

# Region 2 Planning Commission

*Serving Hillsdale, Jackson and Lenawee Counties*

To: Region 2 Planning Commissioners  
Municipal & County Planning Commissioners in Hillsdale County  
Hillsdale County Economic Development Partnership & Other Interested Parties

From: Grant E. Bauman, R2PC Principal Planner

Date: March 3, 2020

Subject: **Hillsdale County | Existing Land Use Patterns  
& 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 information on existing land use patterns and cultural and recreational resources found in Hillsdale County. Separate reports are also available for the counties of Jackson and Lenawee as well as the entire three-county Region 2 Area.

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 Hillsdale County, it is important to recognize some limitations to the data:

- Some portions of the county were not assessed. Consequently, most of the acreage utilized for roads, other rights-of-way, and some large lakes were 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 would likely be 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 were not associated with a traditional land use category.
- Finally, residential, commercial, and industrial land uses are normally 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 was not possible using assessment data.
- It should also be noted that the GIS (Geographic Information System) parcel layers, which include property assessment information, were provided by:
  - the Hillsdale County Equalization and Land Information/GIS Department.

## Property Assessment Patterns

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

- Agricultural uses comprised approximately 72% of assessed acreage (see Figures 1 & 2).  
*Farmland was found in every township as well as many cities and villages (see Figure 2).*
- Residential uses were attributed to approximately 24% of assessed acreage (see Figures 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 found in every municipality but were concentrated primarily in and around cities and villages (unincorporated as well as incorporated), around lakes, and/or along major road corridors (see Figure 3).*

Property Assessment	
Agricultural	72.5%
Residential	24.1%
Commercial	0.9%
Industrial	0.6%
Exempt	1.8%
Other	0.0%
	100%

- 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 (e.g., stores, restaurants, offices, etc.) were found in every municipality, but tend to predominate in and around cities and villages (unincorporated as well as incorporated), near some 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 (unincorporated as well as incorporated), 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 (e.g., churches, 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% of assessed acreage.

*Low-intensive development (i.e., residentially assessed properties  $\geq 5$  acres) was found in every municipality.*

- High-intensive development comprised approximately 6% of assessed acreage (see Figure 6).

*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 (unincorporated as well as incorporated), 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).*

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

## Major Community Facilities

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

### Municipal & County Parks

1. Fields of Dreams | *City of Hillsdale*
2. Hillsdale County Fairgrounds
3. Louis Emery Park | *Hillsdale County*
4. McCourtie Park | *venue for pedestrian bridges made to look like wood (i.e., ‘trabajo rustico’ or ‘rough work’) (Somerset Township)*
5. Wright Street Park | *City of Jonesville*

### State Parks & Private Nature Preserves

6. Adams Township State Game Area
7. Lost Nation State Game Area
8. Michigan Nature Association
9. Somerset State Game Area

### Private Recreation Facilities

10. Gateway Park Campground
11. Hillsdale Golf and Country Club
12. Kimball Camp | *YMCA Nature Center*
13. Marble Springs Campground
14. Michindoh Conference Center | *Christian camp and conference center*
15. Mill Race Golf Course
16. Moscow Maples RV Park
17. Pioneer Scout Res., Camp Frontier | *Erie Shores Council, Scouts BSA*
18. St. Francis Camp on the Lake | *Int. Order of Alhambra camp for the develop. disabled*
19. Six Lakes Campground
20. Somerset Beach Campground | *Free Methodist Church of North America*
21. Sugarbush Campground
22. Way-Back-In Campground
23. White Oaks Golf Course

### Regional Trails & Scenic Railroads

24. North Country Trail

### Hospital Campuses

25. Hillsdale Hospital

### Jails & Prisons

26. Hillsdale County Jail

### College & University Campuses

- 27. Hillsdale College  
*Slayton Arboretum | Dow Conference Center & Hotel | John & Dede Howard Music Hall | Sage Center for the Arts | Hillsdale College Chargers (men's & women's sports teams)*
- 28. Jackson College | *LeTarte Center*

### Airports

- 29. Hillsdale Municipal Airport

### Landfills & Transfer Stations

- 30. Jefferson Township | *Transfer Station*
- 31. Republic | *Transfer Station*



Figure 1

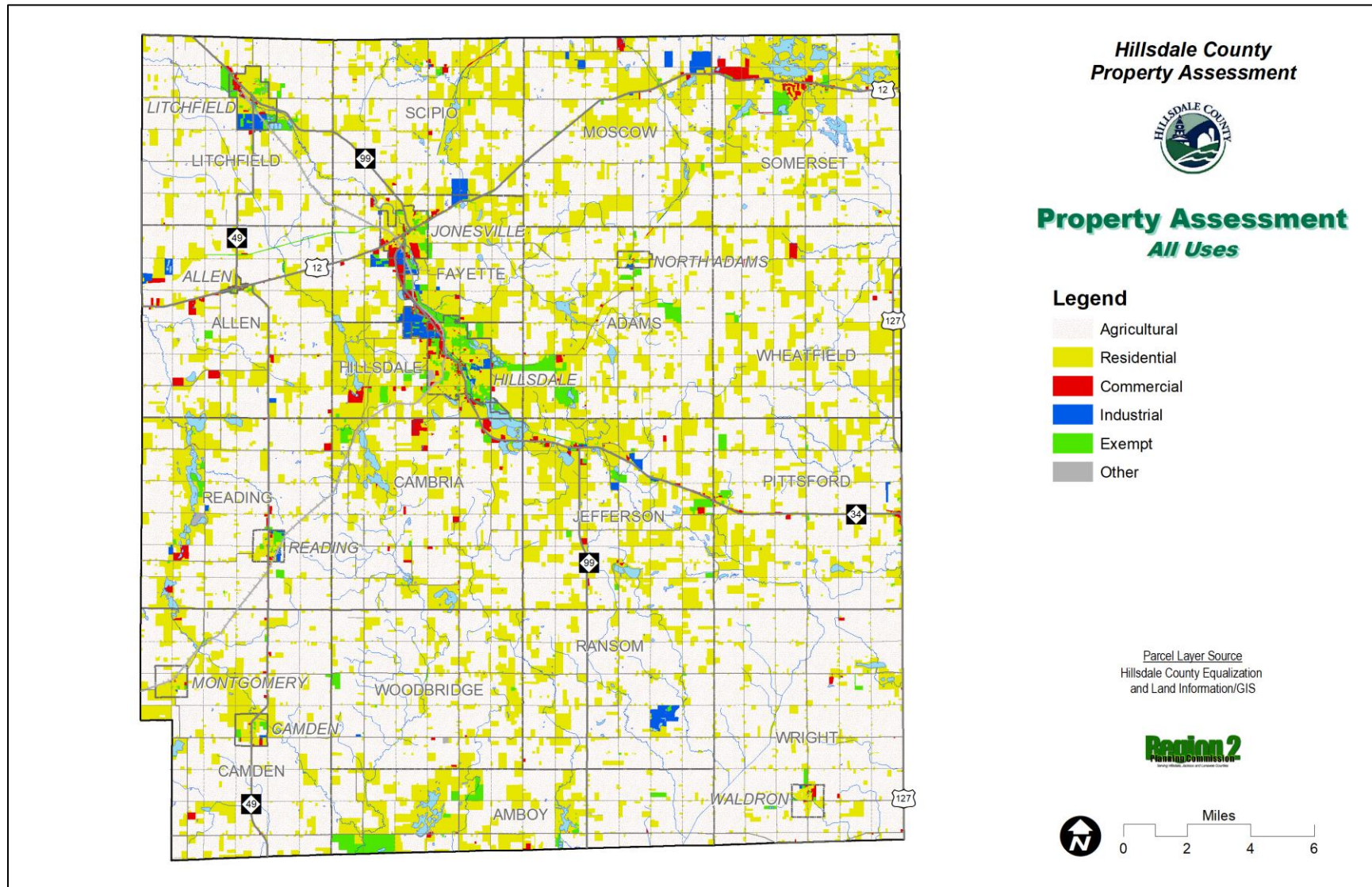


Figure 2

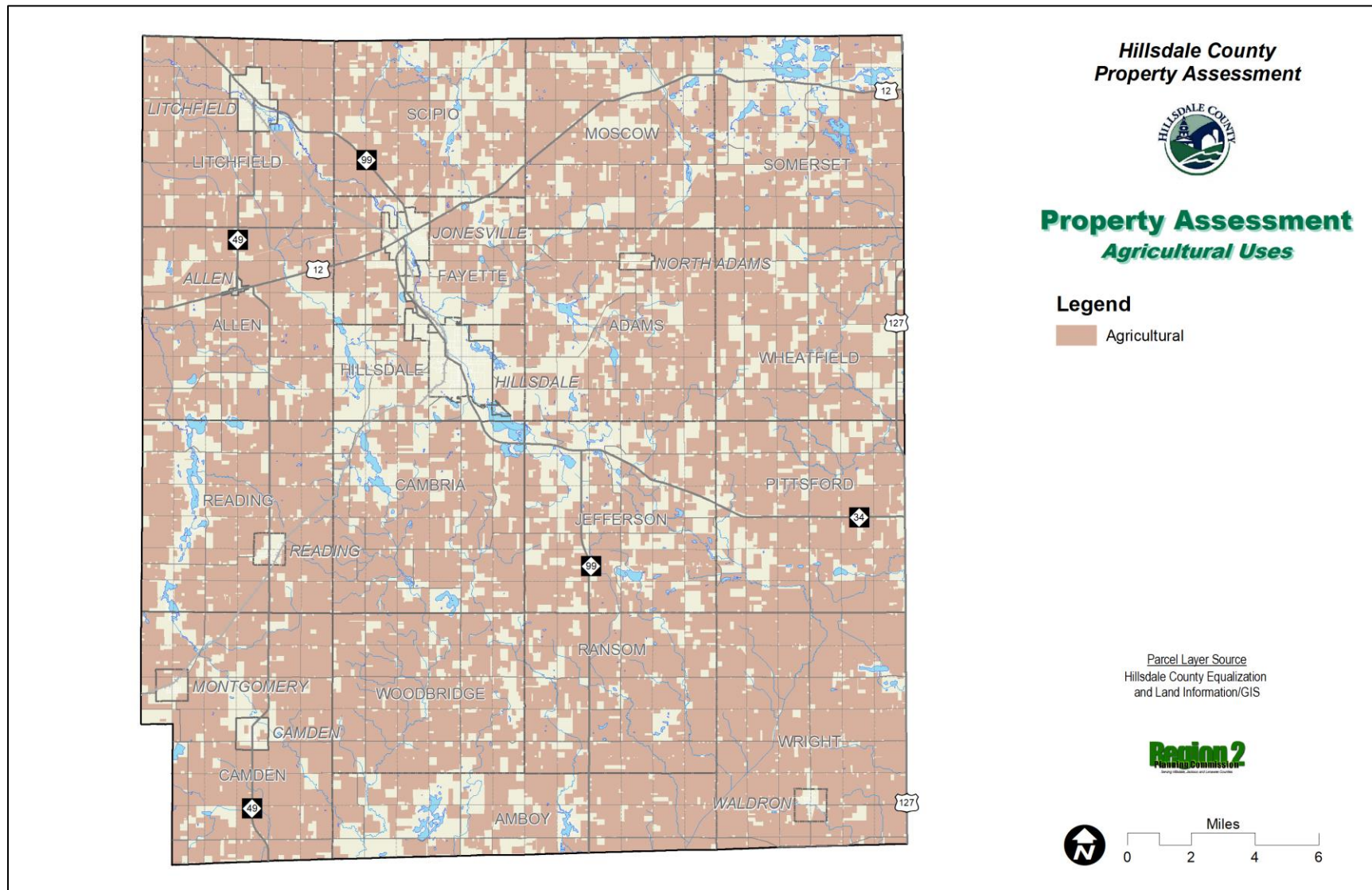




Figure 3

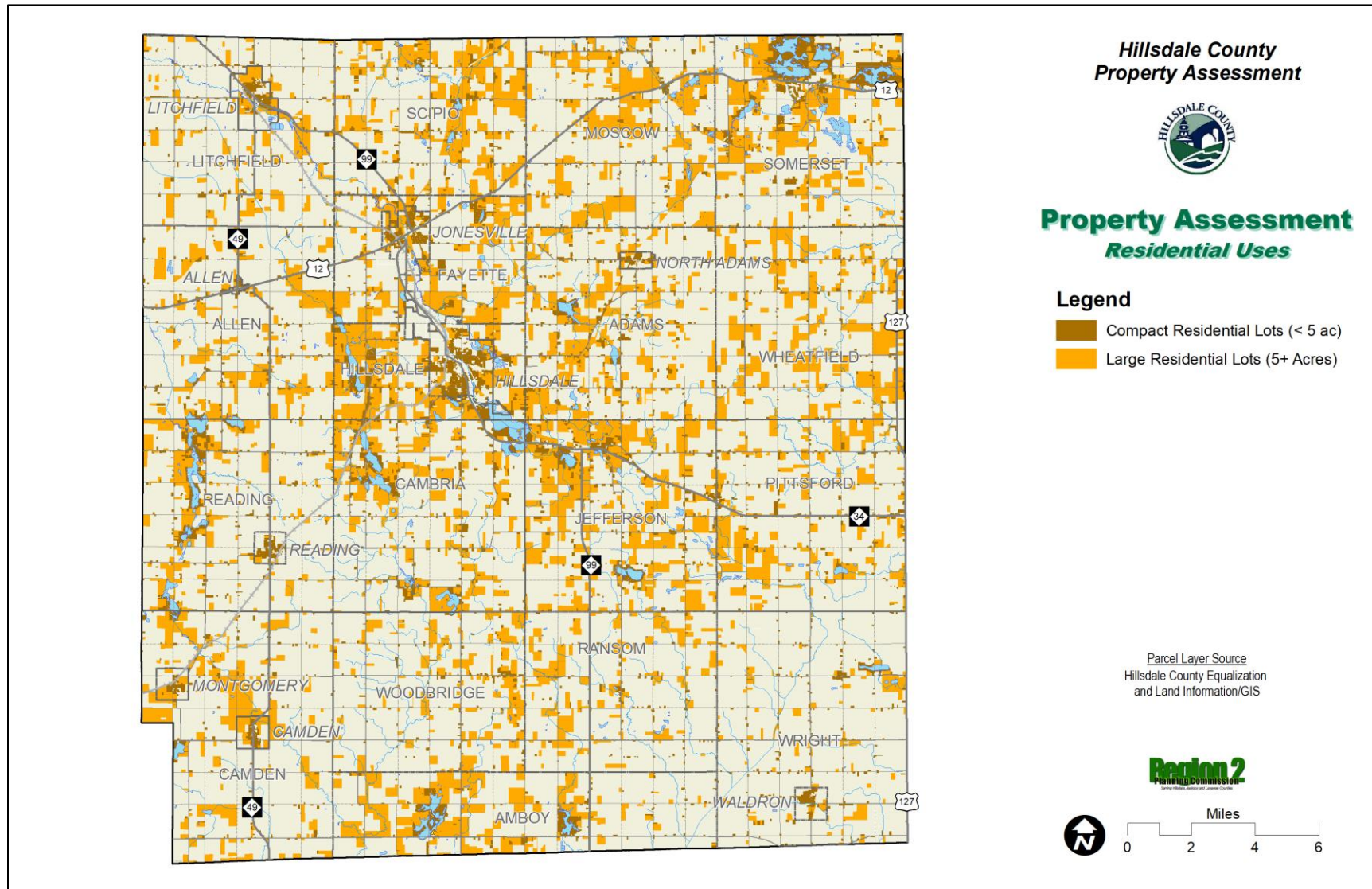




Figure 4

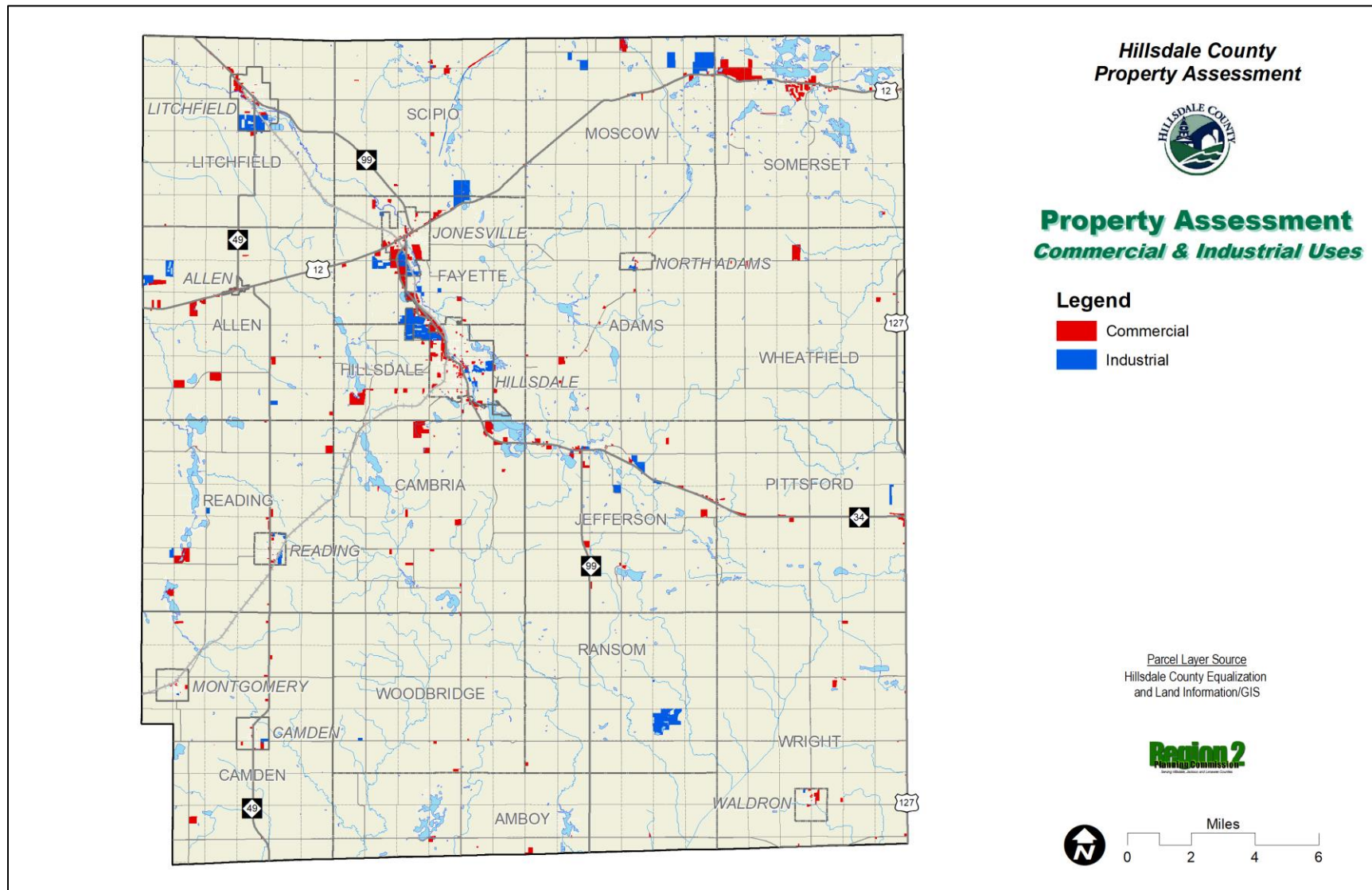


Figure 5

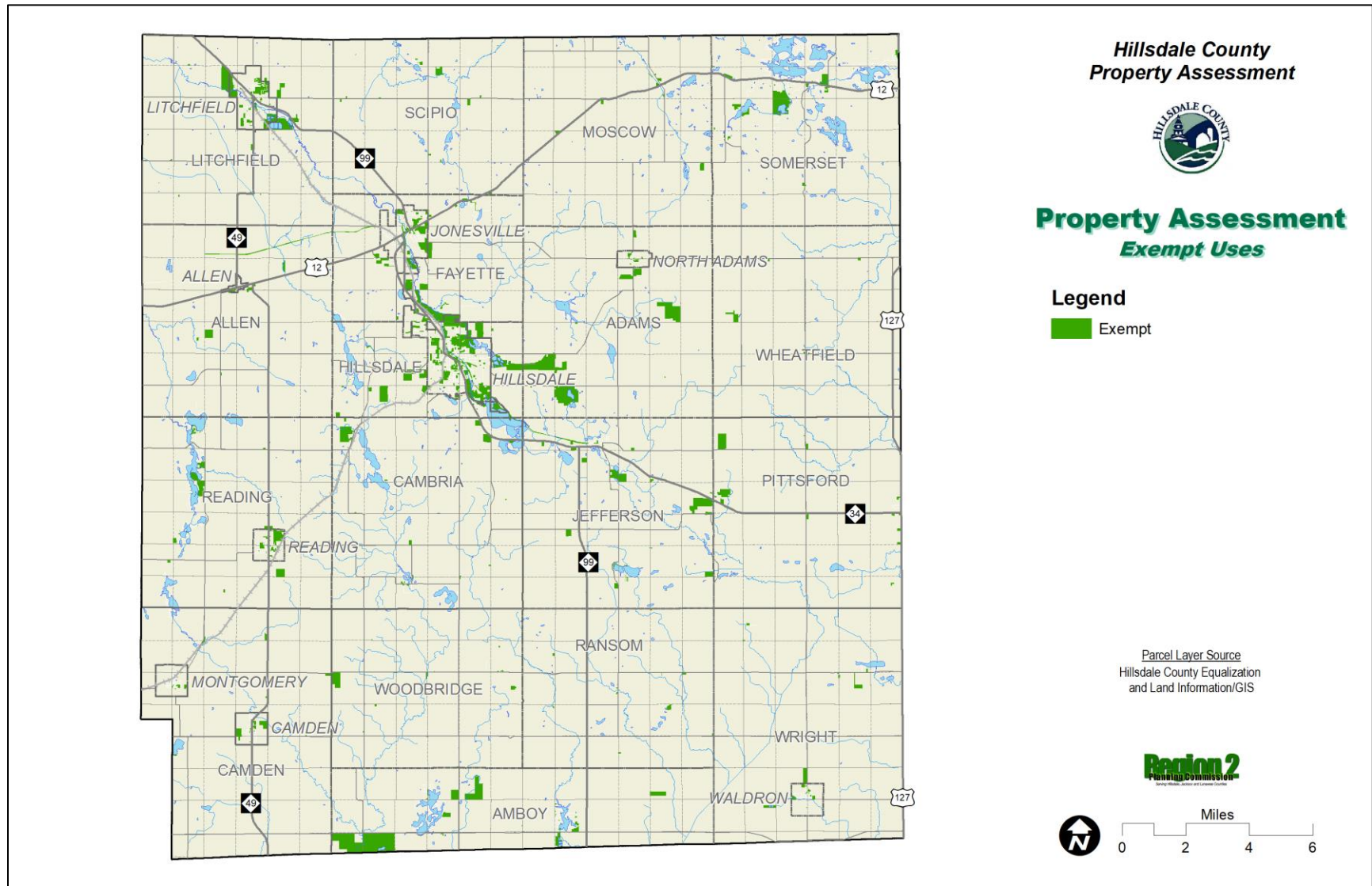




Figure 6

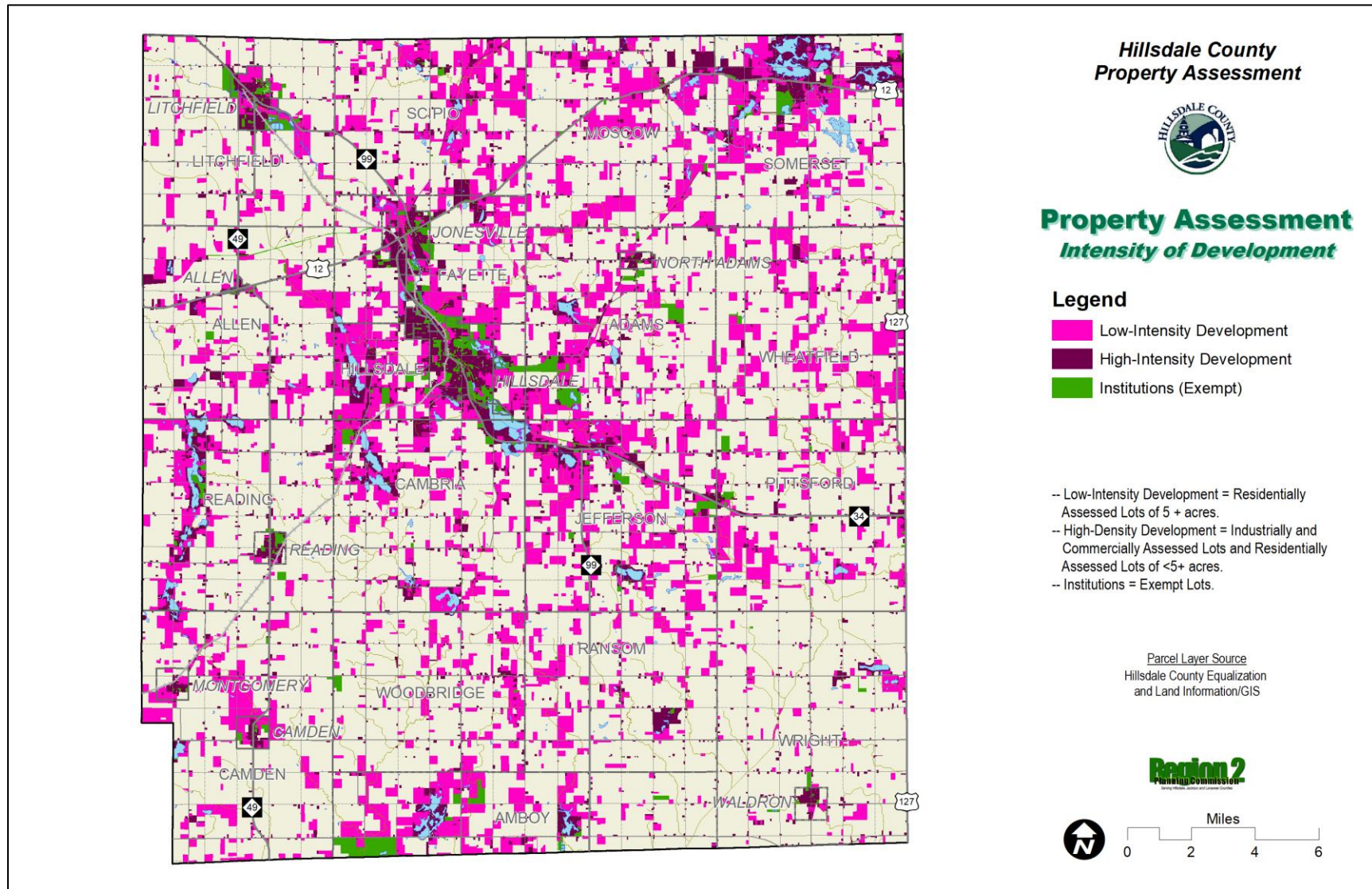


Figure 7

