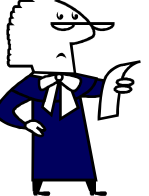



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MAPPING group develops high-priority goals for city

Two main goals have been established by a Hoopeston group examining the community's overall health.

Becoming a community that builds bridges across its issues and strengthening economic growth and prosperity are the high priority goals developed during MAPPING the Healthcare of the Community.

The MAPPING program, sponsored by the Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University, brought local people together over the last several months to look not only at traditional healthcare issues, but also the community's economic, social and environmental health.

Nearly 40 people, representing various Hoopeston organizations, met Tuesday to learn the results of the program.

The MAPPING group looked at where the community is now and where it may want to be in five, 10 and 20 years, said Charlene Drawdy, Hoopeston Regional Health Center director of development and marketing, who oversaw the MAPPING program.

Drawdy presented statistics on Hoopeston, including:

- while Vermilion County population declined by 4.9 percent in the last census, Hoopeston's increased by 1.6 percent.
- the number of 45-65-year-olds in Hoopes-



Jean Minick discusses findings of the MAPPING program's Economic Prosperity Team at Tuesday's MAPPING town meeting.

ton rose 11.3 percent over the last 10 years, while the number of people 25 or younger declined. Hoopeston experienced a 20.45 percent increase in residents aged 65 or older, compared to a 4 percent decline countywide.

- forty percent of Hoopes-ton residents had an increase in some college education. The rate was only 18.6 percent in Vermilion County. More than 33 percent of residents were working for an associate's degree compared with 13.4 percent in the county; however there was a 20 percent decrease in the number of bachelor's degrees received, compared with a 13.2 percent increase in the county.

- Hoopeston's median income rose 43.5 percent in ten years, to \$31,947, a bigger increase but still below the county's median income of \$34,071. The number of people earning \$50-78,000 increased by 56.9 percent.
- the number of people living in poverty decreased 5.8 percent but 50 percent of Hoopeston students receive free or reduced price lunches. Among senior citizens, 12 percent are at the poverty level.

The statistics provide an indicator for the group to focus on, Drawdy said. "Our senior population has grown significantly," she said. "We have to ask ourselves if we're meeting their needs. We also see that our young people are going to college and

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