

# Region 2 Planning Commission

*Serving Hillsdale, Jackson and Lenawee Counties*

To: Region 2 Planning Commissioners  
Municipal and County Planning Commissioners in Hillsdale County  
Other Interested Parties

From: Grant E. Bauman, R2PC Principal Planner

Date: February 3, 2020

Subject: **Hillsdale County | Existing Land Use Patterns  
and Major Community Facilities**

A goal (and associated strategies and actions) of the 2017-2021 edition of the *Region 2 Planning Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)* is the identification and mapping of cultural and recreational resources (see the inset).

A first step in identifying major community facilities (i.e., cultural and recreational resources) is to map existing land use patterns utilizing property assessment categories (i.e., existing land use). Many cultural and recreational resources have an exempt status, making them easier to identify. It was further noted that the property assessment data can also be utilized by counties and municipalities as they create economical and up-to-date existing land use maps for inclusion in master plans and other planning documents. This memo provides more detailed information on existing land use patterns and cultural and recreational resources found in Hillsdale County.

Goal #2 of the *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)* is:

- ***Provide opportunities to support globally competitive business environment strategies***

Strategy C, designed to accomplish the goal, is:

- ***Identify and map unique cultural and regional recreational resources which add to quality of life and placemaking, thereby aiding economic development, including, but not limited to, arts and cultural institutions, agriculture, parks, trails, and other recreation facilities, and natural resources***

And Action #3, designed to fulfill the strategy, is:

- ***The mapping of cultural and recreational resources***

**Caveats**

Before describing the land use pattern found in the County in mid-2019, it is important to recognize some limitations to the data:

- Some portions of the County are unmapped. For example, most of the acreage utilized for roads and other rights-of-way are not included in the analysis.
- Some of the acreage contained in the commercial assessment category would normally be included in other land use categories. For example, recreational businesses are likely included in an institutional land use category and apartment complexes would be included in a residential land use category.
- A small number of properties and assessed acres are not associated with a traditional land use category.
- Finally, residential, commercial, and industrial land uses are often described by their character and/or density (e.g., single-family vs multiple-family residential, local/general vs highway service commercial, light vs heavy industrial, etc.). That is not possible using assessment data.
- It should also be noted that the GIS parcel layer, which includes property assessments, was provided by the Equalization and Land Information/GIS department of Hillsdale County.

**Property Assessment Patterns**

Recognizing the caveats listed above, the property assessment pattern found in Hillsdale County can be described as follows:

- Agricultural uses comprised approximately 72.5% of assessed acreage (see Figures 1 & 2).  
*Farmland was found in every township as well as many cities and villages (see Figure 2).*

<b>Property Assessment</b>	
Agricultural	@ 72.5%
Residential	@ 24.0%
Commercial	@ 1.0%
Industrial	@ 0.5%
Exempt	@ 2.0%
100%	

- Residential uses were attributed to approximately 24% of assessed acreage (see Figure 1 & 3). R2PC staff also subdivided the category into subcategories based upon lot size:
  - Compact residential uses (i.e., lots <5 acres) comprised approximately 4.5% of assessed acreage.  
*Compact residential uses were concentrated primarily in the vicinity of cities and villages, around lakes, and/or along major road corridors (see Figure 3).*
  - Large-lot residential uses accounted for approximately 19.5% of assessed acreage.  
*Large-lot residential uses were found in every municipality (see Figure 3). It should be noted that residential uses on lots of at least 40 acres accounted for approximately 5% of assessed acreage.*
- Commercial uses were attributed to approximately 1% of assessed acreage (see Figures 1 & 4).

*Commercial uses were found in every municipality, but tend to predominate in the vicinity of cities and villages, around lakes, and/or along major road corridors (see Figure 4).*

- Industrial uses accounted for approximately 0.5% of assessed acreage (see Figures 1 & 4). *Industrial uses were found in most municipalities, but tend to predominate in the vicinity of cities and villages, around lakes, and/or along major road corridors (see Figure 4).*
- Approximately 2% of the assessed acreage comprised various types of exempt uses (see Figures 1, & 5).

*Exempt uses—college and university campuses, parks and recreation facilities, etc.—were found in every municipality (see Figure 5).*

**Existing Land Use Patterns**

Based upon the property assessments listed above, the land use patterns found in Hillsdale County can be described as follows (see Figure 6):

- Low-intensive development accounted for approximately 19.5% of assessed acreage. *Low-intensive development (i.e., residentially assessed lots ≥5 acres) was found in every municipality (see Figure 6).*

Existing Land Use	
Low-Intensive Development	@ 19.5%
High-Intensive Development	@ 6%
Institutions	@ 2%

- High-intensive development comprised approximately 6% of assessed acreage.

*High-intensive development (i.e., residentially assessed lots <5 acres, and commercially and industrially assessed lots) were found in every municipality but were concentrated primarily in the vicinity of cities and villages, around lakes, and/or along major road corridors (see Figure 6).*

- Approximately 2% of assessed acreage could be attributed to various types of noncommercial institutional uses. *Institutions (e.g., college and university campuses, parks and recreation facilities, etc.) were found in every municipality (see Figure 6).*

**Major Community Facilities**

The mapping of the land use patterns—and further analysis of property assessment/parcel data and other resources—made it relatively easy to identify various major community facilities in Hillsdale County (see Figure 7), including the following:

**State Game and Recreation Areas**

1. Adams Township SGA
2. Lost Nation SGA
3. Somerset SGA

9. St. Francis Camp on the Lake
10. Six Lakes Campground
11. Way-Back-In Golf Course
12. White Oaks Golf Course

**Private Recreation Facilities**

4. Camp Frontier: Pioneer Scout Reserve
5. Hillsdale Golf and Country Club
6. Michendoh Conference Center
7. Mill Race Golf Course
8. Somerset Beach Campground

**College & University Campuses**

13. Hillsdale College
14. Jackson College

**Airports**

15. Hillsdale Municipal Airport

Figure 1

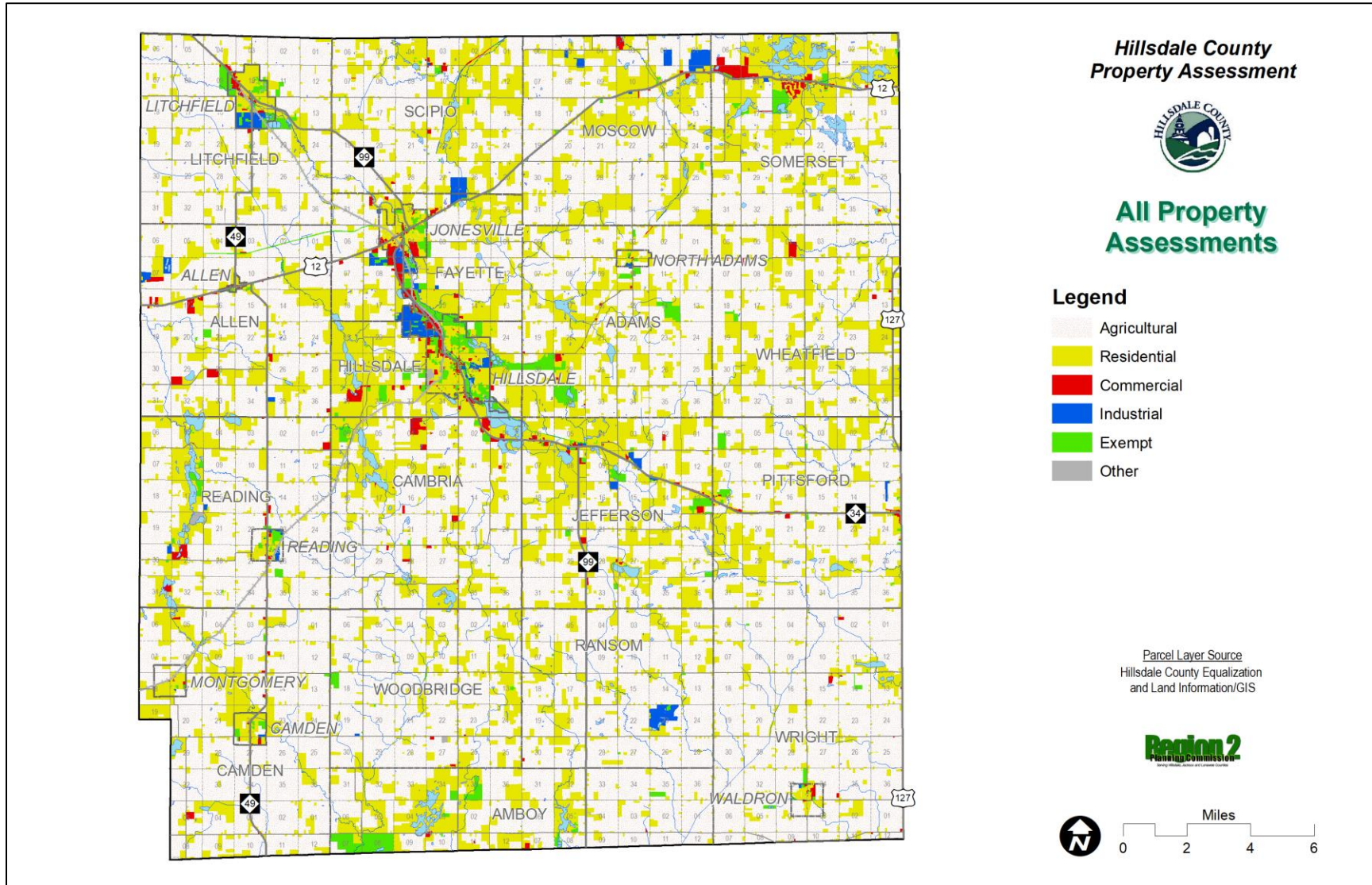


Figure 2

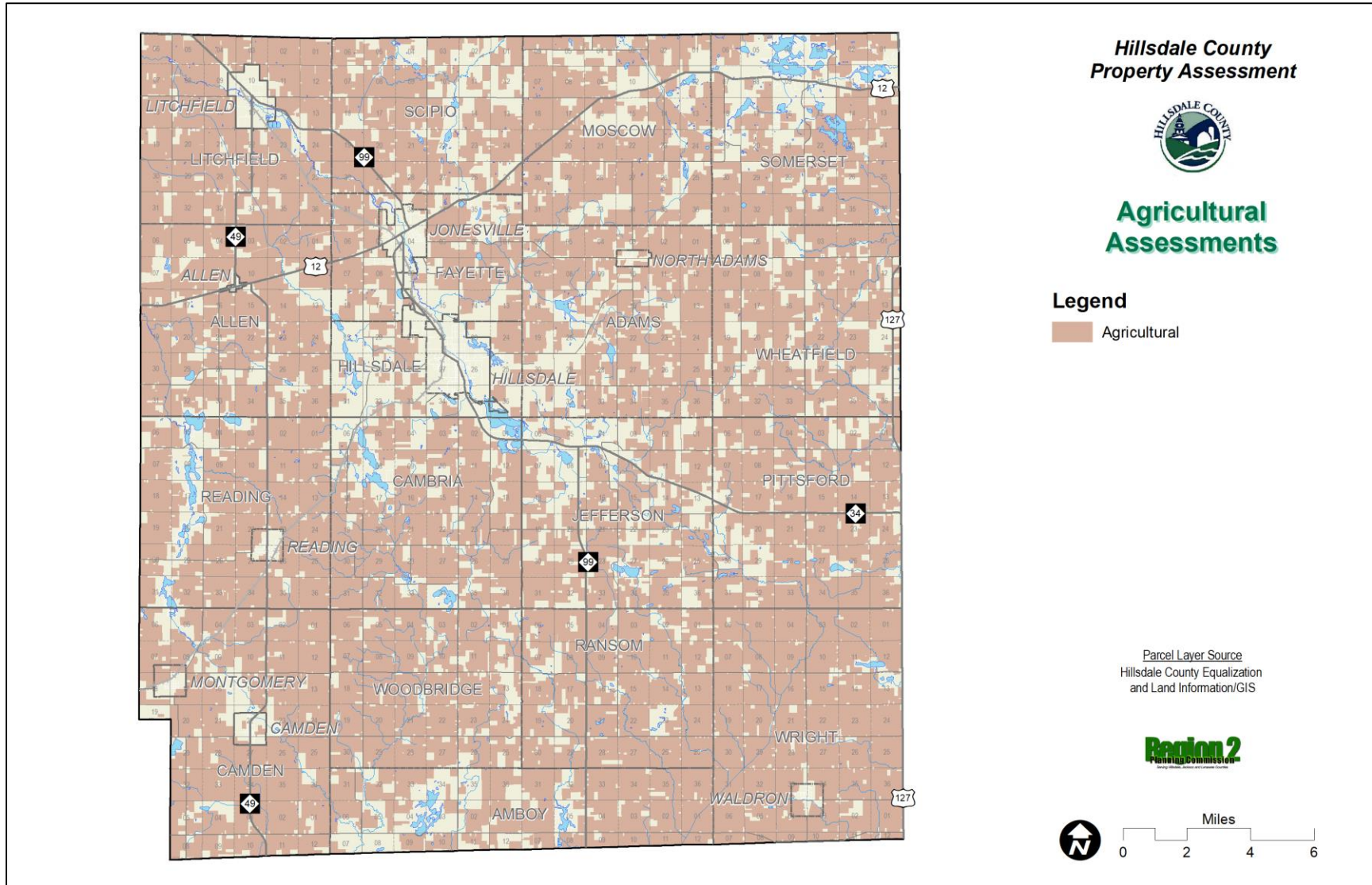


Figure 3

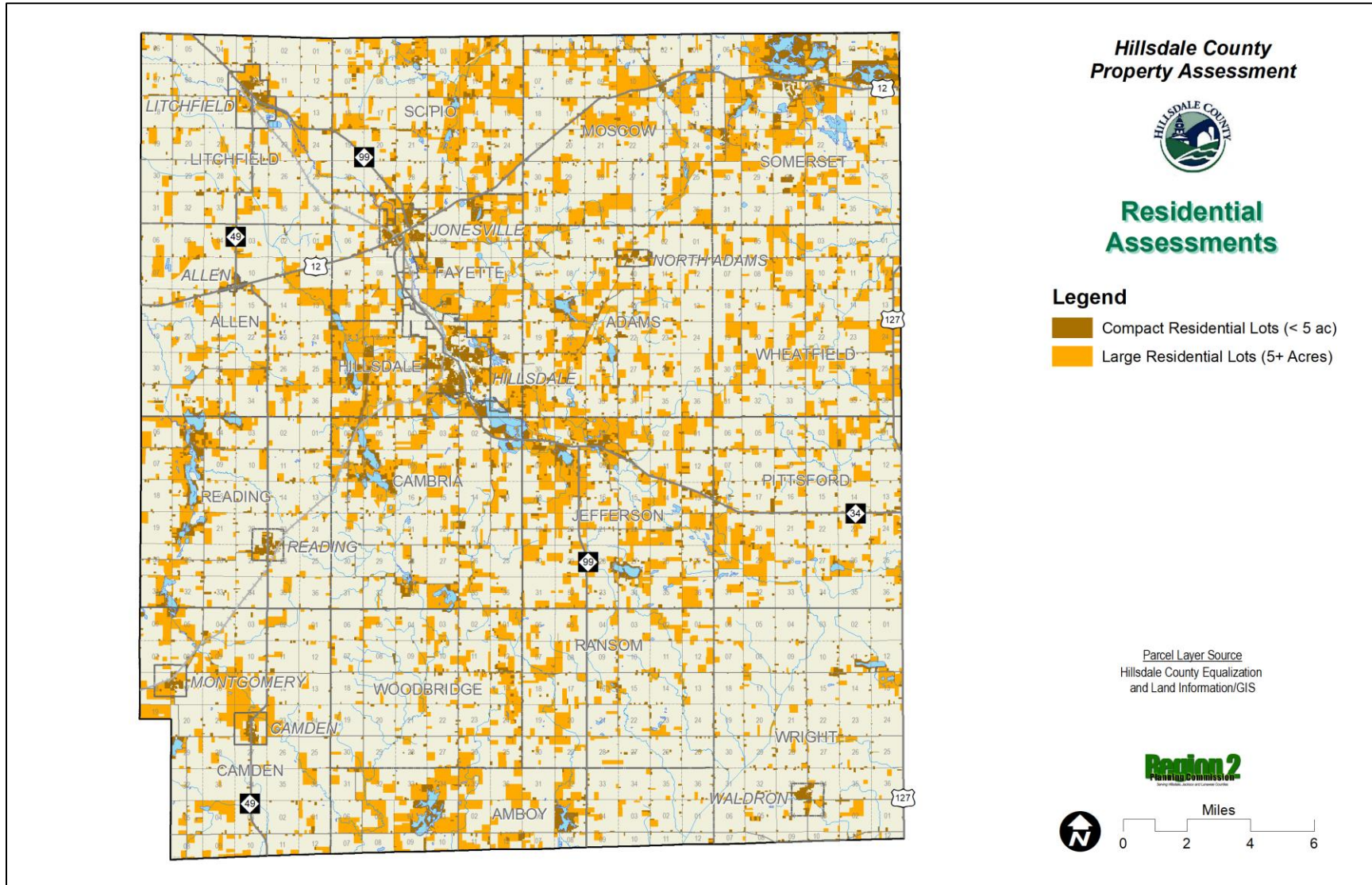


Figure 4

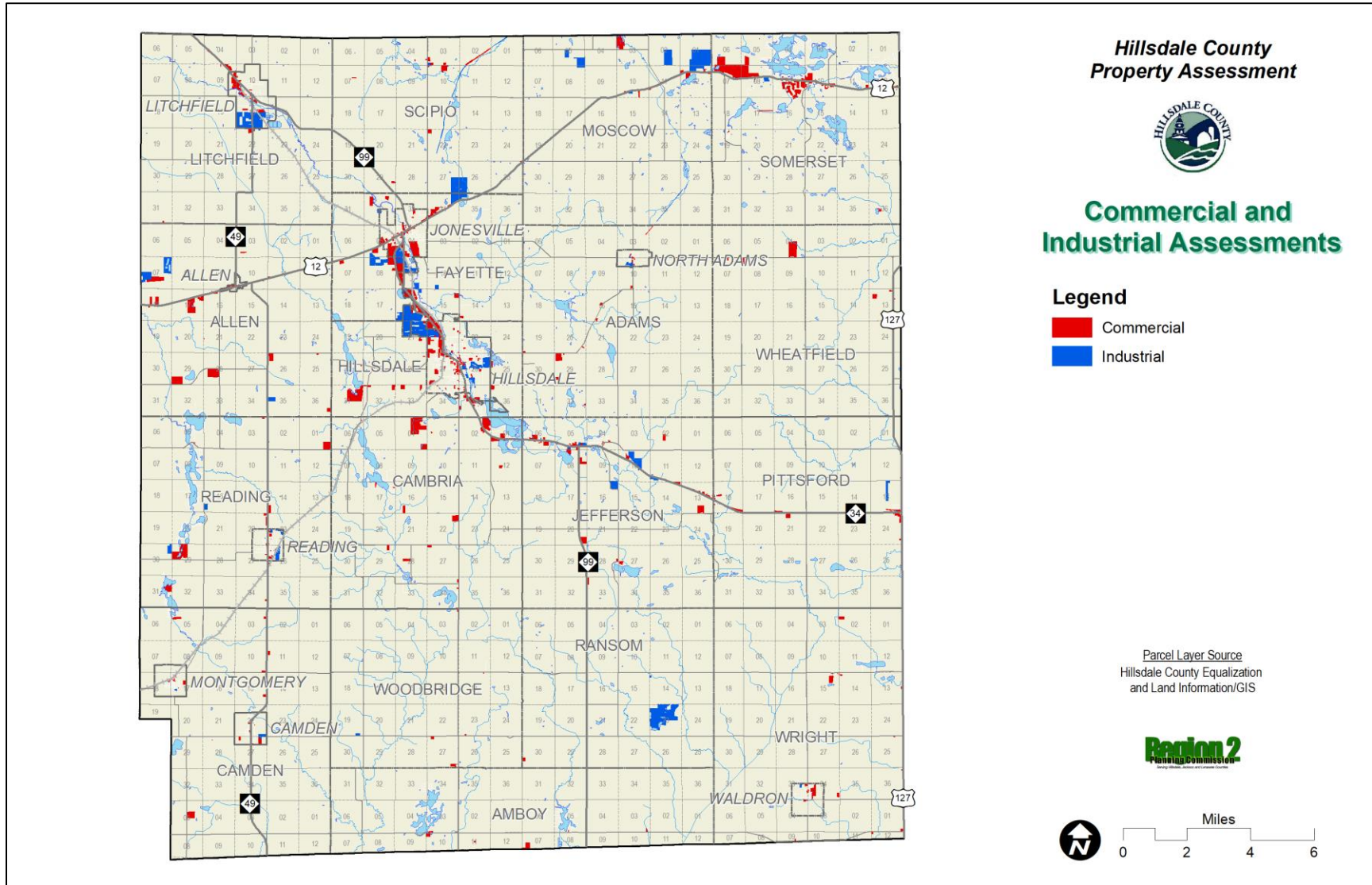


Figure 5

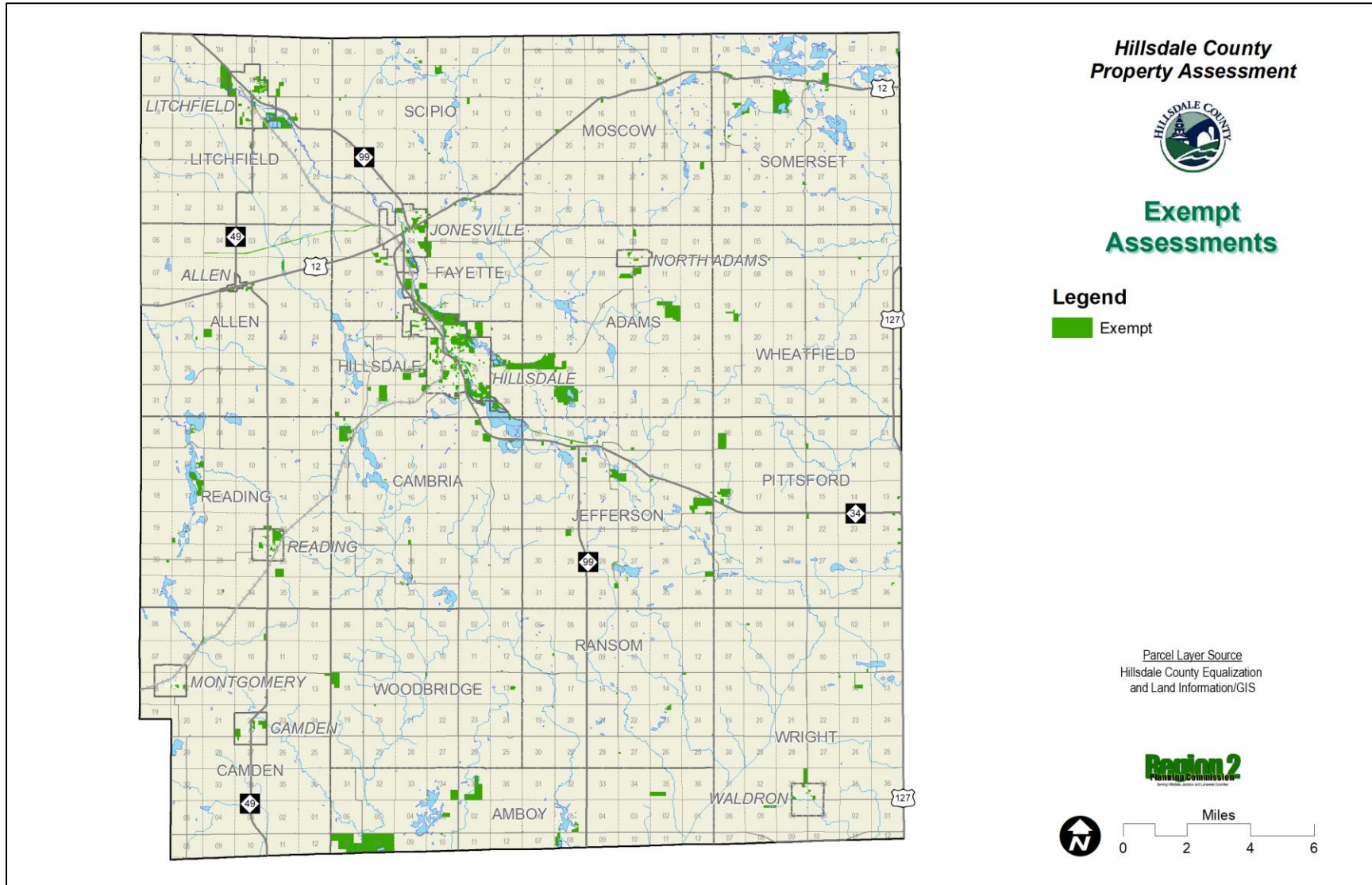




Figure 6

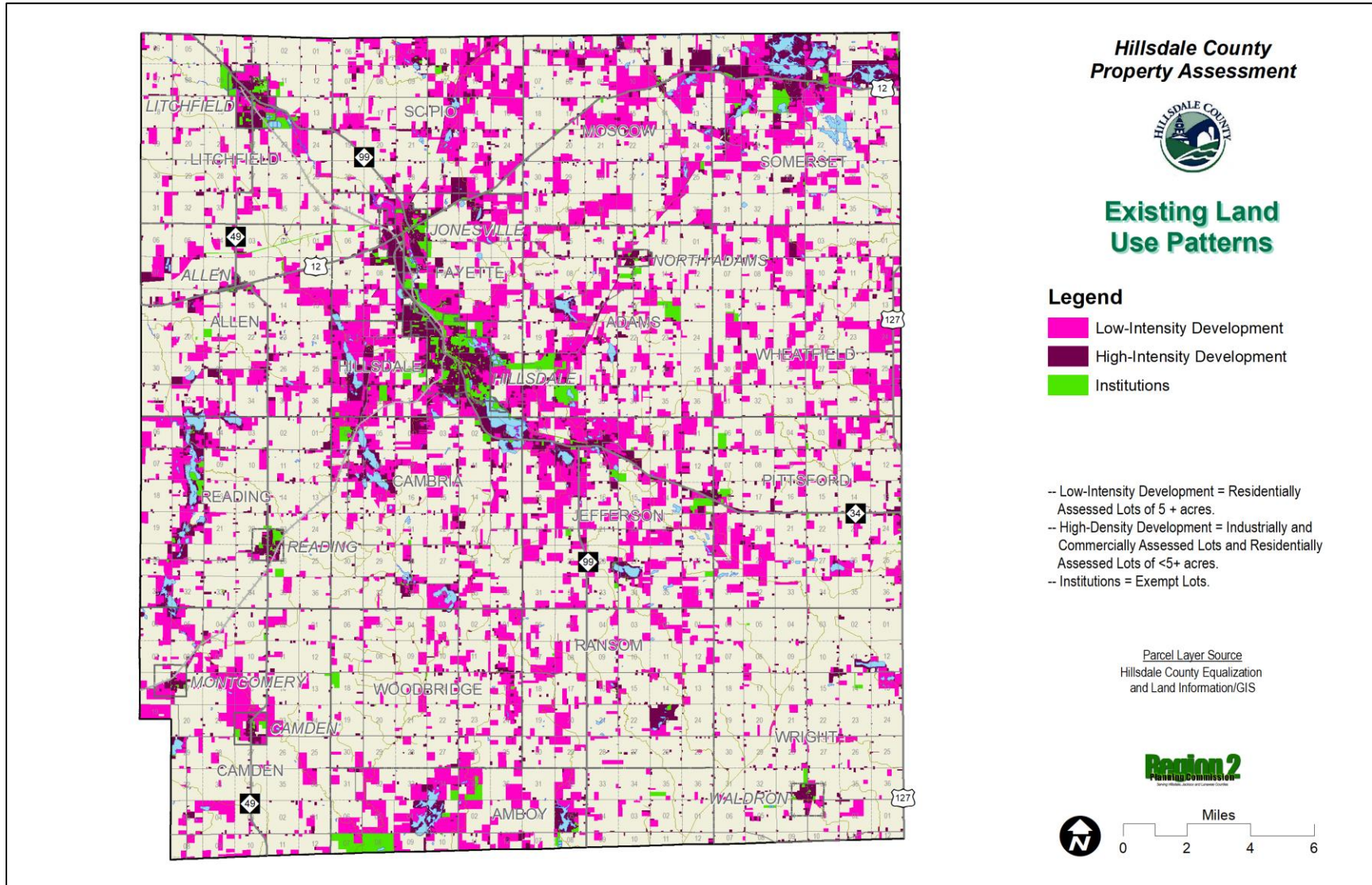


Figure 7

