitality, and tourism industries

- Profile workers in low-wage professions or seasonal jobs

- Help workers and businesses become tourism-ready using tools like the Disney Institute's Be Our Guest training program

5. Research the impacts of financial and non-financial factors on job performance and employment longevity

- Study wage/benefit issues, non-wage/benefit issues (like childcare and healthcare access, transportation availability, flexibility, workplace environment, etc.)
- Quantify/describe under-employment and open positions within the laborshed

OPEN SESAME DAYCARE - LEE CO.



6. Increase childcare access

- Report on the state of childcare within the region
- Identify obstacles (e.g., regulatory, cost, etc.) to providing high-quality childcare access

PETER PAN AT TIMBER LAKE PLAYHOUSE - CARROLL CO.



7. Strengthen ties between students, educators, employers, and labor

- Support worker-student exchange platforms/programs (like MORE)
- Develop career pathways and talent pipeline initiatives (including the Rapid Talent Pipeline Initiative)
- Review available certificates, endorsements, and other evidences of skill, etc.

- Use existing toolkits to build relationships between community colleges and industries, such as those provided by Brookings

8. Promote continuing education within the workforce

- Develop programs that appeal to workers of all ages, incomes, and experience levels
- Identify the traits of successful human resources departments in rural areas and disseminate best practices
- Expand use of Incumbent Worker Training and related programs

9. Tap workers with specialized experience or knowledge

- Recruit retirees to mentor students, apprentices, employees, and C-suite executives
- Encourage retirees to participate in workforce planning

10. Develop programs for work-capable individuals who are not in the labor force

- Encourage employers to sponsor employee participation in drug rehabilitation programs
- Work with minimum security correctional facilities to train currently incarcerated individuals through work release programs

11. Improve access to housing and transportation/transportation alternatives

- Encourage housing investment near jobs or transportation facilities
- Review rideshare/carpooling models in use by local industry and other rural regions

- Invest in non-motorized amenities and facilities that connect employers, educational institutions, and commercial/retail districts
- Bridge cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure gaps in the existing transportation system

12. Prepare youth for work

- Quantify/qualify grades 7-12 participation rate in summer jobs and volunteer activities, noting obstacles to participation
- Solicit grant assistance to create work study-like summer employment opportunities

BETHEL CHURCH VOLUNTEERS - LEE CO.



- Create opportunities for youth to participate in workforce planning
- Review and expand art, ag, and vocational programming
- Acknowledge the limitations of retention strategies

13. Detail methods of incorporating a diversity of peoples, including immigrants

- Identify barriers to various populations' involvement in NWIL community life and economic opportunities
 - * Further identify barriers to immigrant integration at the level of education, industry, and neighborhood
- Quantify/qualify the impacts of immigrants within the local laborshed
- Determine the need for H1-B, H2-B, and other visa holders
- Identify barriers and effective approaches to international recruitment

14. Define soft skills and identify gaps

- Follow research on soft skills
- Use scientifically-vetted literature to enumerate and address soft skills gaps

15. Research temporary employment

- Characterize the use of temporary employment and its impacts on workers, businesses, and government

DE IMMIGRANT WINDMILL - WHITESIDE CO.

Goal 3

Preserve, expand, & diversify the local economy

How do we nurture what we have? How much is too much?

Summary: cluster preservation and expansion is essential to Northwest Illinois' economic health (in the past, agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism-related industries have been particularly important to the six counties). However, regional resiliency also requires economic diversity - and not necessarily the sort achieved through business attraction. In a reality where resources (time, money, etc.) are limited, local leaders should work to prioritize efforts aimed at retention, expansion, and entrepreneurship (including start-up) over attraction.

"They haven't got to take what we make and somebody else will beat us, and we will lose our trade."

- John Deere

1. Build on existing industry

- Continue to identify Northwest Illinois' top industry clusters for retention and expansion
- Review trends within identified clusters and industries
- Note second-stage businesses willing to expand
- Quantify/qualify business needs and wants through the CORE program
- Train CORE interviewers using DCEO-provided resources
- Identify public investment needs (e.g. transit/ transportation, education, social services, recreation, etc.) based - in part - on employer input
- Assess both public and private utility deficiencies and opportunities for investment
 - * Communicate community and industry needs to ComEd, Nicor Gas, etc.



WORKING AT WAHL CLIPPER - WHITESIDE CO.

2. Promote business succession planning

- Note businesses that might benefit from continuity planning
- Identify retail (including food) and service deserts, as well as deserts that may develop when a business exits the market
- Discuss employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) and related models with proprietors
- Establish gap financing, technical assistance, and other programs for first-time business owners acquiring existing businesses that would otherwise close

3. Provide training opportunities for business owners through established entities

- Train businesses owners, company management, and the trainers themselves
- Support leadership/civic awareness training programs in general
- Implement or further develop training programs through partners like NCI Works, local SBDCs, PTACs, etc.

AN ASPIRING CARDIOLOGIST - WHITESIDE CO.



4. Maintain ties to local

- Catalogue businesses with close connections to NWIL
- Identify businesses (and their foundations) that offer location-specific grant programs (i.e., BNSF, Dollar General, Wal-Mart, etc.)

5. Establish a resource platform for businesses and entrepreneurs

- Mimic Michigan's MI Start Gate (mistartgate.com) and provide a one-stop online resources shop

- * Platform should list local consultants, contractors, vendors, and other resources
- * Search existing systems for information (such as chamber listings, regulatory databases created by local governments, etc.)
- Add to the Northwest Illinois Film Office/Illinois Film Office resources database (including potential sites for filming)
- Explore the creation of a regional work-at-home support network

6. Build destination and economic development organization (DOs and EDOs, respectively) capacity

- Ensure stable funding for DOs and EDOs
- Support participation in domestic and international trade and tourism shows
- Support site selector, business, worker/labor, and consulate tours of the area
- When available, pursue state and federal grants to increase project/program impacts



8. Further develop student entrepreneurship and apprenticeship programs

- Continue to support youth programs like Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO)
- Identify resources required by student entrepreneurs, journeypersons, etc. (such as additional education, micro/gap financing, transportation, etc.)
- Create a regional young professionals organization

9. Invest in incubators, maker spaces, and the like

- Use impact/sustainability studies to flesh out proposed projects
- Follow changes in working preferences (working remotely, co-working, etc.) and provide amenities accordingly

10. Assist businesses with automation planning

- Establish an automation taskforce to help employers, educators, and workers
- Develop relationships with entities like EIGERlab, MxD, EDA University Centers, etc., to better respond to automation challenges
- Identify resources for businesses faced with automation challenges

11. Refine regional and local incentives

- Use economic and fiscal impact analysis to inform the incentive award process
- Establish an effective region-wide incentives regime that ensures proper use and administration of incentive programs

- Develop support literature/implementation templates
- Support state/federal incentive programs, like the Illinois Enterprise Zone Program

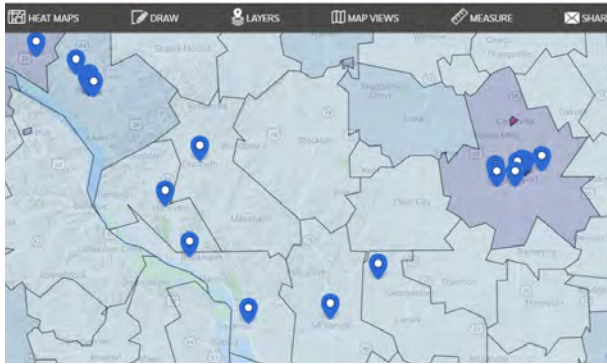
12. Support agricultural diversification

- Review the need for RLFs to support ag-based start-ups
- Establish agricultural land banks for small-scale, indoor, and specialty farmers
- Anticipate expansions in aquaponics, hemp, marijuana, indoor specialty crop, and other farming-related industries
- Explore the feasibility of launching an agricultural aggregator, incubator, and local foods support system to assist new and small farm operations

13. Generate leads through existing businesses

- Determine external origins and destinations of commodities, goods, products, services, etc.
- Establish communications with origins/destinations
 - * Convey the merits of having operations in NWIL

LOIS LISTINGS MAP



14. Support existing business and industrial parks

- Use nationally-recognized building and land listing services (such as LocationOne/ LOIS) to publish properties for site selectors and investors
- Keep LOIS listings, as well as EDO and related websites, up-to-date
- Develop flyers and downloadable Excel files that contain all pertinent information and conveniences required by site selectors
- Ensure locally that a single point of contact understands the site selection process, property specifications, and is capable of tailoring solutions
- Acquire or place options on land consistent with established comprehensive plans

* Ideally, land assembly should focus on brownfields first

15. Develop a regional site certification program

- Research and inventory certification criteria
- Develop branding/marketing plan and publish literature

16. Review and maintain existing infrastructure assets that support business

- Conduct impact/sustainability studies of public airports within Northwest Illinois, including in Freeport, Savanna, Rock Falls, and Dixon
- Encourage road safety audits and other transportation planning



Goal 4

Support & develop initiatives that enrich quality of life for all persons

Who or what do we exclude? What legacy will we leave? What role do both professional and participatory planning have?

Summary: a job may not be the primary (let alone only) reason a person chooses a place to live. Affordability, amenities, family, weather, etc. all influence mobility and, consequently, the willingness and ability to uproot or stay put. While Northwest Illinois cannot change its blustery winters and humid summers, it can invest in and maintain the sorts of amenities available in high-growth regions - albeit at a different scale. Northwest Illinois

"No neighborhood should be immune from change, but no neighborhood should be subject to dramatic change."

-Daniel Herriges, Strong Towns

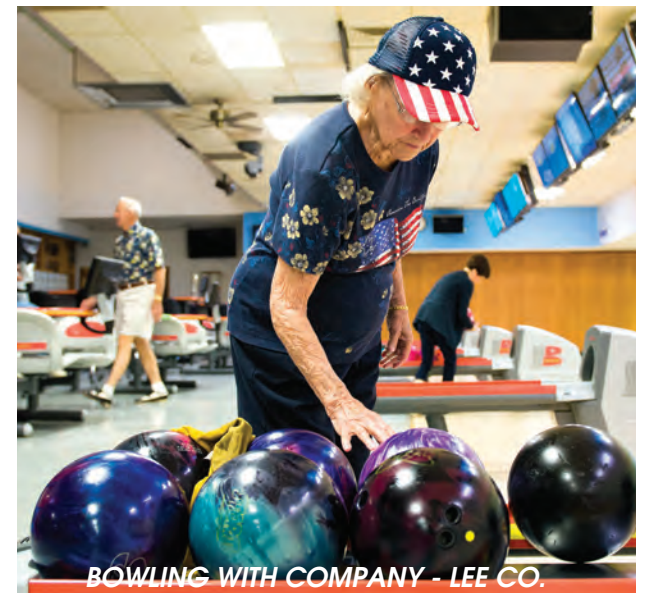
can also focus on qualities that distinguish a place from "Anywhere, USA." Planning has the power to improve these so-called quality of life issues. Successful initiatives - especially those concerned with the long-term - tend to combine engagement and expertise.

1. Identify underserved populations

- Identify particular populations and their locations



- * Particular populations might include homeowners with repetitively flooded houses, persons with limited mobility, those with limited access to a particular critical resource (e.g., food deserts), etc.
- Determine what programs and organizations (if any) serve the previously identified populations.
 - * Note significant service gaps





- Continually assess conditions and needs for residents and businesses in distressed, underserved, or otherwise negatively impacted communities

2. Identify and study various built infrastructure needs

- Assess community accessibility and walkability
- Identify key infrastructure needs
 - * Examples: aging-in-place initiatives, housing, recreational spaces, etc.

- Support capital improvement program planning in local communities and counties
- Secure technical assistance funding from EDA and other granting organizations to study issues and improve projects, programs, and policies

3. Inventory and invest in infill/ brownfield and downtowns

- Review establishing a region-wide landbank
- Consider establishing a region-wide revolving loan fund
- Pursue US EPA project support

4. Encourage investment in existing art and cultural institutions

- Inventory the region's various cultural institutions and amenities
- Support places for artists to live and work

5. Use planning and placemaking techniques to improve community infrastructure

- Develop, maintain, and link various community plans
 - * Examples: comprehensive, hazard mitigation, capital improvement, greenways and trails, improvement, etc.
- Explore methods of improving land use and zoning practices (e.g., research form-based codes, illustrated regulations, simplified code books, enforcement approaches, etc.)
- Identify existing successful community infrastructure
- Help communities plan complete streets and safe routes to schools
- Install art at public gathering spaces and facilities

6. Moderate expectations for state and federal support

- Encourage the development of local match pools

7. Expand established trail systems and develop new trails

- Connect key components of the Grand Illinois Trail, including the JoCarroll Depot
- Acquire right-of-way along abandoned railroads and other corridors

- Establish a regionally cohesive wayfinding and signage program
- Connect existing employers to bicycle routes, including those between Sterling, Sauk Valley Community College, and Dixon

8. Expand access to transportation alternatives

- Encourage Amtrak investment in Northwest Illinois

- Secure funding for commuter station upgrades
- Explore public and private rideshare programs
- Improve bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure, as well as transit interconnections

9. Expand broadband access

- Expand the region's fiber footprint
- Support municipal and not-for-profit networks
- Follow work trends and new technology developments/implementation, such as 5G

10. Address water demand/supply and water quality issues

- Enumerate issues unique to NWIL's watersheds
- Provide recommendations for action (may include information dissemination, conservation education, watershed management and economic use plans, etc.)
- Help communities plan for flooding and drought events
- Encourage testing of active wells and capping of abandoned wells



11. Implement energy efficiency measures

- Promote local and state-wide programs to public and private sectors, including HVAC and lighting upgrade assistance

12. Provide a data repository and clearinghouse for foundation, state and federal resources, especially for grant opportunities

- Update key websites
- Distribute newsletters to the region's stakeholders

SILO ART - WHITESIDE CO.





MEASURING PROGRESS

SAUK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S KIDS FOR COLLEGE PROGRAM - LEE CO.

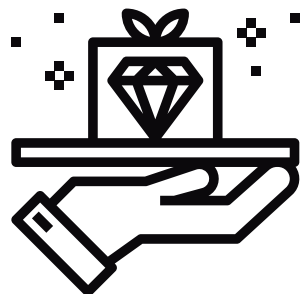
Indicators/Metrics

Good metrics have three key attributes: their data are consistent, cheap, and quick to collect.
- Bladt & Filbin, HBR.org

Because community and economic development should concern itself with the comprehensive growth of people and places, indicators included here cover economic, as well as planning/implementation, environmental, social, and other progress. Here, we highlight five key indicators:

1. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per Capita
2. Annual Wage
3. Percent of Traded Employment in Strong Clusters
4. Civilian Labor Force
5. Unemployment

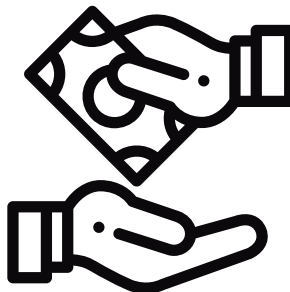
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GDP per Capita

A traditional measurement of prosperity (clustermapping.us)

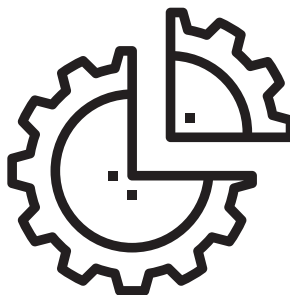
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Annual Wage

Average payroll divided by total employment (clustermapping.us)

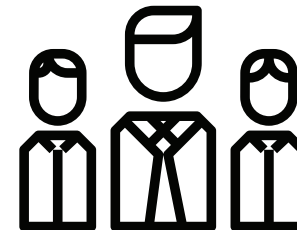
3



Percent of Traded Employment in Strong Clusters

A measure of cluster strength (clustermapping.us)

4



Civilian Labor Force

The sum of the employed and the unemployed (BLS)

5



Unemployment

The unemployed portion of the civilian labor force (BLS)

Indicators/Metrics (cont'd)

BHRC anticipates tracking key and other indicators between 2019 and 2024. Note: some of the indicators listed here may appear tangential to the health of the local economy. They are not. The reader must consider the purpose of economic development and wealth generation. True wealth is marked by individual, family, and community prosperity; it should be widely enjoyed by persons and communities of all kinds.

POPULATION

POP1. Population

Data source: Census (Decennial & ACS)

POP2. Population projections

Data source: Census (BHRC)

POP3. Population density

Data source: Census (BHRC)

INCOME

INC1. Median household income

Data source: Census (ACS)



HOUSING

HOUS1. Median home value

Data source: Census (ACS)

HOUS2. Gross rent as a percentage of household income (GRAPI)

Data source: Census (ACS)

HOUS3. New residential construction

Data source: Census, HUD

HOUS4. New multi-family construction

Data source: Census, HUD

POVERTY

POV1. Poverty level

Data source: Census (ACS)

HEALTH

HEAL1. Premature death

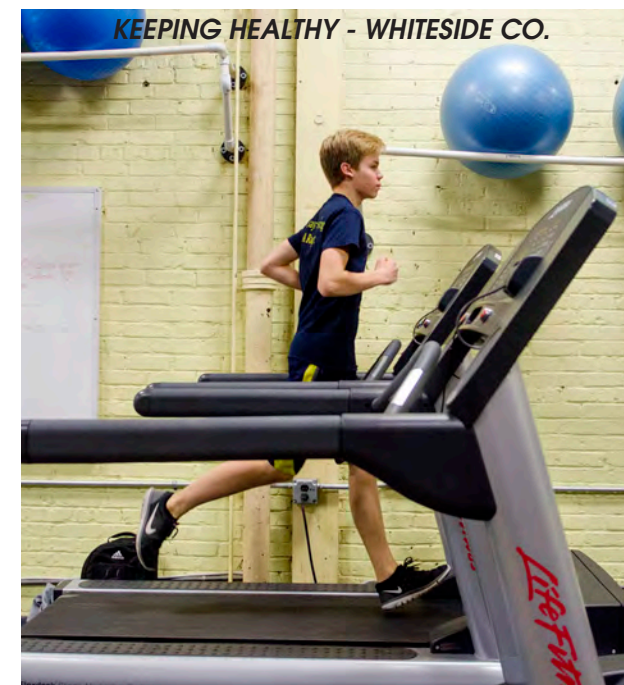
Data source: NCHS NVSS

HEAL2. Mental health providers - persons per provider

Data source: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) National Provider Identification (NPI)

HEAL3. Uninsured rate

Data source: Census (SAHIE)



EDUCATION

EDU1. K-12 district enrollment

Data source: ISBE

EDU2. K-12 chronic absenteeism

Data source: ISBE

EDU3. K-12 average teacher salary

Data source: ISBE

EDU4. K-12 teacher median tenure

Data source: ISBE

EDU5. Higher education college enrollment

Data source: ICCB

EDU6. Higher education average faculty salary

Data source: ICCB



EDU7. Persons with a two-year degree or more

Data source: Census (ACS)

EDU8. Persons with a four-year degree or more

Data source: Census (ACS)

ECONOMIC

ECO1. EDD GDP vs. other-EDD GDP

Data source: clustermapping.us

ECO2. Firm or job deaths and births

Data source: BLS

ECO3. Employment by cluster

Data source: clustermapping.us

ECO4. Traded cluster wage

Data source: clustermapping.us

ECO5. Local cluster wage

Data source: clustermapping.us

ECO6. Apprenticeship enrollment

Data source: BLS

ECO7. Visitors to the region

Data source: CVBs & ILOT

ECO8. Visitor spending

Data source: CVBs & ILOT

ECO9. Capacity of licensed childcare providers

Data source: DCFS



Indicators/Metrics (cont'd)



CONSTRUCTING THE NEW SAVANNA TO SABULA BRIDGE - CARROLL CO.

INFRASTRUCTURE/TRANSPORT

INFRA1. Transit ridership

Data source: Counties & IDOT

INFRA2. Structurally deficient bridges

Data source: Counties & IDOT

INFRA3. Multi-Year Program implementation

Data source: IDOT



OTHER

OTH1. Travel time to work

Data source: ACS

OTH2. Availability and age of planning documents

Data source: Counties & municipalities

OTH3. National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participation

Data source: FEMA

OTH4. Farmland median value

Data source: ISPFMRA

OTH5. Agricultural output

Data source: NASS



OTH6. Shovel-ready or certified sites

Data source: BHRC

OTH7. CEDS projects, programs, and policies implementation

Data source: BHRC

OTH8. National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) participation

Data source: NPS

OTH9. Trail mileage

Data source: Municipalities, park districts, & BHRC

OTH10. Mobile-friendly public websites

Data source: BHRC

OTH11. Governmental debt to revenue

Data source: IDOR

OTH12. Leadership training

Data source: Counties & municipalities

NOTES

- HEAL1 - the years of potential life lost before age 75
- HEAL3 - the percentage of the population under age 65 that has no health insurance coverage.
- OTH1 - including capital improvement plans, comprehensive plans, hazard mitigation plans, etc.
- OTH2 - flood insurance will likely become more important as weather events as a consequence of factors like extreme weather events
- OTH4 - while crops like corn and soybeans will remain a fixture, new crops and uses will be important in the future, including, hemp, organics, renewable energy
- OTH9 - As demographics shift, residents and visitors will expect greater access to online services





APPENDICES

BARN QUILT - CARROLL CO.

Selected Projects & Programs

\$ = <\$500k \$\$\$ = \$1m - <\$10m
 \$\$ = \$500k to <\$1m \$\$\$\$ = \$10m or more

Place	Initiative Proposed	EDA		Scope		Cost
County	Name	LTA	PW/EA	Local	Regional	\$
CC	AUSP Thomson Support Study	•			•	\$
CC	Milledgeville Industrial Park Expansion & Development		•	•		\$
CC	Mississippi Palisades State Park Improvements		•		•	\$\$\$
CC	Savanna Industrial Park Expansion & Development		•	•		\$\$
CC	Shimer College/Campbell Center Campus Redevelopment		•	•		\$\$\$\$
JDC	Galena Art & Recreation Center		•	•		\$\$\$
JDC	Galena Bouthillier St/Park Ave Lift Station & Sewer Main Initiative		•	•		\$\$\$
JDC	Galena Commerce St Parking Lot Rescaping		•	•		\$\$
JDC	Galena Dewey Ave Bridge Replacement		•	•		\$\$
JDC	Galena East Side Water System Initiative		•	•		\$\$\$
JDC	Galena Gear St Sidewalk Initiative		•	•		\$
JDC	Galena Intermodal Depot		•	•		\$\$\$
JDC	Galena Madison St/Fifth Sewer Main Initiative		•	•		\$\$
JDC	Galena Meeker St Pedestrian Bridge Approach Ramps Replacement		•	•		\$
JDC	Galena Streetscaping Initiative		•	•		\$\$
JDC	Galena Wayfinding Initiative		•	•		\$
JDC	Hells Branch Bridge Replacement		•	•		\$\$
JDC	Historic Turner Hall Addition & Improvements		•	•		\$\$\$
JDC	Hour of Code / Technology Farm Team Initiative		•		•	\$
JDC	IEI Barge Transload Facility Enhancements		•		•	\$\$\$
JDC	Mill Creek Bridge Replacement		•	•		\$\$\$
JDC	Muddy Plum Culvert Replacement		•	•		\$\$
JDC	Scout Camp Rd Reconstruction		•	•		\$\$\$
JDC	Scrub Creek Culvert Replacement		•	•		\$\$
JDC	Stockton Industrial Park Development		•	•		\$\$\$
JDC	Twin Culvert - West Culvert Replacement		•	•		\$\$
JDC	US Grant/Galena History Museum Construction		•		•	\$\$\$\$
LC	Dixon Industrial Park Expansion & Development		•	•		\$\$\$
LC	Dixon Riverfront Redevelopment		•	•		\$\$\$
LC	Franklin Creek State Natural Area Enhancements		•		•	\$\$
LC	I-39/Perry Rd Interchange Reconstruction		•		•	\$\$\$\$
LC	Nachusa Grasslands Enhancements		•		•	\$\$
LC	Steward Rd Bridge Replacement		•	•		\$\$
LC	SVCC Multi-Craft Technology Program Expansion		•		•	\$
OC	Byron Riverfront Enhancements		•	•		\$
OC	Dement Rd to Rochelle Industrial Park Extension		•	•		\$\$
OC	German Church Rd Reconstruction		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	I-88/IL-251 Reconstruction		•		•	\$\$\$

Selected Projects & Programs

Place County	Initiative Proposed Name	EDA		Scope		Cost \$
		LTA	PW/EA	Local	Regional	
OC	IL-2 from Byron to Rockford Reconstruction		•		•	\$\$\$\$
OC	Jack Dame Overpass Construction		•	•		\$\$\$\$
OC	Mount Morris College Campus Redevelopment		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Mount Morris Printing Industry Reuse Plan	•		•		\$
OC	Oregon Riverfront Redevelopment		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Oregon/Lowden State Park Trail Construction		•		•	\$\$\$
OC	Oregon-Mount Morris Rail Spur Study	•			•	\$
OC	Oregon Public Works Facility Construction		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Oregon Public Works East Side Expansion		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Rochelle Anaerobic Lagoon Reconstruction		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Rochelle City Rail Expansion		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Rochelle City/BNSF Rail Expansion & Interchange		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Rochelle City/UP Rail Expansion & Interchange		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Rochelle Radium Treatment Plant Construction		•	•		\$\$\$
OC	Rochelle Transload Facility Expansion		•		•	\$\$\$
OC	Stronghold Castle Reuse Study	•		•		\$
OC	White Rock Twp Sanitary Sewer Construction		•	•		\$\$\$
SC	Albertus Airport Development		•		•	\$\$\$
SC	Freeport Adams Street Infrastructure & Streetscaping Initiative		•	•		\$\$
SC	Freeport Art Museum & Plaza Renovation		•		•	\$\$\$
SC	Freeport Chicago Ave Infrastructure & Streetscaping Initiative		•	•		\$\$\$
SC	Freeport Floodplain Mitigation & Reimagining Study	•			•	\$
SC	Freeport Honeywell Plant 2 Brownfield Assessment	•		•		\$\$
SC	Freeport Lamm Rd Industrial Corridor Development		•	•		\$\$\$
SC	Freeport/Stephenson County Tourism Mobile App Development		•		•	\$
SC	HCC Hospitality Management Program Expansion		•		•	\$
SC	IL-26/Afolkey Rd Intersection Reconstruction		•	•		\$\$\$
SC	Kellogg's Grove Improvement & Preservation		•		•	\$\$
SC	Mill Race Crossing Industrial Park Development		•	•		\$\$\$
SC	NWIL WorkStrong: Talent Pipeline Development & Management		•		•	\$
SC	Oakdale Nature Preserve Restoration & Reuse Study	•			•	\$\$\$
SC	Pecatonica Prairie Trail Tutty's to Winnebago County Construction		•		•	\$\$\$
SC	Rawleigh Complex Mixed-Use/Multimodal Feasibility Study	•			•	\$
WC	Albany Rd/Burns Rd Connection to I-88 Reconstruction		•		•	\$\$\$
WC	Crocker Bridge Replacement		•	•		\$\$\$
WC	Fulton Industrial Park Expansion & Development		•	•		\$\$
WC	Landfill Solar Farm/Electrical Grid Connection		•	•		\$\$\$
WC	Loft 112 Enhancements		•	•		\$

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 \$\$ = \$500k to <\$1m \$\$\$\$ = \$10m or more

Place	Initiative Proposed	EDA		Scope		Cost
County	Name	LTA	PW/EA	Local	Regional	\$
WC	MADC Economic Development Financing Program Development		•		•	\$\$
WC	Morrison Industrial Park Expansion & Development		•	•		\$\$
WC	Morrison Main Street Reconstruction		•	•		\$\$\$\$
WC	Morrison Tech Innovation Center Expansion		•		•	\$\$
WC	Morrison to Morrison Sports Complex Trail Planning & Construction	•	•	•		\$\$\$
WC	Morrison to Rockwood Bike Trail Planning & Construction	•	•		•	\$\$\$
WC	Rock Falls Industrial Park Expansion & Development		•	•		\$\$\$
WC	Sterling & Rock Falls Riverfront Redevelopment		•	•		\$\$\$\$
WC	Sterling Industrial Park Expansion & Development		•	•		\$\$\$
Mult	60 by 25 Staffing and Implementation		•		•	\$
Mult	Amtrak Blackhawk Line Restart		•		•	\$\$\$\$
Mult	Apprenticeship Creation Program Development	•	•		•	\$
Mult	East Dubuque Riverfront Development Feasibility Study	•			•	\$
Mult	FTTX to the Farm & Industrial Park Construction		•		•	\$\$\$
Mult	Grand Illinois Trail System Development		•		•	\$\$\$
Mult	NWIL Branding Plan	•			•	\$
Mult	NWIL Career & Technical Education Equipment Replacement		•		•	\$\$
Mult	NWIL Hemp Production & Processing Feasibility Initiative	•	•		•	\$
Mult	NWIL Housing Demand & Supply Study	•			•	\$
Mult	NWIL Illinois Historic Tax Credits Education & Planning		•		•	\$
Mult	NWIL Land Bank and Revolving/Forgivable Loan Study	•			•	\$
Mult	NWIL Local Foods Distro & Aggregation Center Feasibility Study	•			•	\$
Mult	NWIL Opportunity Zones Education & Planning	•			•	\$
Mult	NWIL Site Certification Plan	•			•	\$
Mult	NWIL Talent Pipeline Development & Management	•			•	\$
Mult	NWILED Talent Pipeline Development & Management	•			•	\$
Mult	Public Facility Accessibility, Façade, Safety, & Structural Improvements			•		\$\$\$\$
Mult	Rapid Talent Pipeline Initiative		•		•	\$
Mult	Regional Big Box & Mall Reuse Study	•			•	\$
Mult	Regional Wayfinding Initiative		•		•	\$
Mult	Residential Infill/Tiny Homes Demonstration		•		•	\$
Mult	SAD/JCD Reuse Plan & Infrastructure Initiative	•	•		•	\$\$\$
Mult	Targeted Populations Hiring Initiative		•		•	\$
Mult	US 20 Corridor RSA Improvements		•		•	\$\$\$\$

Measuring Distress

BHRC generated a Stats America distress report in May 2019, which is described here. Lee, Ogle, and Stephenson counties meet distress requirements outright. This means that at the time of this document's publication, all three counties were eligible to apply for Public Works (PW) and Economic Adjustment (EA) funding. Counties not meeting the unemployment or income requirements may be eligible under EDA's "special need" category. All EDD counties are eligible for Local Technical Assistance (LTA) funding, regardless of distress.

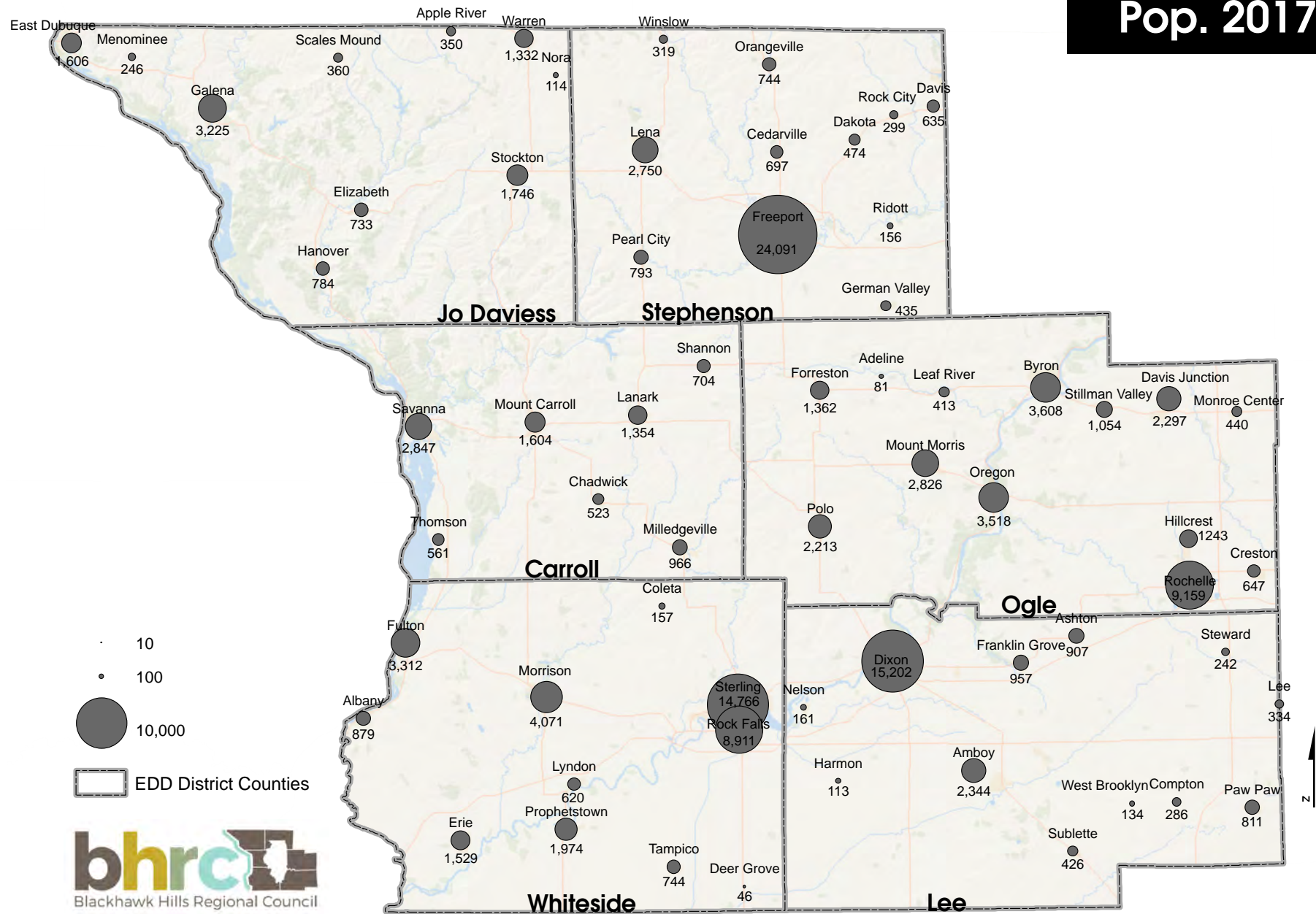
Thresholds				
	24-Month Avg Unemp	BEA PCPI*	2000 Census PCMI*	ACS 5-Year PCMI*
Carroll	.56	82.9%	88.6%	88.5%
Jo Daviess	.53	90.8%	99.6%	103.9%
Lee	.44	78.1%	86.4%	90.4%
Ogle	1.12	85.6%	95.0%	93.8%
Stephenson	.72	79.7%	91.7%	82.7%
Whiteside	.72	81.9%	89.4%	90.4%

To be eligible for certain types of EDA assistance, the project area must exhibit one of the following characteristics:

- An unemployment rate that is, for the most recent 24-month period for which data are available, at least one percentage point greater than the national average unemployment rate (US = 0.00)
- Per capita income that is, for the most recent period for which data are available, 80 percent or less of the national average per capita income (US = 100%)
- A special need, as determined by EDA

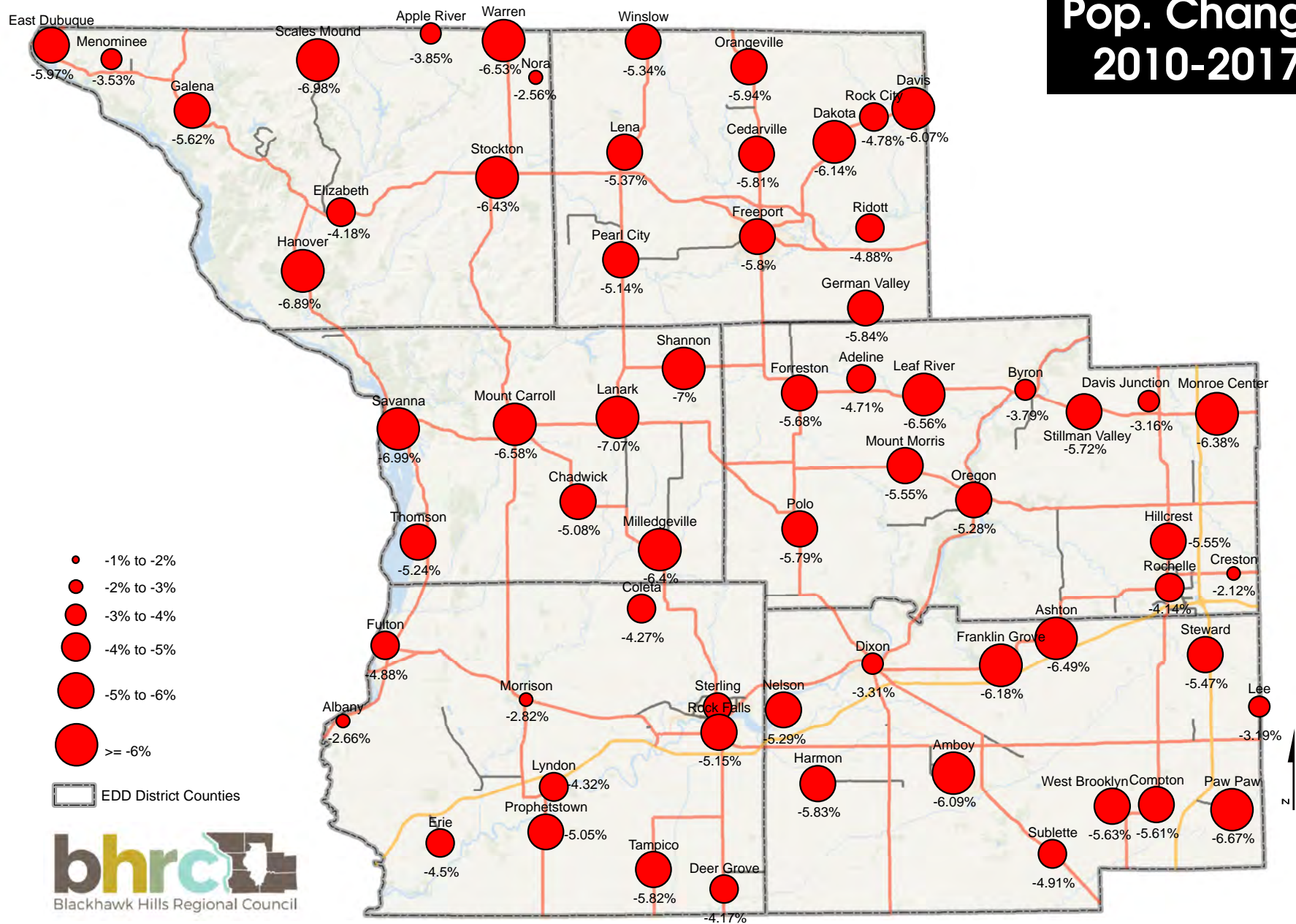
Regional Maps

Municipal Pop. 2017



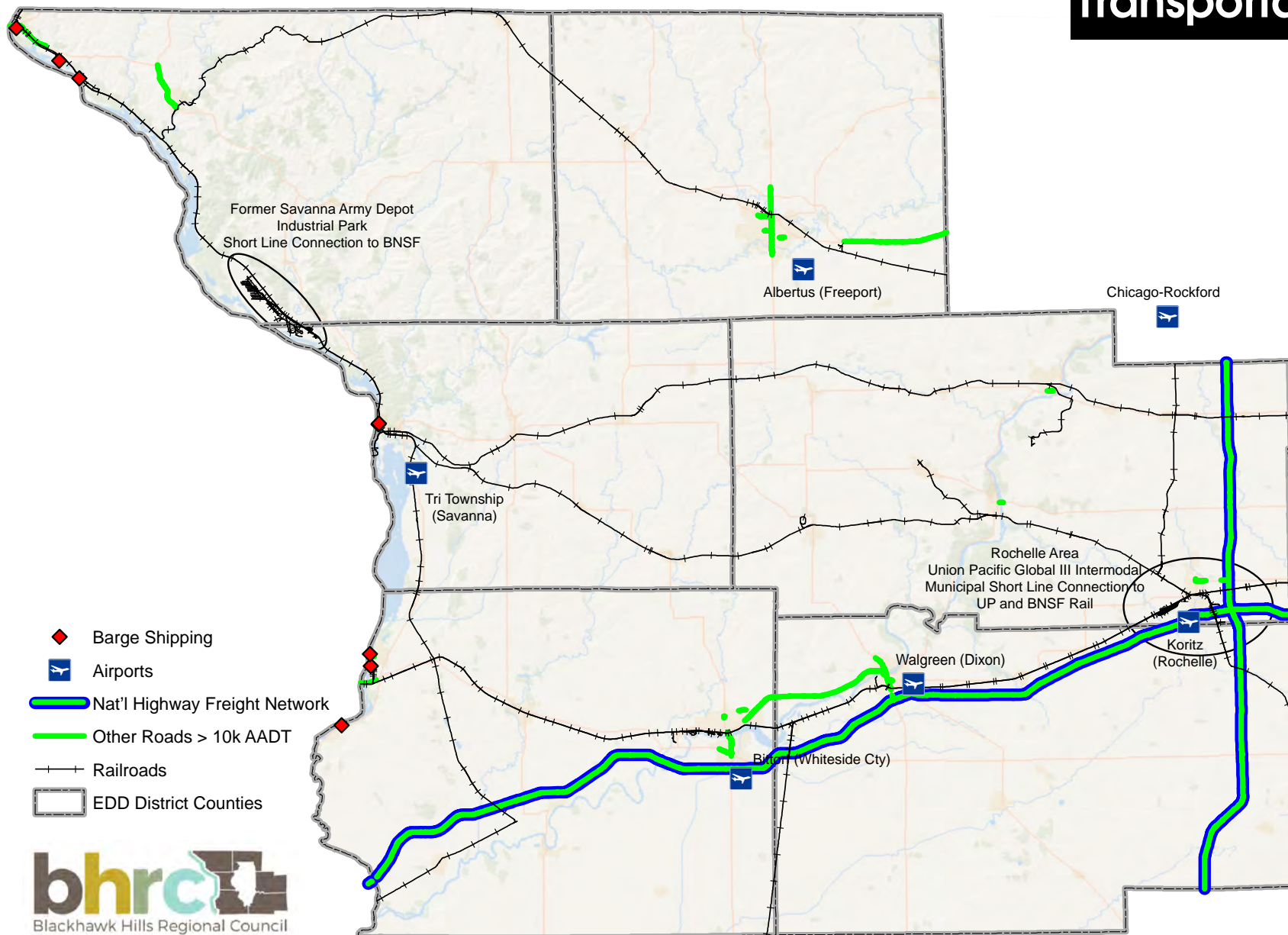
Regional Maps (cont'd)

Municipal Pop. Change 2010-2017



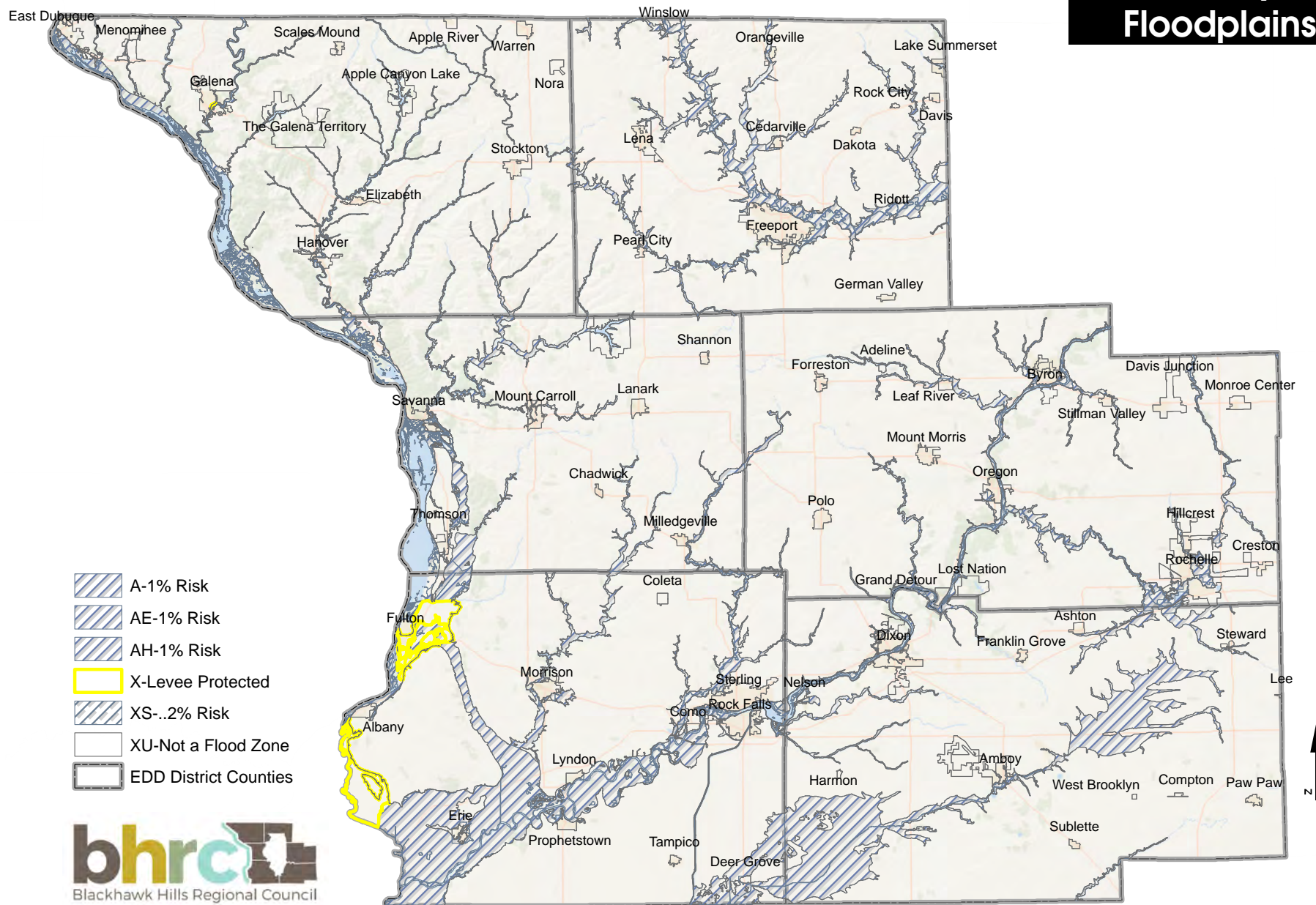
Esri, Garmin, GEBCO, NOAA NGDC, and other contributors

Freight & Transportation



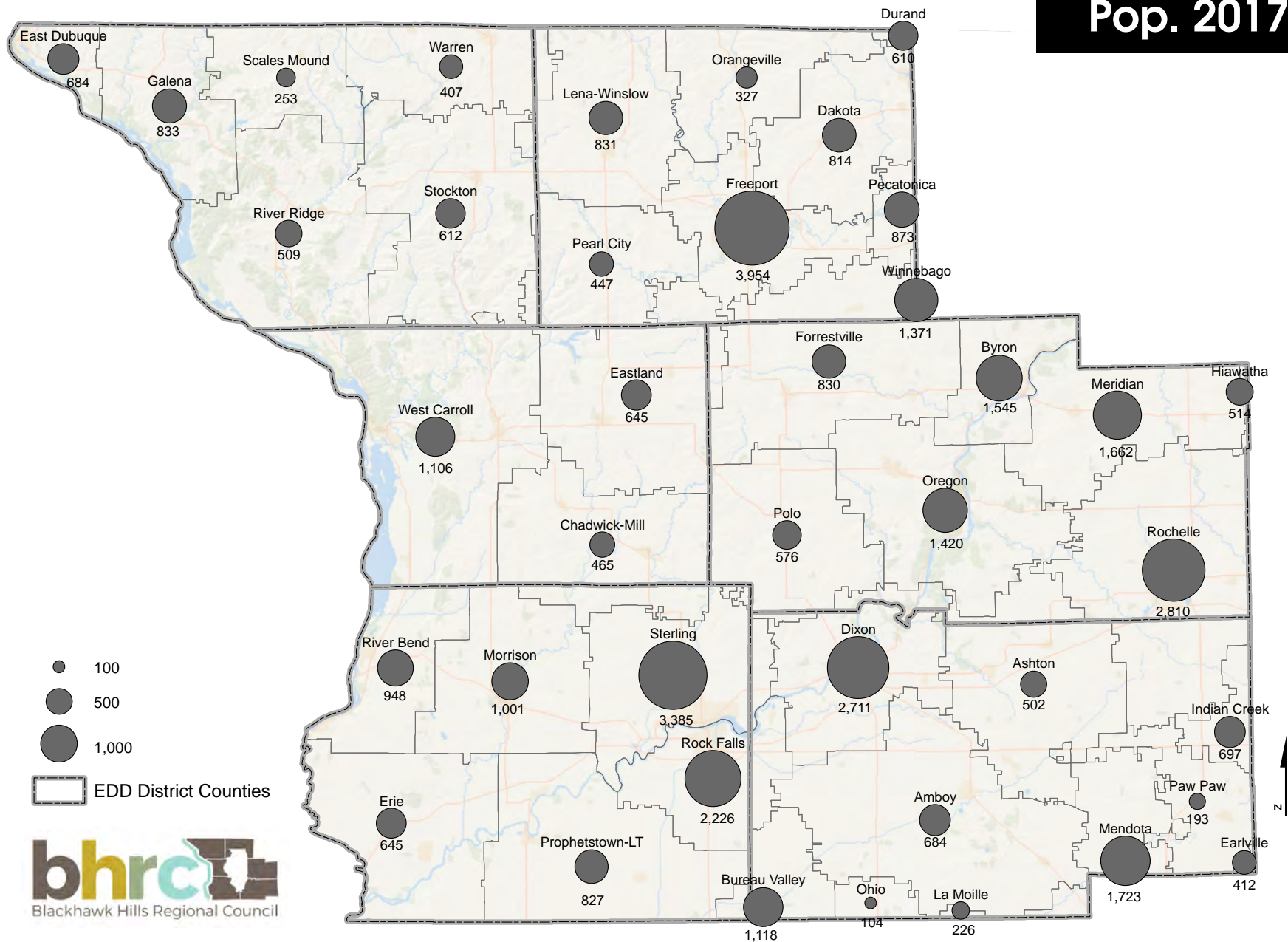
Regional Maps (cont'd)

Regional Floodways & Floodplains



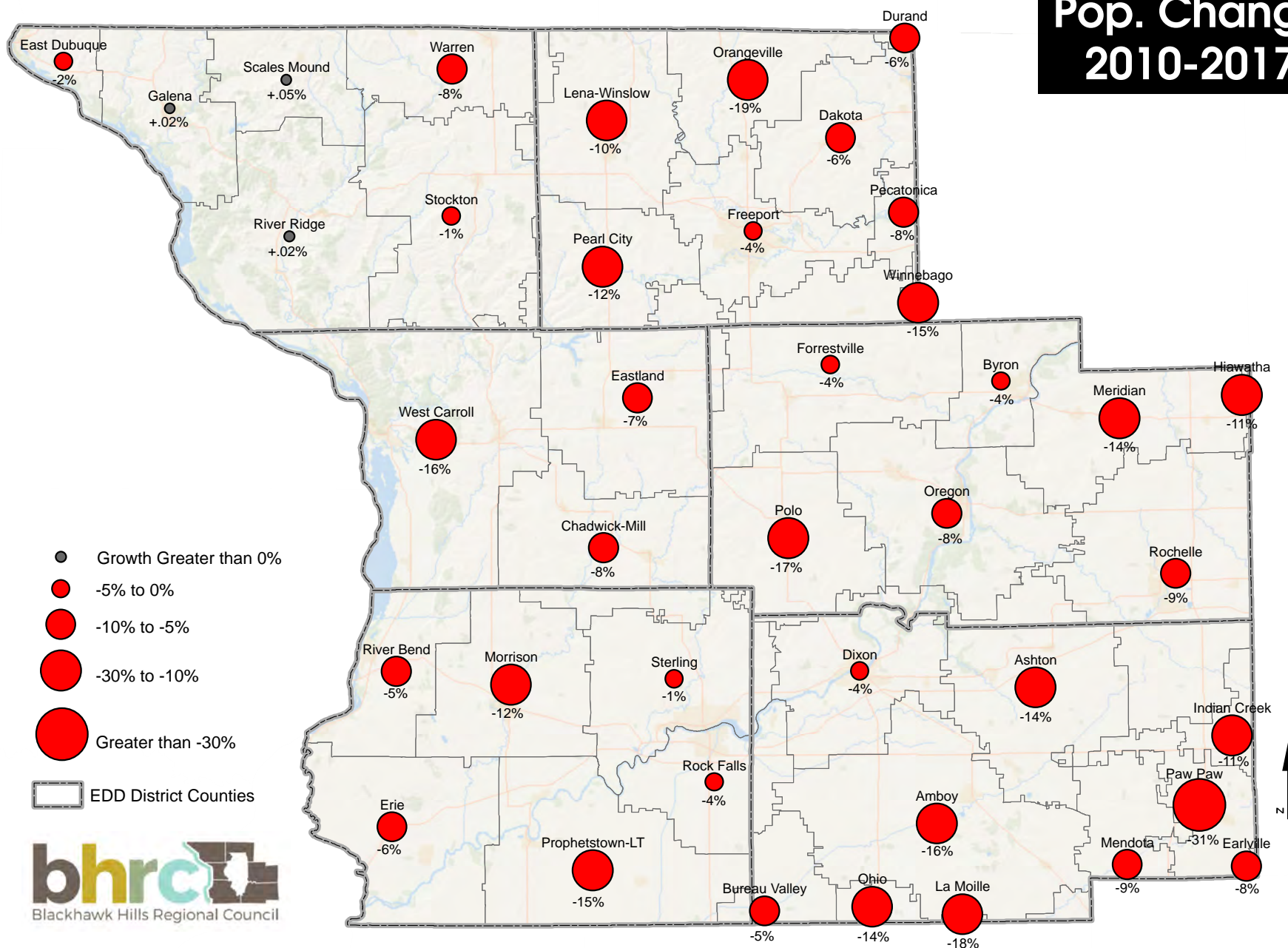
Esri, Garmin, GEBCO, NOAA NGDC, and other contributors

K-12 Student Pop. 2017

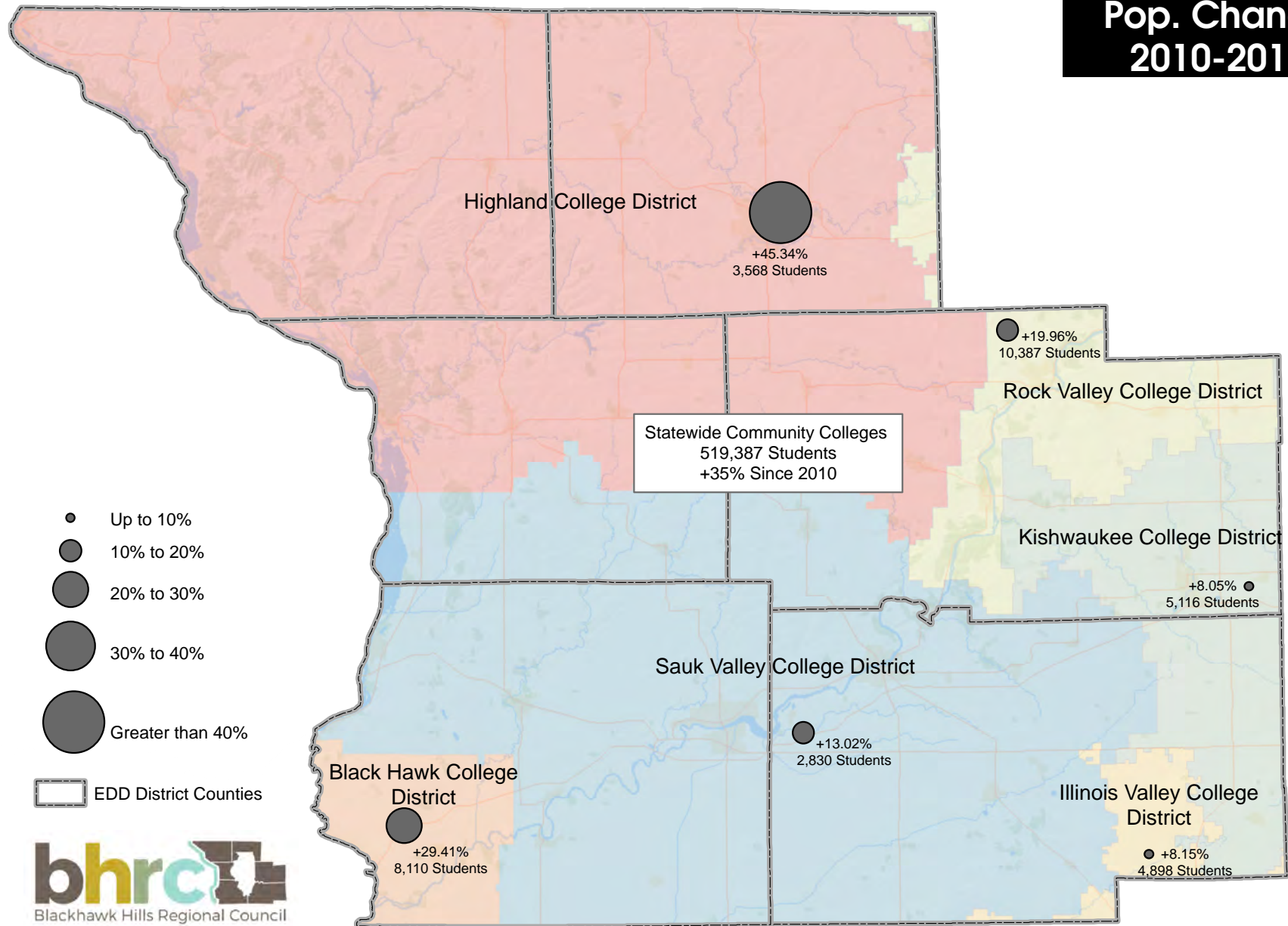


Regional Maps (cont'd)

K-12 Student Pop. Change 2010-2017

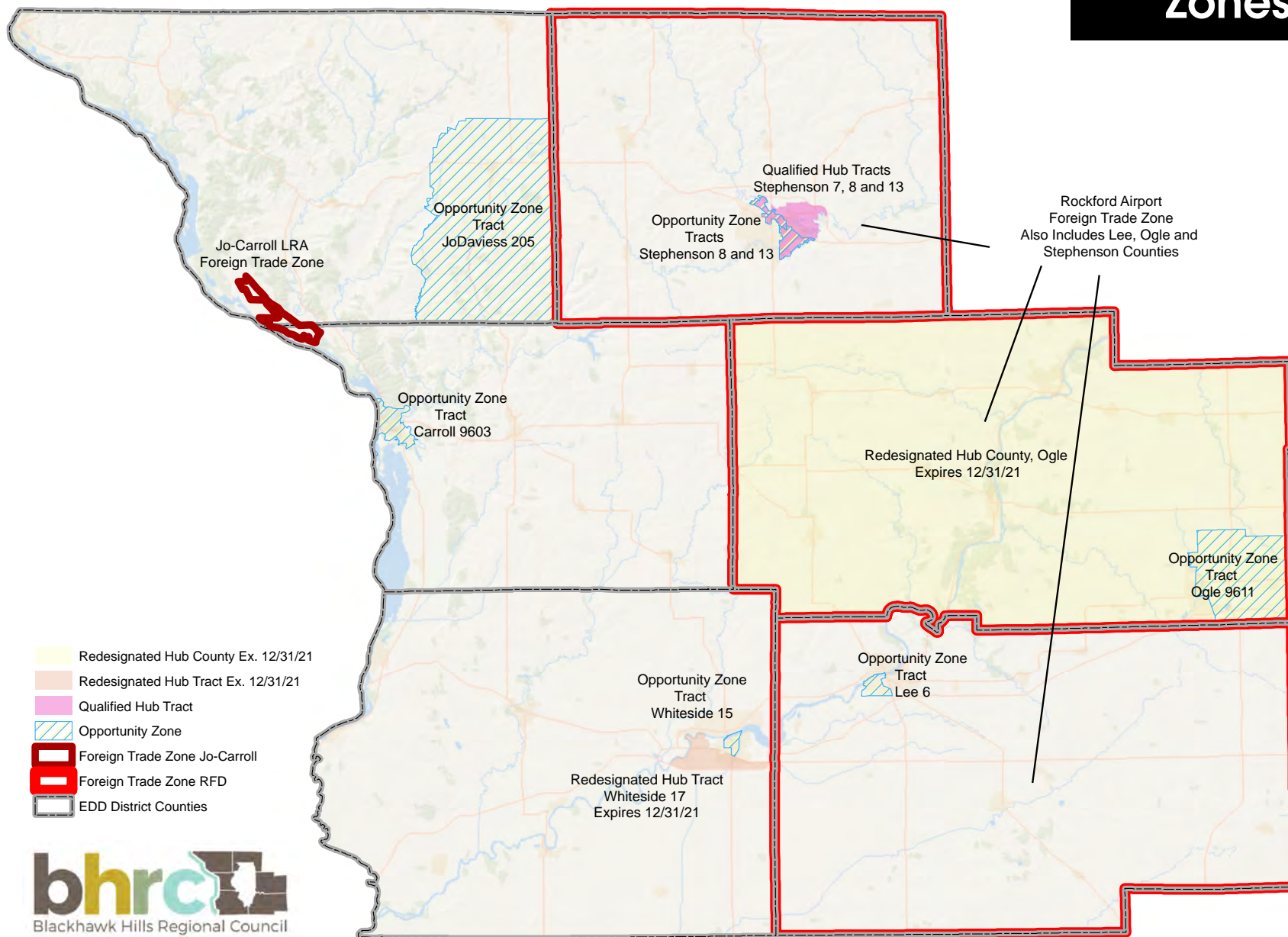


Community College Student Pop. Change 2010-2017



Regional Maps (cont'd)

Development Zones



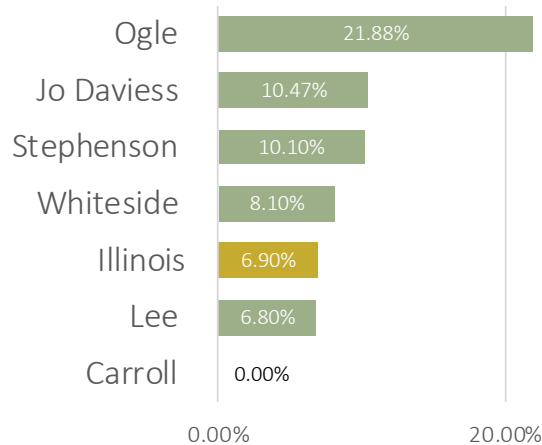
Esri, Garmin, GEBCO, NOAA NGDC, and other contributors

Agricultural Development

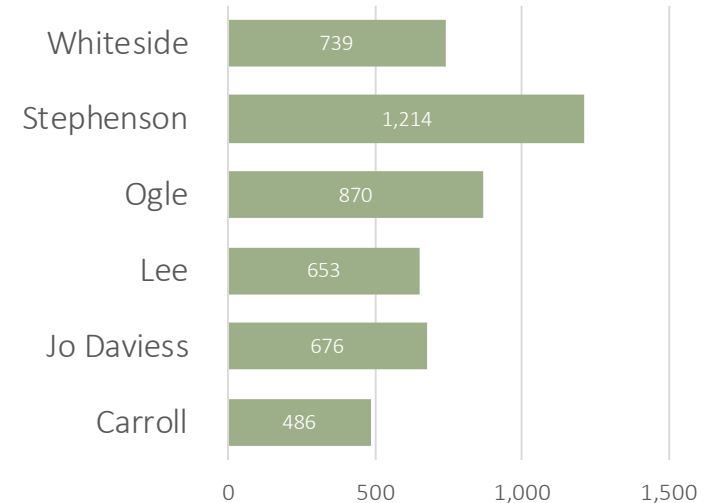
Northwest Illinois farming operations continue to add more acreage over time - Ogle County especially. Supporting many of those operations were 4,638 hired farm workers. 8% of all hired farm workers in Illinois worked in Northwest Illinois.

Farmers continue to plant corn and soy extensively. Carroll County produced the most bushels of corn per acre (229), as well as the most bushels of soy per acre (62). Honey and organics exemplify diversification within the agricultural industry - yet the industries remain fledgling here. Total honey production in the six counties accounted for 7% of statewide production. Regarding organic sales - there is a great gulf between the EDD counties. Whiteside and Lee counties reported substantially more sales compared to Stephenson, Jo Daviess, and Carroll counties (Ogle County was not reportable).

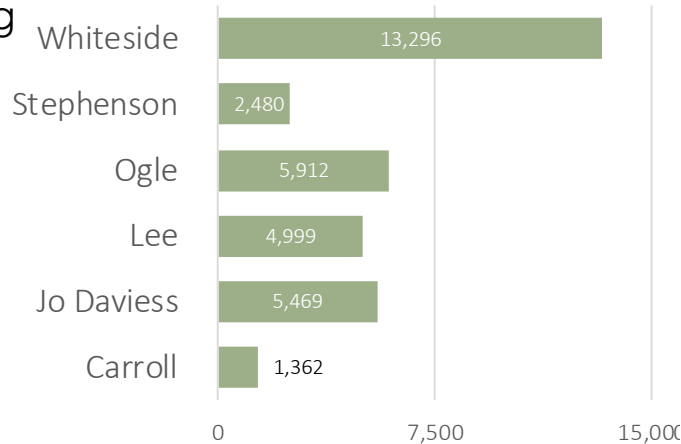
Acres per Operation Change: 2007 to 2017



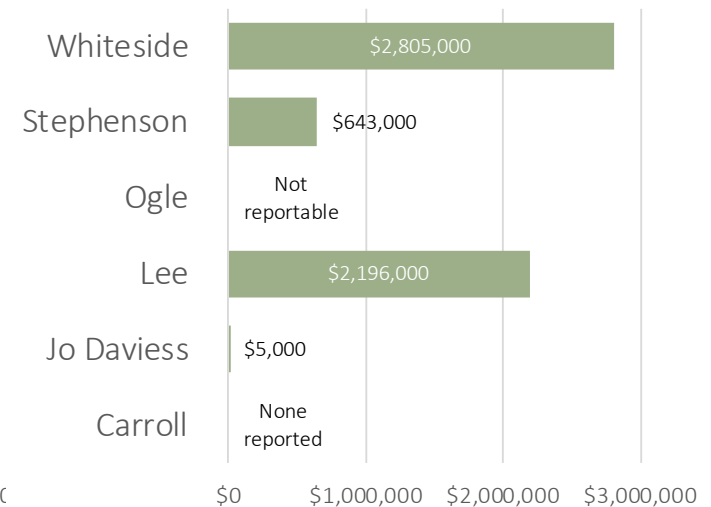
Hired Farm Workers: 2017



Honey Production (lbs): 2017



Organic Sales: 2017



BHRC Board of Directors Roster

JO DAVIESS
Ron Smith
Nicole Haas
Marvin Schultz

STEPHENSON
Sam Newton
Seth Wenzel
Dennis Groezinger

CARROLL
Darrell Stitzel
Ed Juracek
Dennis Bowman

OGLE
Marcia Heuer
Kayse Rushford
Mike Reibel

WHITESIDE
John Espinoza
Eric Epps
Glen Kuhlemier

LEE
Tim Deem
Emily Zimmerman
Janice McCoy

Regional CEDS Roster

Those individuals or entities active on the RCEDS Committee during the most recent CEDS process include:

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Jason Anderson	Greater Rochelle Economic Development Corporation (GREDCO)
Diane Bausman	Blackhawk Waterways (BWCVB)
Gary Camarano	Whiteside County Economic Development (WCED)
Stacey Colledge	Dixon Chamber of Commerce and Main Street (DCCMS)
Kim Ewoldson	Morrison Area Development Corporation (MADC)
Pam Furlan	Business Employment Skills Team, Inc (BEST) Northwest Central Illinois Works (NCI Works)
Lorali Heintzelman	United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development (USDA RD)
Margaret Larson	University of Illinois-Extension (UIEX)
Chris Manheim	Ogle County Manheim Solutions, Inc
Kevin Marx	Lee County Industrial Development Association (LCIDA)
Lisa McCarthy	Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED)
Stacey McCaskill	Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Sauk
Rebecca Motley	Greater Freeport Partnership (GFP)
Chris Scott	Morrison Institute of Technology (Morrison Tech)
Gail Wright	Lee-Ogle-Whiteside Regional Office of Education (LOWROE)

Credits & Partners

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photos included in the 2019-2024 CEDS are from Sauk Valley Media, excluding the following:

- Page 4
 - * Sterling Steel
- Page 6
 - * The Nature Conservancy
- Page 30
 - * Greater Galena Marketing
- Page 43
 - * Timber Lake Playhouse
- Page 48-49
 - * CareerTEC
 - * Tom Kocal
- Page 50
 - * Visviva/Wikimedia
- Page 56-57
 - * Rock Island Economic Growth Corporation
 - * Morrison Tech
 - * Greater Galena Marketing
- Page 58-59
 - * Kramer North America
 - * Pretzel City Area Transit
- Page 77
 - * Daniel Payette

MAPS

Created by BHRC/Andrew Shaw using data from state and federal sources. Basemaps sourced from the ESRI userbase.

RESEARCH, ANALYSIS, & MAPPING



Blackhawk Hills Staff

Julie Jacobs
Daniel Payette
Andrew Shaw

DOCUMENT PREPARATION



FINANCIAL SUPPORT



Economic Development Administration

Carroll County, Illinois

Jo Daviess County, Illinois

Lee County, Illinois

Ogle County, Illinois

Stephenson County, Illinois

Whiteside County, Illinois

Glossary

- AADT - Annual Average Daily Traffic
- ACS - American Community Survey
- ATV - All-Terrain Vehicle
- BEA - Bureau of Economic Analysis
- BHCC - Black Hawk Community College
- BHRC - Blackhawk Hills Regional Council
- BLS - Bureau of Labor Statistics
- BNSF - Burlington Northern Santa Fe
- BOD - Board of Directors
- CEO - Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities
- CMS - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
- CORE - Creating Opportunities for Retention and Expansion
- CUST - Community Unit School District
- CVB - Convention and Visitors Bureau
- DCEO - Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
- DCFS - Department of Community and Family Services
- DO - Destination Organization
- EA - Economic Adjustment
- ECIA - East Central Intergovernmental Association
- EDA - Economic Development Administration
- EDD - Economic Development District
- EDO - Economic Development Organization
- ESOP - Employee Stock Ownership Plan
- FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency
- GDP - Gross Domestic Product
- HCC - Highland Community College
- HUD - Housing and Urban Development
- ICCB - Illinois Community College Board
- IDNR - Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- IDOR - Illinois Department of Revenue
- IDOT - Illinois Department of Transportation
- IEPA - Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- ILOT - Illinois Office of Tourism
- ISBE - Illinois State Board of Education
- IVCC - Illinois Valley Community College
- KCC - Kishwaukee Community College
- LOIS - LocationOne
- LRA - Local Redevelopment Authority
- LTA - Local Technical Assistance
- MHI - Median Household Income
- MIT - Morrison Tech
- MORE - Making Opportunities Real for Everyone
- MxD - University and Industry Labs
- MYP - Multi-Year Program
- NASS - National Agricultural Statistics Service
- NCHS - National Center for Health Statistics
- NCI Works - Northwest Central Illinois Works
- NIU - Northern Illinois University
- NPI - National Provider Identification
- NPS - National Park Service
- NVSS - National Vital Statistics System
- NWIL - Northwest Illinois
- NWILED - Northwest Illinois Economic Development
- PCMI - Per Capita Money Income
- PCPI - Per Capita Personal Income
- PTAC - Procurement Technical Assistance Center
- PW - Public Works
- R&D - Research and Development
- RLF - Revolving Loan Fund
- RORO - Roll-On/Roll-Off
- RPO - Regional Planning Organization
- RSA - Road Safety Audit/Assessment
- RVCC - Rock Valley Community College
- SAHIE - Small Area Health Insurance Estimates
- SBDC - Small Business Development Center
- SVCC - Sauk Valley Community College
- SWOT - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
- SWWRPC - Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- US DOT - United States Department of Transportation
- US EPA - United States Environmental Protection Agency
- WACC - Whiteside Area Career Center



Blackhawk Hills Regional Council

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www.blackhawkhills.com

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Change log available through BHRC