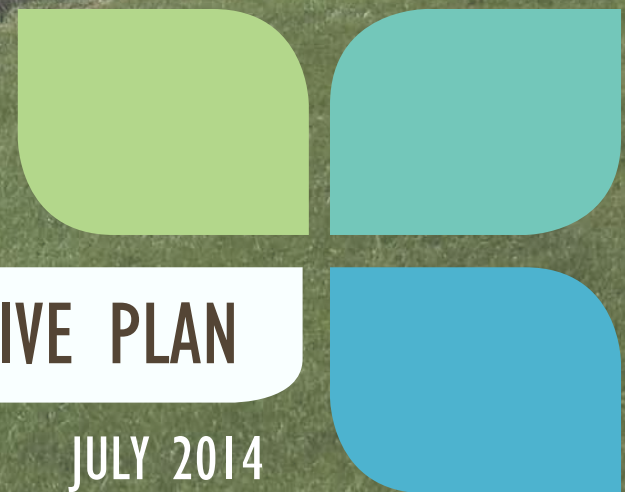




# VILLAGE OF GERMANTOWN HILLS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

JULY 2014



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# INTRODUCTION

*In October 2013, the Village of Germantown Hills, in partnership with the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, began a journey to thoughtfully plan for its future. The effort resulted in a shared vision for the community, developed through interactions with Germantown Hills residents, business owners, and civic leaders. This document articulates the needs and desires of the Village, and recommends specific actions for attaining them.*

## **PURPOSE OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

A Comprehensive Plan allows for a community to prepare for and design its own future. Local officials will make decisions about growth and development whether a plan exists or not. Through thoughtful and cooperative planning, however, a community can be prepared for change and make rational choices for a sustainable future. For instance, growth can be encouraged to take place where necessary infrastructure

can be reasonably provided, conflicts between land uses can be minimized, and financial, physical, and social resources can be used more effectively.

The Comprehensive Plan serves as an advisory guide for the long-term development of Germantown Hills. As an advisory guide, the plan is intended to be flexible, while also providing a framework for the review of development projects, land use and zoning proposals, and the construction of capital improvement projects. It is important to note, however, that the comprehensive plan does not hold the force of law. The plan does not determine how the Village will be developed in the future. Rather, it shows how the Village should develop in order to establish an orderly development pattern based on the impacts that land development will have on the natural environment, the transportation system, and agricultural lands.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

Germantown Hills is not new to the planning process. The community completed its first comprehensive plan in 1978. At that time, the Village was on the brink of major change; a second span of the McCluggage Bridge was being added, and Route 116 was being

widened from two lanes to four. Since that time, the Village has seen rapid residential growth due to its attractive natural setting, its strong school system, and its proximity to Peoria's employment and entertainment centers.

The last update to the Germantown Hills Comprehensive Plan occurred in 2004. With residential growth continuing and the potential for an interstate bypass interchange within a half-mile of the Village limits, Germantown Hills' leaders felt it necessary to revisit their comprehensive plan. This update addresses the growth of the past decade, and plans for the future growth of Germantown Hills for the next twenty years. Additionally, for the first time, the plan will include a disaster planning component.

## **HOW WAS THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DEVELOPED?**

In 2013, the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission received funding through the Disaster Recovery "Ike" Program to prepare comprehensive plans for eight communities within Peoria and Woodford Counties, including Germantown Hills (See the Spotlight for more information about the "Ike" program). The

Village of Germantown Hills Economic Development Council (EDC) took on the role of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) to help guide the comprehensive planning process. The committee met once a month with TCRPC staff from November 2013 to June 2014.

The first phase of the planning process consisted of collecting baseline information to determine existing conditions in Germantown Hills. TCRPC collected data from the U.S. Census Bureau, nine stakeholder interviews, and a community-wide survey. To learn more about these processes, please see the Public Engagement section.

The second phase of the planning process consisted of identifying the plan's goals and action items. Using the baseline information, the CPAC identified goals, objectives, and action items for ten different topic areas:

- Public Engagement;
- Land Use;
- Housing;
- Community Facilities;
- Transportation;
- Agriculture and Natural Resources;
- Economic Development;

- Community Character;
- Disaster Mitigation; and
- Intergovernmental Collaboration.

The goals, objectives, and action items were also guided by six sustainable planning principles:

1. Provide more transportation choices: Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing: Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness: Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.
4. Support existing communities: Target funding toward existing communities—through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling—to increase

community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes.

5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment: Align policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods: Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.

The committee also developed the future land use map. This map reflects both where the community would like to see growth occur and where growth should occur based on infrastructure availability and potential impacts on the transportation system, natural environment, and agricultural lands.

After the goals, action items, and future land use map were completed, the final document was compiled and presented to the public on the village website and at a public meeting.

## HOW IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ORGANIZED?

This comprehensive plan is divided into 13 separate sections. Following the introduction, the public participation process will be explained and an overview of the Village's demographic trends will be described. The plan will then address each of the planning elements mentioned above. Each planning element will focus on the following:

- An inventory of existing conditions;
- An assessment of key issues and opportunities; and
- Community goals and objectives.

The final section of this plan will describe the methods by which the Village of Germantown Hills should review, monitor, and amend the Comprehensive Plan.

## SPOTLIGHT

### **FOCUS: Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery “Ike” Program**

In 2008, Hurricane Ike landed in Galveston, Texas, and caused severe damage within several southern states. Though Hurricane Ike produced its worst damage in areas far south of Illinois, flooding on several Illinois Rivers was attributed to the storms produced by Hurricane Ike. As such, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) was allocated over \$169 million to help communities address disaster planning, relief, and restoration to infrastructure, housing, and economic revitalization in areas affected by flooding.

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission received a portion of this money to prepare comprehensive plans for eight communities within Peoria and Woodford Counties, including Germantown Hills. Each comprehensive plan will contain a disaster planning component. With extreme weather events occurring more and more frequently, disaster planning is becoming a top priority for communities throughout the United States.



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

*A Comprehensive Plan is not meaningful unless it reflects the needs and desires of all constituents. Not only does public participation produce a better plan, but also, it helps build consensus, strengthen relationships, and promote better implementation. In order to ensure citizens were engaged throughout the planning process, special care was taken to encourage inclusivity and public participation.*

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission staff met monthly with a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee made up of civic officials and local stakeholders. This committee also serves as the Economic Development Council for the Village of Germantown Hills. The advisory committee informed and guided the planning process. Public notices were made prior to each meeting, and agendas and minutes were posted on the Village website as well as at Village

Hall. Citizens were welcome to attend and participate in these meetings.

A community survey was provided to all residents within the Village of Germantown Hills from late November through December 2013. Residents were notified of the survey via a letter from the Germantown Hills School District, the Village website, and various posters and displays throughout town. Citizens were asked to go to the provided web link to complete the survey on-line or visit various locations throughout the Village to fill out a paper copy. A total of 311 individuals responded to the survey representing 9% of all residents and 26.5% of all households. A list of the questions asked can be found in the appendix.

The community survey makes it apparent that the residents of Germantown Hills and the surrounding area are concerned about their community and are eager to give input regarding the future development of their home. This planning document will respond to the positive and negative aspects of the Village, and will offer guidance on how to address its challenges and leverage its assets in a meaningful way.

Following the survey, in January 2014, staff conducted 9 separate one-on-one interviews with

community leaders. These interviews allowed for a more detailed discussion of local issues. Interviews focused on assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats at the scale of the individual organization and the community at large. Results supplemented the findings of the survey and helped guide future advisory committee meetings.

To further engage the community, staff and CPAC members pursued “short term wins” to increase awareness of the Comprehensive Planning Process and accomplish easily achievable community objectives. As a result, the Village, in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce, encouraged a “Light Up Germantown Hills” Christmas lights decoration activity for local businesses and civic buildings. Community leaders then partnered to develop and distribute a periodic newsletter to educate and engage the community about local events, issues, and activities. Both events were hailed as a success and began what is hoped to be ownership and implementation of this Comprehensive Plan.

Finally, after nine months of research and analysis the Village hosted a Community Open House on May 1, 2014. Over 70 residents attended to review the



findings of the 9 month long planning process and to provide feedback for the final draft. Residents were able to make recommendations regarding the proposed Future Land Use Map, prioritize goal implementation strategies, and make general comments. Those suggestions have been incorporated into this final document.

Public participation played a key role in the development of this comprehensive plan. The Village should ensure that other plans and Village information is widely available to the general public as well. Goals, objectives and strategies for achieving public engagement are listed below.

## GOAL

**Educate and Empower Citizens:** The dissemination of Village information will be thorough to ensure education of the public and promote the broadest understanding of the Village's needs, as a means of strengthening local policy-making. The interested public will be ensured ample opportunity to participate in the decision-making process for local projects and plans.

## OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

### *Encourage Public Input*

- Provide a range of opportunities and venues for residents to participate in Village governance.

## SPOTLIGHT

### **FOCUS: Germantown Hills' Key Strengths and Challenges**

As with any community, the Village of Germantown Hills is proud of its many strengths, but residents are also aware of several key challenges. In response to the open ended question "What are the top three **strengths/opportunities** concerning the Village of Germantown Hills and its future," residents identified the following:

- Quality school district (103 responses)
  - Community pride (50 responses)
  - Location (23 responses)
  - Quality citizens (23 responses)
  - Growth potential (20 responses)
  - Small town atmosphere (20 responses)
  - Safety and security (15 responses)
- Provide opportunity for interested parties to identify and communicate Village concerns and priorities.
- Encourage public participation opportunities in a wide and varied audience, including traditionally underserved groups.

The following **challenges/weaknesses** were identified by Village residents:

- Lack of businesses and retail options (83 responses)
- Absence of a grocery store (75 responses)
- High taxes (59 responses)
- Lack of sidewalks (48 responses)
- Lack of a town center (40 responses)
- Declining school infrastructure and standards (22 responses)
- High water/sewer rates (20 responses)

- Obtain meaningful public input and participation to inform the Village Board's planning and decision-making processes.
- Coordinate the Public Participation strategy with ongoing public involvement processes to enhance public participation, whenever possible.

- Examples: Broadcast public meetings via Internet/television/radio, live tweet public meetings, publicize citizen participation, create Internet forums to discuss Village issues, host community events to solicit public input, present public surveys, develop monthly Internet Q&A chats about the village and publish the results.

#### *Increase Availability and Accessibility*

- Meet or exceed the standards set forth by the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/).
- Make the Village meetings accessible and engaging to interested participants by using a variety of media, plain language, and easy-to-understand materials.
- Publicize public participation opportunities and activities throughout the development of projects and programs within the Village of Germantown Hills through various media.
- Examples: Expand the times and locations Village meetings, provide child care for working parents to participate in meetings, allow citizens to virtually attend public meetings through live broadcasts, increase the use of images and graphics in presentation documents and plans, minimize the use of jargon in public documents.

#### *Educate Citizens about Village Needs and Concerns*

- Provide objective information to assist the public in understanding issues and solutions.
- Inform and educate stakeholders and interested parties, share information, and increase the overall awareness of Village planning, land use, and transportation issues and activities.



# COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

*Planning for the future of the Village of Germantown Hills requires an evaluation of the local population and economy. Such trends are likely to have a significant effect on long-range growth and development, and will influence comprehensive planning policies of the Village. This section will review Germantown Hills' current population and projected population growth, as well as a variety of demographic variables.*

## GROWTH TRENDS

The Village of Germantown Hills experienced rapid population growth in the last several decades; from 1980 to 2010, the Village's population grew from 524 residents to 3,438 residents. Woodford County and the Tri-County region, on the other hand, have grown at a much steadier pace. In fact, while the population of Germantown Hills grew six-fold from 1980 to 2010,

the Tri-County Region actually experienced an overall population decline.

This rapid population growth can be attributed to several factors. First, Germantown Hills has been experiencing a housing construction boom since 1990. According to U.S. Census Data, 66.6 percent of the Village's total housing stock was built after 1990. For comparison, 24.6 percent of Woodford County's housing stock, and 18 percent of the region's housing stock was built post 1990. These housing trends are discussed in further detail in the Housing Section of this plan. Other factors that have contributed to the Village's growth include proximity to Peoria, a high quality school district, and an overall desirable quality of life.

## GROWTH PROJECTIONS

An important component of the comprehensive planning process is to understand the needs of the future. One of the key ways in which to do this is to estimate population growth. Once we know what the potential increase in population is, we can determine:

- How much land will be needed for development;
- Where that growth should occur;
- Whether the municipal water and sewer systems can handle the additional growth;
- How the schools will be impacted; and
- The effect on emergency services.

A common method of projecting future population is the extrapolation technique. This technique uses past conditions to project future conditions. Though

TABLE 1.1: POPULATION CHANGE 1980 - 2010

	1980		1990		2000		2010	
	Number	% Change	Number	% Change	Number	% Change	Number	% Change
Germantown Hills	524	88.5	1,195	128.1	2,111	76.7	3,438	62.9
Woodford County	33,320	18.9	32,653	-2.0	35,469	8.6	38,664	9.0
Tri-County Region	365,864	7.0	339,172	-7.3	347,387	2.4	360,552	3.8

this process of projecting population is useful, it has limitations. The model assumes past trends will continue into the future; however, there is no guarantee that the past will have a strong bearing on future trends. Therefore, it should be understood that these projections are merely estimates, and that future population cannot be known with absolute certainty.

For the Village of Germantown Hills, the following assumptions were tested:

- **Exponential Assumption:** Germantown Hills will grow at a rate of 89.2%, or the average growth rate from 1990 to 2010.
- **Ten Year Linear Assumption:** The actual number of new residents from 2000 to 2010 (1,327) will continue in each of the next two decades.
- **Twenty Year Linear Assumption:** The average of the actual number of new residents between 1990 and 2010 (1,122) will continue for the next two decades.

Of the three projections, the Twenty Year Linear Assumption offers the most conservative growth scenario for the Village of Germantown Hills; however, it still assumes a relatively rapid growth rate compared to regional trends. Certain data suggest population growth may actually become more steady. For example, while still the highest in the area, home construction rates are experiencing a downward trend in the Village.

Again, population growth is difficult to project, as it can be affected by countless factors, both expected and unexpected. For the purpose of this plan, we will use the twenty year linear assumption, which means the Village of Germantown Hills will grow to approximately 5,682 residents by the year 2030. The future land use estimates included in this plan assume this projected population.

### AGE

According to recent U.S. census data, Germantown Hills has relatively high numbers of children and middle-aged adults. The age cohorts with the highest

population are 0 to 4 (273 residents), 5 to 9 (312 residents), 10 to 14 (317 residents), 25 to 34 (378 residents), 35 to 44 (545 residents), and 45 to 54 (574 residents). These relatively high numbers of children and middle-aged adults suggest that families comprise a significant portion of Germantown Hills' population. Chart 1.2 on the following page shows Germantown Hills' population displayed as a population pyramid which helps visualize the age distribution in the Village.

CHART 1.1: PROJECTED POPULATION CHANGE

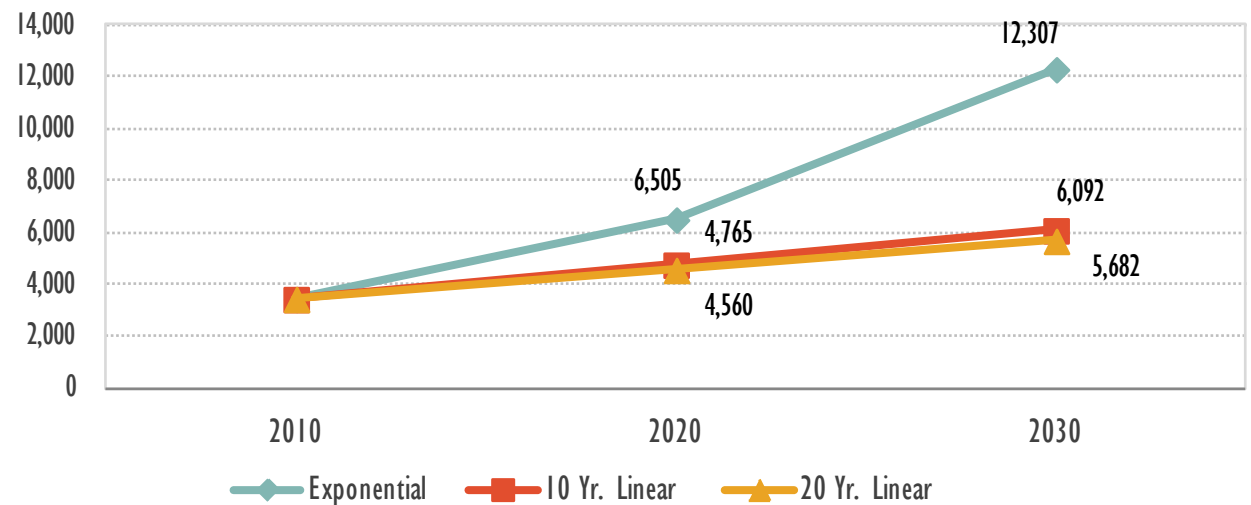
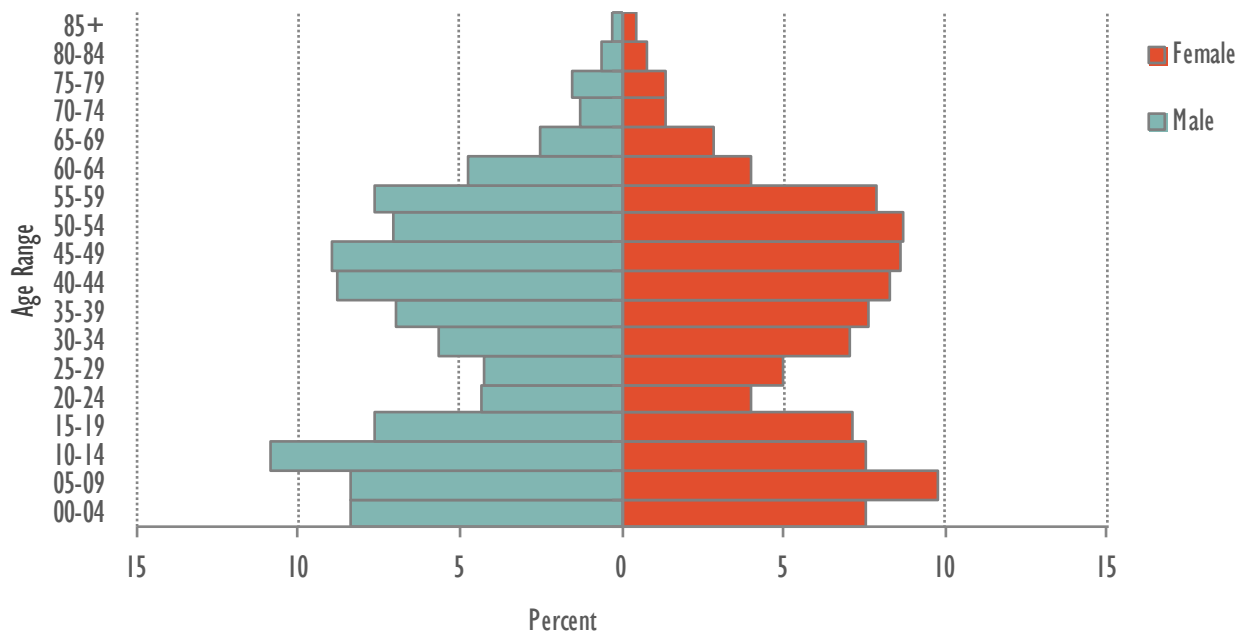


CHART 1.2: AGE PYRAMID



### RACE AND ETHNICITY

The Village of Germantown Hills has very little diversity, with 96 percent of residents identifying as white in the 2010 U.S. Census. The next most prevalent racial groups in the Village are those who identify with two or more races (1.3% of the population) and Asian (1.8% of the population). Additionally, 1.8 percent of Germantown Hills residents identify as either Hispanic

or Latino. This racial make-up is slightly more diverse than it was in the year 2000, with 97.9 percent of the population identifying as white.

Germantown Hills' racial and ethnic composition is slightly more diverse than Woodford County and less diverse than the Tri-County region as a whole. Table 1.2 compares the racial make-up of Germantown Hills, Woodford County, and the Tri-County Region for the year 2010.

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The Village of Germantown Hills has exceptionally high levels of educational attainment in comparison to the County, the Region, and several nearby communities. In Germantown Hills, 97.6 percent of the population 25 years and over have obtained a high school degree or higher, and 45.6 percent have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. For comparison, 91 percent of Tri-County residents have a high school degree or higher, and 25.4 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. Chart 1.3 on the following page compares Germantown Hills' educational attainment to Woodford County, the Tri-County Region, and several similar communities.

In addition to having a high rate of educational attainment, the Village school district performs well. In fact, 90 percent of Germantown Hills Middle School students met or exceeded state standards in reading and math for the past three consecutive years.

### INCOME

Per the 2007-2011 American Community Survey, Germantown Hills has a significantly higher median household income relative to Woodford County the Tri-County Region, and several nearby communities. The median household income is \$98,000 in the Village of Germantown Hills, compared to \$66,198 in Woodford County, and \$57,168 in the Tri-County Region as a whole.

TABLE 1.2: RACE

	Total	White	Black	Asian	Other
Germantown Hills	3,438	96.0	0.5	1.8	0.3
Metamora	3,636	96.7	0.3	0.5	0.9
Morton	16,267	96.3	0.7	1.3	0.8
Washington	15,134	96.6	0.5	1.0	0.6
Dunlap	1,386	92.2	0.9	5.8	0.1
Woodford County	38,664	97.4	0.5	0.6	0.5
Tri-County Region	360,552	86.8	9.8	2.0	1.3

In 2000, the median income in Germantown Hills was \$73,594. When adjusted for inflation, a Germantown Hills household from 2000 would be making \$93,191 in 2010. When compared to the actual 2010 median household income of \$98,000, results show a \$4,809 increase in earning potential over the last decade.

These results are contrary to regional and national trends. On average, the American household is making \$3,130 less than they were in 2000. This national decline is a result of the severe economic recession in the latter half of the decade that Germantown Hills seems to have managed well. Woodford County, in which Germantown Hills resides, has also increased income at or above the pace of inflation. Table 1.3 on the following page compares the adjusted household income for Germantown Hills, Woodford County, the Tri-County Region, and the Nation.

CHART 1.3: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

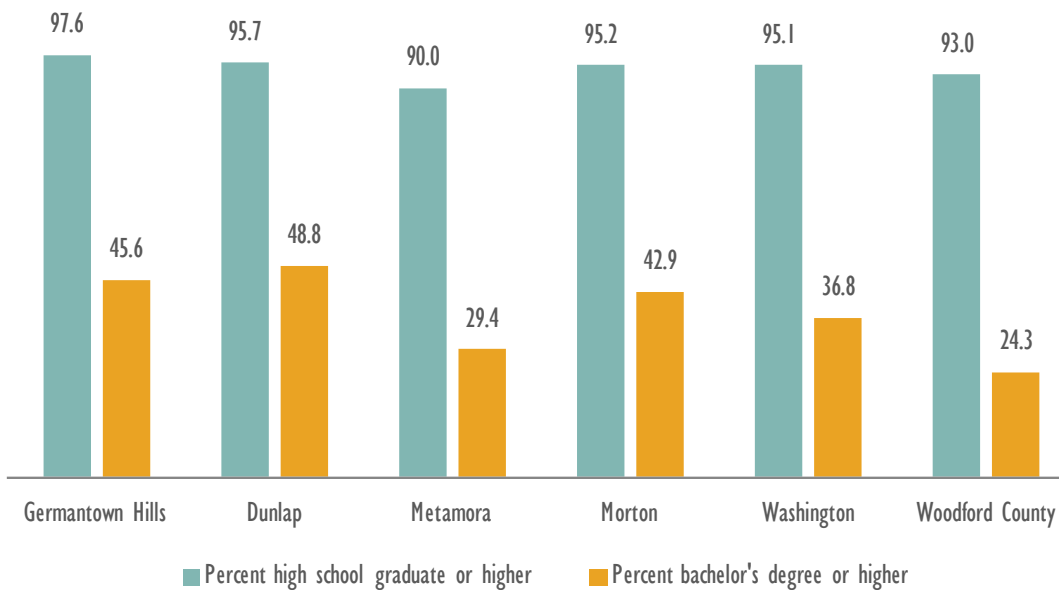
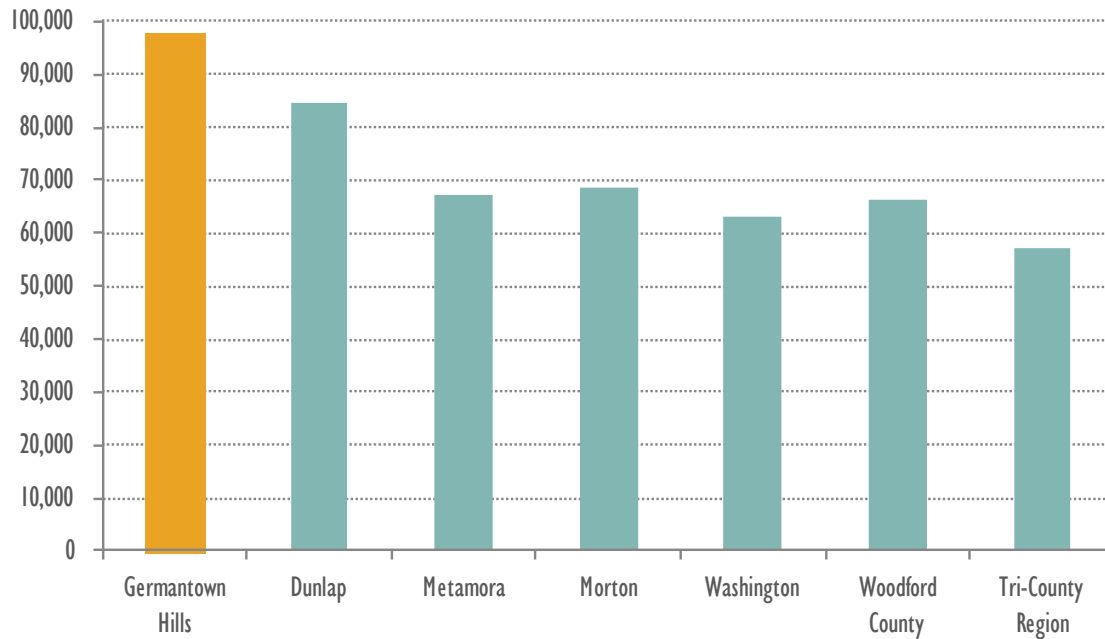


TABLE I.3: ADJUSTED HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Community	2000 (Actual)	2000 (Adjusted*)	2010 Actual
Germantown Hills	\$73,594	\$93,191	\$98,000
Woodford County	\$51,394	\$65,079	\$66,198
Tri-County Region	\$45,540	\$57,666	\$57,168
Nation	\$41,994	\$53,176	\$53,046

\*Adjusted for the total cumulative inflation between 2000 and 2010, or 26.6%

CHART I.4: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2007-2011 ACS)





## LAND USE

*The goal of planning for growth and development is not to significantly change the character of Germantown Hills. Rather, its intention is to preserve and enhance the village's character, while laying the foundation for complementary future development opportunities. This section will begin by identifying the current land uses of the Village, and will then lay out a guide for future growth in Germantown Hills during a 20 year planning period.*

Land Use is a term that describes the human management and modification of public and private property through the arrangement of activities and inputs. The most recognizable land uses are residential, commercial, and industrial; however others include – but are not limited to – parks, open space, agriculture, and civic/institutional purposes.

Historically, the primary use of land in Germantown Hills has been rural housing and agriculture. Over time, area residents who sought refuge from the central city were drawn to the pastoral atmosphere and scenic vistas of the bluffs in and around Germantown Hills. As quick and affordable transportation evolved, residents could travel to and from long distant cities with ease; thus, the village grew from a sparse immigrant settlement into a bedroom community for regional commuters.

The overwhelming majority of current land use is no longer agriculture; it is now residential housing, which composes 79%, or 683.75 acres, of development. This residential use is typified by single-family detached homes on large lots. There is limited undeveloped land available within Germantown Hills' corporate limits and as a result, there are limited opportunities available to develop commercial and retail centers. There are 33.12 acres of commercial establishments mainly located along the limited access state highway, IL Route 116, which passes through the Village. Commercial land that exists serves the local residents with basic service needs including dining, dry-cleaning, and banking. The Village maintains civic and institutional properties on

112.23 acres in the form of grade and middle schools, a library, Village Hall and public parks. There is little to no industry.

Although Germantown Hills has commercial businesses, it does not have a downtown or central business district. Due to the nature of developing along the transportation corridor, much of the commercial properties developed in a linear strip fashion primarily oriented toward the highway. As a result of this condition, we have designated Germantown Crossing as the future central business district. For decades, the Village sought to maintain a rural agricultural character and did not encourage the clustering of these uses as they detract from the pastoral atmosphere. Little space was set aside for civic use or parks. Now that most of the available land has been developed, little of that agricultural heritage remains, and the Village is seeking remediative measures to adapt to the needs of its residents.

Though 84.3 acres of undeveloped land remain in the Village's corporate boundaries, its primary development purpose would be to accommodate additional single family residential properties and small scale commercial uses. Though there is little



undeveloped land, there are many vacant spaces and existing structures that are available for infill development and reuse. Infill development is preferred to new green-field development.

Map 2.1 on the following page indicates the major land uses within the Village and the mile-and-a-half planning area.

## **MANAGED GROWTH**

In order to manage fiscally sound and environmentally responsible growth, Germantown Hills must provide efficient infrastructure, various transportation options, and a mix of uses, while also ensuring compatibility among various land uses. In order to do this, it is important to understand the tools available to help manage growth, and the impacts to consider while deciding how to grow.

### **Land Use Compatibility**

One of the primary purposes of the planning process is to ensure compatibility among various land uses in order to preserve and protect the health, safety, and general welfare of individuals living and working in Germantown Hills. Considering future land use compatibility with current land use ensures that property values and private and public investments in property improvements are well protected. This is a key issue in rezoning and cases where new development is proposed in locations that have not seen such

development. The idea is to minimize the impacts to neighboring uses while moving forward with a proposed project.

The Germantown Hills Zoning Board should consider land use compatibility when making decisions about rezoning cases or special use requests. This doesn't necessarily mean a proposed use with potential conflicts should be denied. It does mean however, that conflicts should be remedied through project redesign.

### **Fiscal Impacts**

Another issue to consider when making decisions about land use and growth is the fiscal implication for public and private entities related to the costs and revenues generated by various land uses. Commercial land uses generally create revenue and will contribute positively to the Village budget, while residential uses generally cost more to serve than they contribute through fees and taxes. It is therefore important that Germantown Hills balances residential and commercial growth to ensure a fiscally sound budget.

### **Annexation**

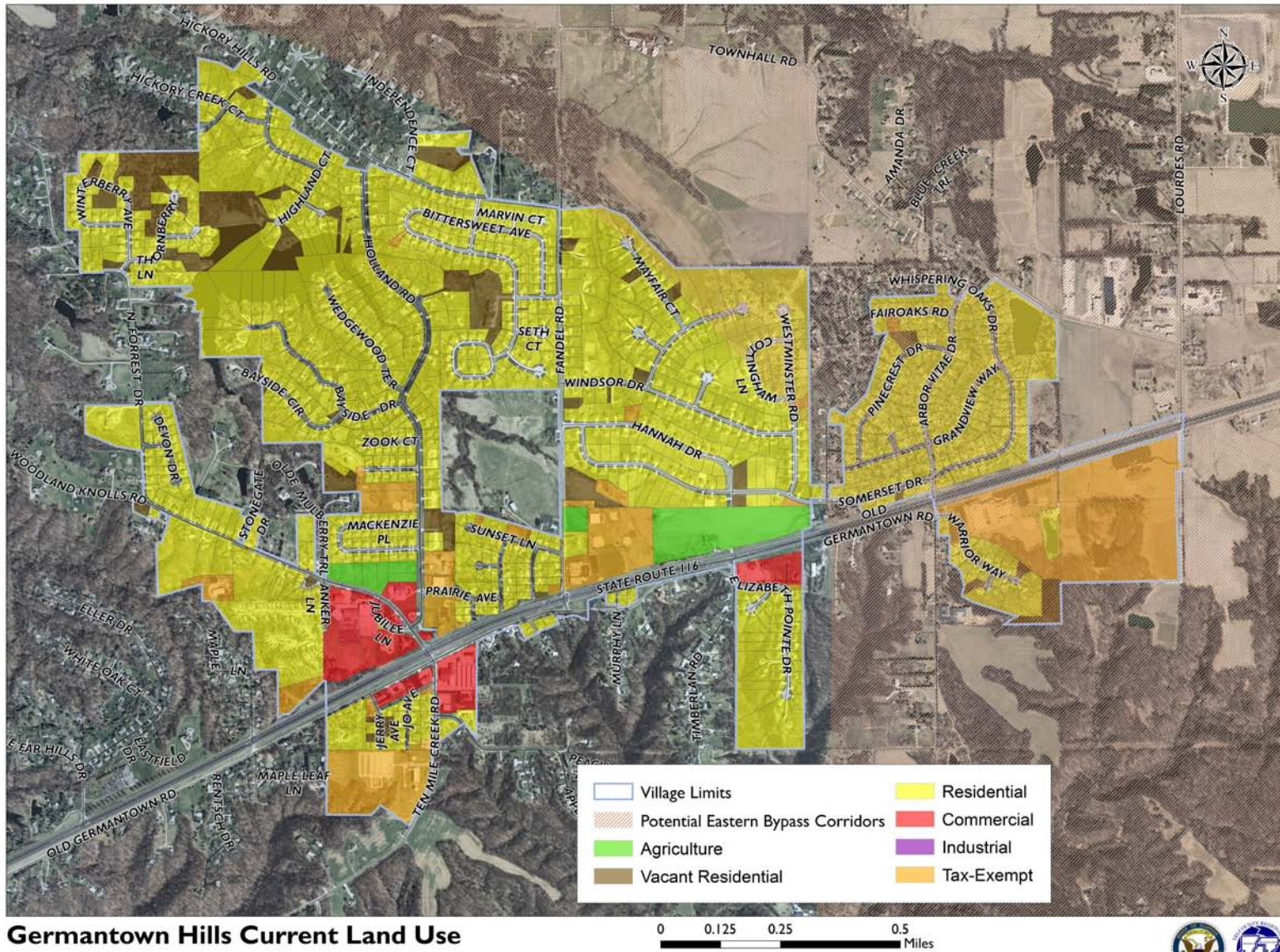
Annexation is the public process by which an unincorporated area may enter into an incorporated municipality. By entering into an incorporated area, the previously unincorporated land is provided with municipal services, voting privileges, regulations, and taxing authority. Over the past decade, Germantown

Hills has annexed several single lots and a small subdivision. Those annexed parcels have been primarily residential.

### **Extraterritorial Jurisdiction**

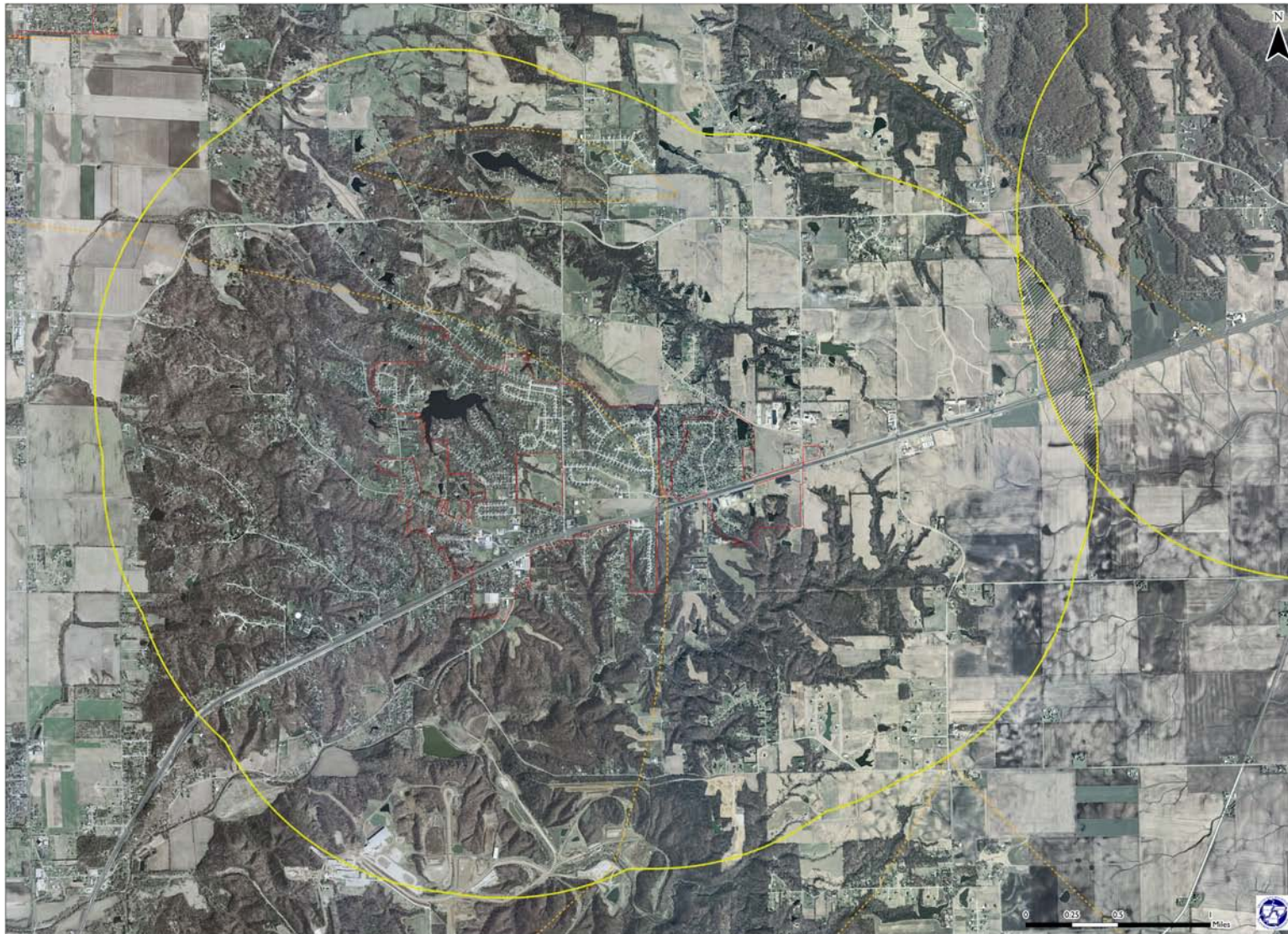
The area within 1.5 miles of the village boundaries is called the extraterritorial jurisdiction area, or ETJ. Because Germantown Hills has a comprehensive plan, the Village is allowed to require subdivisions developed within the ETJ to conform to the village's subdivision ordinance. Municipalities in Illinois are given this right in order to have some control over development that may be annexed into the community at a later date. Germantown Hills' ETJ is shown in Map 2.2 on page 19, and consists of primarily agricultural and residential uses. Residential uses are concentrated in the southwest section of the ETJ where there are dense woods and tall river bluffs overlooking the Illinois River Valley.

MAP 2.1 GERMANTOWN HILLS CURRENT LAND USE\*



\*Please find the current Germantown Hills Zoning Map in the Appendix on page 79.

MAP 2.2 GERMANTOWN HILLS POLITICAL BOUNDARIES



**Germantown Hills**  
Political Boundaries

Municipal Boundaries	Intergovernmental Agreement Line
1.5-Mile Planning Boundaries	Potential Eastern Bypass Corridor

## **FUTURE LAND USE**

A thoughtful future land use plan will help ensure the village is able to accommodate its future needs for residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational development.

Future land use planning is an essential component of the comprehensive planning process. The plan for future land use is a guide to the physical development of the Village that describes how and where to develop land in the future. A future land use map was created to visualize where development should take place, and to act as a guide for development decisions in the future. The map is a statement of what the people of Germantown Hills would like the Germantown Hills of tomorrow to become.

The first step in creating a plan for future land use is to identify the quantity of land needed for each land use based on expected population growth by 2030.

### **Residential Land**

According to the 20 year linear population projection, Germantown Hills will grow to approximately 5,682 total residents by the year 2030, an increase of about 2,244 individuals. Assuming that the average household size will remain at its 2010 level of 2.93, Germantown Hills will need approximately 612 new homes to accommodate residential growth. Assuming that Germantown Hills develops at a density of .5 dwellings

per acre (this assumption is based on averages of Germantown Hills' current residential density), then approximately 306.4 acres of residential land will be needed to accommodate new residential growth.

### **Commercial Land**

A simple per capita calculation was used to project the quantity of commercial land needed in the Village of Germantown Hills by 2030. Germantown Hills has approximately 33.12 acres of commercial land in terms of current land use (as opposed to commercially zoned land). Using the 2010 population total of 3,438, we can deduce that the village has .96 acres of commercial land for every 100 residents. Given the projected total of potentially 2,244 new residents, 21.42 acres of additional land will be needed to maintain this ratio and accommodate new commercial growth in Germantown Hills.

### **Industrial Land**

The Village of Germantown Hills currently has .01 acres of land used for industrial purposes. This amount is negligible and it is not projected to increase in the future.

### **Park Land**

According to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), 10 acres of park land are suggested per every 1,000 residents. Given Germantown Hills' projected total population of 5,682 in 2030, the

village will need 56.8 acres of park land. Currently, the Village has approximately 6.18 acres of park land, which amounts to 1.8 acres of park land per every 1,000 residents, and is well below the NRPA suggested amount. If Germantown Hills wishes to increase this current ratio; the Village would need to add an additional 14.65 acres of park land to the Village before adding additional population.

### **Physical Constraints to Development**

The primary development constraint within the Village of Germantown Hills is the lack of available and developable land within the village corporate limits. Small pockets of agriculture exist to the east of town where infill development would not require new annexation. There is land available in the ETJ in the center of the village, to the northeast, and to the east that is currently utilized as agriculture and would be suitable for residential or commercial uses. Growth is physically limited by the steep terrain to the west and south along the Illinois River Bluffs.

The Future Land Use Map has designated land in the ETJ west of County Road 400 E, and south of East Town Hall Road for new development. Development could extend to the east as far as Lourdes Road and infill the existing residential subdivisions. Route 116 limits the ability to connect development between the north and south of the Village and discourages southern development. The availability of sewage infrastructure

can also be a constraint to expansion. The current state of Germantown Hills' sewage infrastructure is discussed in detail in the Community Facilities Section.

### **Placement of Future Land Uses**

#### *Residential Land*

Most of the future land use recommendations are to accommodate residential development. The land to the north and west of the current Village limits between County Road 400 and East Town Hall Road could accommodate traditional housing with limited geographic restrictions or negative environmental impacts. Map 2.3 on the following page shows these locations graphically. These areas were chosen because of their proximity to existing residential development, growth pressure within the village, and access to major arterials. The Village will be able to extend public infrastructure and utilities to these future areas if it doesn't already exist.

When developing new residential developments, the Village of Germantown Hills should ensure certain guidelines are followed:

- **Stormwater Management:** New development should have curbs, gutters, and storm sewers to manage stormwater runoff. Germantown Hills should consider using alternative management systems that use vegetative material to filter pollutants and absorb runoff. This will reduce

the quantity of stormwater runoff and improve the quality of nearby water bodies, including the Illinois River.

- **Natural Areas:** Natural areas such as wooded land and bluffs should be preserved and incorporated into new residential development to provide recreational and environmental benefits.
- **Street Design:** New development should be served by streets that provide access to major roadways and other developed areas so that traffic flow is efficient and safe for both the public as well as emergency vehicles.
- **Sidewalks:** All new development should be built with sidewalks on both sides to encourage recreation and walkability.
- **Water:** New development must be served by a public water system that consists of water mains and service lines.
- **Wastewater:** New development should be served by a public sanitary sewer system that consists of sewer lines.
- **Parkland:** Neighborhood parks and playgrounds should be encouraged to be built in new developments.

#### *Commercial Land*

Additional commercial land is proposed to be developed as in-fill to the existing commercial centers along Route 116. These areas are shown in the map on the following page. The future of the commercial corridor of Route 116 will include higher densities and well defined public spaces to encourage civic pride, reduce sprawl, and promote walkability.

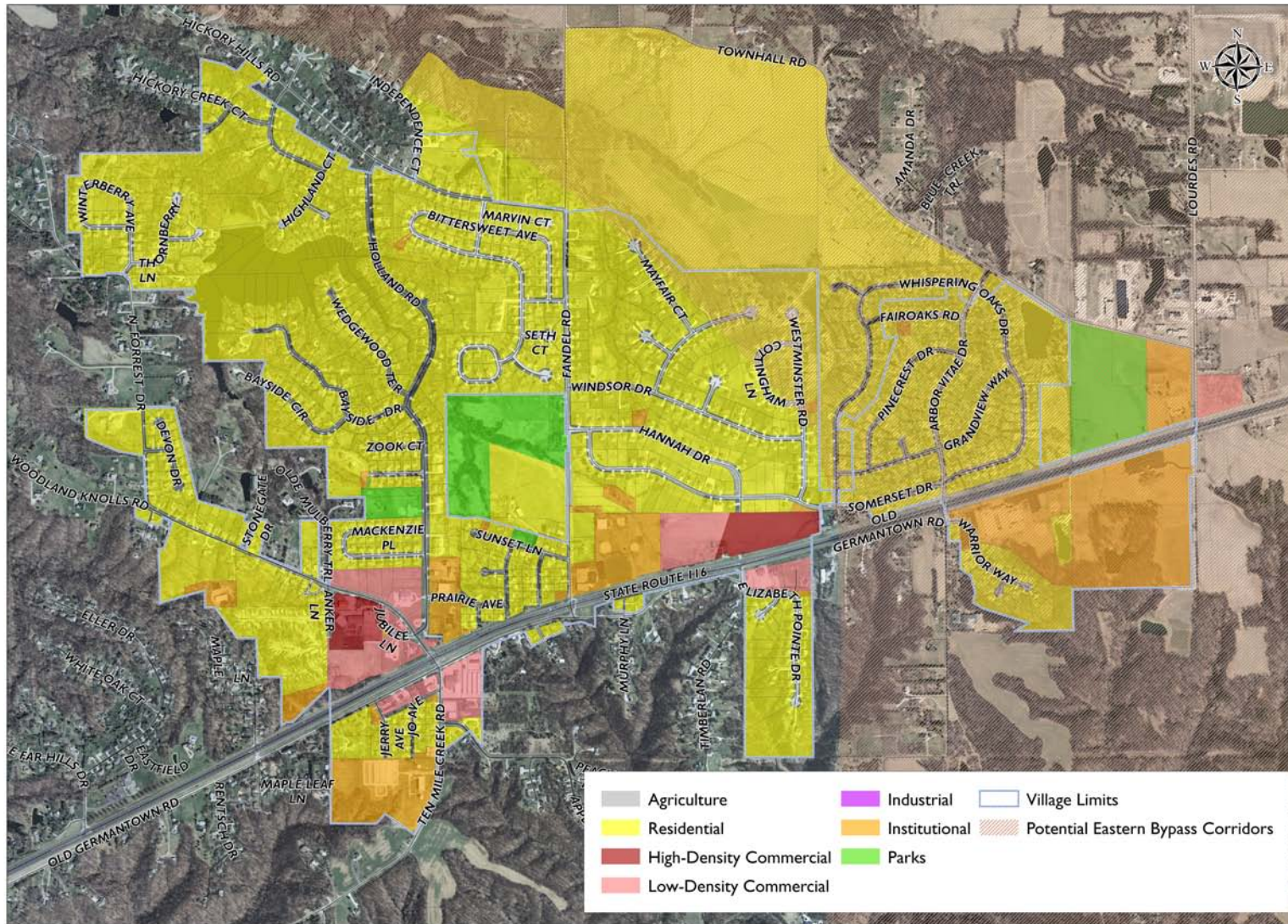
#### *Industrial Land*

Negligible industrial land exists within the village limits and none is expected in future development.

#### *Park Land*

The Village of Germantown Hills has three public parks that it maintains. J.R. Michael White Park is the largest park at 4.9 acres, and is located on Holland Road. Two smaller parks are located in the Oak Grove Park and Jerryville subdivisions. Additional parks are recommended to be dispersed in new subdivision development and east of town where land has already been acquired for MTCO Park, a future recreational youth and school sports facility. If additional park space is needed it is proposed to expand, connect, or enhance the existing facilities.

MAP 2.3 GERMANTOWN HILLS FUTURE LAND USE



**Germantown Hills Future Land Use**

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



**GOAL****Promote Compact, Orderly, and Efficient Development:**

Ensure that the Village of Germantown Hills has sufficient available land within the Village and its planned expansion areas to accommodate existing needs and potential future Village growth.

**OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

*Maintain and enhance Village character through proper land use management.*

- Use the comprehensive plan objectives to guide land use designs while remaining flexible to unforeseen opportunities and information.
  - Land use regulations should be reviewed and revised annually to reflect current development trends – such as flexible zoning techniques – which facilitate unique and innovative approaches to development.
  - Ensure that development within the Village of Germantown Hills is consistent with the Village’s goals and objectives.
  - Encourage development that has limited negative impacts and maintains the character of the Village.
- Guide future growth to planned areas within the established portions of the community, and to planned new development on the Village periphery.
- Accommodate existing and future land use needs.*
- Prioritize development within the village limits before annexing new property.
  - Allow for infill development on commercial sites to increase density.
  - Protect and enhance the Village of Germantown Hills’ ability to expand its municipal boundaries and extend urban services as needed to accommodate and serve its long term future growth and development objectives.
  - Promote only the responsible expansion of Village limits and utilities into unincorporated areas.
  - Encourage the revitalization of the existing Village commercial center and encourage mixed-use, pedestrian friendly enhancements.
  - Recognize and be aware not to expand upon non-conforming uses and zoning conflicts.
  - Monitor the development patterns and activities in other jurisdictions, including the City of East Peoria, Village of Metamora, and Woodford County.
- Extend urban services to new Village of Germantown Hills growth areas in a manner that accommodates the market demand for development, while using existing and planned Village infrastructure efficiently.
  - Seek to ensure that new developments cover the public costs incurred in providing public improvements and public services to the development unless a specific policy creates an exception for defined public purposes.
  - Direct new growth to planned development locations that are suitable for urban development and have easy access to essential infrastructure and services.
  - Direct new development away from land that is unsuitable for development due to engineering or environmental constraints or which have been identified in adopted Woodford County or Tri-County Regional Planning Commission plans for long term preservation in open space uses.
  - Maintain harmonious transitions between new neighborhoods and existing established neighborhoods.
  - Encourage private investment and property maintenance in existing developed areas to prevent property deterioration and promote renovation and rehabilitation.

- Utilize traffic analysis factors when judging suitability of development proposals.
- Consider the environmental impacts of all development.

*Diversify and enhance the current diversity of land uses within the Village.*

- Encourage appropriate site design techniques to buffer differing or incompatible land uses.
- The current mix of land uses does not ensure that an appropriate balance between tax revenue generation and cost of government services can be sustained over time. Increase commercial land to reduce tax burden on residential property owners.





# HOUSING

*In order to be sustainable, communities must provide housing options for residents of all ages and lifestyles. Part of the reason for creating a comprehensive plan is to ensure that the housing stock is changing or being modified as housing needs or wants evolve. Sustainable neighborhoods should provide a mixture of housing forms, sizes, prices, and densities, as well as opportunities for social interaction in the form of neighborhood parks or community centers.*

From an economic standpoint, sufficient workforce housing should be provided in order to support a high-quality employment base. Individuals choose where to live based on basic amenities, and affordable, desirable housing remains at the top of the list for many people. The provision of workforce housing will also help to maintain neighborhood quality, as well as to keep a steady tax base. From an environmental perspective,

housing should be sustainable in terms of energy efficiency and its ecological footprint. Neighborhood design should support alternative transportation options and opportunities for individuals to be active. This can be as simple as ensuring a new subdivision is built with sidewalks or by maintaining the sidewalks of older neighborhoods.

The following sections will provide an overview of Germantown Hills' current housing stock, and will provide suggestions for additional housing options and amenities.

## HOUSING OVERVIEW

The median home value for the Village of Germantown Hills is \$205,900, according to the 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Compared with nearby communities and the region, this median value is well above average. The vast majority of homes (90.4%) have a value over \$100,000, and 51% have a value over \$200,000. The Village's average housing value exceeds the next highest community of Morton by over \$30,000. Furthermore, home values in Germantown Hills are on average more than \$75,000 more expensive than the nearest neighboring community of Metamora. Table 3.1 breaks down Germantown home values by

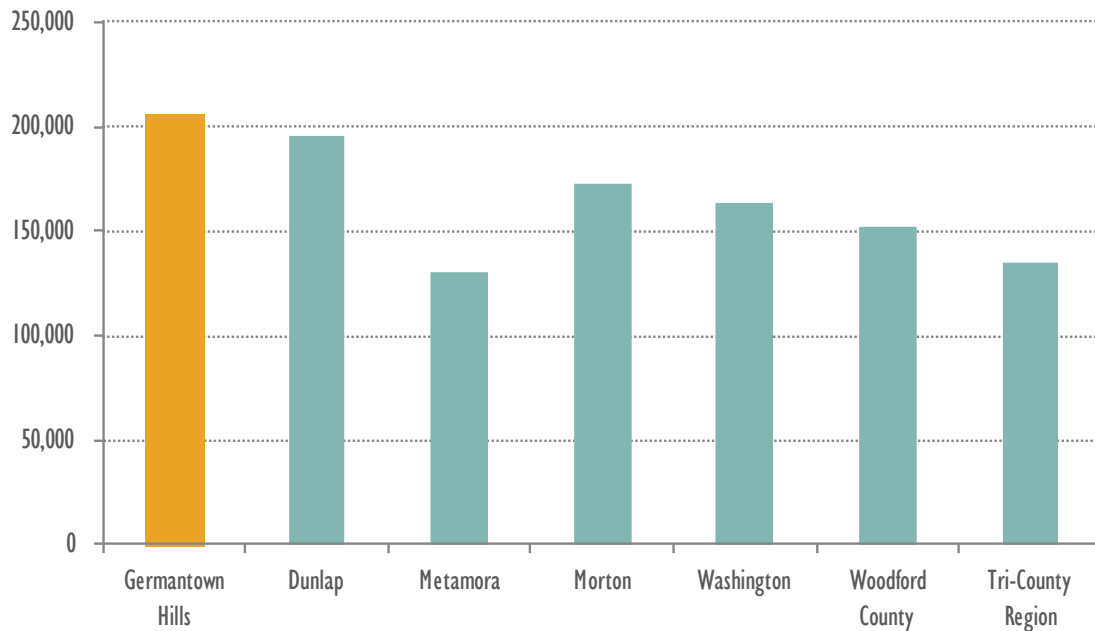
percent, and Chart 3.1 on the following page compares median housing values for Germantown Hills and surrounding communities.

**TABLE 3.1: VALUE OF OWNER OCCUPIED HOMES (2007 - 2011 ACS)**

Home Value	Percent
Less than \$50,000	5.5
\$50,000 to \$99,999	2.4
\$100,000 to \$149,999	8.5
\$150,000 to \$199,999	30.9
\$200,000 to \$299,999	34.2
\$300,000 to \$499,999	16.8
\$500,000 or more	1.7

In 2010, the median household income in Germantown Hills was \$98,000 which is well above local and regional averages. This represents a more than \$20,000 income gap between Germantown Hills and its neighbors in Woodford County. Chart 1.4 on page 15 compares median household incomes for Germantown Hills and the surrounding communities.

Chart 3.1: Median Home Value



**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

It is generally accepted that households should be spending 30% or less of their gross annual income on housing in order for it to be affordable. Most survey respondents were unaware of this indicator and instead cited specific housing prices, styles, or types to define what is “affordable”. Some associated affordable housing with low-income housing and discouraged its availability in the community. According to recent ACS data, nearly 73.1 percent of Germantown Hills

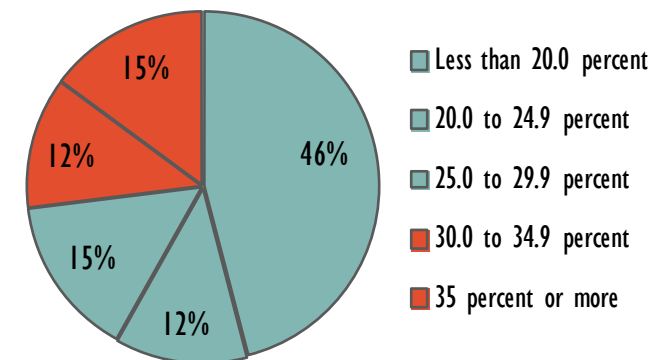
households with a mortgage (this includes all forms of debt for which a property is pledged as security payment for that debt) have monthly costs that equate to less than 30 percent of their gross household income. In comparison, approximately 27 percent of households with a mortgage are spending more than 30 percent of their household income on housing. Over a quarter of the homes in Germantown Hills with a mortgage are considered unaffordable. Such a high proportion of unaffordable housing can make a community fragile to sudden changes in economic conditions.

The majority of housing units without a mortgage are more affordable with 90.4 percent of individuals citing monthly housing cost below 30 percent; however, 9.6 percent of households do have monthly costs exceeding 30 percent. As indicated by the community survey, lack of affordable housing for sale is a major concern in Germantown Hills, with over 74 percent of respondents citing it as the most important housing issue. It should be noted that over 50% of survey respondents did skip this question which could indicate that residents do not feel that there is a housing issue.

Chart 3.2 below shows monthly housing costs as a percentage of household income.

**CHART 3.2: SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

Total Units With a Mortgage

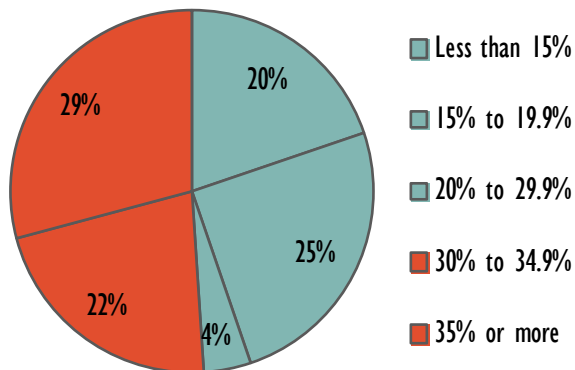


*Rental Property*

Rental property within the Village of Germantown Hills proves to be even less affordable. According to 2008-2012 ACS estimates, median rent was \$1039 in the Village, representing the highest median value in the region by over \$200. As a result, over half of renters (51.1 percent) report paying over 30 percent of their household income on housing costs. The community survey showed that after availability of affordable housing for sale, affordable rental housing was the second greatest concern to residents.

Chart 3.3 below shows costs as a percentage of household income for occupied units paying rent.

**CHART 3.3: GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME OCCUPIED UNITS PAYING RENT**



**HOUSING TYPES**

The number of housing units in Germantown Hills grew by nearly 439 from 2000 to 2010. The majority of this growth can be attributed to the development of Coventry Farms and Fandel Farms subdivisions on the eastern edge of town. Table 3.2 presents data regarding housing occupancy and tenure from 2000 to 2010.

Table 3.3 shows that there was a significant increase in single-family, detached units from 2000 to 2010; the number of homes in this category rose from 580 units to 927 units. Multifamily housing within the village increased with the addition of 10 duplexes, 19 3-4 unit structures, and 4 5-9 unit structures. Before 2000, no duplexes or 5-9 unit housing structures existed in the community, thus showing an increased diversification of housing options. Germantown Hills decreased mobile home units and trailers from 80 in 2000 to only 55 in 2010.

**TABLE 3.2: HOUSING OCCUPANCY**

	2000		2010	
Occupied	696	100%	1175	%100
Owner Occupied	639	91.8%	1064	%90.6
Renter Occupied	57	8.2%	111	%9.4

**TABLE 3.3: UNITS IN STRUCTURE**

Units in Structure	2000		2010	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Total Housing Units	704	100	1143	100
1-unit, detached	580	82.4	927	81.1
1-unit, attached	2	0.3	7.5	10
2 units	0	0	10	0.9
3-4 units	42	6	61	5.3
5-9 units	0	0	4	0.3
10-19 units	0	0	0	0
20+	0	0	0	0
Mobile Home or Trailer	80	11.4	55	4.8

### OWNER AND RENTAL OCCUPANCY

A community typically has a mix of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing. Families often prefer to own their own homes, while some single persons and young professionals prefer to rent. Germantown Hills has almost 91 percent owner-occupied homes, which is well above average for the region. It would be preferable to encourage more rental property availability in the community to increase housing flexibility for Village residents. It is important to note, however, that renters are not as likely to invest in the housing property in the same way as home owners. That responsibility falls to the landlord. Absentee landlords who do not maintain and invest in their rental properties can result in lower property values in a neighborhood. The Village should therefore take special care to educate property owners on their responsibilities and discourage absentee landlords.

### SENIOR HOUSING

According to the 2010 Census, 6.6 percent of Germantown Hills' residents are aged 65 or older. Comparatively, there are significantly more middle-aged adults and children currently living in the Village; however only one senior housing unit exists in the community and it is not accessible to the general population. Though assisted living and nursing homes are available in neighboring communities, a lack of senior housing limits residents' ability to age in place.

CHART 3.4: PERCENT OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS (2007-2011 ACS)



This represents a larger issue when confronted by the “Baby Boomer” generation. The “Boomers” cohort makes up 12.1 percent of the community and will begin aging into the 65 years and over category within the next decade. As individuals age, their housing needs change. With reduced and fixed incomes, retired individuals generally prefer smaller more manageable homes. Furthermore, as individuals age and become less mobile, their need for accessible homes increases. Older individuals may need a one-story home, for example, or

a wheelchair accessible entrance. Understanding these needs is important when planning for future housing development. Additionally, some seniors prefer living in senior specific housing. Senior housing is generally based on market-rate rents, and provides a community for seniors to live in that provides for their increasing needs. Leaders should strongly consider increasing housing options for seniors to help sustain and retain Village population.

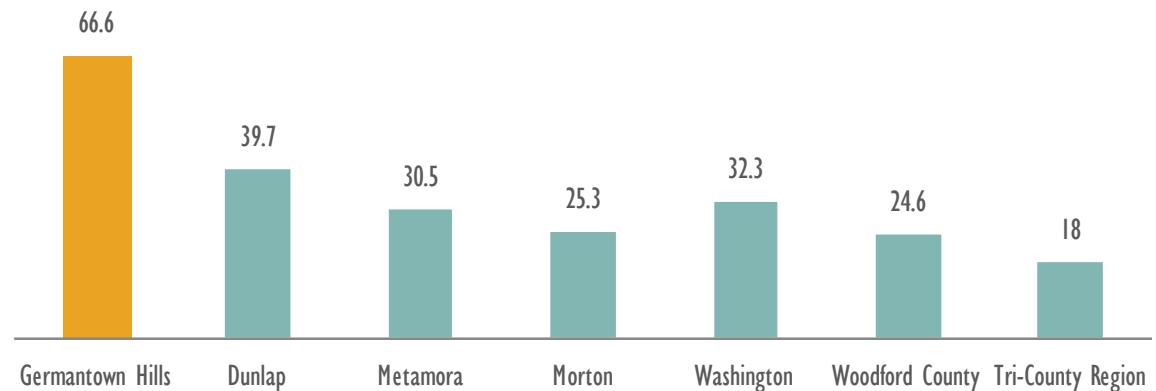
## HOUSING CONDITION

Germantown Hills' housing stock is significantly younger than that of surrounding communities. Only 1 percent (12 homes) in Germantown Hills were built prior to 1939. Moreover, only 13.1 percent of Germantown Hills' housing stock is over 50 years old. For comparison, in the nearby community of Metamora, 8 percent of the housing stock was built prior to 1939, and 46 percent is over 50 years old. It is very rare in the Tri-County area to have such a high proportion of new housing stock within a community. In order to understand the significance of this phenomenon, we can look at the age of housing stock for surrounding communities. The young age of housing stock is likely one of the reasons for high home values in the village.

Though Germantown Hills has had a major housing construction boom in the past several decades, there has been a significant decline since the housing market crash of 2008. Growth pressure in the community has declined (See Chart 3.6 Building Permits Issued Since 1985) and future housing concerns will likely turn toward moderate development, annexation of existing subdivisions, and maintenance of the housing stock as it ages. As these homes age, Germantown Hills can expect implications with maintenance and home values for village residents. If not well maintained, property values can quickly decline.

Since Germantown Hills has so few older homes, the Village has a very limited opportunity to embrace and protect the original character of the community. Those original homes that do remain can be beautiful, historic assets to Germantown Hills and should be protected and celebrated as such. The current homes in the community will one day be older homes; therefore, it is important that they be properly maintained and preserved for future generations and community character.

CHART 3.5: PERCENT OF HOUSING UNITS CONSTRUCTED SINCE 1990



**GOAL**

**Promote equitable, affordable housing:** Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.

**OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES***Increase and Diversify Housing Options*

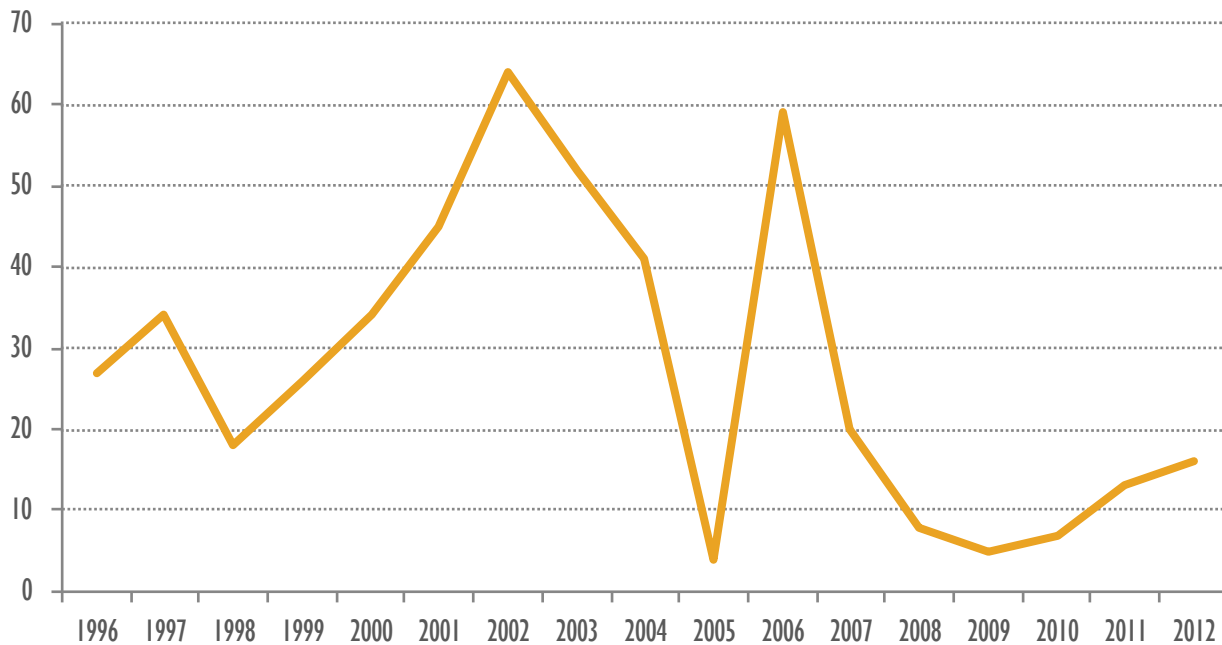
- Provide housing for senior citizens and empty nesters.
- Expand the availability of multifamily housing options.

- Continue to encourage safe, accessible, quality housing development while maintaining options for the young, disabled and senior residents.
- Promote well-designed, walkable residential developments that are accessible to open space and recreational facilities, schools, commercial and employment centers, and basic community services.
- Promote the development of attractive residential neighborhoods that have adequate municipal services and efficient traffic circulation.
- Manage residential development to provide expanded quality and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities that are consistent with the rural quality of the area.

*Improve Housing Affordability*

- Provide a range of affordable, quality housing choices in Germantown Hills to meet the needs of households of different sizes, lifestyles, incomes, and tastes.
- Provide more housing options for units under \$150,000.
- Encourage responsible home buying practices.
- Allow for a mix of building types and lot sizes in residential subdivisions to increase the diversity of home prices and lifestyles available.

**Chart 3.6: Building Permits Issued Since 1996**



- Increase the affordability and availability of rental housing.
- Set aside land or housing for housing services including subsidized and public housing.

*Protect Community Character*

- Encourage home siting in areas that will not result in property or environmental damage or impair rural character or agricultural operations.
- Establish programs and procedures intended to make new residential development “pay its own way” for the facility and service demands it generates, to the greatest extent possible.
- Encourage neighborhood designs and locations that protect residential areas from infringement by incompatible land uses, promote connectivity of roadway and environmental systems, and preserve rural character.
- Do not allow expansion of suburban or cul-de-sac development within village planning boundaries.
- Continue public and private efforts to beautify Germantown Hills’ neighborhoods.





## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

*Community facilities are central components in providing valuable daily services to the residents and businesses of the Village of Germantown Hills. These facilities affect and define the Village's overall quality of life. In order to remain attractive to both current and future residents, it is important for Germantown Hills to both maintain and enhance its facilities, including its schools, library, parks, fire protection services, and public utilities. This section will provide a review of the existing facilities in Germantown Hills, and will provide guidance concerning the future need for new and current services.*

### ADMINISTRATION

The Village of Germantown Hills is led by the Village Board, which consists of a President and six trustees. Each member of the Village Board is elected to a 4-year term. Meetings are held once per month at the Village Hall, and are open to the public.

According to the Community Survey, 53 percent of Germantown Hills' residents are either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with the current Village leadership, and 28.4 percent have no opinion. Survey respondents had mixed opinions concerning Village communication efforts with citizens; 45.6 percent are either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied," 39.1 percent are either "somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied," and 15.3 percent expressed that they had no opinion. Going forward, residents indicated that they prefer the following methods of communication:

- E-Mail – 76.8%
- Mailings or Billings Inserts – 42.8%
- Facebook/Social Media – 40.8%
- City Website – 36.3%
- Flyers from School - 29.4%

Currently, Germantown Hills' primary form of communication is through the Village website, which underwent a complete revamp in early 2014. The new site is designed to better inform residents of meetings and events, as well as potential business owners of available properties. In addition, the site links to the sites of other Germantown Hills' organizations and facilities and provides a list of all businesses located within the Village.

Partly in response to the results of the Community Survey, the Village established an email subscription service. Residents can join the email subscription list by visiting the Village website and specifying whether they prefer to be notified of public information, emergency information, or both.

As part of this planning process, the Village also put out the first edition of what will become a regular newsletter. The newsletter is intended to inform community members about the activities of various Village facilities, including the Village Hall, the School District, the Fire District, the Germantown Hills Athletic Association, and the Chamber of Commerce, among others. The first edition was well-received by the community.



### **POLICE PROTECTION**

Currently, the Village of Germantown Hills does not have its own Police Department. The area depends upon the Woodford County Sheriff's Department for police protection. The Germantown Hills' Fire Department serves as a substation for the Sheriff's Department. Furthermore, the Illinois State Police District 8 Headquarters is located just east of the Village limits, providing another layer of protection.

Overall, Germantown Hills' residents seem to feel safe within the community. When asked to identify the top three strengths or opportunities regarding Germantown Hills and its future, 15 individuals identified the safety of the community, the seventh most frequent response. Furthermore, committee members and stakeholders identified this as an asset during meetings and interviews.

Though residents feel safe overall, many have concerns about the speed of traffic throughout the Village. When asked to identify the top three weaknesses or threats concerning Germantown Hills and its future, ten individuals named traffic and speeding, the ninth most frequent response. The Village has taken measures to try and reduce traffic speeds, including installing radar speed limit signs. Additionally, the Village coordinates with the Woodford County Sheriff's Department to provide additional police protection and enforcement when

needed. The Village should continue coordinating with the Woodford County Sheriff's Department for public safety and traffic enforcement needs.

### **FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE**

The Germantown Hills Fire Department operates as a separate entity from the Village. The district covers approximately nine square miles; the Village of Germantown Hills represents about one half of the district's total service area. The department is made up of both part-time employees and full and part-time volunteers. Currently, there are approximately 30 volunteer firefighters on the roster who respond to calls regarding vehicle accidents, medical emergencies, and various types of fires. In 2013, the department responded to just over 300 calls. The district is always looking for more volunteers, especially for daytime service. Because Germantown Hills is primarily a bedroom community, most residents work during the day, and are not available during daytime hours.

Currently, the district has three pumper trucks, a rescue truck, a paramedic level ambulance, and a utility vehicle. The oldest truck is ten years old. As fire trucks generally have a life of approximately 20 years, the fire district won't have to buy additional equipment for quite some time. According to the Germantown Hills



Fire Department Chief, the district has the capacity to serve additional population if the area continues to grow.

Respondents of the Community Survey indicated high satisfaction with fire protection. When asked to select their level of satisfaction concerning specific community services, 86.3 percent of respondents indicated being “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with fire protection services. This was the second highest response rate to this question.

As indicated by the Community Survey and interviews with the fire chief, the Germantown Hills Fire Protection District serves the Village sufficiently. The Village should maintain its positive working relationship with the district and provide the district with relevant information so that appropriate decisions pertaining to district personnel and facilities can be made as additional growth occurs.

### **AMBULANCE SERVICE**

In July 2012, the Germantown Hills Fire District began providing Advanced Life Support ambulance service to the Village. Currently, the district has one paramedic ambulance. According to the Community Survey, residents are very satisfied with emergency services. When asked to select their level of satisfaction



with specific community services, 85.7 percent of respondents indicated being either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied.” This was the third highest response rate to this question.

### **WATER**

The Village of Germantown Hills is served by the Caterpillar Trail Public Water District, which supplies water to 1,965 homes within Germantown Hills and the surrounding area. The district is a not-for profit entity that has been in operation for over 50 years.

In 2007, Caterpillar Trail Water District greatly expanded its capacity by building a new treatment plant. This upgraded, state-of-the-art plant uses a lime-softening system to provide iron free, soft water to Village residents and businesses. In fact, the Caterpillar Trail Water District was awarded the Illinois Rural Water Association Taste Test in 2010. Awards are determined based on overall taste, clarity and odor.

Unfortunately, the district has not experienced the growth originally expected when plans were made to expand and update the water system. As such, the current Water District Chairperson is concerned about the district’s future financial status, and indicated that the price of water may increase for Village residents and businesses in the coming years.

The district has three wells in use, with a total system capacity of 2.4 million gallons per day. Currently, the average annual demand for water is approximately 450,000 gallons per day, which equates to less than 20 percent of the system’s total capacity. In the winter months, demand is in the range of 300,000 to 400,000 gallons per day, and in the summer months, demand averages 700,000 to 900,000 gallons per day. As the water plant is not even at 50 percent capacity even in the hottest months of the year, the Village won’t need to think about expanding its water system for quite some time.

Due to the topography of the area, water pressures vary. On average, pressures are reported to be approximately 65 pounds per inch (psi); however, pressures can be as high as 100 psi in low-elevation areas, and as low as 50 psi in high-elevation areas. This range in pressure is normal, and in general, the District does not receive complaints about water pressure issues.

Residents are pleased with the quality of water services in the Village of Germantown Hills; 79.9 percent of respondents reported being either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with this public utility. This was the seventh highest response rate out of 14 total services.

## **SEWER**

For wastewater treatment, residents are served by the Village Wastewater Treatment System. The system is made up of two treatment facilities, over 15 miles of gravity sewer, over 4 miles of sanitary force mains, over 2 miles of pressure sewer, approximately 200 grinder pumps, and 10 sanitary pump stations.

The original treatment plant became operational in the late 1970’s and consists of a mechanical extended aeration system with a design maximum flow of 500,000 gallons per day. Based on hydraulic loading, this plant is at approximately 95% of its design flow. The second treatment plant was completed in 1997

and consists of an aerated lagoon system with a design maximum flow of 500,000 gallons per day. Based on hydraulic loading, this second plant is at approximately 45% of its design flow.

Currently, the Village has issues with infiltration and inflow (I&I) of stormwater into their sanitary sewer system. The Village is addressing I&I in several ways, including televising sewer lines to check for cracks, repairing damaged lines, and rehabilitating manholes. Later this year, the Village will also conduct a smoke test to identify sources of I&I in the two oldest subdivisions. Depending on what the source of I&I is, the corrective action could be the responsibility of either the homeowner or the Village. Per the Superintendent of Public Works, inflow – stormwater entering the system due to improper and illegal connections into the system – will remain an issue. Though the Village has ordinances against connecting sump pumps and downspouts into the sewer system, the ordinance is hard to enforce. The Village has sent letters to homeowners to ask that connections be removed. The Village also offers technical assistance to those who ask.

In 2012, the Village of Germantown Hills completed a comprehensive study of the Village’s sanitary sewer system. The primary goals of this study were to outline the objectives for meeting the future wastewater treatment and collection system needs

of the Village, develop a strategy for growth and development in terms of wastewater treatment, and provide for proactive planning to accomplish necessary capital improvements and maintenance. The Village plans to eventually close the older plant and expand the newer plant. Additionally, the newer plant will ultimately be converted to a mechanical lagoon system, per a recommendation from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Village should continue to review, update, and ultimately implement the recommendations of the 2012 study.

## **STORMWATER**

Unlike sanitary sewer and water systems, stormwater flow occurs naturally by way of swales, creeks, and rivers, each of which contributes to larger drainage areas called watersheds. Therefore, the Village is responsible for maintaining the integrity and capacity of these naturally occurring features. Poor stormwater management can lead to increased volumes of runoff, which may lead to substantial erosion, stream deterioration, and flooding.

The Village of Germantown Hills addresses stormwater runoff in the Village Subdivision Code. The code strongly encourages the use of best management practices (BMPs), such as “conserving open space, reducing impervious surfaces, and utilizing bioswales in order to reduce the quantity of stormwater runoff and improve the quality of stormwater runoff to mimic the



natural watershed hydrology.” Furthermore, the code gives design specifications, and requires that detention ponds be designed for peak discharge rates.

As discussed in the Sanitary Sewer system section, the Village has issues with I&I of stormwater into the sanitary sewer system. The Village is addressing infiltration by repairing damaged lines and manholes; however, inflow is harder for the Village itself to fix, as it is often caused by homeowners connecting sump pumps, downspouts, and roof drains into the system.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

### Parks

Traditional park area standards set by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggest 10 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. With a 2010 population of 3,438 residents and approximately 6.2 acres of dedicated public park land, the Village of Germantown Hills has about 1.8 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is significantly below the national standard. With the help of community partners, the Village has purchased a 20 acre parcel of land, which will eventually house a sports recreation facility. With this addition, the Village will have approximately 7.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Though the Village is lacking in public park land, the Germantown Hills Elementary School and

Middle School offer additional recreational land for the public to use during non-school hours. Together, the schools add approximately 14 acres of park land to the Village. Both facilities offer baseball fields and small playgrounds. Additionally, the Great Oaks Community Church, located just east of the Middle School, offers another 40 acres of open land that church leaders allow the public to use. The property includes soccer fields, a cross-country course, and a community garden. Finally, 205 households in the White Oak Lake subdivision have access to a 35 acre lake where residents can fish and boat in the summer months and play ice hockey in the winter months. This lake is not open to the public, but adds to the quality of life of a portion of the Village population.

The existing school and church facilities help meet the Village’s need for recreational space; however, the Village should not depend on these sites to meet park needs. The Village can however consider developing parks in conjunction with or adjacent to these sites to create a civic and destination center for Village residents.

### Recreation

In terms of recreational programming, the Village is served by the Germantown Hills Athletic Association (GHAA). The GHAA is an independent, volunteer organization that provides recreational activities for youth from Germantown Hills and surrounding

communities. In fall 2013, over 200 children participated in the GHAA soccer program, and in winter 2014, over 275 boys and girls played basketball on GHAA organized teams. In the warmer months, the GHAA offers baseball, softball, and tee ball to community youth.

Recreational programs for Germantown Hills youth are well provided. Adult and senior programs however, are lacking. The Village's proximity to Peoria allows residents to utilize Peoria programs with relative ease; however, developing programs for seniors and adults alone or in conjunction with nearby communities would benefit the overall quality of life for Village residents.

### Survey Results

According to the Community Survey, the majority of residents (69.9%) are satisfied with the quality of local parks. However, 80.9 percent of residents expressed dissatisfaction with the availability of sidewalks in the Village, and would like the Village to spend more on sidewalk repair and bike accommodations in the coming years. Furthermore, 49.2 percent of respondents would like to see the Village spend more on parks and recreation.

Lack of sidewalks (48 responses) and bike paths (12 responses) were also top responses to the question, "What are the top three weaknesses/threats concerning Germantown Hills and its future." In addition,



ten individuals listed parks as a weakness/threat; however, ten individuals also listed parks as a strength/opportunity. Finally, in response to the question "How would you change your neighborhood if you could," 79.4% of respondents would add sidewalks or bike accommodations, and 41.1% of respondents would have recreation opportunities available nearby.

Clearly there is a desire for more recreational opportunities in the Village of Germantown Hills, specifically related to recreational trails and sidewalks. This topic is addressed further in the transportation section of this document.

### GERMANTOWN HILLS LIBRARY

The Germantown Hills Public Library is one of six branches located within the Illinois Prairie Library District. Other locations include the Villages of Metamora, Benson, Roanoke, Spring Bay, and Washburn. The Germantown Hills library is located in a small house south of IL Route 116, near the Germantown Hills Middle School. It is the smallest library in the District and has the lowest circulation. In addition, the library is only open on Mondays and Thursdays from 2:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

The District recognizes the need for a larger library in Germantown Hills, and has purchased 5 acres of land along Woodland Knolls Road for a future facility. The process of purchasing land, designing, and planning for a future library has been occurring on and off for over ten years. The main stumbling block is that the Library District is not financially capable of designing and constructing the library at this time. The project may be able to be financed with a bond referendum, fundraising, and/or private donations in the future.

The majority of Germantown Residents are dissatisfied with the state of the Germantown Hills Public Library. According to the Community Survey, 59 percent of residents are either "somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" with Village library services.

Conversely, 24.6 percent expressed satisfaction, and 16.4 percent stated that they had no opinion. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan Committee and several stakeholders expressed unhappiness with the public library.

It is clear that the Germantown Hills community both desires and needs an upgraded, larger library. The Village should coordinate with the Illinois Prairie Library District Board to ensure the topic of designing and constructing a Germantown Hills branch is a top priority. The Village may consider creating a temporary committee composed of Germantown Hills residents and stakeholders and a Library District Board representative to give the project the momentum it needs to get going.

## SCHOOLS

The Village of Germantown Hills is served by Germantown Hills School District 69, which includes Germantown Hills Elementary School and Germantown Hills Middle School. Currently, the elementary school accommodates 286 students from Pre-Kindergarten to 2nd grade, and is located at 110 Fandel Road. Germantown Hills Middle School accommodates approximately 582 students from 3rd to 8th grade, and is located at 103 Warrior Way. In total, the district enrolls approximately 868 students, 94 percent of whom identify as white or Caucasian, and 10.3 percent of whom are classified as low-income.

The average class size for the district is approximately 20 students.

After Middle School, Germantown Hills students feed into Metamora Township High School District 122, located at 101 W. Madison Street in Metamora. Metamora Township High School accommodates approximately 986 students from 9th to 12th grades. At the high school level, 94.1 percent of students identify as white or Caucasian, and 13.9 percent are classified as low-income. The average class size is 19 students.

Germantown Hills School District 69 is planning an expansion to the middle school in order to accommodate students from the elementary school, which will close once the expansion is complete. Metamora Township High School District 122 is also planning an expansion to accommodate a media center and student life spaces. Please see the Spotlight to the right for more information on additional improvements to the facility.

According to the Illinois Interactive Report Card, 82 percent of Germantown Hills students met or exceeded state standards on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) in 2013. This is significantly higher than the state average, at 59 percent, and is also higher than Washington Middle School at 70 percent and Morton Middle School at 74 percent.

## SPOTLIGHT

### FOCUS: Metamora Township High School Renovation

Metamora Township High School is in the planning stages of preparing the building for the next 100 years through improving almost every aspect of the Campus and touching almost every activity and department in some way. Academic focus and improvement is the staple consideration in this master planning effort; security and student safety, student life spaces and athletic spaces are other areas of facility enhancement. A new 21st century media center, unification of academic departments, showcasing First Robotics and Fine Arts, and renovation and upgrading of the Chef and Restaurant classroom are just a few updates coming in the future for MTHS.

At the high school level, 65 percent of students at Metamora Township High School met or exceeded state standards on the Prairie State Achievement Exam (PSAE), compared to the state average of 53 percent. Based solely on PSAE scores, Metamora Township High School performs similar to the nearby Washington Community High School, in which 62% of students met or exceeded the PSAE. Morton High School has the highest percentage of students meeting

or exceeding the PSAE in the area at 77 percent. These numbers are from the 2012-2013 school year. Updated numbers can be found at <http://illinoisreportcard.com/>.

According to the 2012-2013 Illinois Interactive Report Card, students that score at least a 21 (composite) on the ACT are classified as “Ready for College Coursework.” At Metamora Township High School, 59 percent of students scored at least a 21 on the ACT in 2013, compared to 46 percent at the state level. At Morton High School, 70 percent of students scored at least a 21 on the ACT, and at Washington Community High School, 59 percent of students scored at least a 21 in 2013.

Respondents of the Community Survey expressed great satisfaction with Germantown Hills School District 69; 83.4 percent of respondents indicated they are either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with Germantown Hills Elementary School, and 80.2 percent of respondents expressed satisfaction with Germantown Hills Middle School. Additionally, 67.7 percent of respondents indicated satisfaction with Metamora Township High School. Furthermore, in response to the open-ended question, “What are the top three strengths/opportunities concerning the Village of Germantown Hills and its future,” 103 responses identified Germantown Hills’ schools. This was the highest response count for this question. Respondents also expressed that the quality school district was a primary reason for moving to the Village.



**GOAL**

Provide for and equitably fund a system of community facilities and services that meets the needs of all businesses, residents, and visitors, and enhances the Village as a desirable place in which to live and work.

**OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

*Adequately provide for the safety of Germantown Hills residents and businesses.*

- Support the Fire District in maintaining adequate fire protection and emergency medical service response times for all development within the Village.
- Support the Fire District in recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters, particularly for the day-time.
- Review/update the contract with the Woodford County Sheriff's Department on an annual basis; continue to negotiate additional hours specifically for speed enforcement along IL Route 116 and high-traffic north-south corridors.

*Support high quality schools and educational excellence.*

- Support the School District in creating and maintaining partnerships between neighboring districts to take advantage of additional opportunities in academics and extra-curricular activities.

- Support enhanced communication between Germantown Hills School District 69 and Metamora Township High School to ensure curricula align.
- Support school partnerships with the regional business community to take advantage of unique opportunities for education and training.
- Partner with the school district to engage students in community service activities, such as an annual Community Clean-up.
- Work with the school district to monitor population and development trends to ensure adequate resources exist to support future students.
- Work with the School District to find a future use for the Germantown Hills Elementary School building once it moves to the Middle School location.

*Ensure that the Germantown Hills Public Library meets the needs of both current and future residents.*

- Maintain frequent communication with the Illinois Prairie District Library Board of Trustees to reiterate the importance of an enhanced library facility for the community.
- Consider creating a sub-committee to develop recommendations for the design and construction of the Germantown Hills Library.

*Maintain and enhance current park and recreation facilities and activities, and provide for expansion to accommodate future growth.*

- Partner with the Germantown Hills Parks Committee, the Germantown Hills Athletic Association, the School District, and community leaders to kick-off a fundraising campaign for the construction of MTCO Park.
- Ensure adequate park space exists for all members of the general public; pursue the acquisition and/or donation of land for public parks and open space as shown on the Future Land Use map.
- Coordinate with neighboring communities for additional youth and adult recreation leagues, and develop programs for seniors.
- Consider Germantown Hills' place within the larger context of the region by planning for recreational facilities and infrastructure that will connect the Village to regional communities and natural areas, including the Illinois River and Black Partridge Park.

*Establish greater communication and interaction between Village officials and staff and the general public.*

- Continue to publish a newsletter to update residents on Village activities, meetings, and events.



- Maintain and update the Village Website regularly with meeting information and community events and activities.
- Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce to establish new Village events, and enhance current annual events.
- Empower residents to be a part of proper stormwater management. Educate them on proper lawn care, disposal of pet waste, installation of rain barrels, and the planting of rain gardens, for example.

*Provide for the safe and efficient collection of wastewater generated by the community.*

- Continue to monitor and update the Village's Sanitary Sewer Comprehensive Study every 5 years.
- In order to be annexed into the Village, future residential development should be located adjacent to the Village's corporate limits wherever possible to minimize costs.
- Continue to address infiltration and inflow issues by identifying sources, repairing damaged lines, and educating the public on the negative financial, health, and environmental impacts of improper connections into the system.

*Provide for the safe and efficient collection of stormwater.*

- Improve stormwater collection throughout the Village by requiring stormwater best management practices, including permeable pavements (pavements that promote absorption of rain and snow melt), rain gardens, and bioswales.

*Provide for the safe and efficient delivery of high quality potable water to the community for consumption.*

- Continue to maintain a good working relationship with the Caterpillar Trail Water District.



## TRANSPORTATION

*Transportation planning is an important function in designing a system that is safe, reliable, and economical while also decreasing household transportation costs, reducing our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improving air quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting public health, and enhancing quality of life.*

Currently, the Village of Germantown Hills is well connected to the region's road network via Illinois Route 116; however, the community is lacking in sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure and local street connectivity is poor. Additionally, the Community Survey indicated that Village residents are unhappy with the safety of the overall system. Looking forward, the Village will need to consider a system that better accommodates all modes of transportation, from personal vehicles and mass transit to bicycling and walking.

### CURRENT CONDITIONS

#### Motorized Transportation

##### *Personal Vehicles*

The Village of Germantown Hills can attribute much of its growth to its location along Illinois Route 116. This 4-lane state route connects Village residents to nearby job and entertainment centers, and provides regional access to various Central Illinois communities and the Chicago Metropolitan Area. On average, Route 116 accommodates approximately 15,000 vehicles per day within Germantown Hills. Other primary roads within the Village include Woodland Knolls Road, Holland Road, Fandel Road, and Arbor Vitae Drive, which all experience traffic volumes of 2100 to 3400 vehicles per day on average.

Though Germantown Hills is well connected to the region, local connectivity is lacking. The current roads network has one major route – Route 116 – with a series of minor routes radiating from it. There is little east-west connectivity throughout the Village. A disjointed road network can cause a series of issues for a community, including longer response times from fire and ambulance services, inefficiencies for school bus

routing, and increased local travel times for residents. Furthermore, the use of Route 116 for both local and through traffic increases the likelihood for both congestion and traffic accidents.

The issue of connectivity is not new to Germantown Hills; the problem was first addressed in the Village's 1978 Comprehensive Plan and then again in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. The 1978 Plan offered specific suggestions for connecting the Village's major north-south thoroughfares. This design would have created access from Far Hills Drive to Lourdes Road, intersecting with Woodland Knolls Road, Fandel Road, and Townhall Road along the way.

The Village constructed one of the proposed connecting routes (Holland Road); however, the remaining connector streets were never built. Unfortunately, subdivisions have been built in the identified corridors, and the opportunity to create interconnectivity in these areas has been lost. A detailed analysis would need to be completed in order to find alternative corridors for east-west connections; however, the rugged and hilly topography, coupled with the multitude of cul de sacs will make this a challenging task.

Residents of Germantown Hills have become aware of the burden of using Route 116 as both a local and regional thoroughfare; numerous respondents of the Community Survey are concerned with the overall safety and efficiency of the thoroughfare. The following are suggestions made by multiple respondents:

- Add a center turn lane along Route 116 to allow for easier and safer access to north-south cross streets without traffic signals, specifically Maple Lane.
- Adjust the traffic signal timing at the intersection of Route 116 and Woodland Knolls Road. This intersection becomes congested during high-traffic periods.
- Reduce the 50mph speed limit for Route 116, and ensure that it is enforced. Most respondents want to see a speed limit of 45mph; some respondents want to see speed limits even lower near the Elementary School and Middle School.
- The intersections of Route 116 at Fandel Road and Arbor Vitae Dr. should be improved to better accommodate pedestrian crossings. These intersections provide access to Germantown Hills Elementary School and Germantown Hills Middle School, and thus experience heavy foot traffic.

Respondents of the community survey also communicated dissatisfaction with the condition of Village roads, specifically Old Germantown Road and



in Fandel Farms Subdivision, as well as the quality of repairs once they are completed. (The roads in Fandel Farms Subdivision have since been resurfaced, and residents have expressed great satisfaction with the results.) There are also several access points and intersections that are perceived to be unsafe, including the intersection of Holland Road and Woodland Knolls Road, the intersection of Warrior Way and Schmidt Lane near the Middle School, the entrance into Germantown Hills Elementary School, and access to Germantown Crossing and surrounding commercial

activities. The stop sign at Ten Mile Creek Road and Old Germantown Road is also often ignored, likely from a lack of visibility.

#### *Mass Transit*

Currently, the Village of Germantown Hills does not have direct access to public transportation. Peoria's fixed route service, CityLink, does not extend into Germantown Hills, and because the Village is located within the Peoria-Pekin urbanized area, it cannot be served by the rural Woodford County provider.

Public transportation is not a priority for Germantown residents at present. According to the 2012 American Community Survey, 99.6% of households have at least one vehicle available for use, and 86.1% of those households have two or more vehicles available. Additionally, when asked how they would allocate \$100 for transportation-related projects, establishing public transit was allocated the least amount of money on average from a list of 9 possible choices.

Though public transportation is not on residents' minds today, it will be important to consider it for the future. As the Village population ages and gas prices rise, public transportation may become a viable option for many in the years to come.

### Non-Motorized Transportation

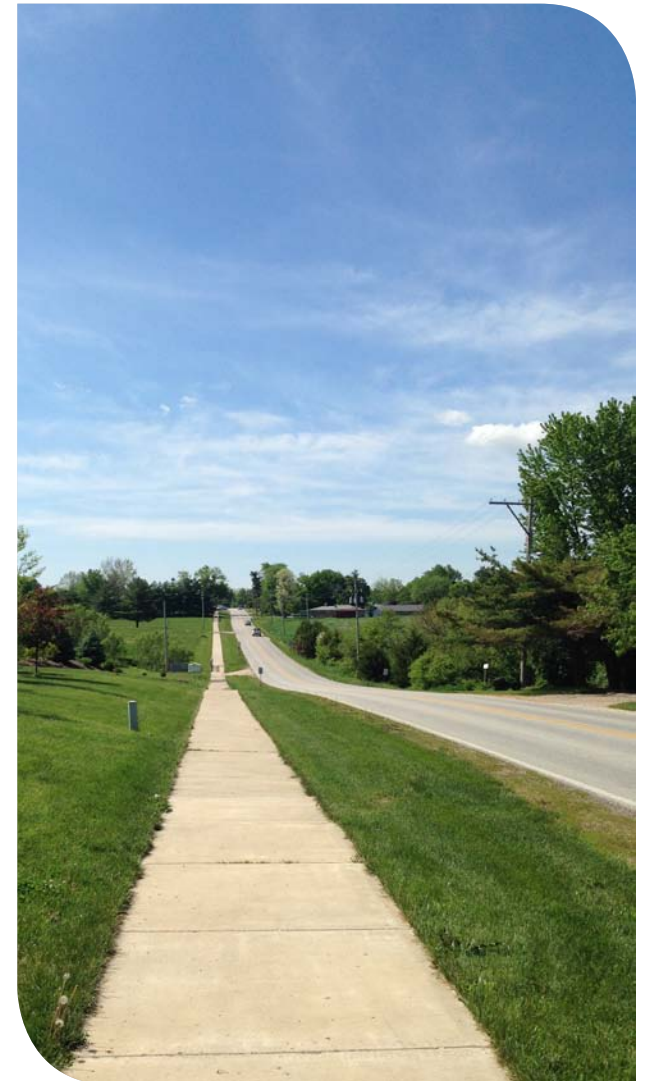
More and more, today's residents want to have the ability to walk and bike, both for commuting and recreational purposes. In 2007, the Village of Germantown Hills created a plan for implementing a recreational trails network; the plan was updated in October 2010. The plan identifies specific corridors where trails should be implemented, and prioritizes segments for a phased approach to completion. The Village has constructed the first of ten proposed segments. This section extends from Fandel Drive at the entrance of Germantown Hills Elementary School to Hannah Drive, and is approximately 0.3 miles in length.

The proposed network of trails is greatly needed in the Village. At present, there is very little sidewalk infrastructure, brought about by a previous desire to maintain the Village's rural environment (this is still the viewpoint of a select few). However, the Village has since seen a residential development boom, and it no longer has the character of a rural community. Sidewalks would allow for greater connectivity between and among subdivisions, and would create a safer environment for recreation.

Route 116 represents great safety concerns for walkers and bicyclists. Though most residential development has occurred to the north of Route 116, Germantown Hills Middle School and numerous commercial establishments are located to the south of

Route 116. The high-speed and high-volume traffic along this major thoroughfare make it difficult for individuals to cross safely, particularly for children who walk or bike to Germantown Hills Middle School. Furthermore, a lack of a connected streets network and the prevalence of cul de sacs have forced individuals to use main north-south roads (rather than neighborhood roads) for recreation. These thoroughfares experience high volumes of traffic moving at relatively fast speeds and do not have wide shoulders or any shoulders at all. These factors create hazardous conditions for bikers, walkers, and drivers.

Respondents of the Community Survey are very interested in creating a more walkable community. Approximately 78% of respondents rated the current recreational trail system, on-road bicycle accommodations, and sidewalk infrastructure as either "poor" or "very poor." Furthermore, when asked how they would distribute \$100 for transportation-related projects, respondents dedicated the most amount of money on average to sidewalk construction and maintenance. Improving roadways and recreational trail construction came in second and third, respectively. Additionally, nearly 80% of survey respondents would add sidewalks or bike accommodations to their neighborhood if they could, the top answer of ten total options. Clearly, walking and biking opportunities are both needed and desired in the Village of Germantown Hills.



## FUTURE ISSUES

For the past several years, the Tri-County region has been actively pursuing an in-depth study of the Eastern Bypass, a new highway that would connect Interstate 74 with Illinois Route 6, east and north of Peoria. All identified corridors would include a bridge over the Illinois River at Spring Bay/Mossville. A final corridor has not been selected; however, all identified options run adjacent to the Village of Germantown Hills. In all likelihood, an interchange would be built at Route 116. The Eastern Bypass project, when completed, will have enormous impacts on the Village.

## GOAL

**Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.

## OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

*Provide transportation options and connections for pedestrians and other alternative transportation modes.*

- Budget for future bicycle and sidewalk infrastructure, especially as match to grant programs such as the Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP).

- Retrofit existing neighborhoods with sidewalks and bike paths, where feasible.
- Continue to revisit and update the Bike/Walkway Plan every three years to ensure it aligns with Village goals, objectives, and development patterns.
- Promote bicycle education within the community to encourage safer recreational and commuter bicycle usage for all ages.
- Enhance the visibility and safety of crosswalks across IL Route 116, particularly at Arbor Vitae Drive and Woodland Knolls Road.
- Continue to require new developments to construct sidewalk infrastructure and incorporate safe crossing points with major roads and intersections.
- Work jointly with the Village of Metamora to pursue funding for the planning and construction of a recreational trail to connect the Village of Germantown Hills and the Village of Metamora.

*Enhance and maintain current and future transportation infrastructure.*

- Continue to undertake street resurfacing projects to maintain the condition of Village streets, with an emphasis on quality.
- Require that new development fund its proportional share of transportation-related costs.
- Incorporate curb and gutter enhancements to future roadways when appropriate.

*Emphasize street aesthetics*

- Retrofit existing parking lots to include trees, plantings, and walkways to visually soften hardscape areas, provide character, and enhance access to storefronts, particularly at Germantown Crossing Shopping Center.
- Encourage shared parking at businesses and civic buildings throughout the Village to minimize the need for additional parking lots.
- Require future commercial development to construct parking to the side and rear of the subject property to the greatest extent possible.

*Maximize the connectivity of Germantown Hills' roadway network*

- Discourage cul-de-sacs in new developments when other configurations can be provided to enhance street connections and route choices to evenly distribute transportation on the local network and provide greater access for emergency vehicles.
- Consider developing a planning study to determine possible east-west connections through bike and alternative transportation mode infrastructure. Coordinate with the Illinois Department of Transportation for possible funding sources.

*Balance transportation system safety with efficient movement of traffic.*

- Improve signal timing and intersection signing throughout the transportation network, particularly at Woodland Knolls Road and IL 116 and Schmitt Lane and Warrior Way.
- Reconfigure the intersection of Woodland Knolls Road, Holland Road, and Jubilee Lane to enhance visibility, increase safety, and reduce congestion.
- Connect N. Anker Lane to IL Route 116 and Jubilee Lane to enhance access and improve traffic flow.
- Reduce speeds on high-volume north-south thoroughfares and local streets with traffic calming design mechanisms as appropriate.

*Support the construction of the Eastern Bypass*

- Maintain regular contact with state and federal legislators and the Eastern Bypass Coalition to express the Village's recommendations as the project progresses.

## AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Photo Credit: TC Davis

*Conservation of natural resources and the environment is an important factor in achieving and maintaining the quality of life of Germantown Hills' residents. The Village currently has many desired and valuable amenities that allow it to find its niche in the region, including agricultural land, an open space system, and natural environments such as public parks.*

These amenities can be referred to as the 'natural infrastructure' of the Village. Natural infrastructure makes communities more attractive, provides recreational opportunities, improves air and water quality, reduces the hazards of flooding, and provides groundwater recharge. Through careful planning, communities can grow while providing natural resource protection in conjunction with development.

Over the next several years, many factors have the potential to radically change the world as we know

it including depleting oil resources, climate change, species extinctions, and increasing human population pressures on resources and the environment. In response, local, regional, state, and federal agencies are adopting sustainability principals. The concept of sustainability is defined as finding the long-term balance between built and natural environmental sensitivity, social equity, and economic vitality. Sustainability seeks to find and nurture a balance among these three key sectors that impact the viability and vitality of a community.

The purpose of the Agriculture and Natural Resources element is to raise awareness, promote the responsibility of long term planning, and encourage the protection of Germantown Hills' natural environment. The following section identifies agricultural and natural resource concerns for the Village of Germantown Hills, and outlines a set of goals aimed at improving current conditions.

### INVENTORY

#### Agricultural Land

The majority of land within Germantown Hills' extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) is used for agriculture

that is characterized by corn and soybean production. Within the Village itself, agriculture accounts for 25.21 acres of land, and is mainly located at the center of the Village limits.

Agriculture is an important component of Woodford County's history and economy, and protecting and preserving prime farmland remains one of the county's main goals. According to the Woodford County Comprehensive Plan, there are several major trends impacting agriculture in the County:

- The total amount of land used for agriculture is decreasing;
- The demand for agricultural products is increasing;
- The average size of farms is stable; and
- The average farm yield is increasing.

Agriculture was once important to residents that live within the Village of Germantown Hills. It remains part of community character and is an active economic driver nearby. In order for Germantown Hills to expand however, it will inevitably need to take over some existing farmland. The challenge will be to accommodate new development in a manner that will

best protect agricultural land within the county. The conversion of farmland to urban development results in permanent reduction of land for row crops and other forms of agriculture, disruption and fragmentation of wildlife habitat and unique natural features, and a diminished sense of the Village's rural character and culture. The Woodford County Comprehensive Plan addresses this issue by suggesting the following:

*New residential, commercial, and industrial growth is located in areas within or adjacent to areas of existing development.*

- Encourage new residential, commercial, and industrial development to be contiguous to incorporated municipalities and served by public water and sewer.
- Encourage new commercial and industrial uses to be located along major transportation corridors.
- Create incentives, especially non-financial, to support the rehabilitation of existing properties and infill housing within incorporated communities.

*Agriculture is preserved and supported through mutual respect and balance among agriculture, development, and the environment.*

- Avoid 'leapfrog' development to preserve contiguous tracts of productive agricultural land.
- Ensure new residents moving into rural areas are educated about agricultural activities and rural living (e.g. distribute Farm Bureau "Country Living" brochure to Realtors).



Photo Credit: Eric Wettstein

- Establish a buffer between agriculture and residential land uses for activities like aerial spraying.

Germantown Hills should consider these suggestions when developing future residential, commercial, and industrial land.

### **Natural Environment and Park Land**

When asked about what areas Germantown Hills should focus its capital improvements, nearly 50% of respondents cited parks and recreation. The natural environment and parkland make up 19.73 acres of the Village. Residents have indicated that these natural

amenities are one of the Village's major assets.

Within the Village limits there is little remaining native environment; however, natural resources are located nearby. The woodlands, bluffs, wetlands, lakes, and streams in the area are aspects of a natural heritage that would be difficult, if not impossible, to replace if lost. In addition, these natural resources and access to nature can create marketing opportunities for new development. Germantown Hills is advantageously located near the Illinois River Bluffs, sweeping scenic vistas, and Black Partridge Park in Metamora. Special care should be taken to protect the bluffs from development. Biking and walking trails through these native habitats is recommended for recreational and educational purposes. It will be important to focus community efforts on park beautification, expanding the recreational opportunities offered, and cultivating more native natural open space within the Village. In addition, it would be beneficial to create a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to further increase success and program future investments.

The Village of Germantown Hills has three public parks that it maintains. For more specific information about the local parks system please reference the Community Facilities Chapter.

### **Environmental Protection and Sustainability**

Ranging from air quality to alternative energies, striving for a higher quality of life is what leads people to change



their behavior. If environmental qualities decline, potential for business and residential development could decline. Sustainability encompasses a wide variety of practices and technologies; however, it is essentially defined as meeting current needs without jeopardizing the needs for future generations. Making decisions today that will not hinder the growth for future development is a critical aspect in the sustainability movement. One example of this is to provide sustainable energy. Providing energy by burning and wasting materials is no longer a viable process. Promoting and utilizing alternative and renewable energy systems would benefit the Village of Germantown Hills in becoming more physically healthy and environmentally sensitive.

As new development occurs within the village, it can severely change the natural landscape, including air quality, soil and slope structure, water runoff, wildlife disruptions, etc. It is important to regulate land use compatibilities at a high tolerance to ensure like uses are placed in close proximity. This reduces disruption to the natural environment.

### Water Quality

Though Caterpillar Trails supplies water to residents, protecting local water quality should still be a goal of the Village. As water runs over the ground it is naturally cleaned and ridded of most unwanted minerals. Drinkable water is rapidly diminishing throughout the nation as the built environment destroys the ability

to naturally filtrate water. Protecting these natural environments will allow the Village and County to provide cleaner water to its residents. In addition, local waterways are important ecosystems that contribute to the health and quality of life for plants, animals, and people. The nearby Illinois River has been identified by the EPA as an impaired waterway threatened by sedimentation and pollution. The decline of such a large regional resource has far reaching impacts on the ability to live, work, and play in its waters. Reducing impermeable surfaces and protecting natural watersheds has been identified as a regional goal to help restore the health of this and other local water bodies that feed the Illinois River and Peoria Lakes.

## GOAL

**Protect and Preserve Land and Natural Resources:** Promote a higher quality of life through environmentally sensitive best practices in regards to air and water quality, soil and floodplain management, noise control, and the urban tree canopy. Encourage land use patterns that preserve the integrity of existing environmental corridors, protect valuable agricultural land, and utilize natural erosion control to protect the environmental quality of the Village.

## OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

*Preserve productive farmland for continued agricultural use.*

- Encourage development within municipal boundaries and limit premature development of areas outside of the municipal boundaries.
- Limit the amount and guide the placement of non-agricultural uses in planned agricultural areas.
- Maintain land in agricultural and other open space uses until it is needed for planned Village development.

*Preserve and enhance environmental and natural resources.*

- Identify and reserve sufficient land resources in the Village to meet current and future recreational needs.
- Serve Germantown Hills' neighborhoods with a balanced system of neighborhood parks and open space.
- Preserve the character of the Village by protecting the natural features and resources located within the community.
- Ensure that development outside the municipal boundaries conforms to the principals of sound land use planning; discourage urban sprawl and/or noncontiguous development.

- Actively pursue the preservation of open space, the natural environment, and wildlife habitats by protecting environmentally sensitive areas from unnecessary and premature development.
- Promote environmental best practices to improve water and air quality.*
- Continue to enforce minimum setback and buffer areas along creeks, streams, rivers, floodplain, and wetlands to reduce the impacts of development on water quality.
  - Encourage land use patterns that preserve the integrity of existing environmental corridors as a means of natural erosion control and protecting the environmental quality of the Village.
  - Ensure a study of stormwater runoff has been made for future residential and commercial development.
  - Design all new developments to create a minimum disturbance to natural drainage patterns, natural landscape, vegetation, and the ability of land to absorb rainfall and prevent erosion.
  - Increase the urban tree canopy.
  - Seek Tree City USA designation.
- Ensure that all new developments provide storm water retention capacity equal to the capacity displaced by that development. Whenever possible, safe, and practical, retention areas should be designed to incorporate recreational uses.
  - Increase walking and cycling infrastructure to reduce car trips for short commutes.
  - Ensure sustainability by promoting alternative and renewable energy practices at all levels of development.
  - Pursue sustainable best practices when executing all village duties, including building, road, and park maintenance as well as energy usage.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*This section of the comprehensive plan describes the strategies that a local government, working on its own and with others, will engage in to promote economic health.*

Economic development generally refers to the sustained, concerted actions of policy makers and communities that promote the standard of living and economic health of a specific area. Economic development can also be referred to as the quantitative and qualitative changes in the economy. Such actions can involve multiple areas including development of human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety, literacy, and other initiatives. Economic development differs from economic growth. Whereas economic development is a policy intervention endeavor with aims of economic and social well-being of people, economic growth is a phenomenon of market productivity and rise in GDP. As economic growth is a subset of development, our focus and recommendations will be development based.

### LABOR AND JOB TRENDS

According to the ACS 2008-2012 5-year estimates, the top three employment sectors of Germantown Hills residents are educational services and health care and social assistance (26.2%), manufacturing (15.3%), and retail (13.6%). Other sectors with high resident concentration include construction (10.7%), finance and insurance, real estate and rental and leasing (6.5%), and services other than public administration (6.5%).

As you can see in table 4.1, there was a dramatic drop in manufacturing jobs from 2000 to 2010. The report indicates an over 12% loss in manufacturing jobs among residents. The community seems particularly vulnerable to layoffs from local major manufacturers due to the high concentration of residents working in that sector. The new, more diverse resident jobs base is more desirable and resilient, though manufacturing jobs tend to pay higher wages than those in healthcare and human services. It is unlikely that manufacturing jobs will increase in the future in this area according to regional employment projections.

TABLE 4.1: INDUSTRIES IN WHICH GERMANTOWN HILLS RESIDENTS WORK

Industry	2000	2010
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.10%	1.10%
Construction	5.50%	10.70%
Manufacturing	27.80%	15.30%
Wholesale trade	2.90%	3.40%
Retail trade	7.60%	13.60%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3.70%	2.40%
Information	1.80%	2.30%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	6.40%	6.50%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	6.40%	4.00%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	26.40%	26.10%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	6.70%	3.20%
Other services, except public administration	2.60%	6.50%
Public administration	1.90%	4.80%

The most telling statistic pertaining to employment of village residents is the village's median household income. As presented on Page 15, Germantown Hills' median household income according to the 2007-2011 ACS 5-Year Estimates is \$98,000, a value substantially higher than that of neighboring communities, Woodford County, and the State of Illinois. The conclusion that can be drawn from this statistic is that the incomes of Germantown Hills' residents are generally higher than the incomes of residents of other communities, indicating that in general, Germantown Hills' residents possess well paying jobs.

### **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN GERMANTOWN HILLS**

Given the small size of the village, it is not surprising that there are not a substantial number of jobs available in Germantown Hills. The commuting pattern of residents is evidence of this. According to the 2008-2012 ACS Survey, the mean travel time to work for Germantown Hills residents was 23 minutes, indicating that it is common for residents to commute to employment centers outside of the Village for work.

No formal list of major employers in Germantown Hills exists, but a directory of businesses is available through the village website. The obvious largest employer in the village is School District 69. Germantown Hills Elementary School and Germantown Hills Middle School are located in the

village, and the administrative, teaching, and support positions that exist at these schools comprise the largest amount of jobs offered by a single employer in the village.

Other employers in the village primarily consist of small businesses or business branches. These businesses are located in two primary areas: along Route 116 and within Germantown Crossing. Gas stations and restaurants are examples of the employers located along Route 116. CEFUCU branch and Dollar General are examples of the employers located within Germantown Crossing.

### **Future Employment in Germantown Hills**

Again, because of Germantown Hills' small size, there are no formal employment projections available from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), the state agency that provides employment projections for the state and metropolitan areas in Illinois. To develop an adequate assessment of future employment opportunities in Germantown Hills, existing conditions in the village have to be considered and realistic future changes have to be identified.

The smallest relevant geographic area for which IDES provides employment projections is Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIA). Woodford County is grouped with Marshall, Stark, and Peoria County to comprise LWIA 15. The projections by industry for 2010-2020 are shown on the following

page in Table 4.2. These projections are based on employment totals in 2010. Though the data is not specific to Germantown Hills or Woodford County, the projection does give an understanding of the sectors that may grow and the sectors that may decline in the future. Not surprisingly, service sectors such as financial activities, professional and business services, and education and healthcare are projected to have the most significant growth. Unexpectedly, natural resources and mining topped the projections with the largest annual growth compound rate; however, this is a very small industry comprising only 90 jobs in the four counties, and thus modest growth will not result in large employment gains. Although these projections are for LWIA 15, they give some sense of the types of businesses that could be started in or attracted to Germantown Hills.

Developing some understanding of future employment in Germantown Hills is important because economic changes impact land use. If new businesses are started in the Village or existing businesses relocate to Germantown Hills, a suitable supply of land at appropriate locations with adequate infrastructure is needed. On the other hand, if businesses cease operations or move out of the community, plans should be in place for how to reuse vacant property.

The current population of Germantown Hills as of the 2010 Census is 3,438, and as discussed in

TABLE 4.2: PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT, LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA 15

North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS)		Base Year Employment	Projected Year Employment	Change	Annual Compound
Code	Title	2010	2020	2010-2020	Growth Rate
100000	Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers	5,499	5,610	111	0.20
110000	Agricultural Production, Total	2,868	2,783	-85	-0.30
210000	Natural Resources and Mining	90	109	19	1.90
230000	Construction	4,586	4,654	68	0.15
300000	Manufacturing, Total	11,793	11,689	-104	-0.09
400000	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	20,813	21,098	285	0.14
510000	Information	1,995	1,896	-99	-0.51
519900	Financial Activities	5,462	6,554	1,092	1.84
539900	Professional and Business Services	17,176	19,888	2,712	1.48
600000	Educational and Health Services	33,304	38,010	4,706	1.33
700000	Leisure and Hospitality	10,183	10,715	532	0.51
800000	Other Services	6,081	6,677	596	0.94
900000	Government, Total	6,494	6,348	-145	-0.23
000000	TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	126,344	136,032	9,688	0.74

the Community Overview section on Page 12, the projected 2030 population developed for this plan is 5,682. While population growth of this magnitude will be significant, Germantown Hills will remain a rather small community, so the likely impact of this population growth is an increase in small businesses that provide specific services to village residents. Service industries including child care, insurance and law offices, entertainment stores, and home/auto repair

are examples of the types of businesses that could find conditions in a growing Germantown Hills suitable for business startup. Businesses that begin operations in Germantown Hills or relocate to the community will be those that can be profitable by serving a relatively small customer base that consists of both residents that live within Village and travelers of Rt. 116.

## COMMERCIAL USES

As discussed earlier, commercial uses in Germantown Hills consist of small businesses located along Route 116 and within the central business district. The results of the community survey indicate that respondents want to see more businesses in Germantown Hills:

- In response to “Which economic development goals should be a top priority in the Village of Germantown Hills,” 79.12% of respondents listed “Work with commercial property owners to provide new business opportunities and fill vacant stores” as their top priority, followed by “Recruit new retailers (64.65%),” and “Recruit new restaurants (64.65%);”
- In response to “What types of businesses are needed in the Village of Germantown Hills,” 194 responses pertained to “grocery store.” This more than tripled the next closest responses of “restaurants” (63 respondents) and “general retail” (33 respondents) as the highest response to this open-ended question;
- In response to “What are the top three strengths/opportunities facing Germantown Hills,” 103 responses pertained to “schools,” followed by 50 responses pertaining to “community pride” as the highest responses to this open-ended question;

- In response to “What are the top three weaknesses/threats concerning Germantown Hills and its future,” 83 responses pertained to “lack of business/retail,” followed closely by “lack of a grocery store” with 75 responses, and “high taxes” with 59 responses as the most cited results to this open ended question.

It is clear that respondents want more shopping opportunities in Germantown Hills, but the Village is a relatively small community, and prospective businesses that will be successful in Germantown Hills are those that can be profitable serving a customer base that consists of the Village and the surrounding area. As the village grows, the customer base will expand, and if customers regularly patronize local businesses, additional businesses will likely be developed in Germantown Hills.

### INDUSTRIAL USE

There is no industrial land in the village at this time. Industrial growth would be desirable for the Village because of its impact on the employment base and the property tax base. No suitable land for industrial uses have been identified within the Village limits, but land to the east of Germantown Hills would be suitable if the Village were to expand as a result of the Eastern Bypass corridor. The village will have to actively market the land to recruit a new or existing industrial business to locate at the property when that opportunity becomes available.

### AGRICULTURAL USE

Though once a primarily agrarian community, Germantown Hills has shifted away from an agriculturally based economy. The remaining agricultural land that exists will likely be converted to housing and commercial development. It is desirable for the Village to maintain a mix of agricultural land within its boundaries to balance the local tax burden. It is recommended that as the Germantown Hills develops existing agricultural land that it annexes additional farm land contiguous to the existing Village limits to maintain a diversified tax base.



**GOAL****Stimulate job creation and retention to support community revitalization that increases local investments and local wealth.**

Peoria will continue to be the predominant employment and commercial center of the Central Illinois region. Germantown Hills will build upon its unique character and heritage to capitalize on agriculture, service, and tourism opportunities for economic development. Germantown Hills will cultivate local culture and invest in quality of life amenities to attract and retain new residents and develop a niche in the regional economy.

**OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES***Revitalize the Central Business District*

- Invest in the Central Business District (CBD) by cultivating local identity, investing in public art, and promoting local events to draw regional tourism.
- Task the Economic Development Council to define the CBD border, what type of development the village should pursue, what commercial building style should be encouraged, and what mix of uses should be allowed within the CBD.

- Develop design guidelines for central business district buildings to promote the unique character of the community and protect current property values and public investments.
- Promote the expansion of the Central Business District by encouraging the development of new stores with off-street parking; by improving structurally sound and/or significant structures; and by replacing old, deteriorated buildings with new, appropriately situated structures.
- Discourage the creation of new conventional, suburban style strip commercial centers and low density office and business parks. Infill development in the existing suburban commercial and strip centers to increase density and improve character (See examples in the Appendix).
- Increase pedestrian access to commercial areas.
- Use a portion of Village revenue to create a Village trust to provide competitive grants for building maintenance and upgrades, or to incentivize and recruit businesses.
- The Central Business District will serve as a community “gathering space” and as such, proposed development should work to incorporate small green spaces, courtyards, an amphitheater, etc.
- Encourage shared parking at businesses to reduce the need for additional parking lots.

*Retain and Expand Local Businesses*

- Encourage locally owned small businesses to utilize Internet markets as well as physical storefronts.
- Actively recruit a variety of new businesses that provide community services, services to highway travelers, and local dining options.
- Inventory available buildings and lots to make them easily accessible to investors through Internet and paper format.
- Implement business licensing fees. Discount business licensing fees for all first year start-ups and implement a low universal rate for years after.
- Promote a buy local campaign. (i.e. “Buy Local, Buy Germantown Hills”).
- Increase the diverse base of land uses within the community.
- Increase business diversity.
- Encourage private investment in façade and other exterior improvements.

*Improve Germantown Hills’ Quality of Life*

- Invest in sidewalks, paths, local greenways, and trails to improve health and connectivity between the Village and area natural amenities like the Illinois River and Black Partridge Park.

- Cultivate a local foods market where residents can sell their own produce.
- Encourage local restaurants to serve locally sourced foods.
- Develop a local branding strategy to be used consistently on Village signage, documents, publications, and streetscaping.
- Increase housing affordability so that residents have more expendable income to use on local goods and services.

*Diversify Economic Base*

- Permit light industrial uses in areas as indicated by the Future Land Use Map.
- Review the permitted and special uses in the industrial section of the zoning ordinance.
- Provide flexibility in building uses in commercial zoning to allow for small scale manufacturing, including microbreweries, artisanal foods, and skilled crafts.
- Provide flexibility in lot use in residential zoning to allow for small scale farming and urban chickens.





## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

*Germantown Hills' community character is frequently referred to as "rural, safe, and bedroom community." However, it is much more than that. Other key components of its character include the natural topography of the river bluffs; wooded areas of forests; scenic vistas across the Peoria Lakes; relatively low traffic volumes; and small scale, low-intensity development.*

Without a defined central business district, it is difficult to categorize separate, identifiable areas in the community. Development could substantially change the quality and sense of place if planned and executed in a manner than enhances character. Conventional development has required extensive land clearing and grading that has destroyed natural features, favored large scale buildings, and generated large volumes of traffic. This in turn has required the transformation of once-scenic roads into a busy highway to provide the necessary traffic capacity. Furthermore, development

has spread out along roads in a strip fashion resulting in high traffic, regionally-oriented development which has no special identity and lacks pedestrian accessibility and safety.

The quality of life in Germantown Hills is important to the citizens and has contributed to the large amount of growth in the area. This continued growth causes concern among residents who fear it will further reduce the character and appearance that attracted many of them to the area. For this reason, the Village has taken many steps toward shaping future development and is sensitive to the many characteristics that already exist. The tools that the Village has at its disposal influence not only the appearance of the community but also the way the community functions and the feelings of visitors, citizens, and those who do business in the area.

### UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Germantown Hills was once full of unique assets that linked modern residents to the rich heritage of the original settlers. Some earlier buildings still remain, but many were demolished in favor of modern development. It is not only the physical elements that

are significant to the sense of place in Germantown Hills. Much of the Village's rich heritage comes from its civic minded citizens who have worked collaboratively through its history to make this a caring community and a great place to live, work, and play. Documenting and celebrating this local history, architecture, food, and festivals is as important in maintaining a vibrant community as ensuring the availability of clean water and well maintained roads. Investing in local culture through religious organizations, social clubs, and recreational clubs will build on the intangible benefits of community that attract so many people to Germantown Hills. Establishing traditions and festivals help build community pride while also providing entertainment and fun for all ages.

### LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

#### Protect and Preserve Village Assets

Preserving and enhancing the local identity, uniqueness and arts assets require that local decision making, planning processes, and policies and regulations reflect and support this community character. Incorporating these elements into an underlying philosophy or identity of a community can provide a framework for

decision making, encourage development that is place based, and reinforce cultural goals and visions. This also supports the work of civic leaders and community advocates and can help bring new allies, talent, and ideas to the table.

#### **Public Investment in Infrastructure**

The design of urban infrastructure such as architecture, streetscapes, transportation facilities, and so on, presents an opportunity to interpret the many constituent elements of a sense of place. Through the development of creative streetscape design, public facilities, street signage, and other infrastructure, artists can inform, educate and comment on these local considerations. Defining a central business district for the community (Germantown Crossing), and cultivating and developing a civic space will create the infrastructure currently lacking in the Village.

#### **Arts and Culture Programming**

Arts and Culture programming provides education about the historical and cultural context of a community and opportunities for participating in community life through festivals, events, performances, interactive classes and workshops, and a variety of other activities. Programming initiates conversation about arts and culture and establishes a structure of happenings and plans that ensure that these activities will continue to flourish.



**GOAL****Preserve and Enhance Village Character:**

Encourage the development of diverse, attractive, and unique uses that showcase the community as a unique place to live, work, learn, shop, dine, and enjoy cultural activities.

**OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES***Invest and Encourage Local Arts*

- Celebrate and promote local arts (including artists, dancers, actors, and musicians) through regular public art displays and performances.
- Create a civic venue that can be used for various purposes including public art and recreation.
- Encourage annual community events and promote membership in local organizations that provide value to the community.
- Create educational opportunities for Village residents to learn skilled crafts.

*Invest and Encourage Local Foods*

- Celebrate and promote locally grown produce through farmers markets or roadside stands.
- Encourage residential agriculture, including allowing for chickens, ducks, and other small farm animals in residential zoning.

- Develop and promote local events where locally grown food is showcased.
- Participate in regional local foods initiatives.
- Develop a civic location to construct a permanent structure for a local foods market.

*Encourage Buy Local Initiatives*

- Promote local goods and services.
- Develop a “Buy Local” campaign.
- Create educational opportunities for Village residents to learn how to start and operate a small business.
- Incentivize local business start-ups through competitive grants, fee and/or tax abatement.

*Protect and Preserve the Village’s Heritage*

- Protect Germantown Hills’ historic structures and older neighborhoods and encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, maintenance, and adaptive reuse of high-quality older buildings.
- Retain and enhance public and community-based institutions and facilities – such as schools, churches, libraries, and parks – as important Village community centers and providers of employment, services, and amenities.

- Preserve the character of the Village by utilizing existing transportation routes and protecting the natural features and resources located within the community.
- Ensure that public and private investment and development within the Village are consistent with and support the Village’s goals, objectives, policies, and programs for the creation of an attractive and engaging built environment that respects the community’s unique setting and established character.

*Create a Unique Sense of Place*

- Implement planning, urban design, and architectural design standards that foster the creation of a unique sense of place for the Village as a whole, as well as within its individual neighborhoods and gathering places.
- Define a community vision.
- Document and celebrate local history.
- Create a public art program that celebrates local culture.
- Establish or reinforce partnerships between local community organizations, community trusts, and non-profit organizations.
- Preserve and protect local assets, including buildings, parks, and culturally significant businesses.

- Establish annual community events at public venues.
- Create a town center and cultivate a civic space where events, farmers markets, public performances, etc. can take place.
- Preserve natural areas with outstanding ecological and aesthetic qualities.
- Establish an interconnected system of parks, greenways, and other types of open space that contribute to the unique sense of place and natural beauty of the Village.

#### *Enhance Unique Village Assets*

- Enhance Germantown Crossing to be the predominant activity center and community gathering place for the Village.
- Establish or improve relationships and communication among developers, Village staff, and community organizations to leverage unique Village assets.
- Develop streetscape standards and design guidelines for significant village corridors. Recognize that the design of streets and the features that line it are some of the most important determinants of the visual quality of the Village.
- Continue to promote Village identity as a means of creating a sense of belonging to the community.
- Ensure that the placement and design of signage and public utility facilities are consistent with the goal of creating a beautiful Village.
- Enhance and define Village gateways. Primary entry routes into the Village are important icons and should be attractive and welcoming.
- Enforce Dark Sky lighting policies.
- Coordinate with IDOT to make State Route 116 more pedestrian friendly by adding a multi-use path and pedestrian refuges at crossing points.
- Use landscaping and streetscaping techniques to increase safety and attractiveness and reduce the negative environmental impacts of State Route 116.
- Develop an urban forestry plan that provides for planting trees in parks and in public right-of way, as well as outlines proper maintenance of trees and other vegetation in the Village.

# DISASTER MITIGATION

*Disaster mitigation is planning for future natural and man-made disasters in order to reduce harm to people and property. While a community cannot prevent a natural hazard occurrence, disruption and devastation can be minimized if mitigation actions are implemented.*

The objective of this section of the plan is to begin to assess the hazard risks that may affect the Village of Germantown Hills, identify the Village's vulnerabilities to those risks, and identify possible mitigation strategies.

## NATURAL HAZARD HISTORY

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) produces storm data via the National Climatic Data Center. The storm events database contains information on storms and weather phenomena that have caused loss of life, injuries, significant property damage, and/or disruption to commerce. This resource provides useful information about the weather

phenomena that have occurred in various jurisdictions; however, due to time and resource constraints in data collection, the National Weather Service does not guarantee the accuracy of the information. Table 5.1 lists extreme storm events that have occurred in the Village of Germantown Hills from 1998 to 2012.

The 2013 Illinois Hazard Mitigation Plan offers further insight into the hazards that may affect the Village of Germantown Hills. The plan rates possible hazards for each county in Illinois. These ratings are based on three categories: historical/probability (frequency), vulnerability, and severity of impact.

Historical/probability looks at the number of times the disaster has occurred in a jurisdiction in the past 60 years and uses that information to determine the likelihood for future disasters. Vulnerability looks at the relationship of where people live in or near the hazard area and the percentage of people that would be adversely affected should the hazard occur. Finally, severity of impact determines the worst conceivable impact to human life and property which could result from a hazard.

**TABLE 5.1: GERMANTOWN HILLS EXTREME STORM EVENT HISTORY**

Event Type	Date	Magnitude
Thunderstorm/Wind*	6/29/1998	52 kts.
Hail	6/4/1999	1.75 in.
Thunderstorm/Wind*	4/20/2000	59 kts.
Thunderstorm/Wind	5/22/2001	50 kts. E
Thunderstorm/Wind	8/30/2001	52 kts. M
Hail	4/27/2002	0.75 in.
Tornado	5/28/2003	F1
Hail	5/28/2003	1.75 in.
Thunderstorm/Wind	6/25/2003	54 kts. EG
Hail	6/28/2003	1.5 in.
Flash Flood*	7/9/2003	-
Thunderstorm/Wind	7/11/2004	52 kts. EG
Hail	3/30/2005	1 in.
Thunderstorm/Wind	7/26/2005	50 kts. EG
Hail	5/17/2006	0.88 in.
Thunderstorm/Wind	7/17/2007	55 kts. EG
Lightning	6/25/2008	-
Flash Flood	9/13/2008	-
Thunderstorm/Wind	8/4/2009	52 kts. EG

\*County-wide Event, not Germantown Hills specific

Based on the criteria explained above, Woodford County's Hazard Ratings are as follows:

- Severe Storms: Severe
- Severe Winter Storms: High
- Drought: Medium-High
- Extreme Heat: Medium-High
- Floods: Medium-High
- Tornado: Medium-High
- Earthquake: Low-Medium

Based on data both from Germantown Hills and Woodford County, the Village is most vulnerable to severe thunderstorms/high winds and severe winter storms.

### **CRITICAL FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

Critical Facilities as defined in the 2007 Illinois Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan include: Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Courthouses, Police and Fire Stations, Rescue/Ambulance Service, Medical Facilities (hospitals, nursing homes, medical clinics), Utilities (water, sewer, electric, and gas), and Transportation Facilities (critical roads, bridges, airports, and ports).

The types of facilities listed above each play a vital role in both disaster mitigation and post disaster response and recovery. Identifying these facilities

within Germantown Hills can help in prioritizing mitigation efforts. Critical facilities in the Village of Germantown Hills include:

- Village Hall
- Caterpillar Trail Water Treatment Plant
- Village Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Germantown Hills Fire Station
- IL Route 116
- Germantown Hills Middle School
- Germantown Hills Elementary School
- Great Oaks Church
- Willow Hill United Methodist Church
- Christ Church
- Germantown Hills Baptist Church
- St. Mary's Lourdes Church
- Illinois District 8 State Police Station

It was identified that schools should be included in the list because of the key role they play in housing people displaced due to damaged homes. Churches were also included, as they often serve as community gathering places and distribution centers post-disaster. Furthermore, though the Illinois District 8 State Police Station currently lies outside of Germantown Hills, its close proximity to the Village and the possibility of annexation warranted a placement on the list.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Village of Germantown Hills has an Emergency Services and Disaster Agency (ESDA) which is housed at the Germantown Hills Fire Station. The goal of ESDA is to prevent, minimize, repair, and alleviate injury or damage resulting from both natural and man-made disasters. The Village Fire Chief is the current coordinator of this agency.

ESDA is in the early stages of preparing a formal Emergency Response Plan. This plan should include a risk/vulnerability analysis; an organizational structure for managing facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications in the event of a disaster; a list of community shelters; and an inventory of regional partners and emergency contacts.

In terms of infrastructure, the Village of Germantown Hills has 2 emergency sirens that are tested once a month. Currently, the Village does not have a designated emergency shelter or a storm shelter. The Fire Station and the Water Treatment Plant each have a back-up generator, and the Wastewater Treatment Facility has 10 back-up generators, 2 of which are portable.

The Village of Germantown Hills also has a formal Mutual Aid Intergovernmental Public Works and Assistance Agreement with the municipalities of Eureka, El Paso, Roanoke, Metamora, Washburn,

Goodfield, Congerville, and Minonk. This agreement was put in place to provide a method whereby public works agencies may request aid in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and/or other associated services as necessary from other public works related agencies.

### MITIGATION MEASURES

The following measures are suggestions from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to minimize vulnerability to the hazards of wildfire, wind, severe storms, and flood. The Village is encouraged to review this list to determine areas where improvements could be implemented.

#### Wildfire Mitigation Actions

- Remove vegetation and combustible materials around structures
- Provide more than one means of access into and out of a community
- Provide fire breaks to prevent the spread of fire
- Provide fire roads to aid in firefighting
- Replace roofing with fire-resistant materials

#### Flood Mitigation Actions (for Public Works/ Utilities)

- Protect or elevate ground-mounted transformers
- Elevate vulnerable equipment, electrical controls, and other equipment at waste water treatment

plants, potable water treatment plants, and pump stations

- For sewer lines in the floodplain, fasten and seal manhole covers to prevent floodwater infiltration
- Protect wells and other potable water from infiltration and flood damage by raising controls and well pipe
- Implement a program for clearing debris from drains and culverts
- Clean and repair stormwater drains
- Increase tree-planting requirements to reduce stormwater runoff
- Develop a protection program to limit the amount of impervious cover in conjunction with new development
- Store books, manuals, permits, and other critical government records on the upper floor(s) and/or on shelves above the base flood elevation of critical facilities

#### Severe Winter Storm Mitigation Measures

- Bury utility lines to prevent ice build-up (check on flooding hazard)
- Ensure adequate supply of snow and ice removal equipment and supplies
- Implement a tree trimming program that routinely clears tree limbs hanging in right-of-way

#### Severe Thunderstorm/High Winds

- Maintain natural environmental features as wind buffers
- Develop architectural design standards for optimal wind conveyance
- Update public community facilities to include severe weather action plans and designated tornado shelter areas
- Make sure right-of-way around power lines is free of trees or limbs that may cause damage
- Survey and remove hazardous trees from drainage systems
- Require “safe rooms” to be added when constructing new schools, daycares, and rest homes
- Build safe room shelters at mobile home parks so that all park residents can reach shelter in less than five minutes
- Develop an ordinance defining the standard for tie-downs of mobile homes
- Secure traffic lights and traffic controls from high wind damage
- Purchase NOAA “All Hazards” radios for early warning and post-event information and place in area schools/businesses/critical facilities
- Require roofing products that are hail-resistant

- Provide standards for burial of electrical, telephone, cable lines and other utilities

#### Multiple Hazards

- Obtain certification by the National Weather Service as “Storm Ready”
- Develop alternative evacuation routes/plans and designate emergency thoroughfares
- Improve emergency management radio coverage and reception
- Implement and enhance an area-wide Emergency Notification System (“Reverse 911”)
- Provide additional means of access into single-entry neighborhoods
- Develop Mutual Aid Agreements with area communities
- Acquire safe sites for public facilities
- Establish a building code with higher standards for hazard resistance
- Update subdivision codes for higher level of ingress and egress
- Establish uniform emergency response procedures with the operators of critical facilities
- Implement a back-up plan for storing public records and digital copies off-site in a non-hazard area

- Offer tree pruning education classes to reduce debris caused by limbs
- Establish a user-friendly database for local residents to access resources for mitigation purposes

#### FUTURE

In 2010 the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission completed the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan which identified and assessed natural hazard risks to Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties. In addition, the plan assessed the capabilities of various jurisdictions to reduce exposure to hazards in their respective communities. The Village of Germantown Hills was not included.

The next update to the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan will take place in late 2014 and early 2015. Any community can opt to participate for a nominal fee. The Village of Germantown Hills is strongly encouraged to take part in this process. Taking part in a more in depth plan can give local officials more guidance in their day-to-day activities and decisions regarding regulations and ordinances, granting permits, and in funding capital improvements and other community initiatives.

## GOAL

**Protect life and property in the Village of Germantown Hills**

#### OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- Promote strategies to protect people and property from natural and environmental hazards (see mitigation measures on page 63)
- Support the formal development of a Village emergency response plan. This plan should determine communication strategies, determine an incident command process, establish a list of sites to be used as gathering places, and inventory regional partners and emergency contacts.
- Participate in the 2015 update of the Tri-County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The process is scheduled to begin in late 2014.



## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

Photo Credit: Martin Fisch

*Intergovernmental cooperation is an arrangement between two or more municipalities to communicate their visions in order to arrive at common goals, share services, or solve mutual problems. Intergovernmental cooperation ranges from informational exchanges to more complicated and formal governmental and legal bounding documentation.*

The Illinois Constitution provides legal authority for intergovernmental cooperation. Article VII, Section 10 specifically provides all units of local government with the authority to contract or otherwise associate among themselves to obtain or share services. In fact, they may jointly exercise, combine, or transfer any of their powers or functions in any manner that is not prohibited by law. This authority extends to cooperation with the State of Illinois, the United States and with other states and their local governments and allows agencies to utilize their credit, revenues, and other resources to pay

costs and to service debt related to intergovernmental activities. There is even a constitutional requirement for the State to encourage intergovernmental cooperation and to use its technical and financial resources to assist intergovernmental activities.

This element of the Comprehensive Plan offers goals, objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and decisions related to intergovernmental cooperation. This section also identifies known existing or potential conflicts between the Village and this Comprehensive Plan and the adopted plans of adjacent municipalities and towns including Woodford County; Germantown Hills School District 69 (Germantown Hills Grade School and Germantown Hills Middle School) and Metamora Township School District 122 (Metamora High School); the Village of Metamora, the Village of Spring Bay, and the Village of Bay View Gardens; the City of East Peoria and the City of Washington; the Illinois Prairie Library District; the Germantown Hills Fire Protection District; the Caterpillar Trails Water District; Worth Township; the Illinois Department of Transportation and the Woodford County Highway Department; Tri-County Regional Planning Commission; and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION POLICIES

The following policies offer a course of action to guide and determine the present and future decisions related to intergovernmental cooperation within Germantown Hills:

- Distribute this Comprehensive Plan, and all other relevant documents, to all surrounding municipalities and counties and encourage them to consider all noted recommendations – in particular, those related to future land use, development, and transportation decisions.
- Work with the Village of Metamora, Worth Township, the City of East Peoria, City of Washington, Woodford County, and Tri-County Regional Planning Commission on the implementation of regional transportation and land use plans.

### GERMANTOWN HILLS' INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

The following section describes Germantown Hills' existing relationships with the numerous governmental

agencies and districts located in and around the Village, and identifies existing or potential conflicts with the adopted plans of such agencies and districts. As development continues to occur – both within the existing Village limits and the designated planning area – the Village will have to rely on these established relationships to assure that adequate services are provided and that development is done in a manner that benefits all parties involved to the greatest extent possible.

### **Woodford County**

All land in the existing municipal boundary is located within Woodford County. Anticipated growth and development of the Village could be significant and would impose a substantial increase in the demand for County services and a large financial impact upon Woodford County. There is no known existing or potential conflicts anticipated between the Comprehensive Plan and the adopted plans of the county.

The Village of Metamora is the nearest municipality to the Village of Germantown Hills, and its ETJ overlaps with the ETJ of Germantown Hills. The Future Land Use map indicates growth to the north and east of Germantown Hills which could encroach upon the jurisdiction of Metamora. Future growth of both communities is expected and both communities expect to grow towards one another. At

this time, it may be necessary to develop a boundary agreement. A service area agreement does exist between the two communities, but it does not address physical territorial growth boundaries, nor does it address land directly to the north or south of the overlapping ETJs. Additionally, the Village of Metamora is in the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan. Upon completion, it should be reviewed to identify any land use or transportation conflicts with those shown in this document. Should any major conflicts arise, Metamora and Germantown Hills should arrange a meeting to discuss and resolve such issues.

Other surrounding municipalities include the villages of Bayview Gardens and Spring Bay, as well as the cities of East Peoria and Washington. Each of these jurisdictions is located near or adjacent to Germantown Hills' Village planning boundary. Currently, no known conflicts exist; however, expansion west or south would result in overlapping extraterritorial jurisdictions and would thus require coordination between municipalities. It should be noted that Woodford County's current Comprehensive Plan identifies land to the northeast and south of the Village as conservation areas to be protected from future development. This is consistent with recommendations of this Plan.

### **Germantown Hills Community School District (Illinois School District 69)**

Germantown Hills School District 69, which includes both Germantown Hills Grade School (grades PK

through 2) and Germantown Hills Middle School (grades 3 through 8), currently serves the Village's school aged population. Any development resulting in an increase to the K through 8 aged sectors of the population will have an impact on the District. Though the school can accommodate more students, a large population increase would affect class sizes and resource availability. The area has seen a lot of growth in the past decade, but will unlikely experience substantial growth in the future without the construction of the Eastern Bypass. It will be important for the District and the Village to be aware of development decisions in Woodford County that may affect enrollment. Overall, the Village should continue to work with the School District to anticipate future growth and facility needs. These recommendations are also suggested for Metamora Township High School District (Illinois School District 122).

For more specific recommendations see the Community Facilities section under Objectives and Strategies.

### **Illinois Prairie Library District**

The Illinois Prairie Library District includes branches in Metamora, Benson, Roanoke, Spring Bay, Washburn, and Germantown Hills. The district is currently deficient in serving the needs of Germantown Hills' residents. The library district currently does not have a strategic implementation plan for how to rectify this issue and

best serve its citizens; therefore, recommendations developed by Germantown Hills are not in conflict with those of the library district.

See the Community Facilities section under Germantown Hills Library for more specific objectives and strategies.

#### **Germantown Hills Fire Protection District**

The Germantown Hills Fire District operates as a separate entity from the Village but coordinates with the Village regularly. The Village of Germantown Hills represents about half of the land served by the fire district. It is not recommended that the district and the Village consolidate services at this time due to the large difference in service areas. Continued coordination with the fire district is suggested as municipal boundaries expand and fire service needs are impacted.

For more detailed recommendations see the Community Facilities section under Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

#### **Caterpillar Trail Public Water District**

The Village of Germantown Hills is served by Caterpillar Trail Public Water District. Caterpillar Trails supplies water to 1,965 homes within Germantown Hills and the surrounding area. As the municipal boundaries and the water district service area are not identical, it is not recommended at this time that they

consolidate; however, if Germantown Hills were to annex the entire service area of the water district, consolidation would be highly recommended. The Village and Caterpillar Trails work closely to coordinate water and sewer services to the community. The water district recently expanded capacity. As a result, future growth is unlikely to affect service delivery. Continued coordination between the Village and Caterpillar Trails is recommended.

For more specific information see the Community Facilities section under Water.

#### **Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)**

State Highway 116 traverses the Village of Germantown Hills. The transportation section contained in this document identifies the potential for new road construction projects east of the Village intersecting 116 in the form of the Eastern Bypass. Furthermore, this plan emphasizes improving and expanding access to alternative transportation infrastructure. These plan recommendations do not conflict with any of IDOT's adopted plans or programs. Per conversations with IDOT District 4, which coordinates the state sponsored transportation efforts in Germantown Hills, no major improvements or roadway projects are anticipated in the near future.

#### **Woodford County Highway Department**

No County Highways traverse the Village of

Germantown Hills; however, County Highway 25 (Santa Fe Trail) does pass through the northern portion of the extraterritorial jurisdiction. As identified in the Transportation section of this document, no new County roads or Highway expansions of existing roads are planned. Additionally, per conversations with the Highway Department, no long-term transportation improvements are planned that would permanently impact traffic in and around the Village. Routine maintenance and upgrades to area roads are to be expected.

#### **Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC)**

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission has authored two integrated regional plans since 2010. The first, the "The Big Plan", is an integrated Regional Plan for transportation, land use, and the environment in the Tri-County Region. The second is the Heart of Illinois Regional Sustainability Plan completed in April 2014. Both plans identify key focus areas of agricultural preservation, balanced growth, economic development, environmental stewardship, and transportation infrastructure within Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford counties. Though neither plan has been formally adopted, those principles are consistent with the recommendations of this plan.

### Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is one of the principal agencies involved in the acquisition and development of recreational paths and pedestrian trails. Additionally, they take a lead role in the protection of wildlife and help to assure the sustained management of woodlands, wetlands, and other natural wildlife habitat areas. This plan promotes the preservation and protection of all natural areas, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife, and environmentally sensitive areas. There are no conflicts with this plan and the adopted plans of the IDNR.

#### GOAL I

**Expand intergovernmental relationships with local municipalities, townships, counties, and other units of government; coordinate with neighboring municipalities to manage land use decisions; and encourage cooperation between local units of government to ensure efficient delivery of services.**

#### GOAL II

**Align policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, and leverage funding and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth.**

#### OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

- Coordinate transportation needs and improvements with both the County and State Highway Departments to assure the established goals and land use decisions of the Village are adequately met.
  - Support changes that encourage cooperation between all levels of government.
  - Ensure that intergovernmental opportunities are cost beneficial and improve the quality of life of the Village.
  - Sharing of municipal services should be reviewed and utilized when beneficial to the Village, community, or region.
  - Acknowledge and encourage economic development programs that involve county-wide involvement.
  - Explore the use of shared facilities and the coordination of services provided by local governments.
  - Investigate adoption of comparable land division regulations and design standards between communities.
  - Participate in groups and organizations promoting intergovernmental cooperation.
- Develop policies, cooperative agreements and working relationships that promote intergovernmental cooperation, sharing of information, and sharing of services with other governmental units.

- Improve opportunities for communication, cooperation, and resource sharing between all layers of government.
- Work side by side with Tri-County Regional Planning Commission on regional planning issues; incorporate key organizations to ensure expertise from other jurisdictional boundaries is recognized.
- Have representation at regular meetings between school districts and local municipalities.
- Participate in joint planning efforts with Woodford County and the Village of Metamora, East Peoria, and Washington.
- Work with Woodford County and the Village of Metamora to identify joint services and facilities where consolidating, coordinating, or sharing services or facilities will result in better services and/or cost savings.
- Work with the same listed agencies to implement a regional transportation plan that addresses the future road, bicycle, trail, and path networks.
- Coordinate planning efforts with the City of East Peoria, City of Washington, Woodford County, Tazewell County, and the Village of Metamora and resolve any major disagreements between this document and any Comprehensive Plans that are being prepared.
- Foster and support a relationship with Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, Focus Forward Central Illinois, and Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area Transportation Study and participate in regional planning efforts.
- Schedule annual meeting between area representatives (specifically Germantown Hills and Metamora) to discuss the state of the communities and coordinate projects and efforts whenever possible.

# IMPLEMENTATION

*Germantown Hills' Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a dynamic document - one that responds to changing needs and conditions. The following section describes the methods by which Germantown Hills should review, monitor, and amend the Plan.*

## ANNUAL REVIEW

The Germantown Hills Board of Trustees should complete an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan prior to the initiation of the budget process each year. The annual review is intended to:

- Measure the Village's success in achieving the goals laid out in the Plan;
- Propose action items to be prioritized or pursued under the coming year's budget;
- Document growth trends and compare those trends to the projections estimated in this plan; and
- Explain any difficulties in implementing the plan.

## LAND USE AND ZONING AMENDMENTS

The Future Land Use Map is intended to serve as a guide for public and private land use decisions. Land use amendments are expected as growth occurs and market conditions change; however, the Village should limit amendments to not occur more than once per year. This will protect the Village from unintentional policy shifts.

## POLICY REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

To ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains an effective guide for the Village, Germantown Hills should evaluate the plan's goals and policies every five years. These evaluations should consider progress in implementing the plan, changes in community needs, fiscal conditions that affect the ability to implement the plan, community support for the plan, and changes in county, state, or federal laws that affect plan implementation.

As with the process of creating the Comprehensive Plan, the review process should include input from all community members.



# APPENDIX

## GERMANTOWN HILLS SURVEY RESULTS

Total Surveys Collected: 311 (9 paper; 302 electronic), representing 9% of the total village population and 26.5% of total village households

### Community Services

*Q1: How would you rank your level of satisfaction concerning community services in Germantown Hills?*

#### Dissatisfied (from most to least):

1. Availability of Sidewalks - 80.9% of residents are either “somewhat dissatisfied” or dissatisfied
2. Public Library - 59%

#### Satisfied (From most to least):

1. Gas and Electric- 90% of residents are “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied”
2. Fire Protection- 86.3
3. Emergency Services- 85.7%
4. Elementary School- 83.4%
5. Trash and Recycling- 82.2%
6. Middle School- 80.2%
7. Water- 79.9%

8. Condition of Streets - 73.3%
9. Quality of Parks – 69.9%
10. Communication (phone, Internet, TV)- 68.8%
11. High School- 67.7%; 29.1% had no opinion
12. Sewer- 66.6%
13. Village Hall- 53%; 28.4% had no opinion
14. Village Communication Efforts with Citizens- 45.6%

*Q2: Of the following Capital Improvement Programs, where would you like the Village to spend less, the same, or more in the next 5 years?*

#### Spend more (from greatest to least):

1. Bike Accommodations- 64.1%
2. Public Library- 60.4%
3. Downtown Improvements- 51.5%
4. Sidewalk Repair- 51.0%
5. Parks and Recreation- 49.2%

#### Spend the same (from greatest to least):

1. Water Improvements- 78.0%

2. Sewer Improvements- 74.8%
3. Storm Water Improvements- 68.5%
4. New Streets- 65.4%
5. Existing Street Resurfacing- 58.9%

*Q3: Of the following services, where would you like the Village to spend less, the same, or more in the next 5 years?*

#### Spend more (from greatest to least):

1. Economic Development (attraction/expansion of businesses)- 75.2%
2. Planning and Development – 53.3%
3. Parks and Recreation – 50%

#### Spend the same (from greatest to least):

1. Fire Protection -73.3%
2. Emergency Services – 69.9%
3. Inspections/Code Enforcement – 64.4%
4. Public Works – 64.1%
5. Police Protection – 63.3%
6. Historic Preservation – 54.3%

*Q4: Please indicate which method(s) of communication that would be the most effective in keeping you and/or your family informed about Village information.*

From most effective to least effective:

1. E-mail – 76.8%
2. Mailings or Billings Inserts – 42.8%
3. Facebook/Social Media – 40.8%
4. City Website – 36.3%
5. Flyers from School – 29.4%
6. Brochures, Flyers, or Posters – 14.1%
7. Broadcast Media – 8.2%
8. Newspaper ads – 4.9%

### **Economic Development**

*Q5: Which economic development goals should be a top priority in the Village of Germantown Hills?*

From greatest priority to least:

1. Work with commercial property owners to provide new business opportunities and fill vacant stores – 79.1%
2. Recruit new retailers – 64.6%
3. Recruit new restaurants – 62.3%
4. Provide assistance to existing businesses to remain open and profitable – 45.5%

5. Recruit businesses that create new jobs for retail workers – 44.8%
6. Retain existing businesses that provide jobs – 44.4%
7. Recruit businesses that create new jobs for skilled laborers – 32.7%
8. Recruit new health care related businesses and jobs – 23.9%
9. Recruit new technology related businesses and jobs – 21.5%
10. Recruit new lodging businesses – 5.9%

*Q6: What percentage of household retail purchases are from businesses within the Village of Germantown Hills?*

- 91.3 % of respondents are purchasing 75-100% of their purchases outside of the Village.

*Q7: What items do you purchase outside of the city that you can't purchase in the Village?*

- Over 85% of respondents purchase clothing and apparel, electronics, appliances, automobiles, groceries, and home furnishings outside of the village.
- The vast majority of respondents purchase office products (74.1%) and home improvement items (64.0%) outside of the Village
- 55.2% eat at restaurants within the Village

*Q8: What types of businesses are needed in the Village?*

From greatest need to least:

1. Grocery Store – 80% (194 responses)
2. Restaurants – 26% (63 responses)
3. General Retail – 13% (33 responses)
4. Pharmacy/Prompt Care – 11% (27 responses)
5. Coffee Shop- 5% (14 responses)
6. Dry Cleaners – 4% (11 responses)
7. Retail – Clothing – 2% (7 responses)
8. Recreation Center – 2% (5 responses)
9. Ice Cream Shop – 1% (3 responses)

*Q9: What are the top three strengths/opportunities concerning the Village of Germantown Hills in the future?*

Top responses:

1. School (103 responses)
2. Community character (50 responses)
3. Location (23 responses)
4. Citizens (23 responses)
5. Growth (20 responses)
6. Small Town (20 responses)
7. Safety (15 responses)
8. Business/Retail (12 responses)



9. Grocery Store (12 responses)
10. Parks (10 responses)
11. Sidewalks/Bike Paths (10 responses)

*Q10: What are the top three weaknesses/threats concerning Germantown Hills and its future?*

Top responses:

1. Lack of business/retail (83 responses)
2. Lack of a grocery store (75 responses)
3. High taxes (59 responses)
4. Lack of sidewalks (48 responses)
5. Lack of a town center (40 responses)
6. School (22 responses)
7. Water (20 responses)
8. Lack of bike paths (12 responses)
9. Parks (10 responses)
10. Lack of long range planning (10 responses)
11. Traffic/Speeding (10 responses)

**Housing**

*Q11: Please classify your current residence.*

- 93.5% of respondents live in a single-family home. According to 2007-2011 ACS estimates, 81.1% of Germantown Hills' housing stock is single-family detached homes.

*Q12: Please select the main reason why you chose to live in the Village of Germantown Hills.*

In order from greatest to least:

1. Convenient to school for you or your children – 47.7%
2. All of the above - 18.8%
3. Convenient to friends or relatives – 14.7%
4. Convenient to job – 13.8%
5. Village's physical appearance – 3.7%
6. Convenient to leisure activities or cultural amenities – 0.9%
7. Public services provided – 0.5%

Other significant responses:

1. Quality schools
2. Great place to raise a family
3. Safe/Low Crime
4. Has lived in Germantown Hills for entire life

*Q13: Please select what you believe is the Village of Germantown Hills' most important housing issue.*

In order from most important to least:

1. Lack of affordable new houses for sale – 41.7%
2. Lack of affordable rental housing – 36%
3. Lack of affordable old houses for sale – 33.1%

4. Lack of housing for the elderly – 20.1%
5. Dilapidated/Abandoned housing – 14.4%
6. Lack of affordable student housing – 3.6%

Other significant responses:

1. High property taxes
2. No housing issues
3. Lack of connectivity between neighborhoods/ lack of sidewalks

*Q15: What percentage of your monthly income is applied to your housing costs?*

- 90.1% of respondents are paying less than 30% of their monthly income on housing costs. Anything over 30% is considered unaffordable.

**Transportation**

*Q18: How do you typically get to work or school?*

- 95.6% of respondents drive alone

*Q19: How much time does it take you, typically, to get to work or school?*

1. 11-20 minutes – 36.6%
2. 21-30 minutes – 33%
3. 10 minutes or less – 21.2%
4. More than 30 minutes – 5.9%
5. Not sure/varies – 3.3%

*Q20: How would you rate the quality of Germantown Hills' transportation network?*

1. Fair – 28.9%
2. Good – 26.2%
3. Poor – 18%
4. Very Poor – 17.2%
5. Excellent – 9.8%

*Q21: How would you rate the quality of these types of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations?*

Poor/Very Poor:

1. Recreational Trail System – 77.9%
2. On-road bicycle accommodations – 77.7%
3. Sidewalks – 77.2%

Good/Fair:

1. Crosswalks – 56.4%

*Q21: The amount of funding available for transportation improvements is often less than what is needed. What are your feelings on the following funding sources?*

Yes, fund with this source (answered yes, or no preference):

1. Charge developers full cost of needed transportation improvements in new developments – 86.2%
2. Local Sales Tax – 73.5%

No, do not fund with this source:

1. Higher property taxes – 88.1%
2. Increased Fuel Tax – 68.5%

*Q23: If you had \$100 to spend on transportation, how would you distribute it among these project types?*

In order from highest average dollar amount to lowest:

1. Sidewalk construction and maintenance - \$44.61
2. Improving roadways - \$29.36
3. Recreational trail construction and maintenance - \$28.79
4. On-road bicycle accommodations - \$21.19
5. Improving traffic flow - \$14.28
6. Widening or building major streets and highways - \$13.60
7. Improving Street Aesthetics - \$12.64
8. Establish Public Transit - \$8.68
9. Improving public transit - \$2.24

In order from most responses to least:

1. Sidewalk construction and maintenance
2. Recreational trail construction and maintenance
3. On-road bicycle accommodations
4. Improving roadway

5. Improving traffic flow
6. Improving street aesthetics
7. Widening or building major streets and highways
8. Establish public transit
9. Improving public transit

**Land Use and Growth**

*Q25: Do you support the future annexation for the Village of Germantown Hills?*

1. Yes – 36.3%
2. Don't Know – 34.4%
3. Maybe – 19.5%
4. No – 9.8%

*Q26: Which direction would you like to see the Village of Germantown Hills grow in the future?*

- The majority of respondents would like to see the Village grow to the north and east.

*Q27: How far would you be willing to walk or bike to work, school, or commercial uses?*

1. Up to 30 minutes – 48.6%
2. Less than 10 minutes – 45.5%
3. Greater than 30 minutes – 5.9%

*Q28: You like your neighborhood because:*

1. It has large lots with large yards – 75%

2. It is close to destinations (schools, shopping, etc.) – 49.6%
3. It is walkable – 35.2%
4. It has close proximity to neighbors – 22.5%
5. It has recreation opportunities nearby – 17.6%
6. It has wide roads – 3.7%
7. It is close to public transportation options – 1.2%

Other significant responses:

1. Quiet/Peaceful/Safe
2. Great, friendly neighbors

*Q29: If you could change your neighborhood, you would:*

1. Add sidewalks or bike accommodations – 79.4%
2. Have recreation opportunities available nearby – 41.1%
3. Have walkable destinations nearby – 30.2%
4. Not have to drive to get daily necessities – 21%
5. Closer proximity to commercial uses – 15.3%
6. Wider roads – 14.9%
7. Increase lot size – 11.7%
8. Mix of housing types – 3.6%
9. Decrease lot size – 0.4%
10. Narrower roads – 0%

*Q30: If you could, what would you change about the Village of Germantown Hills?*

Top responses:

1. Add a grocery store
2. Add sidewalks
3. Add more businesses
4. Lower property taxes

**Demographics**

*Gender*

- 63.9% Female and 36.1% Male (respondents); 49.9% female and 50.1% male (actual)

*Age*

1. 34 – 43 (44.9%)
2. 44 – 62 (36%)
3. 18 – 33 (15%)
4. 63+ (3.7%)
5. 17 or younger (0.4%)

*Race*

- 95.9% of respondents identify as white. (96% of Germantown Hills residents are white)

*Household Status*

- 78.2% of respondents are part of a couple, with children at home. (83% of households are family households in Germantown Hills)

- 65.2% of respondents are living in a household with 4-5 individuals; 23.9% are living with 2 to 3.

*Residency*

- 27% of respondents have been a resident of Germantown Hills for 5-9 years, followed by 10-14 years (22.8%), more than 20 years (17.9%), and 1-4 years (17.5%)

*Education*

- 100% of respondents have obtained a high school degree or higher. (87.9% of Germantown Hills residents have a high school degree or higher)

*Occupation*

- 31.4% of respondents work in management, 20% in education, and 8.6% in finance

*Q40: What could Germantown Hills do that would get you, and the public in general, more involved in local government?*

Significant responses:

- More communication (some suggestions – email, blog, social media, newsletter)
- Better communication about when meetings are held
- Education on how to get involved/be involved
- Community events
- More surveys
- Ask for volunteers
- Improve reputation

**SAMPLES**

**Infill Development**

The following pictures show options for re-purposing a strip shopping center, such as Germantown Crossing, into a pedestrian friendly public gathering place that is more visually attractive.

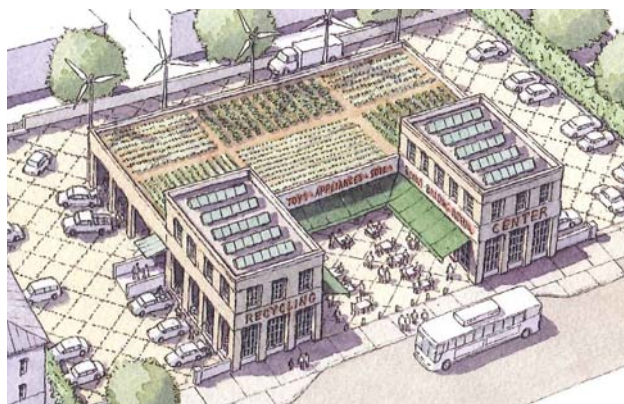
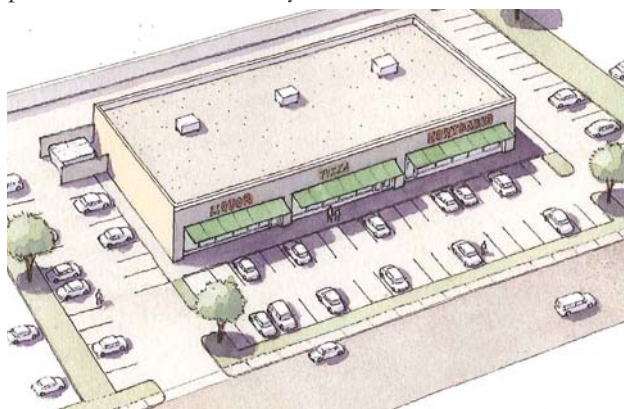


Photo Credit: *The Sprawl Repair Manual* (Tachieva)

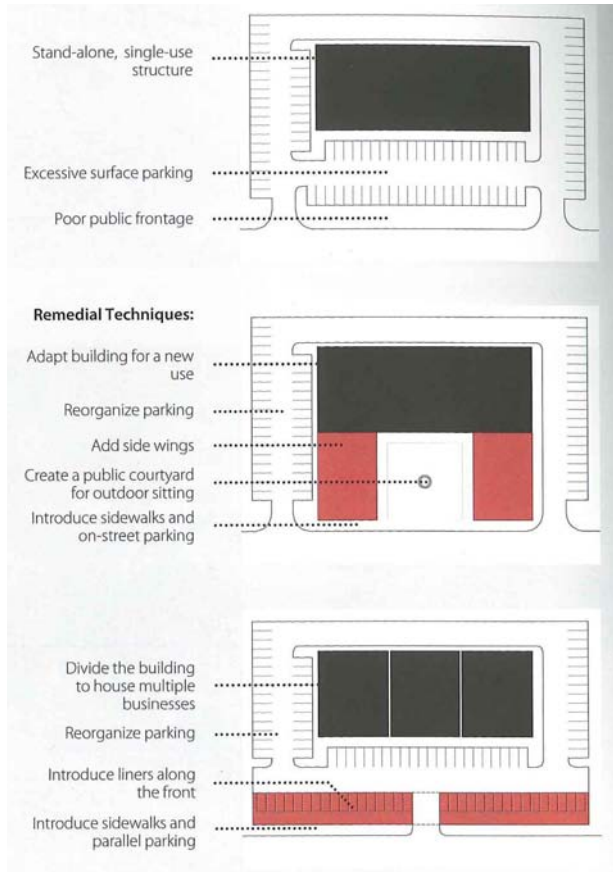


Photo Credit: *The Sprawl Repair Manual* (Tachieva)

The following pictures show a re-purposing success story. Once a strip shopping center, Mashpee Commons in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, has been transformed into a successful town center.



Photo Credit: Mashpee Commons LP via *The Sprawl Repair Manual*



Photo Credit: Mashpee Commons LP via *The Sprawl Repair Manual*

**Parking Lot Improvements**

Large-scale parking lots discourage pedestrian activity and can be unattractive features in a community. The following pictures show options for visually softening these hardscape areas.



Photo Credit: American Planning Association (NNECAPA)

**Traffic Calming**

The following pictures show options for slowing down traffic and creating pedestrian-friendly opportunities.

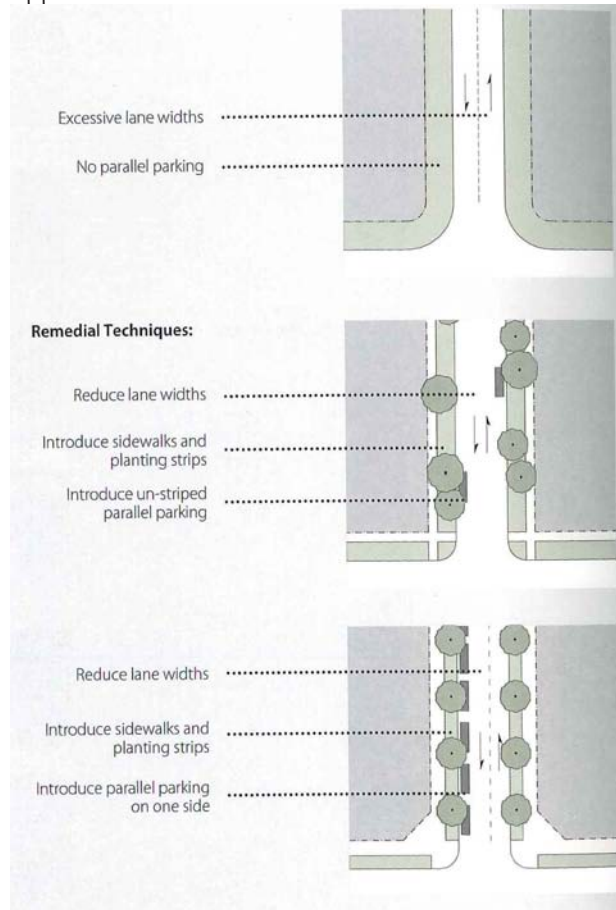


Photo Credit: *The Sprawl Repair Manual* (Tachieva)

**Connectivity**

The following pictures show options for improving connectivity within a transportation network that is dominated by cul-de-sacs.

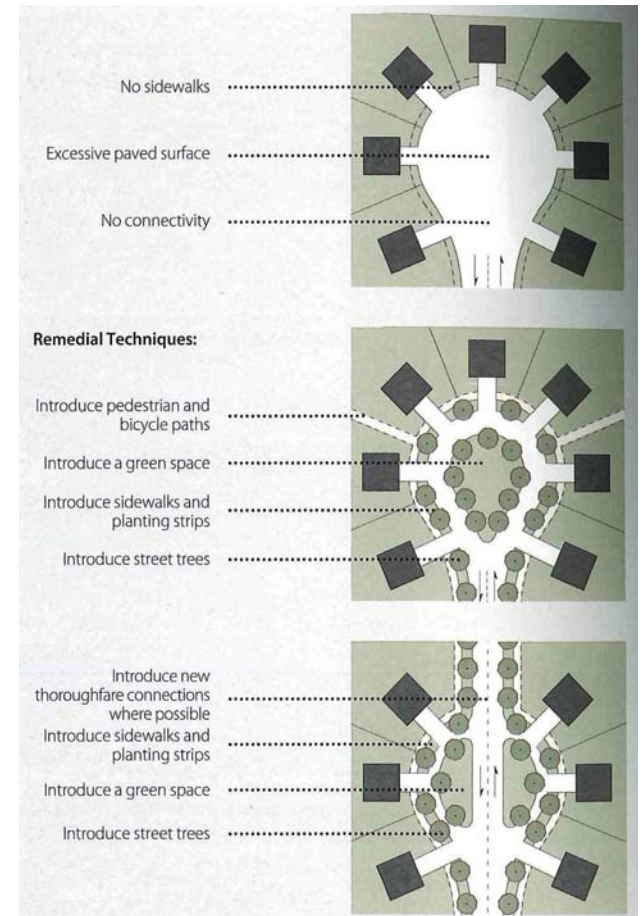


Photo Credit: *The Sprawl Repair Manual* (Tachieva)

### Public Signage

Community welcome signage provides visitors with a first impression of the area and should therefore be attractive and well-lit. The picture below shows a successful community welcome sign.



Photo Credit: Village of Morton

### Stormwater Management Techniques

The following images show stormwater management techniques.



Rain Garden, Photo Credit: Landscape Charlie



Bio-Swale, Photo Credit: Aaron Volkening



Permeable Pavers, Photo Credit: Eric Rogers

## ZONING MAP

The Germantown Hills zoning map is used to regulate development. Each property within the Village is assigned to a zoning district. Different regulations, permitted uses, and other requirements are outlined for each zoning district and can be found in the Village Code. This map does not necessarily reflect what a particular property is currently being used for. To identify current land use within the Village, please see the Current Land Use Map on page 18.

