

AN ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO LAND USE
PLANNING IN MACOMB, ILLINOIS

An Abstract
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By

George Clifton Weaver
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For many decades the relationship between land use and environmental quality was not recognized by land use planners. In the late 1960's the environmental decline of larger urban places fostered greater acceptance of environmental land use planning models as an approach to minimize environmental degradation. Earlier land use plans that had encouraged the arrangement of land uses to maximize economic benefits were then reevaluated to determine the potential for negative environmental implications.

This study utilizes an environmental land use planning approach to delimit future residential, commercial, industrial, conservation, and agricultural areas in the sixty-four square miles around Macomb, Illinois. Utilizing a ten acre observational unit, paper overlays were prepared for soil, vegetation, hydrology, geology, and terrain factors. Existing published information served as the data source. Areas for future expansion or preservation were determined by contrasting environmental suitability criteria for each land use type with a composite map of all environmental factors.

The results obtained with the environmental land use planning approach are compared to two earlier land use plans for Macomb, Illinois that had utilized the traditional socio-economic planning methodology. Differences between the findings of the two approaches are noted with special attention given to the negative environmental implications of the socio-economic methodology.