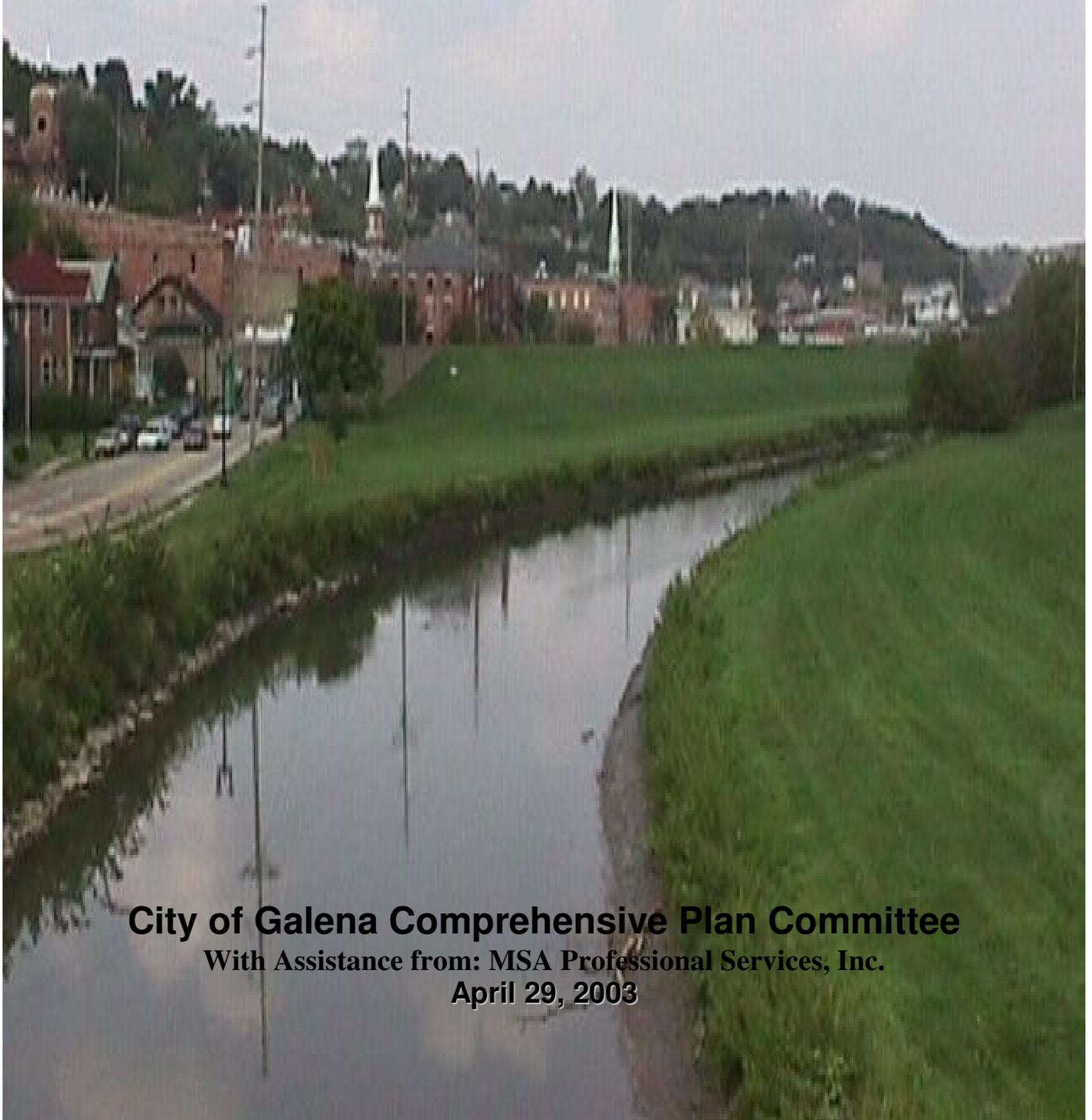


# **Comprehensive Plan**

## **City of Galena, Illinois**



**City of Galena Comprehensive Plan Committee**

**With Assistance from: MSA Professional Services, Inc.**

**April 29, 2003**

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# City of Galena, Illinois Comprehensive Plan

**City of Galena Comprehensive Plan Committee  
MSA Professional Services, Inc.**

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## THE MAYOR'S INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Dear Reader:

The City of Galena, founded in 1826, situated in the rugged hills of northwestern Illinois, home to nine Civil War generals, including the most prominent Civil War general, Ulysses S. Grant, 18th president of the United States, is recognized by a growing number of political leaders, travel writers, and tourists as a national treasure.

Galena's charm and physical beauty are serendipitous Galena lies in the unglaciated area of Illinois that escaped being flattened by mountains of ice thousands of years ago; hence, the city was built more on a vertical plane than on a horizontal one, so that when a Galenean speaks of going "downtown," the meaning is to be taken literally, for the hillsides are filled with hundreds of homes high above the commercial district that lies along the west side of the Galena River. Early settlers were drawn to the area by the rich deposits of lead ore buried in the hillsides. Transportation by boat down the Galena River to the Mississippi River, three miles to the south, and thence to St. Louis and the Ohio River made extracting the lead ore commercially viable. Within three decades of Galena's founding, the population had grown to 9,000 and to over 14,000 by the 1860's. The wealth that was created in those early years permitted the building of substantial homes high above the river, which today are exquisite examples of well preserved, 19th century, Italianate, Victorian, and Federal architectural styles. These enduring structures can be viewed from an infinite number of perspectives as one walks the hills of Galena or climbs the many steps leading up from the downtown. From the tops of these steps, one can look down to the tops of rising church spires. Fire consumed many of the early wooden structures in the downtown, which were replaced by brick buildings which today stand as testaments to the craftsmanship of Galena tradesmen. In the post Civil War period, the Galena River silted in, the railroad came, her role as a thriving port city was lost, the demand for lead decreased, and Galena went into a century of economic decline shrinking to 5,000 people by the 1950's and to under 3500 today.

Ironically, Galena's economic troubles prevented the city from modernizing. She kept her narrow streets, her 19th century commercial district, her wonderful, old homes including a home given by grateful citizens to General Grant after the war, and today Galena is the second most popular tourist destination in Illinois attracting well over a million visitors each year. People come to Galena to enjoy the natural and man-made beauty, to learn about the significant role Galena and her citizens played in the development of this country and to enjoy 21st century shopping and dining experiences in an authentic, 19th century environment. Galena has once again become a vital and vibrant commercial center.

Galena's status as a national treasure of American history and 19th century architecture is coupled with its status as a small, safe, Midwestern American town with all the values

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inherent in that status. This unique position provides great promise, significant responsibility, and many challenges.

The promise inherent in Galena's status is the potential for the community to provide a quality of life for its residents that most towns of its size cannot afford. This promise is made possible by the existence of a pool of talented entrepreneurs that has been drawn to Galena by the opportunities 1.3 million annual visitors bring to the community, the significant sales taxes revenues that accrue to local government by the trade generated by a dynamic tourism industry, and by Galena's ability to attract the attention of political leaders in the state's capital in Springfield and in the nation's capital in Washington, D.C. In addition, an increasing number of men and women are moving to Galena to retire bringing with them significant wealth and life experiences that enrich the community financially and socially.

The responsibility that rests on the citizens of Galena is to preserve its heritage for future generations. That this heritage was preserved for us is, in large part, the result of a happy accident of history. Galena residents simply lacked the wherewithal to change their town for over a century. Now, change is possible and inevitable, and our responsibility is to manage that change in ways that preserve our architectural and historical heritage and the quality of small town life that so many find so appealing.

Among the many challenges we face is the continuing exodus of our young people who seek opportunities not available here. Our tourism industry, while it provides great benefit to the community, does not offer jobs that provide the level of pay and benefits that talented young people seek. Consequently, there are fewer young families living in Galena, and school enrollment is in decline. This threatens the health of our educational system, which is central to the vitality of small town life. Galena is a wonderful town in which to rear families, but that status is at risk.

Also at risk is our ability to continue to provide high quality, volunteer fire protection and medical emergency services. Young people traditionally volunteer for these services, and young people are not remaining in Galena in sufficient numbers to assure that the status quo can be maintained over the long term.

Additionally, much of Galena's physical infrastructure is very old and in great need of repair and replacement. While Galena is addressing this problem by improving its commercial district's streets and water, sewer, and wastewater systems, and by building a new \$14.7 million wastewater treatment plant and by renovating its Recreation Park, much more needs to be done if we are to provide the quality of life that will hold young people here and that will attract young families from outside Galena to move here.

In order to attract and hold young adults, Galena must diversify its economy to provide good jobs with good pay and benefits. It must provide excellent educational, recreational, and cultural experiences for its residents. To do so, it must manage its physical and financial resources in ways that ensure long term, responsible growth for the city as it strives to preserve its small town values and historical heritage.

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In order to fulfill the promise of its unique status, to carry out its responsibilities to future generations, and to meet the many challenges it faces, Galena must think and plan comprehensively. To meet that critical need, the following plan has been developed.

Sincerely,

Richard D. Auman  
Mayor

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## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

While the City of Galena is a unique community, it has one point in common with all other municipalities: change. Over the last 50 years, The City has witnessed the rebirth of its downtown, the revitalization of its economy, and the beginnings of renewed residential growth. The City, while small in size (pop. 3,460), has the issues and opportunities of a much larger community.

Approximately 40% of the City lies within one of the nation's largest National Historic Districts. The historical nature of the community is a key asset that the City of Galena has at its disposal. That, coupled with the natural beauty of the region, plays a large role in defining the City, and the region. These resources also help to create an excellent sense of community within the City. The City has approximately 60 different volunteer organizations that focus on everything from gardening to historic preservation. The history and beauty of the City and the region attract over 1 million visitors a year to the City. This has helped develop a very healthy tourist economy.

The residents of the City of Galena feel very strongly about the historical aspects of their community, as well as the natural beauty that Galena and Jo Daviess County have to offer. Some of the primary historical and natural resources include the home of President Ulysses S. Grant, Horseshoe Mound, the U.S. Customs House and Post Office, the Illinois Central R.R. Passenger Depot, the Galena River, Turner Hall, and one of only two remaining working Blacksmith shops in the State of Illinois. Preservation of these resources and other similar assets in the surrounding region is one of the primary concerns of the citizens of the City of Galena.

All of these assets have helped the City to become a thriving place for residents, visitors, businesses, and others. They have also led to the development of concerns that need to be addressed. The City has a desire to maintain a "small town" image. However, this small town faces the pressures that come with the large number of tourists to the area. The level of tourism has also led to problems with traffic, access, and parking.

Increased development pressure is also facing the City. This pressure is a concern due to the potential threat to the region's natural beauty. This year alone, the City has seen plans or approvals for nearly 100 new residential and commercial lots. Many of these newly developed and developing lots are for residential purposes. The City is experiencing an influx of retirement age residents. This "graying" of the population is coupled with a slow loss of younger residents to outside areas. These younger residents represent the workforce needed for tomorrow's jobs.

To address these issues and concerns requires long term planning. While specific situations may change over time, the City's long term goals should remain the same. They include diversifying the economy, preserving the region's natural resource base, protecting and maintaining the historical structures and character within the community, and improving access and transportation in and around the City. The citizens also want to expand recreational opportunities in the City, and in surrounding areas. Within the

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region, Galena wishes to develop strong relationships with its neighbors, including the Towns of East Galena, West Galena, Rawlins, and Jo Daviess County. While these neighbors are immediately adjacent or overlying the City, Galena also wishes to further strengthen its relationship with the State of Illinois.

A comprehensive plan allows a community to develop a vision for the future. Once this vision is developed, the plan outlines courses of action to help a community shape and mold itself. In this case, the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Galena follows the framework of a Smart Growth plan. Smart Growth planning allows a community to address specific subjects, or “elements” in turn, while acknowledging the inter-connections between these elements. For the purposes of this plan, these elements consist of; a **Community Profile, Economic Development, Housing, Transportation, Public and Community Facilities and Utilities, Recreational, Historical, and Cultural Resources, Natural Resources, Land Use, Intergovernmental Cooperation, and Implementation.**

Once these elements have been researched, defined, and developed, a series of **Goals, Objectives, and Action statements** are developed to address issues and opportunities that have been identified within each element. These **Goals, Objectives, and Action statements** frequently overlap. Within the **Goals, Objectives, and Action statements**, a series of Plan Maps are included as well. These plan maps address everything from future land use patterns, transportation improvements to parks and open spaces.

The City of Galena’s comprehensive planning efforts have been ongoing for over a decade. The City of Galena completed a comprehensive plan that was formally adopted by the City on May 13, 1991. In 1999, the City began the process of updating the 1991 comprehensive plan. This work was started, however it was not completed. In 2002, the City of Galena made the decision to formally update the comprehensive plan and contracted with MSA Professional Services, Inc. to aid in this undertaking. The following plan is the result of these efforts.

# CITY OF GALENA VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

In 2001, The City Council of Galena drafted a mission statement and vision statement. These statements guided the creation of this plan and provided the overarching principles for the direction of the plan. The Mission Statement and Vision Statement(s) are as follows:

## City of Galena Mission Statement:

*“In order to maintain and enhance the quality of life and unique character of our community the City of Galena provides quality municipal services that protect and promote the public health, safety and general welfare. These services are provided with a commitment to excellence, efficiency, and equity.”*

To achieve our mission, the City of Galena embraces the following vision statement:

## VISION STATEMENT

| Vision Topic  | Vision Statement   |
|---|--|
| Values / Beliefs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Volunteerism</li> <li>♣ Hard Work</li> <li>♣ Diversity</li> </ul>   | The City of Galena will strive to become a more cohesive community by embracing and promoting the values of hard work, volunteerism, neighborliness and civic involvement. The City will be a leader in welcoming and unifying persons of all ethnic backgrounds, ages and beliefs.  |
| Local Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Tourism</li> <li>♣ Other Businesses</li> <li>♣ Jobs</li> </ul>   | The City of Galena will strive to diversify its local economy and improve the business environment for tourism by retaining existing businesses, actively attracting clean new businesses with good paying jobs, promoting its quality experience and heritage, including the Galena and Mississippi Rivers, and collaborating with Dubuque and other area destinations. |
| Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Land Use</li> <li>♣ Planning</li> </ul>   | The City of Galena will strive to preserve its small town image by managing physical growth with sound planning and zoning that emphasizes the preservation of the historic district, in-fill development and the efficient and attractive development of new land. The city will be proactive in annexing land to achieve its vision.                                   |
| Physical Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Natural Resources</li> <li>♣ Historic Preservation</li> </ul>   | The City of Galena will strive to be a beautiful place to live and visit by adhering to a high standard of cleanliness, maintaining high quality air, water and soil, protecting our historical and architectural character and protecting and enhancing our natural resources.  |
| Social Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Housing</li> <li>♣ Education</li> <li>♣ Public Safety</li> <li>♣ Transportation</li> <li>♣ Recreation</li> </ul> | The City of Galena will strive to create an excellent quality of life for persons of all ages and income levels by maintaining public safety, facilitating the creation of adequate housing, providing quality recreation facilities and collaborating with the schools to enhance educational opportunities.  |
| Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♣ Local Services</li> <li>♣ Intergovernmental Cooperation</li> <li>♣ Employee Relations</li> </ul>                    | The City of Galena will strive to be a leader in the community and in the county by employing dedicated professional staff, being responsive to citizens needs, providing high quality public services and facilities, maintaining a strong fiscal position and by seeking opportunities for cooperation with other government bodies.                                   |