

PLANNING ISSUES—HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Objectives

1. To protect and maintain historic and architectural resources that contribute to Kane County's heritage and historic character while protecting identity and unique sense of place.
 2. To incorporate the efforts of the county's Preservation Program in planning and development review.
 3. To promote public awareness regarding the value of architectural, natural, and historic resources within the county.
 4. Promote the Rustic Road Program and expand the list of rural and scenic byways that are designated and protected in order to preserve and enhance the county's rural character.
 5. To maintain and improve preservation partnerships with municipal governments and encourage all municipalities to adopt preservation ordinances.
 6. To coordinate county preservation efforts with state and local preservation agencies and organizations.
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Chapter Focus

New development and the resulting changes in the landscape prompted the Kane County Board to adopt a historic preservation program in 1988–1989. The program's aim is to preserve the character of the county's unique communities and to protect its valuable historic resources. The components of the program—the 2030 Land Resource Management Plan, Rural Structures Survey, Historic Preservation Ordinance, Preservation Plan and Register of Historic Places and the Rustic Road Program—are all tools used by the Historic Preservation Commission and the Kane County Board to address preservation issues facing the county. The county has designated 30 historic landmarks, 13 since 1996, one rustic road and one historic district. The historic preservation program addresses a variety of issues, including the preservation and redevelopment of older downtowns, protection of historic resources and landscapes to balance new development, and the preservation and adaptive reuse of agricultural buildings.

This chapter examines:

- Historic Character
 - Historic Resource Protection
 - Kane County Historic Preservation Program
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Historic Character

Over time, development has had conflicting effects on the historic character of the Urban Corridor, the Critical Growth Area, and the Agricultural/Rural Village Area of the county. These three distinct areas have different types of historic resources and different issues of development or neglect that require varied and innovative approaches to ensure their continued or adaptive use.



Located in the eastern portion of the county, the Urban Corridor contains most of the county's historical commercial and residential buildings. As communities grow and change, these buildings provide opportunities for rehabilitation and reuse while also enhancing the original urban and neighborhood character. Historic resources are often threatened and sometimes lost when significant buildings or development patterns are not recognized and protected. The county's Preservation Program provides local communities with assistance and support to sustain their historic resources. Furthermore, the Preservation Program fosters cooperation between municipalities that have established preservation

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ordinances and offers assistance to municipalities that have yet to fully recognize and protect their historic resources. Educational conferences and mobile tours

cosponsored by the Kane County Historic Preservation Commission provide opportunities for these groups to work together to develop strategies for meeting the preservation challenges within the Urban Corridor.

The Critical Growth Area also provides unique historic preservation challenges and requires planning and innovative actions. As previously farmed and natural areas are developed either by municipal incorporation or by County Board action, there is a great potential for loss of character-defining landscapes and important historic resources. The county has integrated preservation planning into the earliest phases of the development review process to minimize loss of historic resources. Developers are made aware of important sites identified by the Rural Structures Survey and are strongly encouraged to incorporate existing houses and farmsteads into new

developments. The protection of these sites contributes to the important visual characteristics of the area.

The Agricultural/Rural Village Area in western Kane County contains rural villages that are long-time centers of commercial and social activities. In its adopted Preservation Plan, the County Board recognized the importance of these rural villages and called for careful treatment of their historic qualities. Although the quantity and type of their commercial uses have changed over the years, rural villages still provide a social and cultural focus as well as limited services to the surrounding area. Further, the villages are the best location for new shops and services needed for expanding residential development. It is important that the villages retain their character and sense of identity as they change or grow. Businesses should be encouraged to locate in existing buildings. New buildings and site layouts should complement and reinforce existing development patterns and building architecture.

The agricultural area of the county includes historic and scenic resources nestled within highly productive farmland. Historic farmsteads dot the countryside providing visual landmarks and serving as the working elements of 150 years of agricultural history in Kane County. Fences, hedgerows, and scenic vistas combine with farmsteads to define the area's character. Intrusions into this setting easily distract from its appeal and diminish its unique beauty. The continued viable use of the different elements of a working farm challenges preservationists and farmers to work together to develop innovative solutions for integrating historic farm structures with modern farming practices (Refer to Figure 69).

Historic Resource Protection

Historic resources in Kane County include residential buildings from different periods, farmsteads and agricultural outbuildings, rural villages, scenic vistas, geological features and landscapes, commercial and industrial buildings, and road corridors. Structures such as water tanks, windmills, bridges, and cemetery art have historic significance in Kane County. Some of these resources are in pristine condition, while others may be in states of decay or alteration. The county preservation program recognizes there is more to historic preservation than merely preservation of buildings and structures. Vistas, landscapes and geological features also have historic significance.

These resources are threatened by demolition, inappropriate rehabilitation, widening and new construction of roads, and new development. Neglecting historic resources

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reinforces public perception that old buildings and structures are of little value. As Kane County grows, it is important to plan for the protection of historic resources, especially along transportation routes. The construction of new roads and the widening of existing roads can endanger or adversely affect historic buildings and alter the character of rural villages and landscapes. Locations and parking layouts for new or expanded commuter rail stations should be planned with consideration for surrounding community features and character. Careful planning of trail systems can allow greater access to historic sites and resources as well as provide opportunities for the public to enjoy these assets.

Preservation of historic resources is best accomplished through advanced and coordinated planning efforts. As municipalities annex land, newly incorporated areas may include historic resources. Some of these resources may be on the Kane County Register of Historic Places while others, although not designated, may have significant historic value. As of 2003, six municipalities had preservation ordinances offering designation and protection of landmarks. Some offer as much protection as the county's Historic Preservation Ordinance, while others do not. Coordination between the county and municipalities is critical to preserve significant buildings and landscapes so that none are demolished or significantly altered as a result of annexation.



Kane County can protect municipal landmarks through intergovernmental agreements, technical assistance in establishing programs in communities without preservation tools and help to strengthen municipal ordinances. The continued success of the Kane County Historic Preservation Program requires citizen support. The county must work with the municipalities, historical and historic resource preservation organizations, and the general public to communicate the importance of Kane County's historic resources.

Kane County Historic Preservation Program

A Kane County Historic Preservation Study committee was established in 1987 to oversee the Rural Structures Survey, evaluate historic resources, and determine if action was needed to protect the county's historic resources. After completing the survey, the committee recommended a preservation ordinance and establishment of a Historic Preservation Commission.

The 1986–1987 Rural Structures Survey inventoried all structures built before 1945 in unincorporated Kane County and unincorporated rural villages west of the Fox River, Urban Corridor. Identified structures varied from homes and barns to water tanks and a bridge. Three age groups were used in the survey: 1800–1859, 1860–1910, and 1910–1945. Only 14% of the buildings in the survey were built between 1800 and 1859. The limited number of buildings remaining from the early settlement period strengthens the argument for their protection. Results of the Rural Structures Survey were reported in *Built for Farming: A Guide to the Historic Rural Architecture of Kane County* published in 1991.

Adopted unanimously by the Kane County Board in 1988, the Historic Preservation Ordinance was the first such ordinance adopted by a county in the State of Illinois. The ordinance established a Historic Preservation Commission with authority to recommend landmarks and historic districts for designation by the County Board to the Kane County Register of Historic Places. The commission has the authority to review significant exterior alterations, additions, new construction or demolitions proposed for designated landmarks or within historic districts.

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In 1989, the County Board adopted the Kane County Historic Preservation Plan as an amendment to the county's 1982 Land Use Plan. Included in the plan are specific goals, objectives, and strategies for preserving the county's character and protecting historic resources. With the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and Plan, Kane County was the first county in Illinois to be recognized as a Certified Local Government, making the county eligible for historic preservation grants.



The Kane County Register of Historic Places is the official list of county landmarks, historic districts and road corridors recognized for their historical, architectural and scenic significance, as well as for their architectural or aesthetic importance, interest, or value. Resources having local, state, or national significance are eligible for designation and may be protected by the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Properties placed on the Kane County Register of Historic Places are protected from demolition or damaging alterations through county review processes (Refer to Figure 70).

As of July 2000 the Historic Preservation Ordinance was amended to allow for the designation and preservation of rustic road corridors in Kane County. A rustic road corridor preserves and protects the road's unique features as specified by the Corridor Management Plan. Rustic roads tell part of the story of Kane County's history by preserving natural and built features along the road. Thurnau Road in Rutland Township was designated as Kane County's first rustic road by the County Board on February 10, 2004. Thurnau Road is a gravel road that meanders through cropland and stands of mature oak trees passing by horses and 100-year old barns. Brundige Road in Blackberry and Campton Township is in the process of being designated a rustic road corridor.

Descriptive permanent bronze plaques are placed on designated landmarks to foster public awareness and appreciation. The county is dedicated to expanding the Register of Historic Places by systematically reviewing potential historic and/or scenic sites and areas, encouraging nominations, and publicizing new landmarks, historic districts, and road corridors.

Policies

1. Encourage preservation of older irreplaceable structures such as houses, outbuildings, bridges, and fences to retain a sense of local identity, visual beauty, and architectural diversity.
2. Protect Kane County's scenic character and visual beauty.
3. Facilitate the reuse of existing buildings in ways appropriate to their character.
4. Encourage new development in village centers compatible with existing architecture and community character.
5. Enhance property values by encouraging the continued maintenance of buildings.
6. Provide opportunities for education and encourage continued study of county architectural and historic resources through publications such as *Built for Farming: A Guide to the Historic Rural Architecture of Kane County*, brochures, programs such as "That Darn Barn", and other resources.
7. Provide technical information to assist property owner's research and restoration efforts.
8. Assist historical societies, museums, and other preservation organizations in Kane County with their public education and preservation efforts.

- Work in partnership with municipalities to promote and to protect historic resources, encouraging adoption of historic preservation ordinances when appropriate.
- Retain the county’s status as a Certified Local Government through the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.
- Support Kane County’s Rustic Roads Program to preserve character and scenic vistas for future generations.

Figure 69

Kane County Rural Structures Survey—	
Historic Resources Surveyed	
In 1986—87 Kane County surveyed 3,966 sites containing approximately 26,000 historic resources. These resources include:	
Residential Buildings	
Queen Anne	Greek Revival
Prairie Square	Italianate
Bungalow	Colonial Revival
Tudor Revival	Federal
Carpenter Gothic	Vernacular
Agricultural Outbuildings	
Barns	Chicken Coops
Corn Cribs	Summer Kitchens
Silos	Outhouses
Granaries	Smokehouses
Hog Houses	Pump Houses
Churches	
Public Buildings	
Commercial Buildings	
Industrial Buildings	
Structures	
Water Tanks	Bridges
Windmills	Cemetery Architecture
Rural Hamlets and Villages	
Archeological Sites	
Landscapes and Natural Features	
Source: <i>Built for Farming: A Guide to the Historic Rural Architecture of Kane County</i> , Kane County Development Department, 1991.	

Figure 70—Kane Co. Landmarks Map

KANE COUNTY LANDMARKS

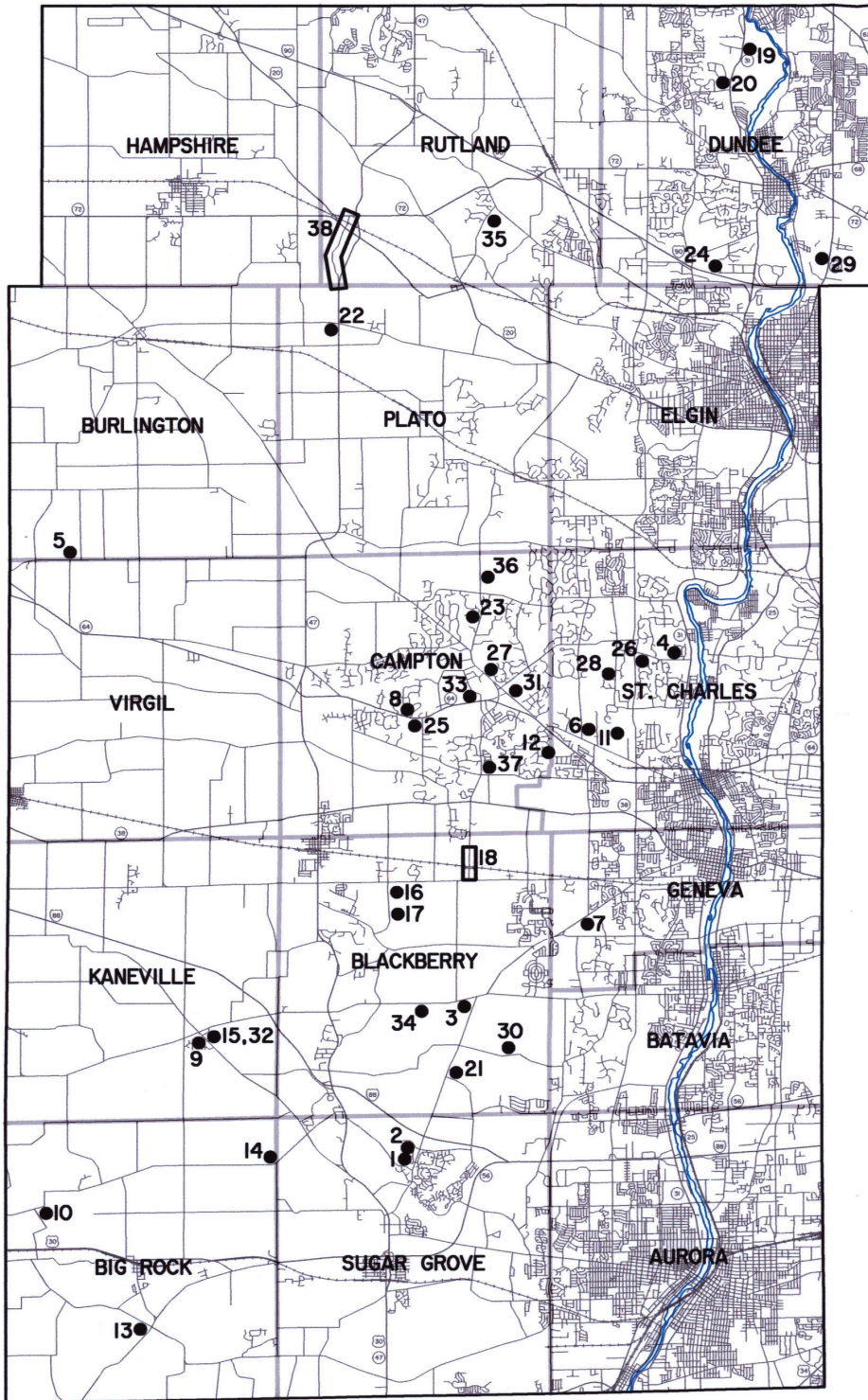


Figure 70

1. J.H. Bliss Homestead
2. P.Y. Bliss Homestead
3. Stearns-Wadsworth House
(also on National Register)
4. Red Gate Farm
5. South Burlington Community House
6. Wilson Homestead
7. Peck Homestead
8. Eber Chaffee Farmstead
9. Dr. Hardy's Office
10. Lamson Homestead
11. Durant-Peterson House
(also on National Register)
12. Daniel Lincoln Homestead
13. Withered Oaks
14. Benjamin George House
15. Benton Homestead
16. Pouley Estate
17. Blackberry Creek Farm
18. La Fox Historic District
19. Perry-Lathrop Homestead
20. Meadowdale Country School
21. Norris House
22. Old St. Peter's Church Building
23. God's Little Acre Cemetery
24. John Schmidtke House and Landscape
25. Campton Town Hall
(also on National Register)
26. Harlow Hooker Homestead
27. Fischer Homestead
28. Primrose Farm
29. Country Tea Room
30. Reckinger Farm
31. Eddy-Swanson Farmstead
32. Farley House
33. Campton Community Center
34. Hinds Farmstead
35. Damisch Farmstead
36. Corron Farm
37. Beatty Homestead - Mongerson Farm
38. Thurnau Road (Rustic Road)

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Figure 71

Kane County Rustic Roads Program

Many of the roads in Kane County reveal the rural character of the area. The view of the countryside along these roads gives a sense of stability in a fast-changing world. Points of visual interest along a rustic road, both natural and man made, add to the enjoyment of roadside scenery and to a sense of place. In Kane County rustic roads provide views of Midwestern vernacular—gently rolling woods and expansive farm fields, the Fox River and its tributaries, autumn color, farmhouses, barns, hedgerows and churches.

Roadside land is often the first and most visible land converted to residential or commercial uses. The **Rustic Roads** program was established under the Kane County Historic Preservation Ordinance to designate and preserve natural character and scenic vistas for future generations. The Rustic Roads program promotes:

1. **A Sense of Place**, by preserving community identity and quality of life;
2. **Resource Preservation**, by protecting the significant scenic, natural and historic resources that are often located within rustic road corridors.
3. **Economic Development**, by generating tourist revenue through the promotion of the scenic beauty of the county; and
4. **Recreation**, by providing enjoyment for those who enjoy driving for pleasure and sightseeing.

The designation process includes gathering input from property owners within and adjacent to nominated road corridors, the appropriate highway authority public officials and other governmental jurisdictions.

Rustic Road designation does not “freeze” roads in time. During the designation process, a Corridor Management Plan is developed that defines the significant features of the road corridor that should be protected and enhanced. Traffic and life safety issues continue to be addressed while those features are preserved.

Designated road corridors minimally include the road right-of-way and can also include properties and features adjacent to the right-of-way. The program applies to roads located in unincorporated Kane County and may include municipal roads through intergovernmental agreements.

Source: Kane County Development Department, 2004.

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Figure 72

15 Year Anniversary of Historic Preservation in Kane County

June 2003 marked the 15th anniversary of the Kane County Historic Preservation Program and the Historic Preservation Ordinance. This 15-year period is highlighted by the following accomplishments:

- 35 individual landmarks designated by the Kane County Board
- The first unincorporated historic district in Illinois designated by the Kane County Board
- Rustic Roads Program adopted as an amendment to the Preservation Ordinance
- Seven national, state, and local preservation awards recognizing the efforts of the County Board, the Preservation Commission, and Development Department staff
- Publications: *Kane County Preservation Plan*, *Built for Farming*, and *That Darn Barn*
- Calendars: 1997 *That Darn Barn*, 2002 *Rustic Roads*, 2004 *Preserving Kane County's Heritage*
- Co-sponsorship of county-wide preservation conferences and bus tours
- Advocacy for over \$3 million in riverboat grants awarded by the Kane County Board for preservation projects.

Source: Kane County Development Department, 2004.