



Honor the Past, Plan for the Future

# PLATTSMOUTH

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

January 2015



# acknowledgements

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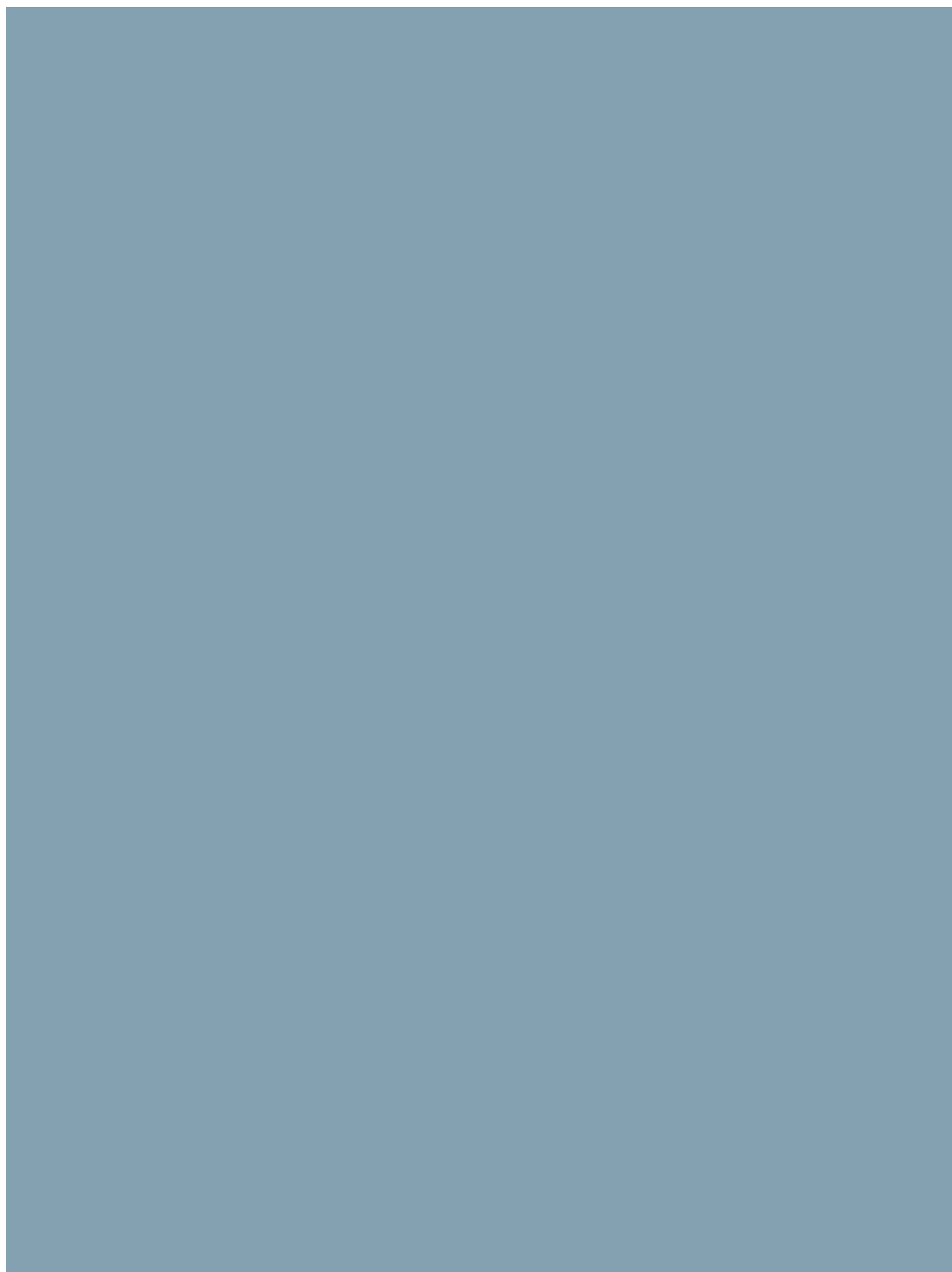
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# introduction

## Introduction

Nestled just south of the confluence of the Missouri and Platte Rivers, Plattsmouth stands apart from other Nebraska communities in the wealth of natural beauty, public services, and historic architecture it presents to residents and visitors alike. As the county seat of Cass County, Plattsmouth is a vibrant center of regional government and services that offers easy access to the employment opportunities and amenities of a larger city while maintaining the character and charm of a small town.

# INTRODUCTION

## WHY A PLAN?

The comprehensive development plan for Plattsmouth has two fundamental purposes. The first provides an essential legal basis for land use regulation such as zoning and subdivision control. Secondly, a modern comprehensive plan presents a unified and compelling vision for a community, derived from the aspirations of its citizens; and establishes the specific actions necessary to fulfill that vision.

## LEGAL ROLE

Communities prepare and adopt comprehensive plans for legal purposes. Nebraska Revised Statute 19-901 enables cities to adopt land use zoning to promote the "health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community." Such regulations are required by state statute to be in conformance with a comprehensive plan.

Land use regulations, such as zoning ordinances, recognize that people in a community live cooperatively and have certain responsibilities to one another. These regulations establish rules that govern how land is developed within a municipality and its extra-territorial jurisdiction. The comprehensive plan creates a vision for how a community should develop and thus should guide land use decisions.

## THE COMMUNITY BUILDING ROLE

A comprehensive development plan has an even more significant role in the growth of a community, as it is intended to establish a shared civic vision of Plattsmouth's future.

This vision continues to be crucial, as challenges related to population growth and economic changes affect the character of Plattsmouth. The plan is designed as a working document that both defines the future and provides a working program for realizing the city's great potential.

## FORMAT OF THIS PLAN

The Plattsmouth Comprehensive Plan is organized around a series of goal statements. Each of these statements forms the core premise of an independent chapter, focused on a subject area. The goals themselves were generated through a series of public meetings, conversations with the project steering committee, local and regional stakeholders, and city staff.

It is an intrinsic belief of this plan that future generations should have the same opportunity to enjoy the quality of life afforded to their forebears. In the interest of ensuring this future, policies, partnerships, and capital improvements that can improve the conservation of energy and natural resources are integrated throughout the document.





## HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

### The Public

The comprehensive plan is a representative summary of the will of the engaged citizens of Plattsburgh, as seen through the lens of demographic and economic factors. Given that it is intended to help shape the future growth and development of the city they call home, the public is one of this plan's most important constituencies.

### City Staff

The staff of the City of Plattsburgh will be the 'feet on the ground' orchestrating the day-to-day execution of this plan. This document can serve as a constant reference about the broad course of development envisioned by the public. Having this as a resource can improve consistency and efficiency in the hundreds of little decisions that go into making a city operate.

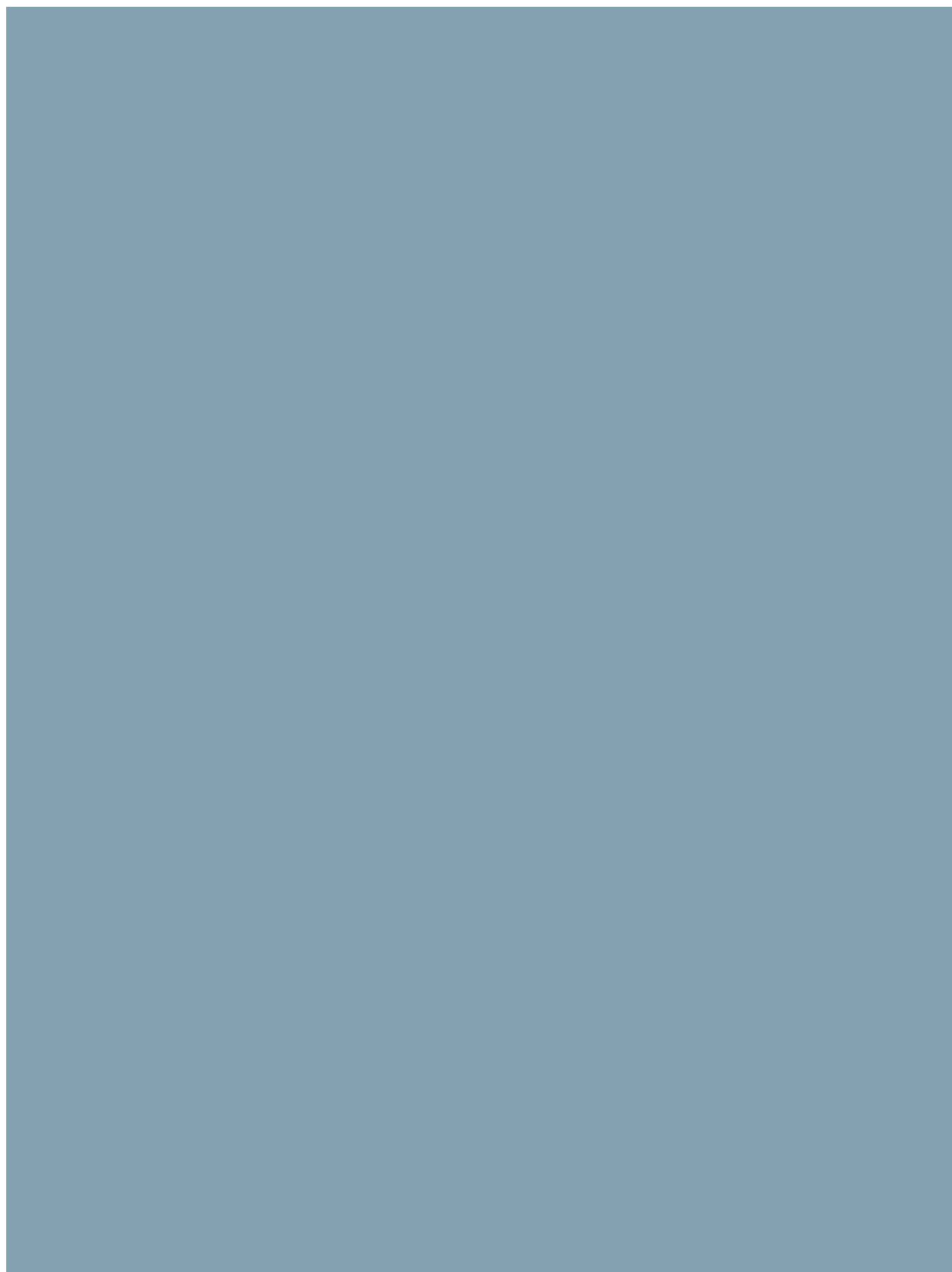
### Policy Makers

Policy makers, most notably Plattsburgh's City Council, Planning Commission, and Historic Preservation Board, will help set the course for the realization of this plan. These are the bodies that will create and administer the policies that direct and shape development in Plattsburgh. This plan document can serve as a reliable source of information to guide decision making both in large-scale policy and on an individual project basis.

### Developers

While guided by city policy, the vast majority of property development in American cities is undertaken by private, market-driven developers. This plan can help serve as a guide to developers who wish to work in Plattsburgh. By understanding the city's vision of its future, developers can approach projects from a place of collaboration, reducing unnecessary project delays that can affect profitability.







# chapter 1

## Trends, Goals and Opportunities

Without knowing the current state of affairs of a place, it is impossible to make valid recommendations for its development and growth in the future. This chapter addresses the current population, economics, and civic vision of Plattsmouth, as well as some of the opportunities for its future.

# TRENDS, GOALS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

### Population Trends

This discussion presents important changes in the characteristics and dynamics of Plattsmouth's population. Figure 1.1 summarizes the historical population change in Plattsmouth and includes Nebraska City, Blair, Waverly, Glenwood (Iowa), and Rural Cass County for comparison. Figure 1.1 indicates:

All communities added population over the past 50 years, although those further from the 'halo effect' of the Omaha and Lincoln metropolitan areas have added population at a slower rate.

Waverly's rapid growth can be attributed to its proximity to the Lincoln metropolitan area, and excellent access to both Lincoln and Omaha, via I-80.

The population of Rural Cass County increased more rapidly than Plattsmouth itself, potentially a result of the development of outlying residential districts, rural, and 'large lot' developments.

The location of Plattsmouth along the recently improved and expanded US 75 corridor positions it well for future growth and development.

### Population Change 2000 - 2010

To better understand the city's future population dynamics, it is important to look at the composition of the city's population. Figure 1.2 examines the city's population in 2000 and 2010, divided by specific age increments or cohorts. Figure 1.3 compares the actual 2010 population with the projected population for 2010. This projected population is determined by applying average birth and death rates to population data from 2000. The difference between actual and predicted population indicate which cohorts experienced growth (or decline) beyond natural population change. This variance from expectation is commonly attributed to residents moving into or out of the study area, a phenomenon known as migration.

Figure 1.2 indicates a significant loss of population in the young adult and youth age ranges. The out-migration of adults aged 25-44 was responsible for the decrease in children aged 0-15. These adults are essential to sustaining a growing population, in that the children that grow up in Plattsmouth frequently form the core of the population that someday might have and raise children of their own in the city.

Many communities experience out migration among those in their early to mid-20s, as they leave to attend college and begin careers. Plattsmouth has experienced this expected decline.

**FIGURE 1.2 POPULATION CHANGE 2000 - 2010 BY AGE, PLATTSMOUTH, NE**

	2000	2010	Difference
0-15	1,696	1,441	-255
15-19	480	463	-17
20-24	432	337	-95
25-34	995	862	-133
35-44	1,036	861	-175
45-54	790	882	92
55-64	502	701	199
65-74	422	447	25
75-84	324	314	-10
85+	210	194	-16
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6,887</b>	<b>6,502</b>	<b>-385</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, RDG Planning & Design

**FIGURE 1.3 COMPARED ACTUAL VERSUS ESTIMATED POPULATION CHANGE 2000 TO 2010 BY AGE COHORT, PLATTSMOUTH, NE**

	2010 Predicted	2010 Actual	Difference	Percentage
0-15	1,400	1,441	41	102.9%
15-19	625	463	-162	74.1%
20-24	499	337	-162	67.6%
25-34	904	862	-42	95.3%
35-44	984	861	-123	87.5%
45-54	1,012	882	-130	87.1%
55-64	743	701	-42	94.4%
65-74	426	447	21	104.9%
75-84	290	314	24	108.2%
85+	201	194	-7	96.5%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,085</b>	<b>6,502</b>	<b>-583</b>	<b>91.8%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, RDG Planning & Design

**FIGURE 1.1 HISTORIC POPULATION CHANGE, PLATTSMOUTH, NE**

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change (1960-2010)
Plattsmouth	6,244	6,371	6,295	6,412	6,887	6,502	4.1%
Nebraska City	7,252	7,441	7,127	6,547	7,228	7,289	0.5%
Blair	4,931	6,106	6,418	6,860	7,512	7,990	62.0%
Waverly	511	1,152	1,726	1,869	2,448	3,277	541.3%
Glenwood, IA	4,783	4,421	5,280	4,960	5,358	5,269	10.2%
Cass County	17,821	18,076	20,297	21,318	24,334	25,241	41.6%
Rural Cass County	11,577	11,705	14,002	14,906	17,447	18,739	61.9%

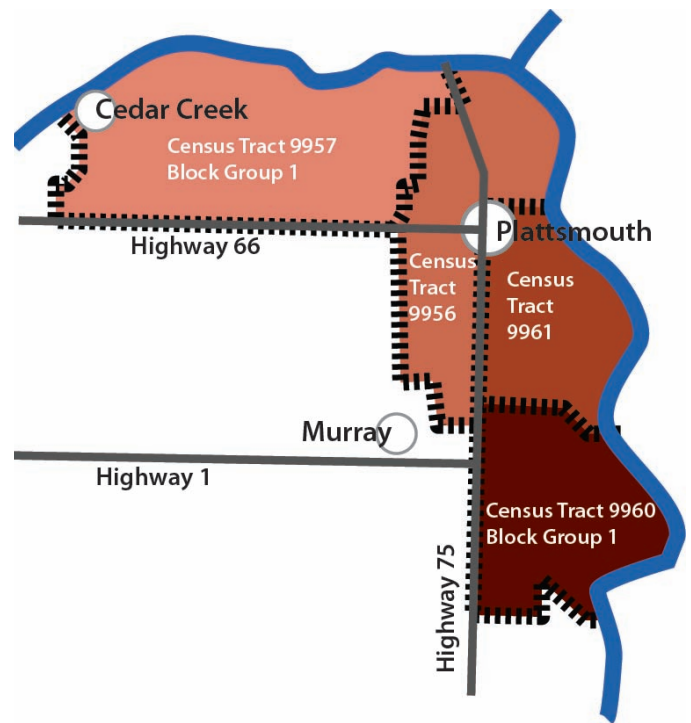
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, RDG Planning & Design



**FIGURE 1.4 POPULATION CHANGE BY CENSUS TRACT, PLATTSMOUTH, NE**

	1990	2000	2010	% Change, 1990-2010	Annual Growth Rate
Tracts 9956 and 9961 (exc. Plattsmouth)	1,585	1,590	1,709	7.8%	0.38%
Tract 9957, BG 1 (exc. Cedar Creek)	621	964	1,476	137.7%	4.42%
Tract 9960, BG 1	1,253	2,238	2,605	107.9%	3.73%
Total Outside Plattsmouth	3,459	4,792	5,790	67.4%	2.61%
City of Plattsmouth	6,412	6,887	6,502	1.4%	0.07%
Plattsmouth Service Area	9,871	11,679	12,292	24.5%	1.10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning and Design



**FIGURE 1.5 POPULATION GROWTH SCENARIOS, PLATTSMOUTH, NE**

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
0.75% AGR	12,292	12,760	13,246	13,750	14,273	14,817
1.00% AGR	12,292	12,919	13,578	14,271	14,999	15,764
1.25% AGR	12,292	13,080	13,918	14,810	15,759	16,769

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Despite projections to the contrary, Plattsmouth's population has declined over the past 10 years, a result of out-migration of residents. This is supported by the migration analysis in Figure 1.3.

Though Plattsmouth experienced a net out-migration, there are population segments that buck the trend. The 2010 population has more children up to 14 years old than anticipated. Given the out-migration of adults in the 'child-rearing' years, this suggests a higher than anticipated birth rate.

Additionally, there was a net in-migration of adults between the ages of 65-85, indicating that Plattsmouth is a popular living destination for retirees.

## Population Projections

Projecting Plattsmouth's population is the first step in understanding the future land use and community service needs and policies. By evaluating Plattsmouth's historic population and economic trends, a projected future population can be formulated. Figure 1.3 provides insight into the city's natural population change and population growth scenarios.

Under a 'natural growth rate' scenario, in which the current population stays in Plattsmouth, the city can expect to grow to a population of 6,572 in 2030. This population stability is the result of the fairly balanced proportion of the current population that remains within their child-rearing years.

Given the continued growth of the Omaha metropolitan area, Plattsmouth's improved access to Omaha via US Highway 75, and an increasing base of civic and retail amenity, it can be expected that Plattsmouth will experience a 2% migration rate in the coming years. This migration rate suggests a 2030 population of 6,839.

## Population Growth in Surrounding Areas

Although the areas adjacent to Plattsmouth are beyond the specific scope of this plan, their population dynamics are significant to the city itself. These areas, though they are not part of the city proper, frequently rely on some measure of Plattsmouth's public services (parks, schools, library services) and these residents are likely to consider Plattsmouth a destination for every-day retail needs.

Although the City of Plattsmouth itself has lost population in recent years, the surrounding areas - as identified by the census tract in Figure 1.4 - have experienced significant population growth.

Using this information, we can project the likely population of Plattsmouth's 'service area' over the coming years assuming a range of growth rates. These outcomes are depicted in Figure 1.5.



## ECONOMIC TRENDS

### Employment

Employment within a community can be assessed in two different ways. One is based on employment by occupation, while the other is based on employment by industry. Employment by occupation describes the kind of work a person does on the job, as opposed to the type of industry an individual works in, which relates to the kind of business conducted by a person's employer. For example, a person might be an accountant (their occupation) for a major manufacturer (the industry).

Figures 1.6 and 1.7 demonstrate Plattsouth's employment trends. The data presented in these figures represent the estimates gathered through the 2000 US Census and 2010 American Communities Survey.

Plattsouth's job market has a broad range of occupations. The largest occupational sectors are:

- » Office and Administrative Occupations (22%)
- » Professional and Related Occupations (17%)
- » Food Preparation and Serving Occupations (11%)

**FIGURE 1.6 OCCUPATION BY PROFESSION**

	2000	% of Total	2010	% of Total	Change	% Change
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	320	9.7%	151	4.7%	-169	-52.8%
Professional and related occupations	401	12.1%	547	17.1%	146	36.4%
Healthcare support occupations	143	4.3%	115	3.6%	-28	-19.6%
Protective service occupations	80	2.4%	70	2.2%	-10	-12.5%
Food preparation and serving related occupations	211	6.4%	365	11.4%	154	73.0%
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	114	3.4%	140	4.4%	26	22.8%
Personal care and service occupations	126	3.8%	168	5.3%	42	33.3%
Sales and related occupations	387	11.7%	168	5.3%	-219	-56.6%
Office and administrative support occupations	519	15.7%	706	22.1%	187	36.0%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0	0.0%	26	0.8%	26	0%
Construction and extraction occupations	338	10.2%	235	7.4%	-103	-30.5%
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	186	5.6%	197	6.2%	11	5.9%
Production occupations	302	9.1%	108	3.4%	-194	-64.2%
Transportation and material moving occupations	187	5.6%	199	6.2%	12	6.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning and Design

The median annual wage in Plattsouth is approximately \$28,085. The highest paying occupations are related to the practice of computer, engineering, and science professions at \$74,444 a year. Occupations related to personal care and service are the lowest paying, with a reported median wage of \$6,441 per year.

Between 2000 and 2010, total employment decreased from 3,314 to 3,195, a decrease of 119 jobs. The greatest losses were experienced in the following industries:

- » Sales and related occupations (219 jobs)
  - » Production occupations (194 jobs)
  - » Management, Business, and Financial Operations occupations (169 jobs)
- While Plattsouth experienced a net decrease in jobs over the past decade, some occupations gained jobs. The greatest increases occurred in:
- » Professional and related occupations (146 additional jobs)
  - » Food Preparation and serving related occupations (154 additional jobs)
  - » Office and administrative support occupations (187 additional jobs)

**FIGURE 1.7 OCCUPATION BY INDUSTRY**

	2000	% of Total	2010	% of Total	Change	% Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	14	0.4%	39	1.2%	25	178.6%
Construction	431	13.5%	244	7.6%	-187	-43.4%
Manufacturing	345	10.8%	237	7.4%	-108	-31.3%
Wholesale trade	104	3.3%	37	1.2%	-67	-64.4%
Retail trade	392	12.3%	321	10.0%	-71	-18.1%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	235	7.4%	257	8.0%	22	9.36%
Information	71	2.2%	64	2.0%	-7	-9.9%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	265	8.3%	176	5.5%	-89	-33.6%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	189	5.9%	192	6.0%	3	1.6%
Educational, health, and social services	599	18.7%	899	28.1%	300	50.1%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	323	10.1%	331	10.4%	8	2.5%
Other services (except public administration)	133	4.2%	161	5.0%	28	21.0%
Public administration	213	6.7%	237	7.4%	24	11.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning and Design

These statistics reflect the work that people do (occupation), as opposed to the practice area of their employer (industry). The educational, health, and social services sector is the largest employer in Plattsmouth accounting for 28.1% of employment. The next largest industry sector is arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services, which account for just over 10% of Plattsmouth's jobs.

The distribution of employment across industries reinforces the image of Plattsmouth as a city with a diverse economy. Though employment of Plattsmouth residents has declined over the past decade, there remain areas for economic development activities in both the commercial and light industrial realms.

## Income and Retail Sales

Figure 1.8 describes the income distribution for Plattsmouth, similar communities, Cass County, and the State of Nebraska.

Plattsmouth contains a relatively larger proportion of lower income households and a lower proportion of higher income households than many of the communities listed.

Plattsmouth has among the lowest median household income of all the communities evaluated, at \$50,678 it remains below the statewide median. In terms of comparison communities, Plattsmouth is most similar in income profile to Glenwood, Iowa.

Figure 1.9 compares taxable retail sales in Plattsmouth with those in several comparison cities, over the past five years. Retail sales are an important part of the economic life of a city as they can be an indicator of growth or stagnation in the local economy, as well as in important local industries such as tourism. Additionally, monies spent locally tend to re-circulate in the economy, fostering local job creation.

Taxable retail sales in Plattsmouth have grown over the past 5 years, which is a promising sign. It should be noted that these figures do not fully account for the effect of the new Hy-Vee, which opened in November of 2013. This store has had a significant effect on local retail revenues. Plattsmouth's retail sales in January of 2014 were up 12.5% over the sales in the same period the year before.

## Housing Trends

The expense, nature, and disposition of a community's housing stock are some of its defining characteristics. It is important to consider whether the existing housing stock is adequately meeting the needs of the community. Additionally, tracking data on housing tenure, median value/rent, and price relative to income can help reveal important information about a community's current economic trajectory.

**FIGURE 1.9 ANNUAL TAXABLE RETAIL SALES**

	Plattsmouth, NE	Nebraska City, NE	Blair, NE
2013	\$53,968,936	\$102,668,850	\$125,852,919
2012	\$53,024,768	\$102,771,117	\$125,168,811
2011	\$50,782,988	\$97,267,137	\$104,748,588
2010	\$50,310,538	\$100,227,825	\$103,075,128
2009	\$50,962,268	\$99,911,437	\$101,528,401

Source: Nebraska Economic Development Department; RDG Planning and Design

**FIGURE 1.10 HOUSING ANALYSIS**

	2000		2010		Change
	Number	% Occupied Units	Number	% Occupied Units	
Owner-Occupied	1,756	67%	1,645	65%	-111
Renter-Occupied	862	33%	880	35%	18
Total Vacant	187		338		151
Vacancy rate	6.7%		11.8%		
Total	2,805		2,863		58

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning and Design

**FIGURE 1.8 AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

	Plattsmouth city, Nebraska	Nebraska City, Nebraska	Waverly city, Nebraska	Blair city, Nebraska	Glenwood city, Iowa	Cass County, Nebraska	State of Nebraska
Total households	2,527	2,933	1,103	2,879	1,907	9,610	711,771
Less than \$10,000	6.5%	7.0%	0.9%	4.7%	4.8%	4.4%	6.4%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5.2%	7.5%	2.2%	8.4%	5.7%	3.2%	5.8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	8.2%	14.0%	4.8%	13.0%	14.6%	6.9%	11.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.0%	15.5%	11.2%	5.9%	8.9%	9.3%	11.7%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	16.0%	12.7%	11.4%	11.0%	12.7%	13.9%	15.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	27.4%	21.8%	26.0%	23.0%	23.8%	24.0%	20.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.9%	11.8%	21.5%	13.2%	14.7%	17.0%	12.8%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	9.1%	7.6%	17.1%	16.9%	12.0%	15.5%	10.8%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.5%	1.8%	1.8%	2.2%	2.2%	3.3%	2.8%
\$200,000 or more	1.2%	0.3%	3.0%	1.8%	0.5%	2.4%	2.4%
Median household income (dollars)	\$50,678	\$43,069	\$66,494	\$56,049	\$52,106	\$62,039	\$49,342

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning and Design

Figure 1.10 considers the total number of housing units in Plattsmouth as well as relevant information about residential vacancy, whether occupants are renting or owning their house, and the median expense or value. The figure compares estimated values from 2000 and 2010 to assess change over time in these indicators.

Over the past 10 years, the total number of housing units increased slightly, growing by 2.1% or 58 units.

Vacancy has also increased significantly over the same time line, suggesting that there are numerous units at, or beyond, the margins of restoration and rehabilitation. Further, this may suggest that the supply of certain rental markets has met market demand and the surplus of units are becoming vacant.

Additionally, median property values and median contract rents have escalated at a pace slightly less than the average annual rate of inflation over this last 10 years. This suggests that while there may be a premium placed on well-maintained and managed residential units, the broader Plattsmouth housing market has lagged.

Figure 1.11 compares Plattsmouth to similar communities on the basis of the prevalence of owner-occupied housing, median housing value, and median contract rent. In many cases, rates of home-ownership are seen as a proxy for the willingness of residents to make a long-term investment in the community.



Plattsmouth performs similarly to its peer communities in the region, in percentage of owner-occupied housing units though the value of it housing, as expressed through median value, trails many of the jurisdictions.

Figure 1.12 compares these same communities on the basis of the home value to income ratio, a measure of the affordability of a place's housing market. A value-to-income ratio between 2.5 and 3 suggests a self-sustaining housing market with adequate values and revenue to support new market rate construction. Owner-occupied housing that costs between 2 and 2.5 times a household's yearly income is considered affordable. Homes priced above this range can mean that housing costs are greater than what many in the market can afford.

Plattsmouth has a value-to-income ratio of 2.00, suggesting that the housing stock is affordable relative to incomes in the area.

This ratio is somewhat below that in comparison communities. While it indicates an affordable housing market, it suggests that significant new construction might be difficult to support on many local incomes. Also, a lower value market can also discourage investment in the construction of new housing.

Plattsmouth undertook a significant step in understanding and charting a course forward for its housing supply in 2012 when it commissioned a city-wide housing study. This document included a survey of housing condition, projection of future housing demand, and policy suggestions to address shortfalls and gaps in the housing market, and these results will be discussed in more detail in the chapter devoted to housing in Plattsmouth.

**FIGURE 1.12 AFFORDABILITY ANALYSIS IN PLATTSMOUTH AND COMPARISON COMMUNITIES**

	Median Household Income	Median Value	Value to Income Ratio
Plattsmouth city, Nebraska	\$50,678	\$101,600	2.00
Nebraska City city, Nebraska	\$43,069	\$88,700	2.06
Waverly city, Nebraska	\$66,494	\$146,300	2.20
Blair city, Nebraska	\$56,049	\$141,000	2.52
Glenwood city, Iowa	\$52,106	\$131,100	2.52
Cass County, Nebraska	\$62,039	\$142,800	2.30
Nebraska	\$49,342	\$123,900	2.51

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning and Design

**FIGURE 1.11 OWNER AND RENTAL HOUSING IN PLATTSMOUTH AND COMPARISON COMMUNITIES**

	Plattsmouth city, Nebraska		Nebraska City city, Nebraska		Waverly city, Nebraska		Blair city, Nebraska		Glenwood city, Iowa		Cass County, Nebraska		State of Nebraska	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Owner-occupied	1,766	69.9%	1,954	66.6%	863	78.2%	2,063	71.7%	1,379	72.3%	7,941	82.6%	488,034	68.6%
Renter-occupied	761	30.1%	979	33.4%	240	21.8%	816	28.3%	528	27.7%	1,669	17.4%	223,737	31.4%
Owner Occupied Median Value (dollars)	\$101,600	(X)	\$88,700	(X)	\$146,300	(X)	\$141,000	(X)	\$131,100	(X)	\$142,800	(X)	\$123,900	(X)
Median Contract Rent (dollars)	\$631	(X)	\$601	(X)	\$758	(X)	\$653	(X)	\$632	(X)	\$662	(X)	\$648	(X)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning and Design

**FIGURE 1.14 COMMUTING CHARACTERISTICS - INFLOW/OUTFLOW**



## Commuting Characteristics

Figure 1.13 illustrates the average commute time for residents of Plattsmouth, and residents in other similar locations. The estimated average commute time for Plattsmouth residents was 21.3 minutes. This suggests that a large number of residents commute to work in other communities. This is confirmed by the data illustrated in Figure 1.14, which shows the number of Plattsmouth residents that commute out for work versus the number who both live and work in the city, and the number that commute in to jobs in Plattsmouth from other locations.

Travel time to and from work is a frequently under-appreciated aspect of the quality of life offered by a community. Assuming someone works 50 weeks each year (to account for holidays and vacation time), a five minute difference in travel time each way to work adds up to over 41 hours of additional driving time over the course of a year. With the completion of improvements to US Highway 75, Plattsmouth residents will enjoy a quicker commute to Omaha's major employment centers.



**FIGURE 1.13 COMMUTING CHARACTERISTICS**

	Plattsmouth city, Nebraska	Nebraska City city, Nebraska	Waverly city, Nebraska	Blair city, Nebraska	Glenwood city, Iowa	Cass County, Nebraska	Nebraska
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	3,197	3,404	1,753	3,948	2,578	12,937	923,456
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	82.4%	82.5%	87.6%	83.1%	72.5%	83.3%	79.9%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	10.4%	11.6%	9.4%	5.7%	11.3%	9.7%	10.0%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
Walked	4.0%	0.9%	0.6%	4.6%	11.2%	1.6%	3.2%
Other means	2.6%	1.4%	1.2%	0.9%	1.1%	1.3%	1.3%
Worked at home	0.7%	3.6%	1.3%	5.7%	3.9%	4.1%	4.9%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	21.3	14.8	25.8	19.5	18.1	26.1	17.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning and Design



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND GOALS

While this plan is designed to incorporate the physical and economic realities of Plattsmouth, it is – first and foremost – a statement of shared civic beliefs and a vision of what Plattsmouth can become in the coming decades. Its design interventions and policy recommendations are built around goal statements that are constructed to capture the spirit and vision of the community. These goal statements were generated through an in-depth process of public engagement and facilitation, which included the following events:

- » A large scale public meeting to discuss the future development agenda for Plattsmouth and to identify strategic strengths that serve as the basis for new achievements.
- » A full day of focus group discussions, each of which was targeted at a different group of stakeholders.
- » Comments and critiques from the public collected through the project website.
- » Consultation and collaboration with the members of the Plattsmouth Planning Commission.
- » Several in-depth meetings and visioning exercises with a steering committee comprised of local civic and business leaders.

## Land Use and Development

Land use policies should encourage the contiguous development of a diverse range of compatible land uses along Plattsmouth's corridors while supporting the adaptive reuse and redevelopment of previously developed parcels within the city.

## Energy, Environment, and Resources

The City of Plattsmouth should strive to be a judicious stewards of its resources by focusing on responsibly managing its own energy consumption and environmental footprint, while encouraging proactive steps by the private sector through policy, partnerships, and incentives.

## Connectivity

Plattsmouth's streets, sidewalks, and trails should focus on establishing and reinforcing safe multi-modal connections between major activity centers and areas of interest.

## Community Character

Policies and standards should ensure that development supports Plattsmouth's unique character. These guidelines should apply both to projects of adaptive reuse and rehabilitation in existing districts and to support attractive new development within the city's emerging commercial corridors and residential districts.

## Economic Development

Plattsmouth should continue to develop a diverse economic base, with a focus on enterprises that capitalize on the strengths of the area. Policies should support both the attraction and retention of new businesses and support to ensure the continued operation and growth of existing businesses.

## Housing

Through targeted investments and partnerships with the private sector and individual property owners, the City of Plattsmouth should support the ongoing creation of housing at a wide range of scales and prices.

## Parks and Civic Recreation

Plattsmouth should provide a quality parks and recreation system by maintaining and improving existing facilities and serving future and under-served areas.

## Public Services and Infrastructure

Plattsmouth should continue to strive to provide high levels of equitable, effective, and responsive public service. The systems and infrastructure which ensure this high-quality service should be continually maintained and expanded as necessary to support reasonable, contiguous urban growth.



## OPPORTUNITIES

### US Highway 75 Corridor

With the completion of work on US Highway 75 between Omaha and Plattsmouth, the city may begin to attract additional residents and visitors as a result of the new ease of travel. As a primary highway and main route to and from Omaha, the US 75 corridor is a center of commercial development and Plattsmouth's 'calling card' to the region.

### Old High School and Blue Devil Stadium

This is a key redevelopment site that has been under-utilized for several years. With the return of development energy to the broader real estate market, it stands as an important site for infill development.

### The Waterman Building Site

It is, of course, always unfortunate to lose significant buildings in a historic downtown environment. That being said, the destruction of these buildings provides significant opportunities for the downtown district.

### Parks and Connectivity

Plattsmouth has some excellent existing resources in its parks and recreational assets. Enhancing connections between these sites and the city, along with comprehensive management of the park system can serve to further improve its value to residents.

### Western Development Areas

The flat to slightly rolling lands west of US Highway 75 could serve as strong candidates for future development, as Plattsmouth continues to mature as a city. The pace of residential development may well accelerate given Plattsmouth's new retail amenities and ease of access to employment centers.

### Community Gateways

Many of Plattsmouth's successes cannot be seen from the most well-traveled corridor in Plattsmouth, US Highway 75. The opportunity to create strong community gateways will help project the positive image of the city that Plattsmouth is becoming.

### Missouri Riverfront Recreation

Although the Missouri River is considered a significant threat to Plattsmouth, it also provides a unique opportunity for economic development. Sensitive development of lands along the river could provide Plattsmouth an advantage over other communities and create a new market for recreational tourism.







# chapter 2

## Land Use and Development

Land use policies should encourage the contiguous development of a diverse range of compatible land uses along Plattsmouth's corridors while supporting the adaptive reuse and redevelopment of previously developed parcels within the city.

# LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

## EXISTING LAND USE AND URBAN FORM

In Plattsmouth's pattern of land use, one can read the story of its historic development. It was the river that first brought settlers to the area that would become Plattsmouth. Hence, it is logical that its early center of civic and commercial activity – which, today, is Downtown Plattsmouth – would spring forth from the river itself. From this touchstone, Plattsmouth developed outward in with residential neighborhoods shaped by the area's topography and, in some cases, early railroad lines.

As time passed and the car became the dominant mode of transportation, sizes and styles of development shifted to account for the requirements of parking and circulation. These more auto-oriented commercial corridors developed along Chicago Avenue and US Highway 75. In contemporary times, there has been some limited 'suburban' style development in and around the outskirts of Plattsmouth's city limits. This has been paired with some new development activity in the central core of the city, as property owners reinvest in their historic commercial and residential buildings.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK

In the coming decades, as Plattsmouth matures and grows as a community, it will continue to face some of the same environmental challenges that it has worked to overcome throughout its existence. These challenges include:

- » The threat of persistent flooding from the Missouri and Platte Rivers
- » The threat of flash (or incidental) flooding from the region's numerous natural watercourses and drainageways
- » The presence of steep topography
- » Areas of poorly consolidated soils

There are also some more contemporary challenges that development will need to take care to address including:

- » The presence of a number of pipelines associated with natural gas and other energy distribution
- » A growing concern about urban deforestation and the maintenance of Plattsmouth's tree canopy

Potential development should take care to account for these variables and, where possible, be designed with an eye toward lessening their impact on the city as a whole.

## ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND GOALS

### Demand for additional housing units/new residential development

- » In order to accommodate a growing population, Plattsmouth's housing stock will need to expand and evolve in the coming years. In some cases, this can be achieved through strategic infill development and the rehabilitation of existing housing. Additionally, some areas of new housing will likely be required to ensure a wide range of housing types are available to the market.

### Desire to increase commercial land use base

- » Plattsmouth has experienced significant retail and commercial growth in the past year, with the opening of Hy-Vee and several adjacent businesses. This development has established Plattsmouth as a stronger destination within the region for retail trade and services. Continued expansion of commercial development within the city limits can help reduce the tax burden on residents by generating local sales tax revenue.

### Regional need for light industrial sites

- » The creation of new sites for light industrial development is a priority of the regional economic development organization. Highly suitable sites for this type of development are frequently located near housing, robust power and water infrastructure, and significant transportation facilities. Plattsmouth is well positioned to capture some of this demand, if it chooses to make the development of manufacturing facilities a civic priority.

### Opportunities to capitalize on existing assets

- » Plattsmouth's waterfront is a long-standing asset that has been perennially underutilized. With the city now having site control of the former Castaway Pointe development site, new efforts to reinforce the city with the river can move forward.
- » Additionally, Plattsmouth's airport, with its 5,500 foot concrete runway, presents an amenity not seen in many other Nebraska communities of similar size. This is an asset that, through collaboration with Cass County, could be leveraged into a significant development opportunity. As access to the facility improves, so too could the demand for developable land around the airport. This could include expanded hangar space for recreational pilots and private aircraft owners.

## POLICIES OF FUTURE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT



### Encourage compact, contiguous, and fiscally responsible development

Contiguous and compact development will help preserve Plattsmouth's character by growing the city in a walkable, neighborhood-focused pattern. This type of development also reduces costly infrastructure extensions such as water, sewer and roads by developing on existing lots, under-utilized infill properties or in strategic areas adjacent to existing development. Compact, contiguous development minimizes travel distances, helps preserve open spaces and farm land, and encourages development that is "human-scale" rather than designed solely for the car.



### Promote infill development

Infill development supports the economic and social value of Plattsmouth's existing neighborhoods by promoting investment in established areas rather than solely at the fringe. Infill development helps make full use of existing infrastructure, thus limiting unnecessary expansions and their associated expense. Such development should respect the character of the surrounding neighborhood.



### Preserve sensitive environmental features

Preserving key natural areas can protect plant and animal habitats, increase property value for adjacent development, enhance and connect the park system, and reduce flash-flooding by providing natural stormwater drainage. A network of natural preserve areas would enhance community character and make Plattsmouth more attractive to new residents. The preserves protect wetlands, hydric soils, floodplains, drainage-ways, and wooded areas.



### Promote diverse housing choices

While many other similar sized cities have experienced far fewer rental options, Plattsmouth needs to continue to promote a variety of housing styles that meet the needs of the youngest and oldest households. Housing needs and preferences are diversifying. The mortgage crisis and recent economic downturn has inspired a greater preference for affordable and/or rental options. The baby boomer and Millennial generations are demonstrating a growing preference for smaller lot homes and multi-family housing, in addition to a continued interest in traditional single family homes. Plattsmouth can increase its appeal to potential residents by promoting housing options for a diverse population.



### Plan for community amenities such as parks and schools

Parks, open spaces, schools, and other public places can serve as neighborhood focal points that promote community activity, personal interaction, and a sense of place. Plattsmouth's parks and open spaces can serve as an attraction for potential residents and encourage new development around their perimeter.

## POLICIES OF FUTURE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT



### Provide a multi-modal, continuous transportation network

A network of streets, bikeways, and pedestrian paths should provide connectivity throughout Plattsmouth and accommodate a diverse set of mobility needs and preferences.

Street networks should provide well connected routes that make both private travel and public service provision more efficient.



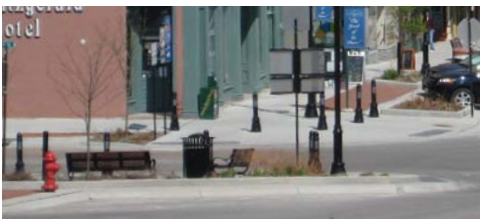
### Enhance public safety and minimize hazard risk

Land use decisions have a wide variety of effects on public safety and hazard mitigation. Preserving floodplains and natural drainage-ways to manage storm-water minimizes the risk of injury and property damage due to flooding. A well-connected and multi-modal transportation network promotes better emergency service provision and evacuation routes in case of large-scale hazards. A mixture of land uses within neighborhoods enhances security by creating activity and “eyes on the street” throughout the day.



### Develop balanced neighborhoods that provide options

Balanced neighborhoods provide residents with easy access to a variety of places to live, shop, work, play and engage in community life. Mixing compatible uses, such as a corner store or school in a residential neighborhood, creates dynamic and resilient communities that promote efficiency in infrastructure provision and travel times. Balanced neighborhoods provide a variety of housing options, access to open space, and contain activity centers such as parks, schools, civic centers, or commercial areas that are well connected to surrounding neighborhoods. Appropriate transitions should be made between higher intensity uses, such as industry, and lower intensity uses, such as homes.



### Use public investments to promote private development

Plattsmouth’s public investments can be leveraged to promote private investments. When strategically located, a new park or street extension can catalyze private residential development, while targeted infrastructure improvements can attract new industry. This can and should include tax incentives and shared financing arrangements.



### Make decisions in a transparent and collaborative manner

Land use and environmental decisions should be made through a transparent process, with opportunity for input from all citizens and affected entities, such as neighboring towns or the school district. Creation and implementation of land use decisions should be a shared responsibility that promotes the equitable distribution of development benefits and costs.



# LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDE:

The Development Concept (Map 2.1) shows proposed uses for the preferred growth areas. These areas are discussed in detail later in the plan. The concept shows approximately the amount of land needed to accommodate population projections and focuses on areas that are most strategic for shorter term growth.

The Future Land Use Map (Map 2.2) combines the development concept with existing land uses and longer term growth areas. This map shows land use transitions that will not occur for many years, beyond the plan time frame. Land use categories are described in Figure 2.2.

## 3 IMPORTANT POINTS ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT AND FUTURE LAND USE MAPS

### 1. PROPERTY OWNERS DECIDE

- Changes shown in the Development Concept and Future Land Use map are expected to occur slowly over time, in response to market demands, as property owners voluntarily sell, develop, or change the use of their land.

### 2. NOT A ZONING MAP

- The Future Land Use map should be interpreted generally at the block level and is not intended to provide specificity at the individual property level. For example, minor variations in land use, such as a small civic use on a primarily residential block, are not reflected in this generalized map, though they may still be permitted per zoning regulations.

### 3. GUIDE FOR LAND USE DECISIONS

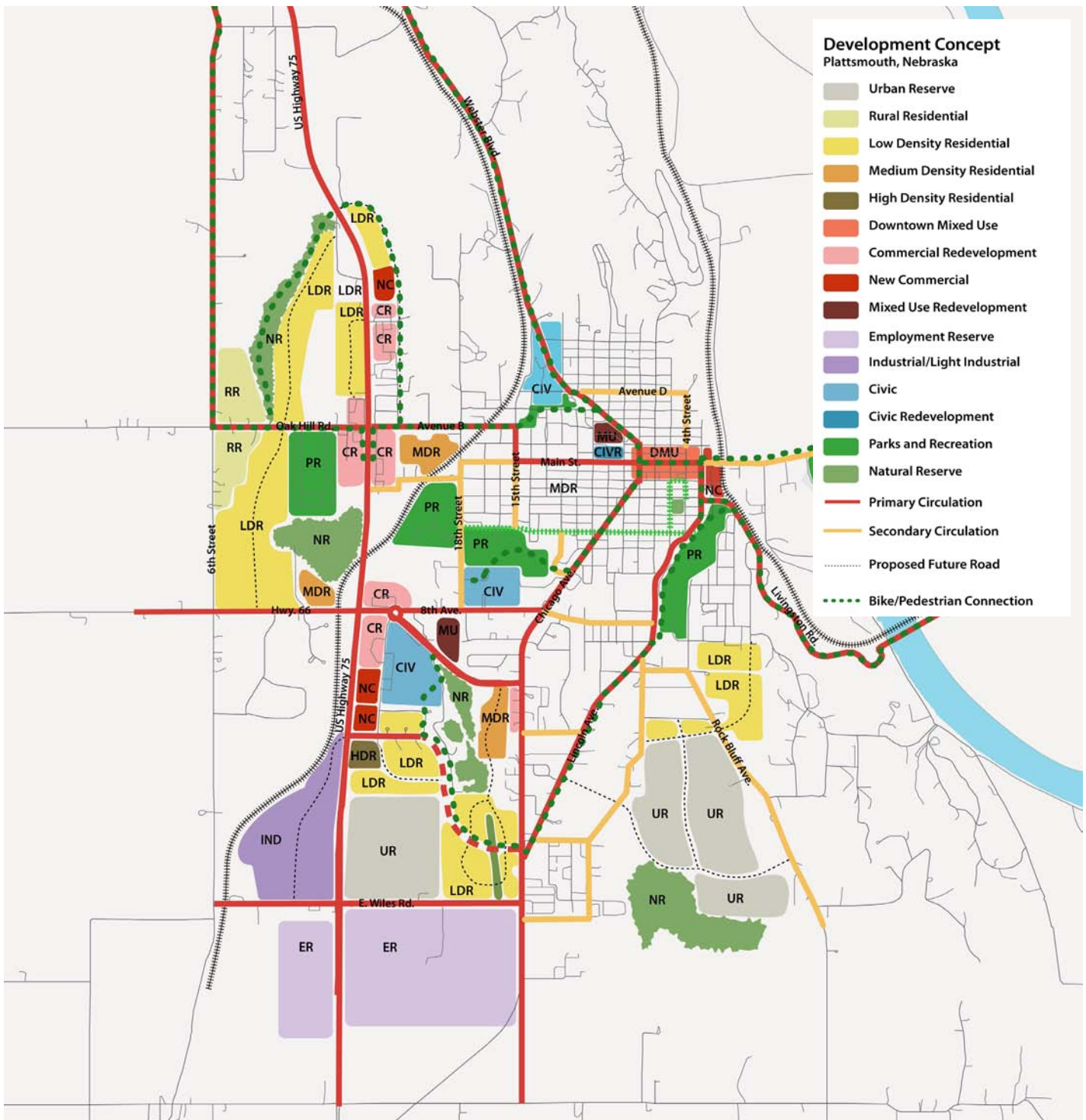
- The Future Land Use map will guide the land use and development decisions of the Planning Commission and the City Council. The map should guide the approval process for development proposals and zoning decisions.

# FUTURE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

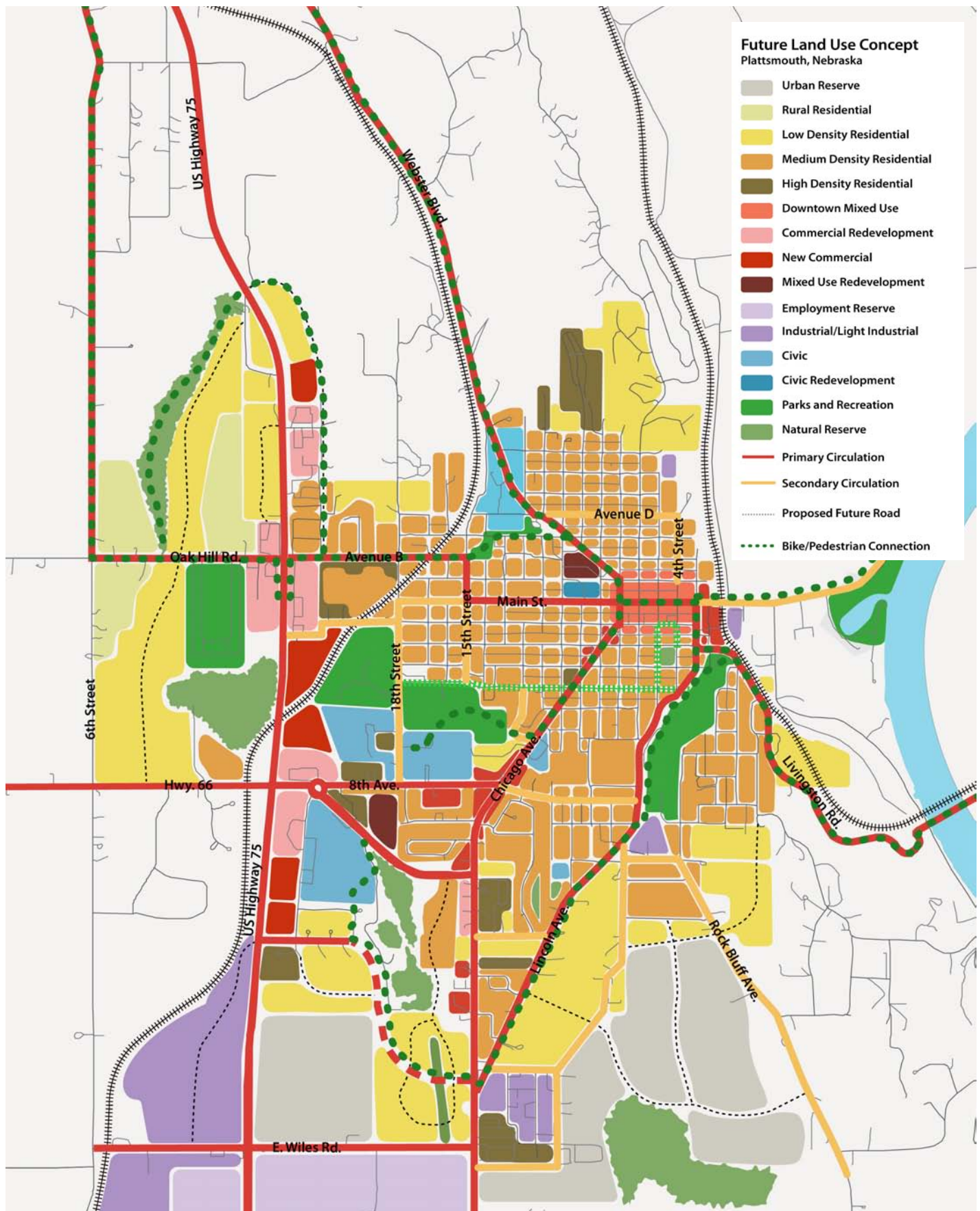
A Future Land Use Plan addresses three overall areas of concern:

- » Community growth. This considers land that will be converted to urban uses during the planning period. The previous Development Framework discussion identified the directions of the community growth, including residential growth centers and focuses on commercial and industrial development.
- » Strategic direction areas. This area addresses projects and policies for critical areas that have both land use and major public/private investment implications.
- » Managing incremental land use decisions. This issue focuses on establishing criteria for the location of individual uses or project types. While big ideas and directions are important, community development is implemented over the long period by hundreds of individual decisions, from where to locate a business, to granting rezoning and subdivision approval. The Land Use Decision Matrix, presented in this section, provides the context for these decisions.

## MAP 2.1 DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT



MAP 2.2 FUTURE LAND USE MAP





## Land Use Compatibility

Figure 2.1 provides a land use compatibility guide that indicates which land uses can be located near each other, and which land use combinations will create significant conflict. The creation of new conflicts should be avoided moving forward. Existing conflicts should be encouraged to change over time as property turns over. **This chart should be used to assess the relationship between land uses and provide a basis for development proposal review.** The compatibility of each pairing is rated 1 to 5:

- » **5 - Completely compatible.**
- » **4 - Basically compatible.** Traffic from higher intensity uses should be directed away from lower intensity uses. Building elements and scale should be consistent with surrounding development.
- » **3 - Potential conflicts.** Conflicts may be resolved or minimized through project design. Traffic and other external effects should be directed away from lower-intensity uses. Landscaping, buffering, and screening should be used to minimize negative effects. A Planned Unit Development may be advisable.
- » **2 - Significant conflict.** Major effects must be strongly mitigated to prevent impact on adjacent uses. A Planned Unit Development is required in all cases to assess project impact and define development design.
- » **1 - Incompatible.** In general, proposed uses with this level of conflict will not be permitted. Any development proposal requires a Planned Unit Development and extensive documentation to prove that external effects are fully mitigated.

**FIGURE 2.1 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY MATRIX**

	Urban Reserve	Rural Residential	Low Density Residential	Medium Density Residential	High Density Residential	Downtown Mixed Use	Commercial Redevelopment	Mixed Use Redevelopment	Employment Reserve	Industrial/Light Industrial	Civic	Civic Redevelopment	Parks and Recreation	Natural Reserve
Urban Reserve	X	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	3	4	4
Rural Residential		X	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	4	4
Low Density Residential			X	4	3	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	4	3
Medium Density Residential				X	4	4	4	4	2	2	3	3	4	2
High Density Residential					X	4	4	4	2	2	3	3	3	2
Downtown Mixed Use						X	4	4	1	2	4	3	3	2
Commercial							X	4	2	3	4	4	3	2
Mixed Use Redevelopment								X	2	3	3	4	3	2
Employment Reserve									X	5	2	1	2	2
Industrial/Light Industrial										X	2	2	1	1
Civic											X	5	3	2
Civic Redevelopment												X	2	2
Parks and Recreation													X	2
Natural Reserve														X

Source: RDG Planning and Design

**FIGURE 2.2 LAND USE CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA**

	Use Characteristics	Features and Location Criteria
<b>Urban Reserve</b>  Typical zoning classification: Agricultural District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generally in agricultural or open space use.</li> <li>- Reserve areas can eventually be served with municipal water and sewer and may be in the path of future urban development.</li> <li>- Development will likely occur after the planning horizon contained in this plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- These areas should be reserved for long-term urban development.</li> <li>- Primary uses through the planning period will remain in open land uses.</li> <li>- Any interim large lot residential development should accommodate future development with urban services.</li> </ul>
<b>Rural Residential</b>  Typical zoning classification: Rural Residential District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restrictive land uses, emphasizing housing and open space.</li> <li>- Civic uses may be allowed with special use permission.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Applies to areas where conventional large lot subdivisions have been established.</li> <li>- In many cases, houses use individual wastewater systems and are unlikely to experience extensions of urban services. Large lot residential is likely to be the permanent development stage.</li> <li>- Gross densities will generally be less than one unit per acre.</li> <li>- These developments should not be permitted adjacent to city limits or within areas that can be easily served by urban services.</li> </ul>
<b>Low Density Residential</b>  Typical zoning classification: Low-Density Residential District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restrictive land uses, emphasizing single-family detached development, although innovative single-family forms may be permitted with special review.</li> <li>- Civic uses are generally allowed, with special permission for higher intensity uses.</li> <li>- Developments will be provided with full municipal services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primary uses within residential growth centers.</li> <li>- Should be insulated from adverse environmental effects, including noise, smell, air pollution, and light pollution.</li> <li>- Should provide a framework of streets and open spaces.</li> <li>- Typical densities range from 1 to 6 units per acre, although individual attached projects may include densities up to 6 units per acre in small areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Medium Density Residential</b>  Typical zoning classification: Medium-Density Residential District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restrictive land uses, emphasizing housing.</li> <li>- May incorporate a mix of housing types, including single-family detached, single-family attached, and townhouse uses.</li> <li>- Limited multi-family development may be permitted with special review and criteria.</li> <li>- Civic uses are generally allowed, with special permission for higher intensity uses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Applies to most established, historic neighborhoods of the city which have diverse housing types, and in developing areas that incorporate a mix of development.</li> <li>- Developments should generally have articulated scale and maintain identity of individual units.</li> <li>- Tend to locate in clusters, but should include linkages to other aspects of the community.</li> <li>- Typical maximum density is 6 to 12 units per acre, typically in a middle range.</li> <li>- Innovative design should be encouraged in new projects.</li> <li>- Projects at this density may be incorporated in a limited way into single-family neighborhoods.</li> <li>- May be incorporated into mixed use projects and planned areas.</li> </ul>

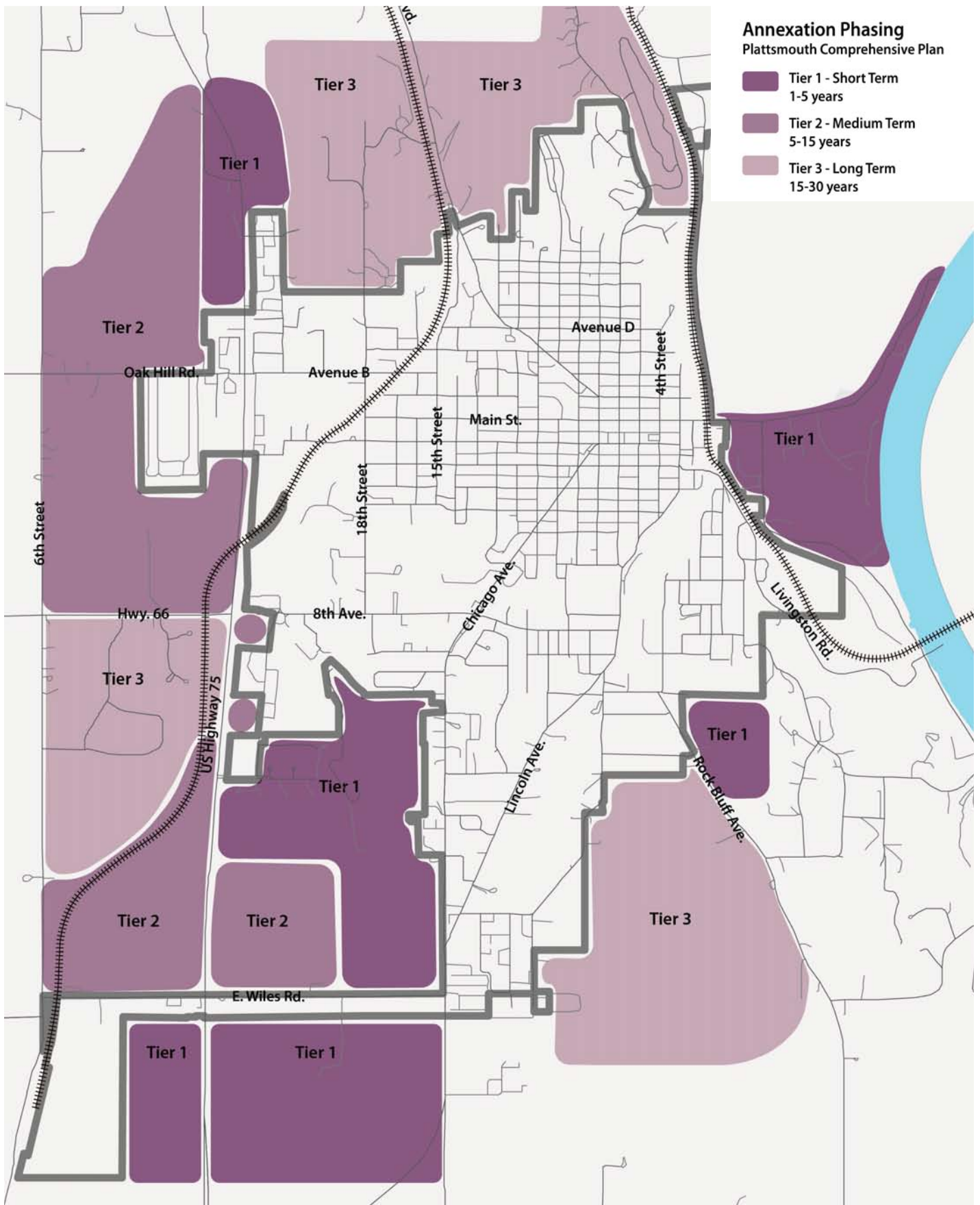
**FIGURE 2.2 LAND USE CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA**

	Use Characteristics	Features and Location Criteria
<b>High Density Residential</b>  Typical zoning classification: High-Density Residential District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allows multi-family and compatible civic uses.</li> <li>- Allows integration of limited office and convenience commercial within primarily residential areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Locate at sites with access to major amenities or activity centers.</li> <li>- Should be integrated into the fabric of nearby residential areas, while avoiding adverse traffic and visual impacts on low-density uses.</li> <li>- Traffic should have direct access to collector or arterial streets to avoid overloading local streets.</li> <li>- Should require Planned Unit Development designation when developed near lower intensity uses or in mixed use developments.</li> <li>- Developments should avoid creation of enclaves with poor circulation.</li> <li>- Attractive landscape standards should be applied.</li> <li>- Typical density is in excess of 12 units per acre.</li> <li>- May be incorporated into mixed use projects and planned areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Downtown Mixed Use</b>  Typical zoning classification: Central Business District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Traditional downtown district of Plattsmouth.</li> <li>- Includes mix of uses, primarily commercial, office, and upper level residential.</li> <li>- Should be the primary focus of restaurant and specialty retail as well as major civic uses, including government, cultural services, and other civic facilities.</li> <li>- Developments outside the center of the city should be encouraged to have “downtown” characteristics, including mixed use buildings and an emphasis on pedestrian scale.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishes mixed use pattern in the traditional city center. May also apply to planned mixed use areas.</li> <li>- Recognizes downtown development patterns without permitting undesirable land uses.</li> <li>- District may expand with development of appropriately designed adjacent projects.</li> <li>- New projects should respect pedestrian scale and design patterns and setbacks within the overall district.</li> <li>- Historic preservation is of significant value in these areas.</li> <li>- Good pedestrian and bicycle links should be provided, including non-motorized access to surrounding residential areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial</b>  Typical zoning classification: General Commercial District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Includes a variety of commercial uses, including auto-oriented commercial development.</li> <li>- Includes major retailers, multi-use centers, restaurants, and other services.</li> <li>- Commercial may also be accommodated in MU areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Should be located along arterials or other major streets, and in areas that are relatively isolated from residential, parks, and other vulnerable uses.</li> <li>- Traffic systems should provide alternative routes and good internal traffic flow.</li> <li>- Negative effects on surrounding residential areas should be limited by location and buffering.</li> <li>- Development should maintain good landscaping, focused in front setbacks and common boundaries with lower-intensity uses.</li> <li>- Pedestrian/bicycle connections should be provided for consumer-oriented uses.</li> </ul>
<b>Mixed Use Redevelopment</b>  Typical zoning classification: High-Density Residential, Limited Commercial and Office District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incorporates a mix of residential, office, and limited commercial uses.</li> <li>- Includes a variety of mixed use contexts including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Residential/office/commercial</li> <li>- Neighborhood commercial</li> <li>- Office/Financial Services</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developments should emphasize relationships among parts.</li> <li>- Pedestrian traffic should be encouraged and neighborhood scale retained when applicable.</li> <li>- Projects should avoid large expanses of parking visible from major streets.</li> <li>- Signage and site features should respect neighborhood scale in appropriate areas.</li> <li>- Commercial and office development in mixed-use areas should minimize impact on housing. Should be located at intersections of major or collector streets.</li> </ul>

**FIGURE 2.2 LAND USE CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA**

	Use Characteristics	Features and Location Criteria
<b>Employment Reserve</b>  Typical zoning classification: Urban Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indicates policy desire for land to be held in reserve expressly for development as future employment center.</li> <li>- Suitable for development as light industrial, business park or manufacturing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This designation maintains large areas to enable the attraction of new companies and retaining businesses that need to expand.</li> <li>- Small-scale industrial, office, or retail development is appropriate provided that it supports / strengthens major employment uses and does not restrict future large-scale development by fragmenting parcels or impeding internal circulation.</li> </ul>
<b>Industrial/Light Industrial</b>  Typical zoning classification: Business Park District, General Industrial District, Heavy Industrial District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited industrial provides for uses that do not generate noticeable external effects.</li> <li>- Business parks may combine office and light industrial/research uses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited industrial uses may be located near office, commercial, and, with appropriate development standards, some residential areas.</li> <li>- Strict control over signage, landscaping, and design is necessary for locations nearer to low intensity uses.</li> <li>- Zoning regulations should encourage business parks, including office and office/distribution uses with good development and signage standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Civic</b>  Typical zoning classification: Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Includes schools, churches, libraries, and other public facilities that act as centers of community activity, as well as other public service facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May be permitted in a number of different areas, including residential areas.</li> <li>- Individual review of proposals requires an assessment of operating characteristics, project design, and traffic management.</li> </ul>
<b>Civic Redevelopment</b>  Typical zoning classification: Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identifies areas where there are existing civic facilities that are well-suited to adaptive reuse to meet future city needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May be permitted in a number of different areas, including residential areas.</li> <li>- Individual review of proposals requires an assessment of operating characteristics, project design, and traffic management.</li> </ul>
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>  Typical zoning classification: Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Traditional park and recreation areas including both passive and active recreation uses.</li> <li>- Environmentally sensitive areas and crucial scenic corridors that should be preserved and possibly incorporated into the city's trail system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parks should be centrally located with easy access for both pedestrian and auto users.</li> <li>- Residents should be within approximately a half mile of a neighborhood park.</li> <li>- All parks should be connected through the city's trail and greenway system.</li> <li>- Environmentally sensitive areas, including wetlands, native prairies and drainage channels should be protected and incorporated into the city's greenway network.</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Reserve</b>  Typical zoning classification: Agricultural District, Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generally held as naturalized open space.</li> <li>- Lands tend to be in drainage areas or environmentally sensitive areas that should not be developed.</li> <li>- Drainage corridors should function as greenways that connect community destinations and preserve natural habitats.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- These areas should remain in primary open space. Urban encroachment, should be discouraged.</li> <li>- Applies to areas designated for conservation, including floodplains and steep topography.</li> <li>- Environmentally sensitive areas not intended for recreation may be designated as open space.</li> </ul>

## MAP 2.3 ANNEXATION MAP



# ANNEXATION STRATEGY AND TARGET ANNEXATION AREAS

Plattsmouth should implement an annexation policy that incorporates future development areas and meets state statutory requirements. The city should work with Cass County to establish annexation agreements and ensure consistent development patterns.

The development concept is predicated on community growth attractiveness as a living environment. The projected land needs exceed the amount of available, undeveloped land within existing city limits. As a result, sound community growth will require annexations to accommodate land needs during the planning period.

Voluntary annexation of developments should occur before extension of city services. Plattsmouth should also adopt an annexation policy that establishes objective criteria for annexation and identifies candidate areas for incorporation into the city. Areas considered for annexation should meet at least one of the following criteria:

- » Areas with Significant pre-existing development. Areas outside the city that already have commercial, office, or industrial development are logical candidates for annexation. In addition, existing residential areas developed to urban densities (generally higher than 2 units per acre) should be considered for potential annexation.
- » Protection of Future Growth Areas. In order to allow the city to guide its growth and development more effectively, future growth areas will need to be managed through zoning and annexation. Annexation will allow the city to extend its zoning jurisdiction to adjacent areas, thus guiding development in a direction that will provide safe and healthy environments.
- » Public Services. In some cases, public service issues can provide compelling reasons for annexation.
- » Community Unification. Establishing a unified transportation and open space systems while maintaining a common commitment to the city's future is an important factor in considering annexation.

The Annexation Plan (Map 2.3) illustrates those areas around Plattsmouth that should be considered for annexation. The areas are categorized into three phases based on the estimated likeliness for incorporation into

the city. Within each phase, sections are delineated by their relevance regarding the need for annexation and the services the city will need to provide. The need for annexation should be determined by each area's unique situation.

- » Phase One – Short Term. Location and associated issues will likely warrant consideration for annexation in the next ten years. These areas are adjacent to city limits and may already have access to city services
- » Phase Two – Medium Term. Conditions exist that may bring about the need for annexation of these sections. Annexation will not be likely during the early stages of the plan.
- » Phase Three - Long Term. The Development Concept does not identify future uses within this area beyond agriculture. In the event of development pressure emerging in these areas, the plan recommends discouraging large-lot development that could possibly hem the city from expanding services beyond those areas.







# chapter 3

## Energy, Environment and Resources

The City of Plattsmouth should strive to be a judicious steward of its resources by focusing on responsibly managing its own resource consumption and environmental footprint, while encouraging proactive steps by the private sector through policy, partnerships, and incentives.

## ENERGY AND RESOURCES

An approach to the future of energy consumption, the environment, and resources may include energy-efficient updates to public facilities and infrastructure, reducing material consumption and waste, purchasing more fuel-efficient vehicles for the city's fleet, streamlining private and public operations, and working to ensure the preservation of natural amenities and resources.

When considering the environmental footprint of a city, it is important to understand the source of the energy that drives the community. Nebraska is fortunate to have low-cost access to a wide range of both conventional and renewable energy resources. In part, this is a result of Nebraska's system of public utility districts. Since these districts operate in the public interest rather than under the motivation of profit, they are frequently more willing to reinvest in their infrastructure and energy innovation. This also enables the management of a utility to be more responsive to the needs and desires of their customers, since they will, more often than not, be members of the same community.

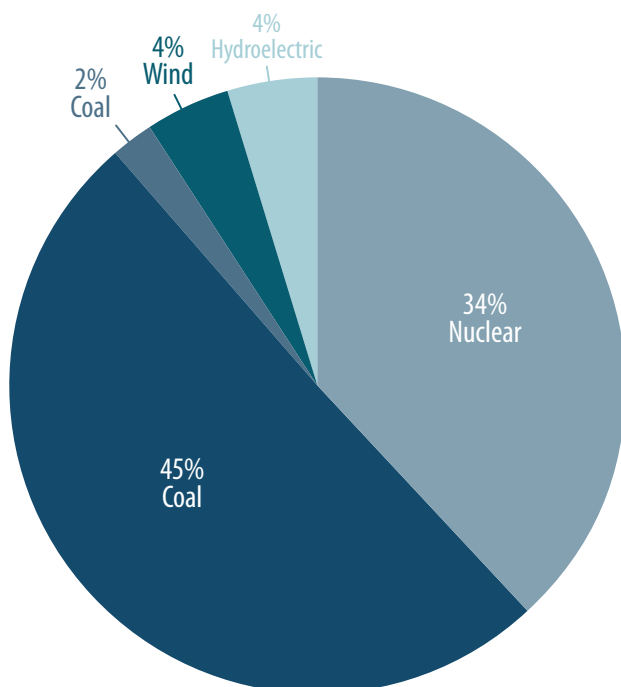
For the purposes of this chapter we will consider energy use and its role in environmental responsibility in the context of, energy source and supply, public service, residential, commercial, and industrial before a discussion on renewable resources and implementation strategies.

### ENERGY SOURCE AND SUPPLY

Plattsmouth is served by the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) for its electrical energy needs. NPPD uses a mix of energy sources and has set the goal to have 10% of their native energy production from renewable resources by 2020. Black Hills Energy provides natural gas service to Plattsmouth.

NPPD provides pro-active and relatively low cost energy to the community – however, it is the responsibility and choice of Plattsmouth from thereon. Physical conditions or policy decisions impact the cost and environmental impact of energy use at the local level. In addition to the sources provided by NPPD, residents of Plattsmouth also have the opportunity to utilize private sources of energy including natural gas and propane.

**FIGURE 5.1 RESOURCE MIX FOR NPPD POWER, 2012**



## PUBLIC SERVICE

The City of Plattsmouth is the entity responsible for setting local policy related to energy, the environment, and resource preservation, and also a major consumer of energy as well. Through continued proactive facility, fleet, and grounds management, the city can implement energy efficiency and environmental initiatives in a practical and cost effective manner.

City operations are provided through a complex system of facility and service networks further discussed and evaluated in Chapter 9. The facilities responsible for these services are numerous – from City Hall and the Water Treatment Plant to the police fleet – opportunities exist to improve efficiencies.

Other services, such as trash pick-up, are provided by the private sector. In the case of trash removal, a number of contractors operate independently to serve the needs of the community. While there is merit to having competition in the marketplace, this redundant service is inherently inefficient as it places additional heavy vehicles on neighborhood streets and increases vehicle miles traveled.

### Strategies and Initiatives:

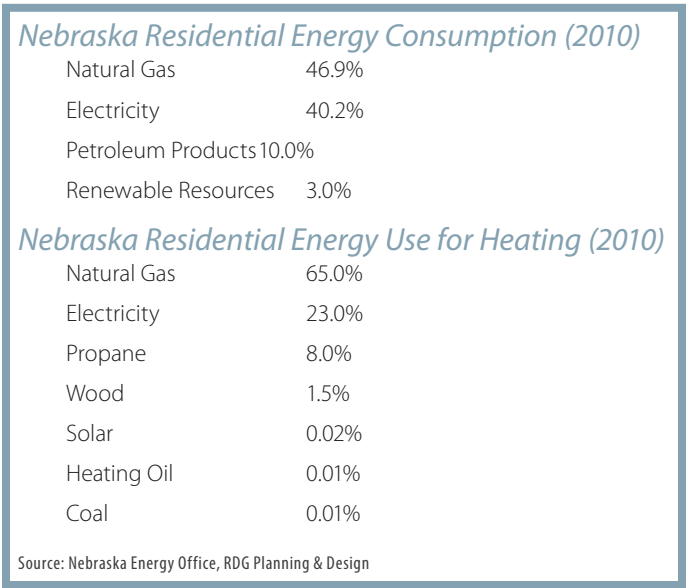
- » **Maintain facilities.** A well maintained facility will have a longer useful life and be less costly over its lifetime. While public facilities are frequently outgrown, a well maintained facility may have a significant life beyond its initial use. Deferred maintenance will increase the cost and severity of the eventual repair or demolition.
- » **Finance proactive improvements.** The city should evaluate facility and infrastructure needs and finance the improvements and maintenance in a proactive manner. Through the regular evaluation of these systems, the city will be able to identify challenges, develop solutions and assemble a budget to remedy before the issue worsens.
- » **Plan for the reuse of existing facilities when feasible.** The construction of a facility is a significant investment of time, money, and energy and these costs multiply if demolition and replacement becomes necessary. Continually evaluate facilities to determine the most efficient course of action and, if a facility is unable to meet the current and future needs, a reuse plan should be explored.
- » **Streamline waste management.** Plattsmouth is served by several private waste haulers. This redundancy is inherently inefficient resulting in unnecessary wear on the streets, vehicle emissions, and service costs. The city should contract with a single contractor for waste and recycling.
- » **Upgrade city fleet with energy efficient vehicles.** The city owns and operates an extensive fleet ranging from heavy construction equipment to riding lawn mowers. As these vehicles age, they should be replaced with energy efficient or alternative fuel vehicles.
- » **Replace existing streetlights with LED fixtures.** As part of the downtown revitalization project, many of the streetlights downtown have been converted to low energy LED fixtures. As fixtures age and require replacement, the city should phase this same technology in across all city streetlights and traffic signals.
- » **Explore transit and rideshare programs.** Many residents of Plattsmouth commute to the Omaha Metro Area, frequently in single-occupancy vehicles. The city should create a "Park and Ride" location and encourage the creation of a rideshare program. The city should also consider and evaluate express bus options.

## RESIDENTIAL

The residential sector consists of private households and is the most dominant land use in Plattsmouth. In residential homes, energy is consumed primarily for space heating, water heating, air conditioning, refrigeration, cooking, clothes drying, and lighting.

Strategies and Initiatives:

- » **Encourage green technology and building methods.** Create an central information resource, perhaps located at City Hall or the public library, to encourage the use of energy efficient building technologies by local residents and developers.
- » **Encourage the use of all available energy rebate programs.** Create an information repository to encourage the use of energy efficiency rebates offered through the Nebraska Public Power District and other entities.



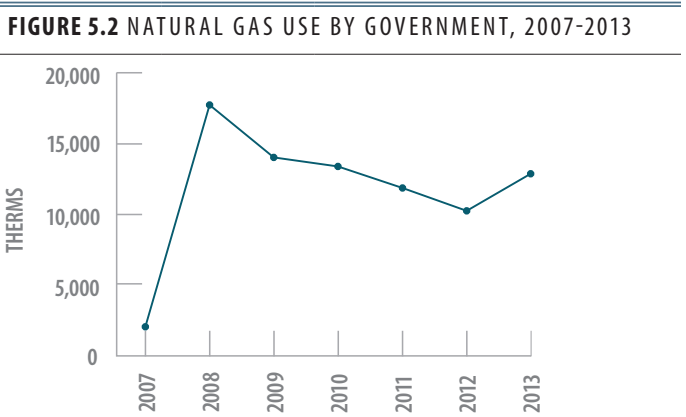
NATURAL GAS

Black Hills Energy provides natural gas service to Plattsmouth. A large number of the city’s homes and businesses use natural gas for their furnaces, water heaters, and to cook food. This represents a significant energy input to the community.

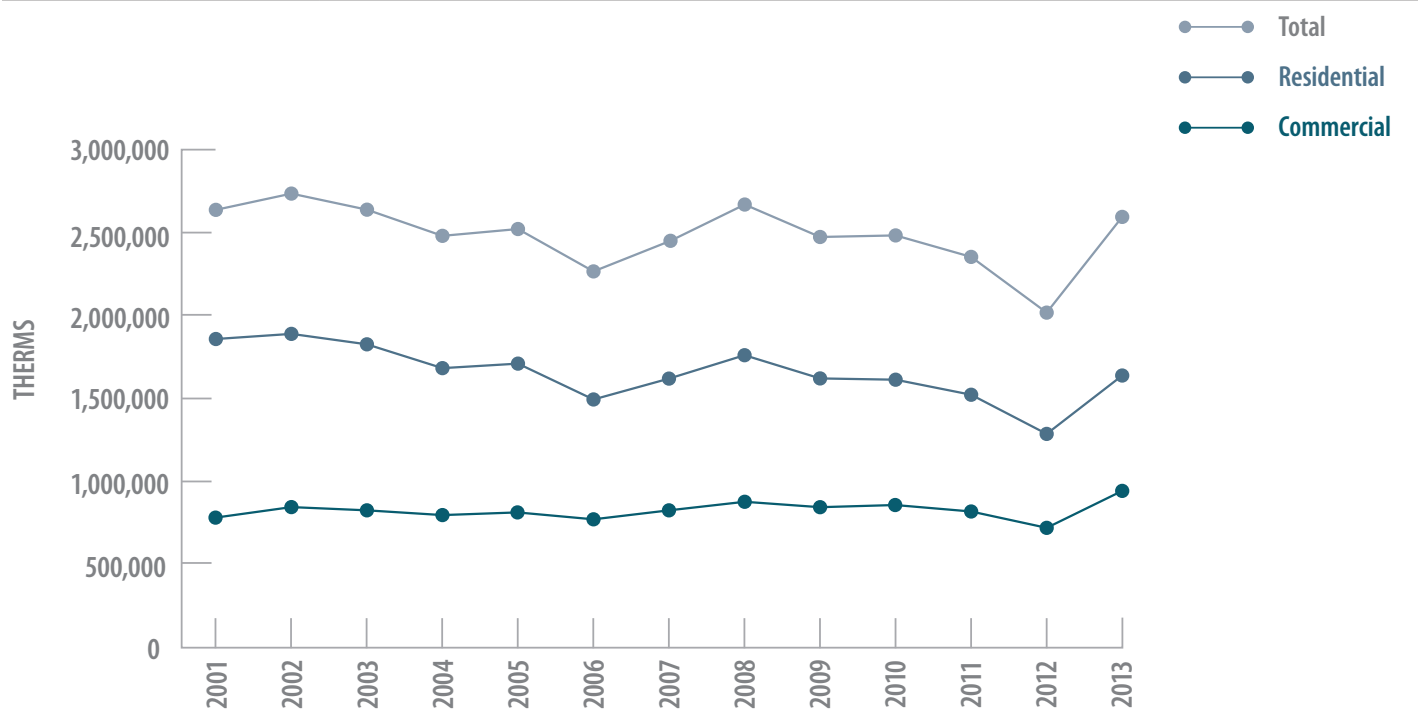
Given that natural gas is used in many homes and businesses to power furnaces and fuel water heaters, the consumption of this resource can be significantly effected by weather, particularly the length and severity of the winter months.

The data in the following graphs was provided by Black Hills Energy, the primary provider of natural gas service to Plattsmouth. Governmental usage of natural gas was tracked beginning only in 2007, so that data is graphed separately from commercial and residential consumption.

Continuing thermal energy improvements including the installation of new windows and additional insulation can play a significant role in improving the efficiency of homes and businesses over the winter months.



**FIGURE 5.3 RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL GAS USE, 2001-2014**



## COMMERCIAL

The commercial sector consists of non-manufacturing business establishments. Included are hotels, motels, restaurants, wholesale businesses, retail stores, laundries, and other service enterprises; health, social, and educational institutions; and federal, state, and local governments. Streetlights, pumps, bridges, and public services are also included. Energy is commonly consumed for space heating, water heating, refrigeration, air conditioning, and cooking.

From 2009 to 2010, commercial sector net energy use increased 1.9% to 68.8 trillion British thermal units (Btu). Total energy use in the sector increased 1.9% to 143.8 trillion Btu. Petroleum use increased 13.9% although it comprises only 3.8% of the energy used by the commercial sector. Renewable energy use increased 7.9% and electricity use increased 2.3% from 2009, while natural gas use increased 0.3%.

### Strategies and Initiatives

- » **Encourage green technology and building methods.** Create an information repository of information at City Hall to encourage the use of energy efficient building technologies by business owners.
- » **Continue to support downtown revitalization initiatives.** Many communities and private developments have, at significant cost, attempted to duplicate the character of a historic downtown district. Plattsmouth is fortunate to have an intact and well-preserved downtown. This pattern of development promotes walking and non-motorized transportation, while preserving the embodied energy of an existing building stock.
- » **Encourage the use of all available energy rebate and grant programs.** Encourage businesses to take advantage of the energy analysis and efficiency incentives offered by NPPD and others for commercial enterprises.

#### *Nebraska Commercial Energy Consumption (2010)*

Natural Gas	94.0%
Petroleum Products	3.8%
Renewable Resources	1.8%

Source: Nebraska Energy Office, RDG Planning and Design

## INDUSTRIAL

The industrial sector consists of manufacturing, construction, mining, agriculture, and forestry organizations.

### Strategies and Initiatives

- » **Encourage complimentary business clusters.** A complimentary business cluster is both efficient for the city and for the participating business. It is less costly to provide high quality public services to a single location with many businesses than to scattered facilities. A business cluster benefits the private sector by reducing the cost of material transport.
- » **Encourage the use of programs that support improved efficiency.** Encourage businesses to take advantage of the energy analysis and efficiency incentives offered by NPPD and other agencies for industrial enterprises.

#### *Nebraska Industrial Energy Consumption (2010)*

Natural Gas	31.5%
Electricity	12.8%
Petroleum Products	13.1%
Renewable Resources	37.9%
Coal	4.7%

Source: Nebraska Energy Office; RDG Planning & Design

## USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES

Renewable energy resources are naturally replenishable but flow-limited. They are virtually inexhaustible in duration but limited in the amount of energy that is available per unit of time. Some (such as geothermal and biomass) may be limited in that stocks are depleted by use, but, on a time scale of decades or perhaps centuries, can be replenished. Examples of renewable energy resources include: biomass, hydro, geothermal, solar, wind, and wood.

Plattsmouth buys all of its electricity from the Nebraska Public Power District, which uses a variety of means to generate the power it markets to communities statewide. In 2011, NPPD used the following resources to generate their power:

- » Hydroelectric - Generated (4.9% of capacity)
- » Hydroelectric – Purchased (4.8% of capacity)
- » Wind: (3.9% of capacity)
- » Nuclear: (28.2% of capacity)
- » Natural Gas/Oil: (0.6% of capacity)
- » Coal: (57.6% of capacity)

Electricity from various resources is exchangeable across the grid, so these figures represent the best guess available as to the magnitude of various resources used to generate Plattsmouth's electricity.



## Strategies and Initiatives

### » **Encourage and eliminate barriers to solar energy production.**

Residential-scale solar power generation is a trend that is re-emergent in the United States. Efficiency gains in photovoltaic panels has enabled the generation of electricity in more northern latitudes than was previously the case. Meanwhile, aesthetic improvements to these panels have allowed more homeowners to warm to their installation. Plattsmouth can support this trend by eliminating unnecessary regulatory barriers to solar panels and ensuring good solar access and orientation through the city's zoning code and in the platting of new neighborhoods.

### » **Encourage small scale wind energy production.**

Consumer-scale wind generators have become more common and cost-effective as technology has improved. Plattsmouth should support a balanced approach to this technology, keeping in mind that because of the underlying topography of Plattsmouth, some areas will find the successful installation of these turbines to be challenging. In the case of this technology, safety and external impacts must be considered.

## ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES

### Nebraska Energy Code

Under Revised Statutes Sections 81-1608 to 81-1616, the State of Nebraska has adopted the international Energy Conservation Code as the Nebraska Energy Code. Any city may adopt and enforce the Nebraska Energy Code or an equivalent energy code. The code applies to all new buildings and renovations of or additions to existing buildings.

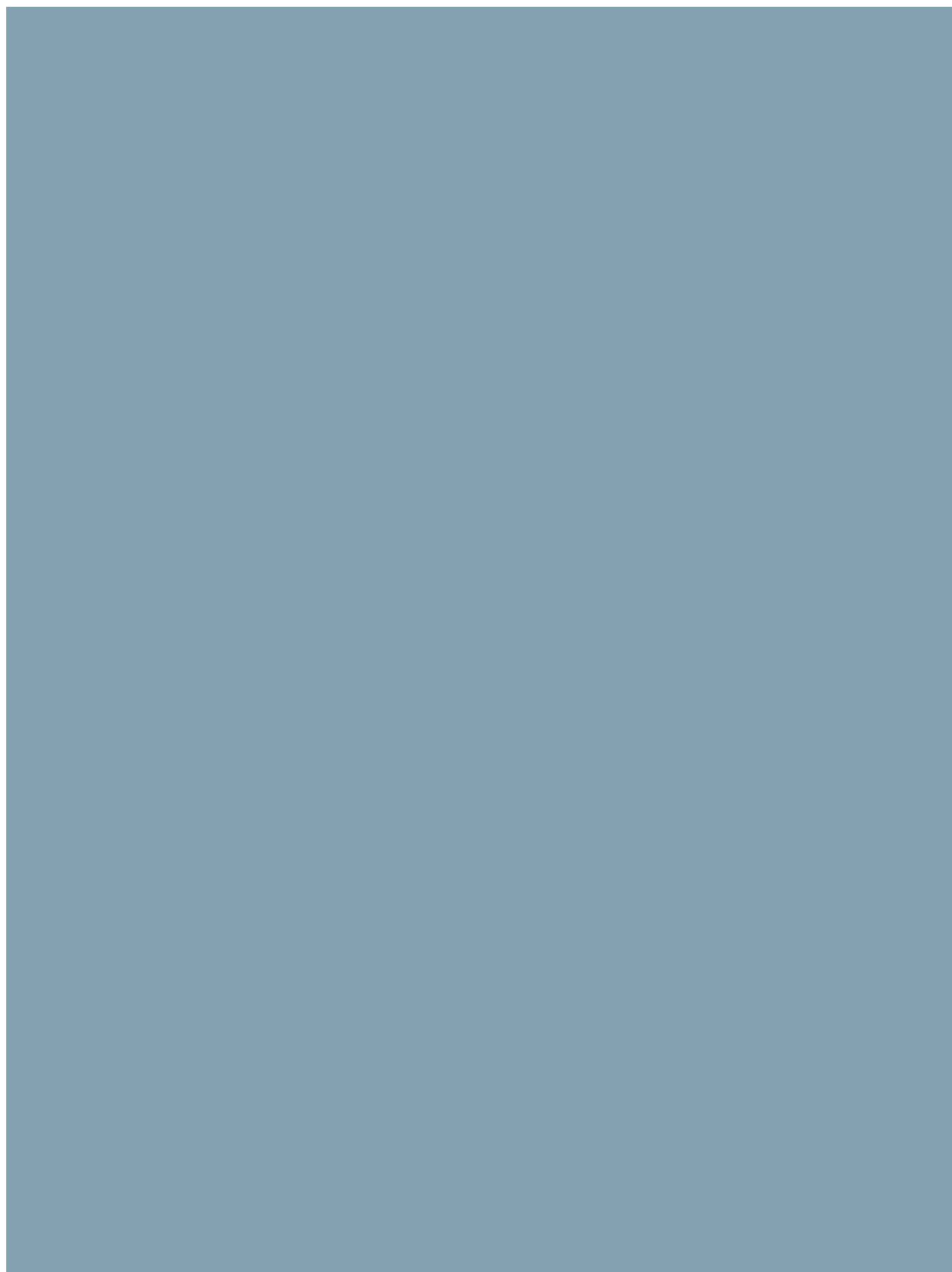
Only those renovations that will cost more than 50 % of the replacement cost of the building must comply with the Code. Additional information on the Nebraska Energy Code can be found at [http://www.neo.ne.gov/home\\_const/iecc/iecc\\_codes.htm](http://www.neo.ne.gov/home_const/iecc/iecc_codes.htm)

### Strategies and Initiatives

### » **Consider adopting the Nebraska Energy Code.**

The Nebraska Energy Code codifies best management practices for energy efficient construction, renovation, and rehabilitation.

Additional energy and conservation policies and actions will be identified in the implementation table.





# chapter 4

## Community Character

Plattsmouth's natural and built environments give the city a distinctive physical character and a strongly evocative image. This design character is one of the Plattsmouth's greatest marketing assets. Policies that preserve and enhance this resource will provide substantial returns on investment to the city.

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

People sometimes consider good community design a luxury, unnecessary to the process of business and economic growth. Yet, enhancing the quality of a community is a strategic economic decision, adding value to the community, increasing property values, and producing a city that its residents find rewarding. Good urban design promotes community growth and establishes an environment for healthy neighborhoods. Just as the land use, transportation, parks, and community services elements of this plan define aspects of its development vision, the community character element works to describe a long-term vision for the image and of the city.

People choose to live in places that are attractive and have a high quality of life. Building on its considerable assets will be vital, as Plattsmouth competes for new investment and residents. Indeed, the best economic interests of Plattsmouth lie in treasuring the best of the city's urban environment and applying its lessons and patterns to new growth.

## THE COMPONENTS OF COMMUNITY CHARACTER

This chapter includes three major components, each addressing parts of the urban environment that make the city distinctive. These components include:

**Place Character**, addressing the nature of important places in Plattsmouth's private and public environment, and including the principles that should guide development.

**Neighborhood Character**, addressing Plattsmouth's residential areas, their relationships to one another, and to the city as a whole.

**Green Character**, addressing Plattsmouth's natural features and landscape character as a defining element of the city's identity.

## PLACE CHARACTER

All parts of a city are important and contribute to the character of the community. That being said, some places are especially important because of their historic or symbolic role in the growth of the city, their visibility, their role in the everyday life of citizens, or their special physical and even spiritual qualities. People think of special places on many levels, beginning with their home, church, or other places of individual importance.

When we think about special places in a city, we address areas of civic importance that are typically the territory of all members of the community. Sometimes, these areas are referred to as "image centers" – the places that define the visual and even economic quality and health of the overall city. Often, these places of civic importance focus around historic parts of the city, such as downtowns and neighborhood centers. Downtown Plattsmouth's scale, public plaza, and distinguished historic architecture reflect the principles of city design during the era of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – principles which are now so valued that urban designers are attempting, under the banner of New Urbanism, to recreate them in contemporary developments.



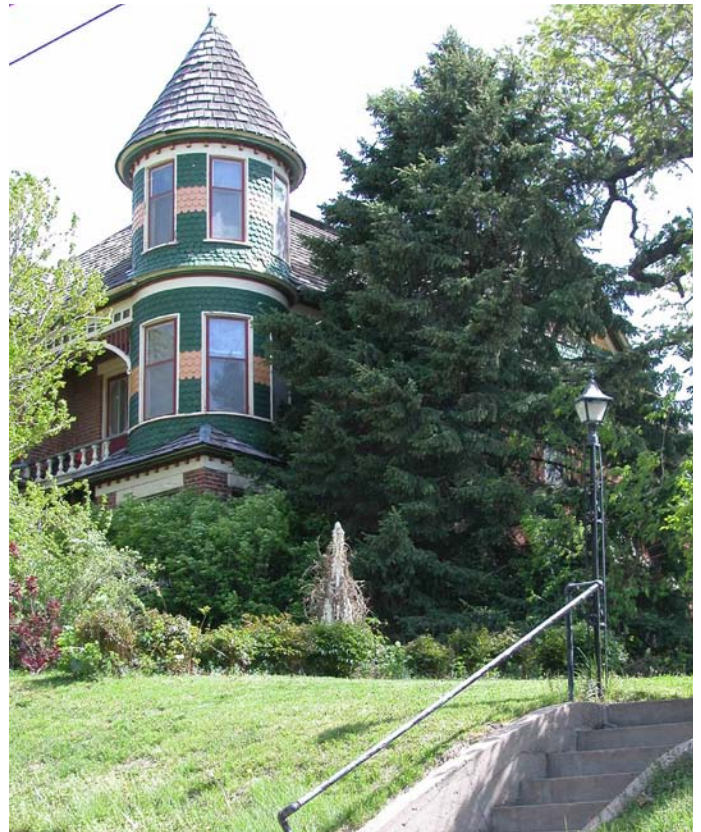
## Goal 1: Define Areas of Civic Importance

In most cities, the traditional city center and adjacent neighborhoods are seen as having the most community importance. The seats of government, finance, and business are often clustered in these areas. For example, Downtown Plattsmouth includes the centers of city and county government, major local financial institutions, the Public Library, and a significant collection of local retailers and professional offices.

However, as Plattsmouth has grown and developed, other important places outside of downtown have also grown. Some of these are currently centers of community life, while others have potential that is yet to emerge. These areas include: the Plattsmouth Community and Senior Center; the walkable neighborhoods of historic homes adjacent to downtown; the 18th Street connection between the schools, the community center and Memorial Park; and major commercial developments along US Highway 75. These unique features and areas, in aggregate, create Plattsmouth's distinctive character.

1. Plattsmouth should define areas of civic importance that receive special design review and attention as they grow and change.
2. Streets and public spaces within areas of civic importance should receive special design attention. In some cases, major streets in these areas are already identified as Urban Design Corridors, making them subject to specific streetscape and landscaping standards discussed in the Transportation Character section of this chapter.
  - Private development in these areas should respond to their importance as image centers for the community, and should be designed or retrofitted to improve their visual quality and the experience offered to users.





## Goal 2: A Distinctive Heart of the City

Downtown Plattsmouth is a diverse district, rich in historic and cultural importance, and a physically attractive and economically alive district. Despite the growth of more “suburban” commercial development, Downtown retains considerable vitality and remains the focus of civic, financial, professional, and a reasonable share of commercial life.

But Downtown Plattsmouth is more than a major civic and commercial center. It is one of the city’s lead attractions. A healthy and thriving contemporary downtown will serve all parts of the city’s development program, and can be a leading marketing asset as well. Continuing efforts to strengthen Downtown Plattsmouth should be viewed as investments that to ultimately enhance the economic value of land and homes throughout the city.

Additional discussion of opportunities related to Downtown Plattsmouth follow in the chapters relating to economic development and implementation.

### Objectives:

1. Downtown Plattsmouth will maintain its quality as the city’s image center, a visually attractive place filled with activity, a place that people find delightful to experience.
2. Downtown will grow stronger by taking advantage of development opportunities on underused sites both within and outside of the central commercial core.
3. Downtown should provide an environment that supports the growth and prosperity of local business, services, restaurants and entertainment, and specialty retailing.
4. Downtown will provide a stronger connection to its surrounding natural environment and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

## Goal 3: Public Art

Public art can become an important part of Plattsmouth’s cityscape. In many cities, highly successful programs have displayed sculpture on a loaned basis, and have brought delight to both residents and visitors. Neighborhood groups and students may also make their mark with art in the public environment. These projects, especially when geared to reinforce the innate qualities and history of Plattsmouth, will add personality and distinctiveness to the city.

### Objectives:

1. Public and environmental art should be a notable part of the cityscape.
2. Plattsmouth should identify locations as focuses for public art. These areas may include Urban Design Corridors, places of civic importance, public facilities, parks, and special districts.

## Goal 4: Historic Preservation and Conservation

Plattsmouth has a rich history that stretches for over 150 years. This history is particularly reflected in the city's superb architecture and neighborhoods, most notably in downtown but also in some residential and mixed-use areas outside of the central district. In addition, features that older adults consider relatively "new" now qualify for historic designations. For example, buildings constructed in the mid-1960s now meet the 50-year old guideline used by the National Register of Historic Places. These buildings and sites are important assets for the city, provide the possibility of significant economic return, and help tell the city's story through history.

### Objectives:

1. Plattsmouth, always cognizant of its history and architectural quality, should institute activities and programs that recognize, promote, protect and - where possible - increase the economic life of historic buildings, sites, and districts.
2. In general, the city should create policies to protect and conserve its existing housing and building stock.
3. In key districts, measures such as design guidelines, historic overlay districts, and national/local designation of historic assets and landmarks can be a useful tool to protect neighborhood character. These tools should be used in combination with a program of education and incentives for proactive homeowners.



## Goal 5: Gateways

Like buildings, communities have entrances – points of transition between the "outside" and the "inside." At these gateways, the traveler passes into the urban sphere of influence, and the city has its first opportunity to communicate its quality and sense of place. With the completion of reconstruction along US 75, Plattsmouth has a unique opportunity to create clearly defined entrances and exits to the city, which communicate the character and values of the place and its people.

### Objectives:

1. Plattsmouth will develop a community gateway enhancement program that will effectively communicate the quality of the community.
2. New gateways along US 75 warrant special attention. Because of the continued importance of access from US 75, the Webster Boulevard, 8th Avenue, and Chicago Avenue entrances are very important. The First Avenue and Avenue B entrances will be a significant points of community access, but are a lower priority than other gateways.
3. A comprehensive system of wayfinding should be established to help guide visitors around Plattsmouth. This should include key destinations such as athletic facilities, the High School, the historic downtown district, and the riverfront. Each of these areas should have site-specific signage directing visitors to key features and attractions, as well as to parking facilities.

## WAYFINDING EXAMPLES

### DOWNTOWN OMAHA



Gateway/Vehicular Signage

<b>Omaha Visitors Center</b> 2 blks	4 blks <b>Durham Museum</b>
<b>CenturyLink Center</b> 7 blks	5 blks <b>Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts</b>
<b>Holland Performing Arts Center</b> 5 blks	7 blks <b>Orpheum Theater</b>
<b>The Riverfront</b> 8 blks	
<b>Gene Leahy Mall</b> 2 blks	

Pedestrian Signage



## Goal 6: Building Design and Scale along Corridors

Plattsmouth's most important urban transportation corridor is largely, but not entirely, commercial in character. Auto-oriented development of different eras often do not relate well to the street. Often set back from the property line and separated from the public environment by a parking lot, the advertising sign often becomes more important than the building in the streetscape. In addition, the front door is often not connected to the sidewalk and little attention is paid to its own design or the design of neighboring buildings. The appearance and function of transportation corridors depends on the type of edge condition established by adjacent private development.

### Objectives:

1. Buildings and adjacent private developments on major corridors should contribute to the quality of the street environment and should enhance the experience of the motorized or non-motorized traveler along the corridor. A strongly defined building edge is especially important along wider streets.
2. A clear connection should be provided between public sidewalks and pathways and the entrances to buildings and adjacent major development.
3. Buildings should be at least as apparent as signs and parking lots to travelers along major corridors.
4. The visual impact of parking lots directly visible and adjacent to the street should be reduced, although the route from the street to parking areas should be extremely clear.



## NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Plattsmouth has a wide variety of quality neighborhoods with a high degree of identification and community. Some of these geographic distinctions are caused by the nature of the land and the city's development patterns. Along with the significant topographical variation, the pattern of railroad tracks, and drainageways, created a grid of separate development districts.

These forces created a pattern of neighborhoods – partially self-contained areas that have a distinct structure and character, that are nevertheless linked to one another by streets, greenways, and trails. Many of these neighborhoods provide walkable environments, with entrance points, open spaces, parks and recreational facilities, and sometimes public schools within relatively easy walking distance. They are the building blocks of community on which the civic life of Plattsmouth flourishes.

### Goal 1: Support Neighborhood Character

A community-wide policy that builds on the identity and character of neighborhoods should first identify these areas or clusters. The fabric of the city, including street patterns, edges and barriers, entrance points, where local and arterial streets intersect, school sites, and parks provide important clues. The neighborhoods become the basis for future neighborhood character efforts and, if properly delineated, can also provide the foundation for pride of place and small-scale improvements through neighborhood-level organizations.

### Objectives:

1. Using existing neighborhood analysis boundaries and consultation with neighborhoods, Plattsmouth should define its neighborhoods. These areas in some cases will represent clusters or alliances of separate subdivisions that share street patterns, public features, or other aspects of character.
2. The city should encourage the creation of neighborhood associations, including providing incentives for enhancement programs. These associations should carry out such activities as social or neighborhood events, landscape enhancements, park improvements, and other positive actions. They can also provide a forum of direct communication between the city and residents on specific projects that affect the neighborhoods.

## Goal 2: Gateways and Neighborhood Connectors

Neighborhoods should provide both good living environments and a strong public face to the rest of the city. The public environment of neighborhoods is largely made up of gateways and neighborhood connectors. These are areas that may be a focus for initial neighborhood work and investment.

Gateways are the entrances to the neighborhood. These are typically the intersection of the neighborhood's major street and an external arterial or neighborhood edge. The gateways are excellent locations for enhancements such as neighborhood identification signs or monuments, landscaping or flower plantings, or special street treatments such as medians.

Neighborhood connectors are the principal public streets for the neighborhood. From a functional perspective, the neighborhood connector are the collectors that run throughout the neighborhood, and channel traffic from the local system. From a civic point of view, neighborhood connectors should be public spaces that connect parks and schools, and may become the promenades of the neighborhood – the street that people walk or bicycle along to reach activity centers, and see and be seen. Because neighborhood connectors often serve as collectors, traffic calming techniques such as roundabouts or pavement narrowing are appropriate, and can also add both beauty and safety to the neighborhood.

### Objectives:

1. The identification of Plattsmouth's neighborhoods should be reinforced by attractive gateways, usually at the intersection of a neighborhood connectors and a neighborhood edge such as a defining arterial street. These gateways may emphasize the special character of the neighborhood, and may include landscape, lighting, graphics, or neighborhood art. Guidelines for the design of the gateways should be established, but they should allow for individual differences
  - a. **When considering major new neighborhoods for approval Plattsmouth should require attractive neighborhood gateways or other appealing entry features.**
2. Neighborhood connectors should serve as the main streets of Plattsmouth's neighborhoods. They should function in a number of ways – as local collectors that move traffic calmly but efficiently to the edge of the neighborhood, as promenades and public spaces, and as safe and reasonably direct bicycle routes. These streets should be excellent public spaces, linking neighborhood gateways with parks, schools, public facilities, neighborhood commercial uses, and activity centers. They should be a focus for public and neighborhood investments that reinforce their use and make them a source of neighborhood pride and delight.
3. The neighborhood connectors, when designated, completed, and integrated with the pathway system, should form an interconnected network that leads people through all parts of the city, and prevents neighborhoods from becoming isolated from one another.

## Goal 3: Neighborhoods Form in Newly Developing Areas

The Neighborhood Character section explicitly addresses the character of Plattsmouth's existing neighborhoods. These patterns, an important part of the city's neighborhood character, should also be expressed in new development areas, which are integrated into the concepts of the Future Land Use Plan. Indeed, an emphasis on neighborhood identification, civic quality, and walkability, can create exceptional neighborhoods that remain true to the intrinsic nature of the city.

### Objectives:

1. New residential development should be consistent in basic structure with the city's neighborhood village framework. This should not be taken to discourage innovative development designs, but rather to promote continuity and connectedness between existing and new neighborhoods.
2. New neighborhoods should provide an intimate, walkable environment for residents, with clear connections to community facilities such as parks, schools, activity centers, and commercial development.
3. New residential development should continue the patterns of gateways and village streets that are evident in many existing neighborhoods. When new neighborhoods expand the size of an existing neighborhood village, the village street should be extended to connect the new and established parts of the neighborhood district.



## GREEN CHARACTER

Plattsmouth is located amid a number of natural landscapes, including rolling and fertile agricultural plains, small, steep canyons formed by natural drainage to the Platte and Missouri Rivers, and flat, alluvial river basin. This range of landscapes gives rise to a strong place character associated with natural processes and native plants.

This “green character” is an essential piece of Plattsmouth’s urban identity and should be protected and enhanced. Although this element of Plattsmouth’s character has its genesis in natural processes, it can be augmented by wisely directed human interventions around the built environment. This plan considers goals, objectives, policies, and implementation measures to help the city conserve these natural features and expand the use of these features.

### Goal 1: A Complete Trail and Pathway System

Both the Transportation and Parks elements of the Plattsmouth Plan address the city’s pathway and trail system. This network is important on a number of levels: it connects the city’s neighborhoods and activity centers, provides an important recreation resource and community amenity, and supplements the street system.

#### Objectives

1. Plattsmouth should develop a complete trail network that increases the number of multi-use trails separated from roadways. The city’s natural drainage ways and parks will provide the routes for some of these off-road trail connections.
2. Separate trail segments should be connected into a unified system by off-street pathways or by adapting strategic streets to multi-modal use.
3. Plattsmouth should expand its program of multi-modal roadways by continuing the development of roadside pathways along major streets, including new street connections.
4. The existing pathway and trail system should be in a state of good repair, and trails that are substandard in condition or width should be upgraded.
5. The pathway system should be connected to pedestrian circulation in neighborhoods, commercial and mixed use areas, and should provide access to most of the city’s major recreational, civic, cultural, and commercial facilities.

6. New parks should also be connected to the pathway system.

### Goal 2: Green Streets

Streets cover more than 20% of Plattsmouth’s developed area and make up the city’s largest public space, using more land than parks and civic spaces combined. Their appearance has a major impact on the visual quality of the city. Many of Plattsmouth’s tree-lined streets illustrate the impact of quality street design, and also help to manage traffic speeds.

Elements that contribute to the successful functioning of major streets as public spaces include:

- » Linear greenways on both sides of the street with sidewalks and/or pathways on both sides of the street.
- » Sidewalks and pathways should be set back far enough from the street to provide separation from vehicular traffic and provide adequate space for street landscaping and snow storage.
- » Attractive landscaping that provides shade and helps define the pedestrian and motorized domains of the street.
- » Ornamental or colored paving surfaces, defining sidewalk edges, raised medians, bike lanes, or other areas of special focus.

While major streets are very important and experienced by most people, most of Plattsmouth’s streets serve residential areas and have a major impact on neighborhood environments. Streets of appropriate width, combined with sidewalk setbacks and street landscaping can both provide more attractive residential settings and prevent traffic from moving through neighborhoods at excessive speeds.

Neighborhood streets in existing and developing areas should also contribute to Plattsmouth’s Green Character.

#### Objectives

1. Plattsmouth’s major streets should include landscaped environments that include trees, landscaped areas, and special features such as public art. Landscaping should be incorporated into all new major street construction projects.
2. Plattsmouth’s local streets should be appropriately landscaped to reinforce the residential character and reinforce the quality of

Plattsmouth's neighborhoods.

### Goal 3: Good Landscaping on Public and Private Property

Greening of the public environment is very important and can help enhance Plattsmouth's already attractive cityscape.

However, reasonable landscaping of private development projects, focused along major civic corridors, is also very important. The city's development regulations should be upgraded to require focused landscaping of such projects.

Landscaping should occur where it makes the most difference – at the public/private interface and between land uses with potential conflicts. In addition, landscaped areas can help to manage stormwater by increasing permeable surfaces and reducing the quantity and speed of urban runoff into drainage ways.

Typically, though, new requirements do not apply to previously developed property. To address this problem, Plattsmouth may consider a pilot landscape incentive program, providing financial incentives on a competitive basis to encourage existing projects to provide landscaping.

Recognizing that most existing developments cannot fully comply with new standards, the incentive program establishes priorities, beginning with landscaping adjacent to public rights-of-way.

#### Objectives

1. All new public and private development should be attractively landscaped to improve the visual quality of the city, manage stormwater, provide shade in the summer, help define access and circulation ways through large projects, and increase the economic value of properties in the city.
2. Large expanses of paving should be broken with landscaping to reduce the effects of summertime heat and to slow stormwater run-off.

# IMPLEMENTING CHARACTER: AN ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

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This Community Character chapter proposes a variety of policies that use the inherent character of Plattsburgh to create an even better and more attractive community. These recommendations fall into four implementation categories. Each of these categories requires different implementation and priority setting processes, a common, citizen-based constituency should unify them and help form partnerships between the public and private sectors. This is a role that could be assumed by the existing planning commission.

## 1. GUIDELINES AND REVIEW

Plattsburgh should undertake a review of its development ordinances, including its zoning and subdivision ordinances. Full implementation of the Community Character element requires new guidelines that will affect the design of residential and commercial development. These features will not necessarily add cost to development. They will direct the design of projects to promote greater connectedness and continuity with the character of the city. The Planning Commission is one of the stakeholder groups that should be involved in a participatory process to complete relevant ordinance modifications.

## 2. INTEGRATE VISUAL DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS INTO PUBLIC PROJECTS

This simply includes changes to the normal way of doing business that include design enhancements in public projects. These are most applicable to street and transportation improvements, but also affect other public works projects. These improvements should be designed to be as low-maintenance as is practical, while still creating the desired visual effect.

## 3. EXISTING PROJECT ENHANCEMENT

The Plattsburgh Planning Commission, representing both the private and public sector, can be an extremely useful catalyst in helping to improve the functional and aesthetic design of projects. The city should also be prepared to offer assistance in these projects, sometimes with capital investment. This presents challenges as it involves using public dollars in private development efforts.

## 4. CAPITAL PROJECTS

The Community Character element recommends a series of capital projects both large and small. Some require city funding, some require public/private partnerships, and others can use external sources such as Transportation Enhancement funds. Setting priorities should be a community-based process; as a result, this plan does not recommend a top ten projects list. Instead, the Planning Commission, representing a variety of public and private interests, should review this element in detail and develop a system for assessing priorities. The outcome of this review should be a Plattsburgh Civic Character Capital Plan that considers a variety of funding sources and becomes part of the city's Capital Improvement Program.

The Neighborhood Character element suggests ongoing programs to help fund small-scale neighborhood improvements such as Gateway or Village Street projects, or the installation of traffic calming projects. While these programs should be funded on a regular, ongoing basis by the city, the Planning Commission may establish priorities and application guidelines, and serve as an initial review organization to evaluate projects.







# chapter 5

## Economic Development

Plattsmouth should continue to develop a diverse economic base, with a focus on enterprises that capitalize on the strengths of the area. Policies should support both the attraction and retention of new businesses and support to ensure the continued operation and growth of existing businesses.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Plattsmouth should continue to develop a diverse economic base, with a focus on enterprises that capitalize on the strengths of the area. Policies should support both the attraction and retention of new businesses and support to ensure the continued operation and growth of existing businesses.

## INTRODUCTION

In Plattsmouth, as is the case in many similar-sized communities across the Midwest, the economic health of the city is of concern. While attracting new businesses and commercial development is an ongoing challenge, Plattsmouth boasts several advantages not enjoyed by other 'comparison' communities in terms of location, resources, and amenities.

### Employment

Currently, Plattsmouth offers a range of jobs across industries with specific emphasis on office and administrative occupations. These fields comprise 22% of local employment. For a more in-depth look at employment by industry and occupation please refer to Figures 1.6 and 1.7 in Chapter 1.

### Household Income

Plattsmouth's median household income is nominally higher than the average across Nebraska, and has grown at a significantly greater rate over the past 10 years. Median household income in Plattsmouth grew 30% between 2000 and 2010, as compared with a 25% growth in the statewide median household income. See Figure 1.8, in Chapter 1, for a closer look at how income in Plattsmouth compares to other cities in the region.

## Retail Sales

Given Plattsmouth's location within an easy drive of Omaha it is not surprising that, for a wide range of retail goods, residents shop at specialty stores in or around Omaha. That being said, there are some categories of goods that shoppers might choose to purchase locally, if provided a cost-competitive option.

The retail 'leakage' of an area is determined by comparing consumer expenditures on a certain type of good with the retail sales in an area. Should consumer expenditures exceed retail sales, some of those expenditures are being made outside the community. Alternatively, if retail sales exceed local consumer expenditures, the area is likely attracting consumers from outside the community.

Plattsmouth is a significant exporter of dollars in nearly every retail category. Again, this is likely because of the wealth of retail options available within a short drive. That being said, there remains the opportunity to foster a smaller scale local vendor of some of these goods.

One bright spot, in which Plattsmouth attracts retail dollars to the community, is food and beverage stores. In this category, where consumers shop convenience as much as price or selection, Plattsmouth attracts over \$5 million in retail sales.

This suggests that, to a large extent, Plattsmouth residents are doing their grocery shopping in-town and that Plattsmouth serves as a destination for grocery shopping to the surrounding area. Given that people are already commuting from the outlying area to Plattsmouth for their grocery needs, as price comparable merchants in other retail sectors are established it is possible that they can capture some of the retail dollars currently being spent in other jurisdictions.

A few of the more noteworthy opportunities to capture lost retail spending include:

- » Building materials and garden equipment (\$7.9 million)
- » Health and personal care products (\$5.6 million)
- » Clothing and clothing accessories (\$4.3 million)
- » Full-service restaurants (\$3.7 million)
- » Sporting goods, hobby supplies, music, and books (\$1.4 million)

## ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Plattsmouth has a number of specific geographic areas which present different types of economic development opportunities.



Photo Credit: Dan Rohan

### Downtown

Downtown Plattsmouth will continue to be the economic and civic heart of the community. The recent improvements to the public realm should continue to pay economic dividends and there are several exceptional opportunities for continuing investment and improvement.



Photo Credit: Dan Rohan

### 75 Corridor

Improved connectivity to Omaha and the surrounding area has made the US 75 corridor increasingly attractive to commercial development. The success of the new HyVee and accessory development will likely give renewed confidence to developers of additional properties.



### Chicago Avenue Commercial Corridor

Chicago Avenue currently has a mix of uses, but offers the potential to create smaller, urban-scale, local serving retail in a location that has easy access from adjacent neighborhoods as well as relatively strong automotive traffic.

### Industrial Growth Areas

Plattsmouth enjoys relative proximity to the Omaha metro area, strong transportation connectivity, and a large supply of nearby undeveloped land. This recommends it as a location with potential for the development of properties for additional light-industrial and manufacturing.



### Plattsmouth Municipal Airport

Plattsmouth has a well-appointed airport, for a city of its size. Given its size, proximity to the Omaha metropolitan area, and the availability of buildable land adjacent to the airport, it is a strong candidate for promotion as a center for private and recreational aviation.



## DOWNTOWN

The downtown district is the social, economic, and civic heart of Plattsburgh. It embodies the history and character that makes Plattsburgh unique and serves as a destination for residents and visitors alike to enjoy.

The successful downtown streetscaping and sewer separation project of 2010 brought a renewed sense of civic pride and excitement to the district. This new spirit, along with thoughtful promotion and support for local businesses has fostered a new wave of vitality and development energy. A number of new businesses and restaurants have opened in the district creating a destination attraction that has begun to regularly attract customers from outside of Plattsburgh.



Photo Credit: Dan Rohan



Photo Credit: Dan Rohan

## Programming and Events

Another key aspect to the ongoing success of the downtown district is the ongoing seasonal programming offered throughout the summer months. These events which run the range from weekly concerts in the event plaza to larger events like Cruising Main and the Plattsburgh Harvest Festival draw new visitors and potential customers to the downtown district. As new visitors come to the district they create an impression of Plattsburgh as an event destination, which they can then share with their social networks. This kind of positive self-reinforcing loop can do more than any targeted advertising campaign to sustain and improve the economic fortunes of the downtown district.



Photo Credit: Dan Rohan



Photo Credit: Dan Rohan



## Historic Character

In order to protect and enhance the character of Downtown Plattsmouth the city, in collaboration with downtown property owners, created a local historic preservation district. This preservation district enables property owners in the district to use state and federal programs to offset some of the cost of preserving and rehabilitating their historic buildings. These state and federal programs, in conjunction with grants for façade improvements and rehabilitation, have played a role in the ongoing improvements to the buildings in the downtown district.

Sadly, in January of 2014, the downtown district suffered a temporary setback in its forward momentum. A significant fire broke out, damaging two prominent buildings beyond repair. These buildings had particular significance, in that they sat diagonally across from the Cass County Courthouse and adjacent to the area that, in the summer, serves as Plattsmouth's public event plaza and stage. Presently, the sites of these two buildings have been cleared and exist as vacant lots. Though the loss of the historic structures is regrettable, these prominent development sites present an interesting opportunity for new development in Downtown Plattsmouth.

## Parking

As in many downtown districts, parking is perceived to be a concern in Downtown Plattsmouth. The perceived shortage is particularly acute around the Cass County Courthouse. Downtown business owners have indicated, anecdotally, that county employees and visitors to the courthouse will monopolize street parking in the business district. There are off-street parking facilities located in downtown, and improved wayfinding and identification may increase their use.

Though there is little interest in returning meters to the on-street parking stalls, the creation and enforcement of time-limits for on-street parking may warrant additional study and consideration. By enforcing a parking time limit, while providing free parking, Plattsmouth could incentivize the use of off-street lots by employees and other longer-term visitors to the district without creating an undue burden for shorter-term visitors to businesses in downtown.

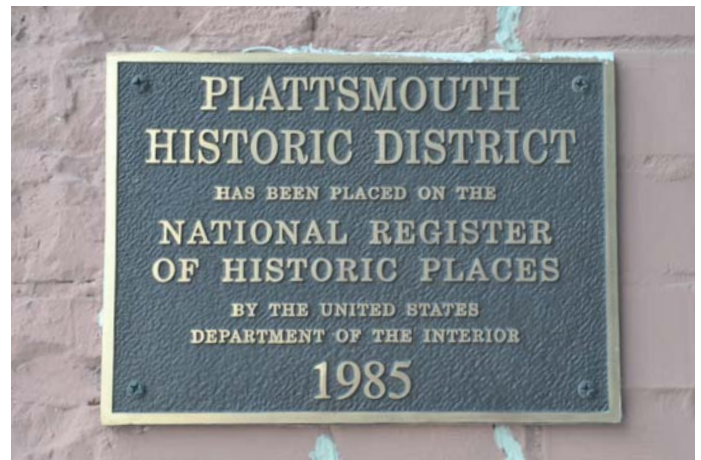
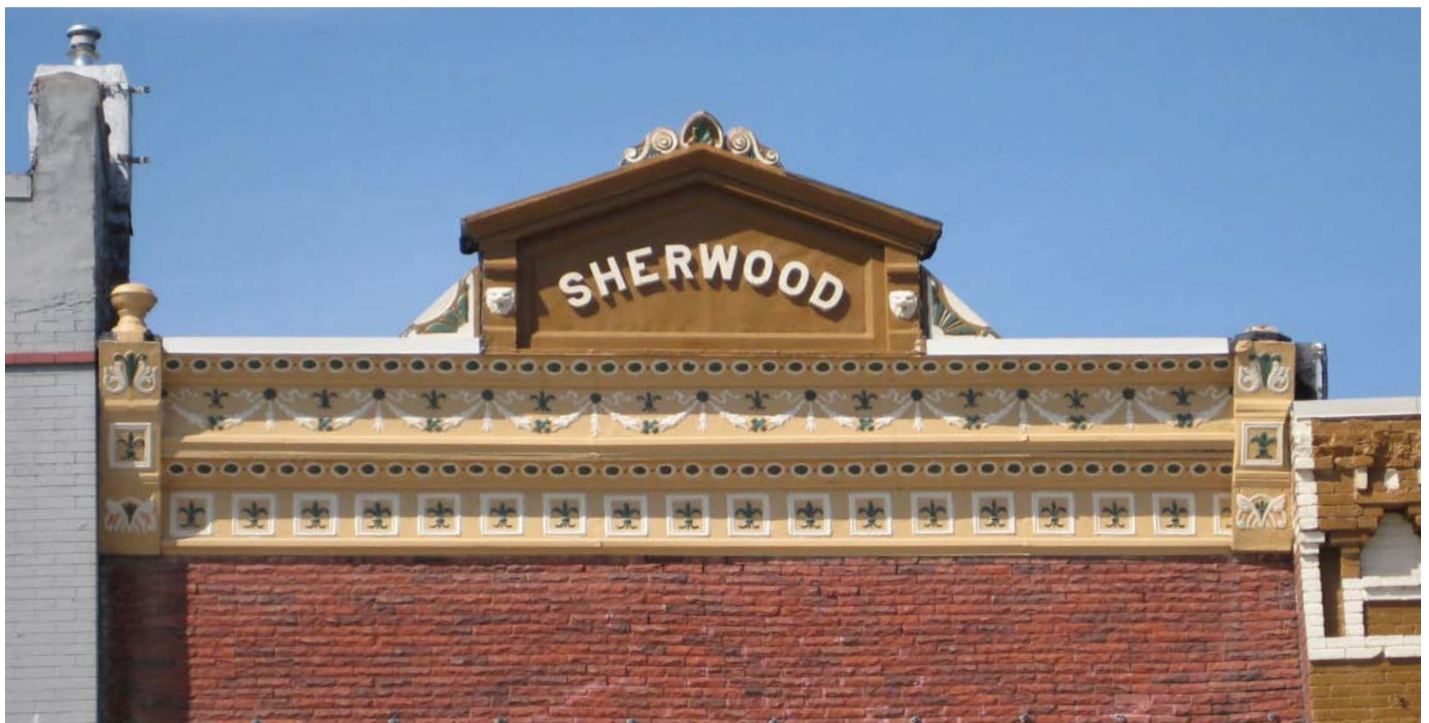


Photo Credit: Dan Rohan





# US 75 CORRIDOR

## AUTO ORIENTED COMMERCIAL

As the success of the new commercial development anchored by HyVee has demonstrated, Plattsmouth can serve as a secondary regional market for certain classes of goods and services. There are a number of sites ready for new development along this corridor. Additionally, there are some currently developed sites that have become underutilized and are probably ready for redevelopment. Redevelopment of these sites offers additional benefit to the city in that they are already served by public infrastructure.

All the sites along the US 75 corridor have significant importance to Plattsmouth beyond their economic potential. For many, their primary impression of Plattsmouth is formed as they pass through this corridor en route to another location. This is why the civic design corridor regulations, already in place, are so important. To further project an image of good city-making and public order, access to these sites should be simplified using a continuous access road at the front or rear of the area. As new sites are developed, they should transition well into surrounding land uses. This can be achieved using vegetated buffers to protect neighboring areas from site lighting and by creating additional access routes to adjacent areas to promote easy vehicular and non-motorized access.



Photo Credit: Dan Rohan

## CHICAGO AVENUE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

In addition to its downtown core and automobile oriented commercial districts, Plattsmouth features a secondary commercial corridor along Chicago Avenue. Commercial development along this strip provides a wide range of goods and services targeted primarily at the local market.

This corridor cuts through primarily residential neighborhoods and is a primary access point to Plattsmouth for travelers and residents approaching from the south.

Though this is an important area of commercial activity for Plattsmouth, some of the properties have become vacant and fallen into modest disrepair. These vacant properties are ripe for redevelopment and these redeveloped properties have the potential to both increase neighborhood access to goods and services and to improve the overall image of Plattsmouth.



Photo Credit: Dan Rohan

## INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AREAS

Regional economic development planners have identified an unmet need for building sites that are located near to transportation assets and within an easy commute of the area's workforce. There are a number of sites in Plattsmouth, particularly on the southern side of town that are well suited for development as manufacturing, warehousing, or light industrial facilities.

These sites are of significant size and do not have significant grade changes that would need to be mitigated in advance of development. They are well served by infrastructure and the transportation network, and are located a reasonable distance from residential growth areas. Though the identified sites are adjacent to a rail line, they do not have a spur in place for access to the rail network. The attraction of a few businesses of this nature would add to the diversity of Plattsmouth's economy and the base of taxable land, while increasing the demand for city services less than an equivalent taxable value of residential development.



Future Road Extension



## PLATTSMOUTH MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Plattsmouth's airport offers an admirable set of facilities and services for a community of Plattsmouth's size. As has been demonstrated with the popularity of Millard's airport, with proper promotion and support, a small municipal airport can be a driver for economic development, with business stemming from both the private and recreational aviation markets. As other airports in the region begin to grow to their capacity to support non-commercial service, Plattsmouth's airport could be well positioned to gain additional market share.



## TOURISM

In addition to development-related economic development, Plattsmouth has a lot to offer as a regional destination for tourism and recreation. From its small-town feel to the natural amenities that it offers, Plattsmouth would be well-served to continue to refine and augment the marketing of its attractions.

### Downtown Events/Attractions

Plattsmouth's Downtown Association has been extremely active in promoting the district as a regional designation. This has been achieved through weekly evening concerts and special events through the summer months, Plattsmouth's Harvest Festival in the fall, and seasonal programming during the holiday season. Additionally, following the streetscape improvements, Plattsmouth's downtown has seen a resurgence of new businesses and restaurants.



## Schilling and Gilmour Wildlife Management Areas

The Schilling WMA is a popular attraction among the area's hunters, fishermen, birders, and nature enthusiasts. Its 1,755 acres is bordered by the Platte and Missouri Rivers, and is primarily designated as a protected area for birds to rest and feed as they migrate. No overnight camping is allowed on-site, so most visitors use the facility on a day-trip basis.

Nearby William Gilmour WMA (also known as Tobacco Island) offers excellent fishing and hunting opportunities as well. Though access to this island is by boat only, it remains popular with outdoor enthusiasts in the region.

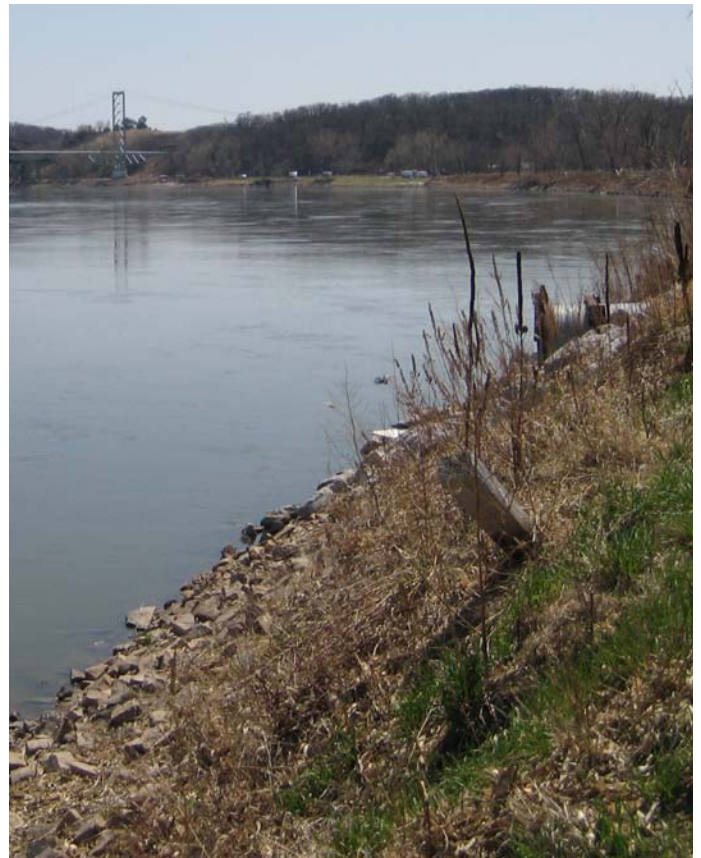
Though neither of these areas are controlled by the city it is an asset unique to Plattsmouth and should figure into the city's tourism strategy.

## Riverfront Development



The City of Plattsmouth recently acquired the Castaway Pointe site along the Missouri River and plans to develop it as a recreational site. Though a specific design has yet to be determined, potential elements could include camp sites, recreational vehicle sites, an improved marina and boat launch, and a playground.

This development, with its prized Missouri River access and convenience to a historic downtown district, would be one of a very few of its kind in either Nebraska or Iowa. The park could be a boon to tourism both in the summer vacation months and potentially into the autumn as hunters descend on the Schilling Wildlife Management Area.









# chapter 6

## Housing

Through targeted investments and partnerships with the private sector and individual property owners, the City of Plattsmouth should work to remedy housing shortages through the ongoing creation of housing at a wide range of scales and prices.

# HOUSING

The majority of land in every city in America is taken up by housing. It is the place where we spend a significant portion of our lives and its condition and appearance greatly affects both the lives we live and the perception of our cities.

Plattsmouth's residential areas are among its most important urban resources. The city's housing stock is its largest single investment, in terms of both private and public capital. Additionally, residents measure their satisfaction with their community by the quality of their blocks and neighborhoods.

Plattsmouth's incremental and traditional development patterns have allowed for easy neighborhood connections and movement around the community. Like many communities of its size, Plattsmouth's residential land use is dominated by single-family housing styles; however, demand for both quality rental and new owner occupied housing is strong.

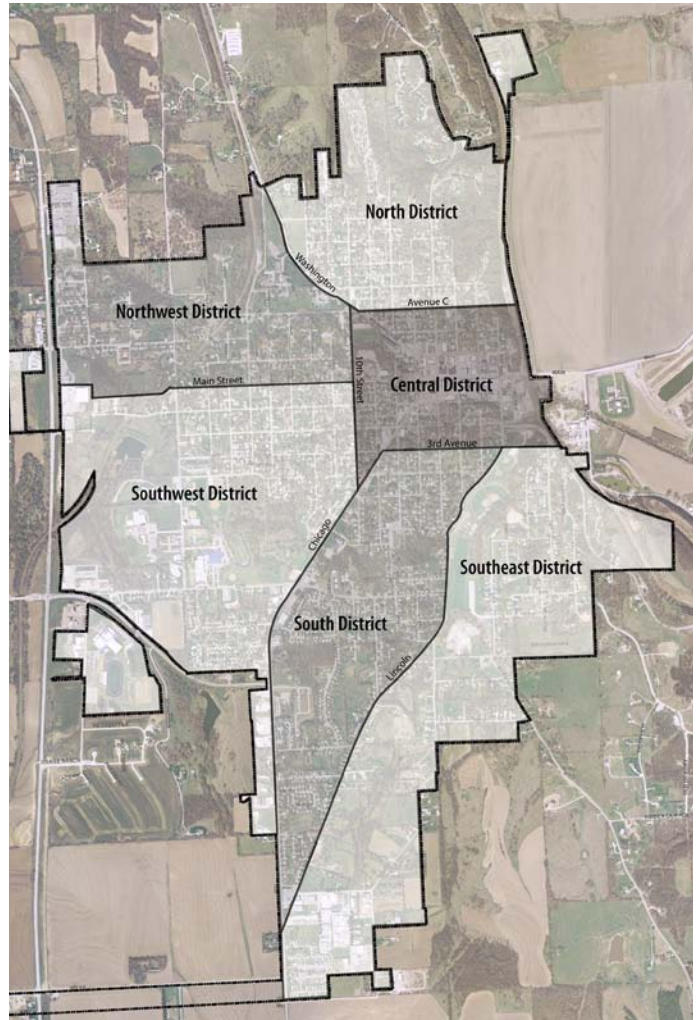
## Neighborhoods

Plattsmouth's neighborhood development patterns are unique among many comparably sized communities in Nebraska. Each of its neighborhoods has a mixture of housing sizes, values, and other characteristics. This pattern is partly the result of Plattsmouth's topography and its riverfront origins. For the purpose of the evaluating the character, condition, and policy strategies, this chapter establishes six neighborhood planning districts.

- » North: Contains much of the oldest and most historic homes in the city, as well as recently platted subdivisions. Boundaries are Webster/ Washington Boulevard on the west, Avenue C on the south, the Burlington Northern railroad on the east, and the city limits on the north.
- » Northwest: An extremely mixed residential community in terms of age, price range, and density of housing. Boundaries are Webster and Washington on the east, Main Street on the southwest of 10th Street.
- » Southeast: Dominated by single-family dwellings, this neighborhood contains older developed areas and large vacant areas with "paper plats." Boundaries are Rhylander Park and Smith/Lincoln Avenue on the west, the city limits on the south, and Burlington North tracks on the east and northeast.
- » South: A newer, mixed-density neighborhood with substantial tracts of vacant, unplatted property. Boundaries are 3rd Avenue south between Chicago and Lincoln Avenues.
- » Southwest: A newer neighborhood with large vacant tracts of land abutting suburban scale commercial development along Highway 75. Boundaries are 10th Street and Chicago Avenue on the east, Main Street on the north and the city limits on the south and west.
- » Central: With older, predominately single-family housing, this neighborhood encompasses the downtown and is completely surrounded by urban development. Boundaries are Avenue C on the north, 3rd and Chicago Avenues on the south, 10th Street on the west and the city limits on the east.

Each of these neighborhoods is distinct in character and, as noted in previous local planning documents, "a good city is formed by a network of healthy parts and their boundaries are fluid as people travel and conduct daily business throughout the community." This statement emphasizes the importance of healthy neighborhoods as a major building block of the healthy city.

MAP 6.1 NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICTS



## Housing Condition

The physical condition of Plattsmouth's housing stock was surveyed as part of the 2010 Housing Assessment and Strategy Plan. The assessment is based on a "windshield survey" assessment method, wherein structures are observed from the street and rated on a five-point scale. These ratings are based on visible characteristics only and do not suggest intimate knowledge of the underlying structural condition of the home. Structures were rated:

- » Excellent: no rehab or maintenance needs evident; new, recently restored, or otherwise excellent
- » Good: sound condition, little evidence of maintenance needs, deficiencies are minor and non-structural
- » Fair: structurally sound, but approximately three or more minor non-structural deficiencies exist
- » Poor: major rehabilitation is needed for non-structural and possibly one structural deficiency
- » Demolish: deteriorated beyond saving with noted structural deficiencies

The survey included an assessment of the city's mobile home parks. The condition assessment was done for the entire mobile home park and not on each individual site. Within those parks, the total number of units was counted with the overall park being assigned a rating.

Housing condition varies widely across Plattsouth. Over the course of its history, larger homes were constructed on the ridges throughout the community, more modest housing was developed in the lower lying areas with major arterials being aligned to follow the drainageways and, more recently housing is being developed at the periphery of the original bounds. With the contiguous pattern of housing development in Plattsouth, the nature of housing condition is primarily a matter of concentration – the impact of vacant lots and deteriorated homes on their respective neighborhoods.

The survey revealed that the condition of housing stock in the City of Plattsouth is generally strong; however, several opportunities exist to strengthen neighborhood vitality through targeted initiatives. Of the total 2,160 units surveyed, 3.6% were excellent condition, 59% were good, 28% were fair, 8% were poor, and less than 1% was identified beyond saving.

Map 6.2 identifies areas where housing condition and other variables have created opportunities for positive intervention. These opportunity areas follow:

- » **Neighborhood Conservation Areas:** These are areas where the existing housing stock has a cluster of houses in fair condition. Policies for this area should be to conserve the existing housing stock with a coordinated rehabilitation strategy.
- » **Infill/Redevelopment Areas:** These areas have more serious housing deficiencies and vacant lots than the neighborhood conservation areas. An infill/redevelopment area is identified as a significant cluster of deficient structures or vacant lots where a targeted program to remove deteriorated properties and develop vacant lots will have a major impact.
- » **Redevelopment Areas:** These areas are focused on the mobile home parks with the most deteriorated structures. Infrastructure improvements and removal of deteriorated structures should create safe affordable housing and stronger neighborhoods. Infrastructure improvements should address stormwater drainage, urban street standards and any water and sewer infrastructure.
- » **Vacant Lots:** These sites are platted but undeveloped lots are still available within and adjacent to the city.

This condition analysis, while an important tool in understanding the state and future of Plattsouth's housing stock, is only placed into proper context when understood through the lens of the demographic and economics of the community. These factors have been explored earlier in this report and will be expanded upon through the coming section. This combined analysis can help identify imbalances in the housing market and suggest the direction of housing policy.

## Housing Units and Occupancy Indicators

Figure 6.2 considers the total number of housing units in Plattsouth as well as relevant information about residential vacancy, whether occupants are renting or owning their home, and the median expense or value. The figure compares estimated values from 2000 to 2010 to assess the change in these indicators over time.

- » The total number of housing units increased by 58 between 2000 and 2010, when including vacant units.
- » The total number of owner occupied units decreased by 111, the total number of rental units increased by 18 and the total number of vacant units increased by 151.
  - It should be noted that these numbers are based on the census count which is charged with confirming the population occupying every housing unit. Based on the 2010 housing condition survey there did not appear to be this many vacant units although these units could be located inside multifamily structures.
- » The total number of occupied housing units has decreased from 2,618 to 2,525, a change of 93 households.
- » The overall housing trend is consistent with the negative change in population from 2000 to 2010 but also indicates that the loss of population comes primarily from homeowners relocating from the community.
- » Vacancy in Plattsouth has also increased consistent with the overall population trend.

Median property values and median contract rent have escalated at a pace significantly higher than inflation. This suggests that there may be a strong premium placed on well-maintained and managed rental units.

**FIGURE 6.2 CHANGE IN COMPOSITION OF HOUSING OCCUPANCY**

	2000 Number of Households	2010 Number of Household	Change	Percent Change
Owner-Occupied	1,756	1,645	-111	-6.3%
Renter-Occupied	862	880	18	2.1%
Total Vacant	187	338	151	80.7%
Vacancy rate	6.7%	11.8%		
Total	2,805	2,863	58	2.1%
Median Value	\$83,900	\$101,600		21.1%
Median Rent	416	631		51.7%

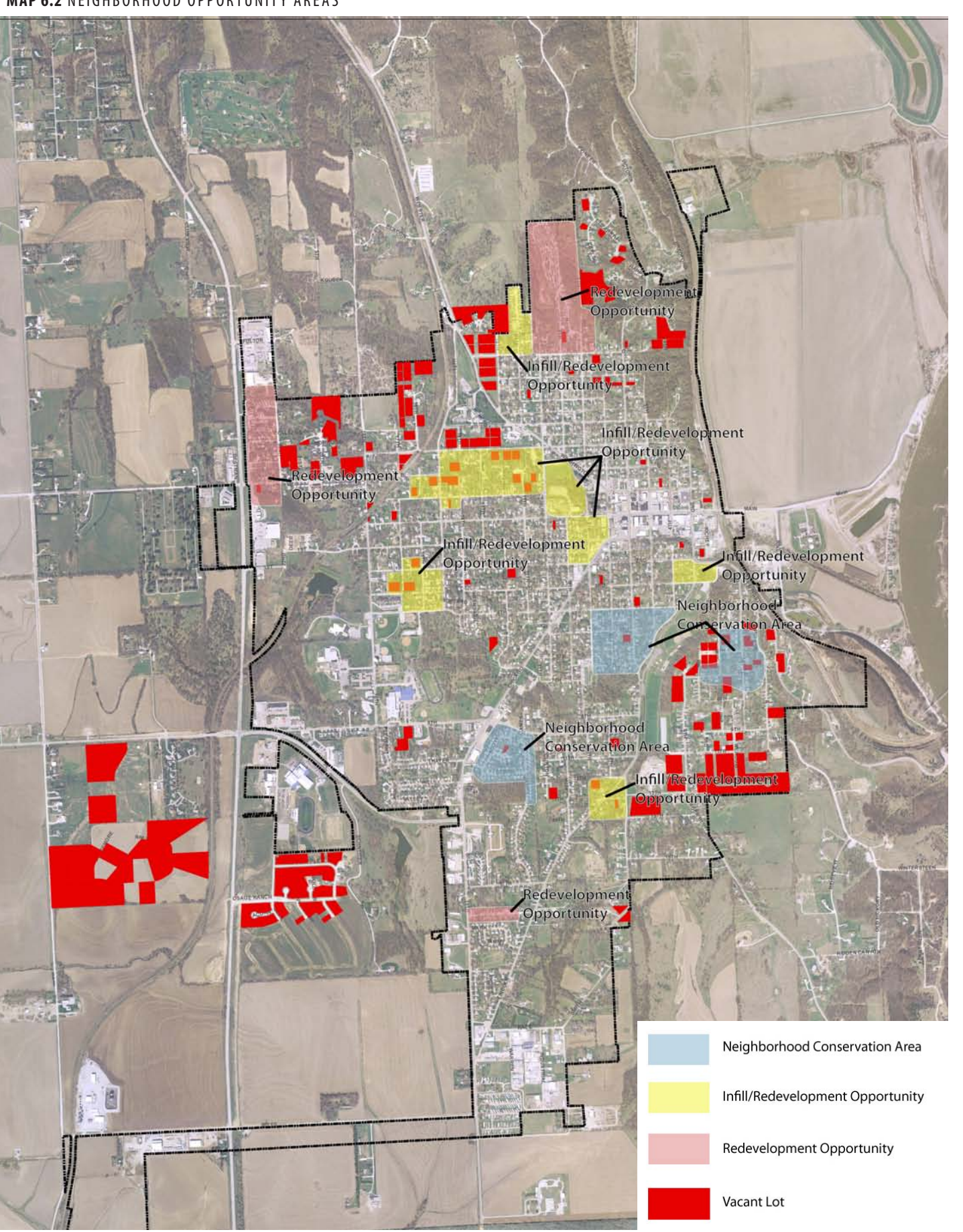
Source: RDG Planning & Design

**FIGURE 6.1 CITYWIDE HOUSING CONDITION SURVEY**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Demolish	Total
Single Family	78	1090	427	73	4	1672
2-4 Family	0	46	3	0	0	49
Apartment Buildings		12 (146 units)	5 (44 units)	0	0	190
Mobile Home Park		1 (24 units)	6 (143 units)	2 (104 units)	1 (17 units)	288
Total Units	78	1282	602	177	21	2160
	3.6%	59%	28%	8%	0.97%	100%
Pre-WW2 (SF)					756	45%
Post-WW2 (SF)					916	55%

Source: RDG Planning & Design







## Comparison Tenure and Median Value

Figure 6.3 compares Plattsmouth to similar communities on the basis of the prevalence of owner occupied housing and median housing value. In most cases, rates of home ownership are seen as a proxy for the willingness of residents to make a long-term investment in the community.

- » Plattsmouth performs similar to many of its peer communities in the percentage of owner occupied housing but has a consistently lower median valuation than most others.
- » Following the housing crisis of the late 2000s most cities experienced a decrease in the number of owner-occupied units and an increase in the number of renter-occupied.

**FIGURE 6.3 TENURE AND MEDIAN VALUE – OWNER OCCUPIED**

	% Owner Occupied	Median Value
Plattsmouth, NE	69.9%	\$101,600
Nebraska City, NE	66.6%	\$88,700
Waverly, NE	78.2%	\$146,300
Blair, NE	71.7%	\$141,000
Glenwood, IA	72.3%	\$131,100
Cass County, NE	82.6%	\$142,800
State of Nebraska	68.6%	\$123,900

Source: RDG Planning & Design

While Plattsmouth has some excellent examples of late 19th and early 20th century residential homes, these homes are significantly smaller and older than much of the housing stock evaluated in its peer communities, and thus, the values are reflected in this age difference.

Figure 6.4 addresses this same variable as it relates to rental housing, which plays a significant role in a housing market.

**FIGURE 6.4 TENURE AND MEDIAN VALUE – RENTAL HOUSING**

	% Renter Occupied	Median Contract Rent
Plattsmouth, NE	30.1%	\$631
Nebraska City, NE	33.4%	\$601
Waverly, NE	21.8%	\$758
Blair, NE	28.3%	\$653
Glenwood, IA	27.7%	\$632
Cass County, NE	17.4%	\$662
State of Nebraska	31.4%	\$648

Source: RDG Planning & Design

## INFILL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

### OLD HIGH SCHOOL AND BLUE DEVIL STADIUM SITE

Plattsmouth would be well-served to identify locations for additional residential development that can both reuse infrastructure that is already ‘in the ground’ and generate additional vitality and economic activity in existing residential neighborhoods. The potential redevelopment of the Old High School and Blue Devil Stadium site is one such opportunity. This concept is meant to illustrate just one possibility for the site. Any redevelopment of the site with an active and productive set of uses would increase the amount of activity in and around the downtown district and boost Plattsmouth’s economy.

In this concept, the old high school building is rehabilitated into a community-serving building, potentially a center for the arts and education paired with the relocation of Plattsmouth’s public library. The adjacent elementary school continues to operate in that capacity. Elsewhere on the site, a series of townhouses is created, enabling the site to hold 39 residential units, many of which would feature roof-top decks and excellent views of Downtown Plattsmouth. This density would enable a developer to achieve return on their investment while creating a type of housing not currently available in the Plattsmouth market.



**TOWNHOME HOUSING - DOWNTOWN OMAHA**



# HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IN PLATTSMOUTH

## Value to Income Ratio

Figure 6.5 compares median household income to median value for Plattsburgh and other surrounding markets to measure the affordability of the marketplace. An affordable, self-sustaining housing market, with adequate value and revenues to support market-rate new construction, will typically have a value to income ratio between 2.5 to 3.0. Ratios above 3.0 exhibit significant affordability issues while ratios below 2.0 are significantly undervalued relative to income.

Owner-occupied housing that costs between 2.0 and 2.5 times a household's yearly income is considered affordable. Homes priced above this range can mean that housing costs are greater than what many in the market can afford.

Plattsburgh has a value-to-income ratio of 2.00, suggesting that the housing stock is affordable relative to incomes in the area.

**FIGURE 6.5 MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE AND AFFORDABILITY**

	Median Household Income	Median Value	Value to Income Ratio
Plattsburgh, NE	\$50,678	\$101,600	2.00
Nebraska City, NE	\$43,069	\$88,700	2.06
Waverly, NE	\$66,494	\$146,300	2.20
Blair, NE	\$56,049	\$141,000	2.52
Glenwood, IA	\$52,106	\$131,100	2.52
Cass County, NE	\$62,039	\$142,800	2.30
State of Nebraska	\$49,342	\$123,900	2.51

Source: RDG Planning & Design

## Housing Affordability by Cost Range

Figure 6.6 matches housing supply by price bracket to median household income. The median price of a community's housing supply in relation to the median income of its residents helps define whether the city's housing is affordable for its citizens. Theoretically, a household budget must be divided among basic housing costs, other essential needs, and costs to maintain a home. Households spending a disproportionately large share of income on basic housing have less money to spend on other living essentials and fewer resources to maintain their homes.

A shortfall exists in the supply of housing in the middle and upper income ranges while a significant surplus exists in the low-to-median income ranges.

Figure 6.6 evaluates the availability of affordable housing in Plattsburgh and compares the quantity of housing that is affordable to each income group. A positive balance indicates a surplus of housing within the affordability range of each respective income group, while a negative balance indicates a shortage. This analysis indicates that the greatest shortages are for households above the city's household median income of \$50,678 as well as households that make between \$50,000 per year and \$150,000 per year.

A shortage of housing in the middle and upper-middle ranges makes it more difficult for Plattsburgh to attract residents earning above the median income, and indicates a lack of opportunities for higher-income households to "move-up" to higher value housing. Generally, the market adequately serves demand for its highest-cost housing without public intervention. Although some subdivisions have been developed since 2000 to meet the needs of middle to upper income families, these have been outside the city limits and slow to build out. Several conclusions may be drawn from these trends:

- » A limited amount of buildable land within the city limits
- » Reluctance to construct new housing developments due to concerns that Plattsburgh cannot differentiate itself in the regional market and therefore cannot compete directly.
- » A surplus of homes valued between \$25,000 and \$50,000 discourage middle income families from "moving-up" in the housing market due to concerns on whether the home would be able to sell.
- » Limited opportunities exist for middle to upper income households to move-up in the housing market.

Policy options for addressing the problems may include:

- » Restructuring Osage Ranch as a mixed density village to better compete in the regional housing market
- » Target redevelopment and infill development as a way to stabilize neighborhoods
- » Emphasize neighborhood conservation to improve and stabilize existing neighborhoods
- » Create alternative housing settings, such as independent living units, for older adults. This will free up some of the supply of sound and affordable housing for middle to upper income households.
- » Encourage higher value housing developments that provide realistic "move-up" options to some higher-earning households.

**FIGURE 6.6 AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY BY INCOME RANGE**

Income Range	% of City Median	% of Households	# Households in Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	0-49%	20.47%	536	\$0-50,000	195	\$0-400	382	577	41
\$25,000-49,999	50-99%	38.92%	1,019	\$50,000-99,999	1,113	\$400-800	426	1,539	520
\$50,000-74,999	100-148%	18.11%	474	\$100,000-149,999	311	\$800-1,250	11	322	-152
\$75-99,999	149-197%	11.88%	311	\$150,000-200,000	123	\$1,250-1,500	0	123	-188
\$100-150,000	198-296%	9.05%	237	\$200-\$300,000	14	\$1,500-2,000	19	33	-204
\$150,000+	Over 296%	1.57%	41	\$300,000+	0	\$2,000+	24	24	-17
Median	\$50,678	100%	2,618		1,756		862	2,618	0

Source: RDG Planning & Design

## FUTURE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

This section projects future demand for new construction.

The housing demand projections are based on the known information from the 2010 Census and the following assumptions:

- » The household size in Plattsmouth will remain constant. There is some chance that the number will increase as the children of the baby boomers continue into their childbearing years.
- » The city's non-household population (people in institutions, group quarters, or nursing homes) does not produce a demand for conventional housing, and will make up the same proportion of the population in the future as 2010.
- » Plattsmouth's 2010 vacancy rate of 11.8% will remain constant providing a variety in the market and supporting the removal of the most deteriorated structures.
- » The projection model assumes a replacement need of between 13 and 15 units per year, reflecting demolition of substandard units, including mobile home units, and the conversion of some residents to non-residential uses. This rate reflects the needs identified in the housing condition survey and align with concerns from residents over housing quality.

The demand analysis in Figure 6.7 shows a need for an additional 135 units between 2010 and 2020 or an average annual increase of between 13 and 14 units per year. This is less than the average of 20.6 units constructed annually between 2000 and 2010 as shown in Figure 6.8.

The forecasts of Figure 6.7 can be compared to the current development activity and the available land for future development to set priorities for the types and location of proposed future development. Note that not all 'new' units will be added to the market through new construction. Some of these units will be created through the rehabilitation and improvement of existing vacant units.

**FIGURE 6.7 FUTURE HOUSING DEMAND MODEL**

	2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	Total
Population at End of Period	6,568	6,650	6,746	
Household Population at End of Period	6,338	6,417	6,510	
Average Persons Per Household	2.48	2.48	2.48	
Household Demand at End of Period	2,556	2,587	2,625	
Projected Vacancy Rate	11.80%	11.80%	11.80%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	2,898	2,934	2,976	
Replacement Need		35	35	70
Cumulative Need During Period		71	77	148
Average Annual Construction		14	15	15

Source: RDG Planning & Design

**FIGURE 6.8 HOUSING CONSTRUCTION IN PLATTSMOUTH**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Single Family	23	19	28	18	19	22	18	11	15	4	1	4	5	6	193
Two Family	-	2	4	4	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
Multi-Family	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
Mobile Home	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Total	34	21	32	22	21	24	22	11	15	4	1	5	5	7	224

Source: RDG Planning & Design; City of Plattsmouth

# HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The development demand figures provided in Figure 6.7 are only significant if the types of housing being developed meet the need of the community as it grows. To suggest what types and price points of housing should be pursued, these demand figures can be broken out by the affordability ranges identified earlier in this chapter. Additionally, these demand figures can be broken out into demand for ownership and rental housing units.

Based on the 2012 income distributions provided by the American Communities Survey, about 41% of all owner occupied units, or 33 units, should ideally be priced below \$130,000 (current dollars). Some of these units may be produced indirectly by developing higher cost housing that serves the “move-up” market of owners that now occupy lower value homes. Affordability ranges are also influenced by interest rates – people afford more expensive homes when interest rates are low. Increasing residential interest rates may reduce the list of affordable “workforce housing.” About 37% of the rental market falls within the moderate cost ranges.

In order to support future economic growth, the housing supply must be diverse. Units at the lowest cost end will meet the needs of entry-level production workers and those in the service sector, while higher-cost housing will attract and retain manager- and executive-level positions. Entry level housing is typically produced in two ways:

- » Direct production, using various techniques to produce new or rehabilitated housing affordable to the city’s workforce.
- » Developing higher-cost or alternative housing that frees up the existing housing stock for more moderate income households.

FIGURE 6.9 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

	2015-2020	2020-2025	Total
Total Need	71	77	148
Total Owner Occupied	35	39	74
Affordable Low: \$60-100,000	6	7	13
Affordable Moderate: \$100-130,000	9	9	18
Moderate Market: \$130-200,000	12	13	25
High Market: Over \$200,000	9	9	18
Total Renter Occupied	35	39	74
Low: Less than \$450	9	10	19
Affordable: \$450-700	13	14	28
Market: Over \$700	13	14	27

Source: RDG Planning & Design, Claritas Inc.

Replicating conventional West Omaha developments neutralizes one of the assets of towns like Plattsmouth, Glenwood, and Blair – their civic and community quality.





## HOUSING INTERVENTIONS FOR PLATTSMOUTH

Plattsmouth is positioned for steady growth in the coming years through internal increases and influx of population from elsewhere in the Omaha metropolitan area. This increase will include young professionals entering the housing market for the first time, young families looking for appropriate ownership options, and seniors looking for services within a small town atmosphere. Analysis of both the city's assets and issues suggest a housing and community development strategy for Plattsmouth that:

- » Improves overall housing quality. By improving the quality of housing, a city serves the interests of all residents from the perspectives of physical and economic well-being. Upgrading housing quality creates market security in addition to increasing values and marketability. Conversely, deteriorating housing inevitably produces deteriorating housing values.
- » Increase the number of quality market-rate rentals. Low interest rates and easy financing tend to reduce the short-term costs of home ownership and therefore, discourages rental development and occupancy. With the crash of the subprime market in 2007-08, mortgage financing standards became more rigorous and, consequently new demand has emerged for rental housing. Plattsmouth has a number of affordable rental options but many residents said the community lacks good quality, market-rate rentals for families and young professionals.
- » Increase building opportunities and demand in Plattsmouth. New development (and especially higher-income development) around the periphery of the metropolitan area tends to locate on large rural lots in rural areas rather than towns. This pattern is evident in Washington County and also Cass County. A limited supply of lots within the city reinforces this trend, as do lower perceived development cost and the ability to finance projects through SID's. Urban projects also must have distinct features and amenities to compete with other developments in the Omaha metropolitan area. Replicating conventional West Omaha developments neutralizes one of the assets of towns like Plattsmouth and Blair – their civic and community quality.

A program capable of realizing these goals should:

- » Develop moderately-priced, market-rate housing for both owners and renters.
- » Increase availability of buildable lots in and near the city
- » Conserve existing housing stock and use available land that is already served by infrastructure
- » Define a distinctive niche and community marketing program to take advantage of existing markets.
- » Emphasize neighborhood conservation for existing and design new developments to create a cohesive neighborhood.

Actions in pursuit of these goals will fall within five primary categories:

1. A Housing Development Partnership
2. Program Focuses
3. Redevelopment Initiatives
4. Rehabilitation and Property Maintenance Programs
5. Lot Development

## HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

Plattsmouth should develop a partnership with the flexible capability to address its specific housing needs.

An effective community housing partnership should provide project development, financing, and marketing capabilities. The components of a Plattsmouth Housing Partnership should include:

- » A Plattsmouth Community Housing Development Corporation
- » A Lenders Consortium
- » The City of Plattsmouth
- » Current and prospective homebuilders

## Community Housing Development Corporation

A Community Housing Development Corporation is a nonprofit developer governed by a Board of Directors and operating in the same entrepreneurial way as a conventional developer. They often grow out of established organizations that have identified housing as vital to their work, or of other community organizations (such as churches, human services groups, or community action agencies) that identify housing as a critical need. Several of these organizations exist in the Omaha area and could provide the existing infrastructure and capacity to assist in Plattsmouth.

Economic development corporations can also be a vital resource for building partnerships. Such organizations in the past typically developed industrial parks and speculative buildings, and offered incentives to recruit employers. Increasingly, housing development has become vital to economic development.

A community housing development corporation could be organized as a "community development housing organization," or CDHO. CDHOs require majority community board representation, in return, they enjoy a special allocation of tax credits for affordable housing financing through the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA). The key roles of the CHDO in the housing partnership will be such programs as rehab/resale projects and construction on infill sites as described below under the program component Project Focuses.



## Lending Consortium

A community development corporation must have a source of financing to do its work. Such a financing program should be designed for maximum leverage (in the language of community development, “leverage” is the ability of program dollars to generate private investment in response to a principal investment); shared risk; and quick turnover rather than long-term financing. The Housing Partnership should include a “lenders consortium,” a cooperative venture among lending institutions active in the Plattsmouth market that spread individual exposure. In addition, these cooperative ventures can attract the support of other agencies such as the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) and the Federal Home Loan Bank.

A lending consortium is an ideal instrument to provide short-term financing for a modest but adequate inventory of moderately-priced, owner-occupied houses, and to provide interim financing for projects developed by the CHDC and City.

## The City of Plattsmouth

Cities generally have the responsibilities of providing and maintaining urban infrastructure and municipal services, and, under the Nebraska Community Development Law, have the ability to act as community redevelopment authorities. Consistent with these powers, the city should finance capital improvements using techniques that reduce and/or defer the front-end cost of lots, assembles or acquires property for development or redevelopment as needed, and acts to promote other projects or remove obstacles to desirable development. The City of Plattsmouth’s roles in the housing partnership could include:

- » Acquisition and site preparation of infill redevelopment sites
- » Financing assistance through CDBG, TIF and other programs
- » Subdivision development with infrastructure
- » Annexation and restructuring of debt

## Builders and Realtors

While some Community Development Corporations (CDC) have established their own construction and marketing capacities, there is no reason for a Plattsmouth corporation to move in this direction. The private sector of builders and Realtors, working in concert with the other partners, will be the primary delivery mechanism for new products.

## Housing Trust Fund

A Housing Trust Fund provides a source of seed capital, unconstrained by program regulations, for a city or development corporation to use for the purpose of developing needed housing types. Trust funds can be generated in several ways, including dedication of a specific share of local option sales taxes, fees, local revenue bond issues, or grants and charitable contributions.

## 2. PROGRAM FOCUSES

Three special project focuses appear most appropriate in Plattsmouth given housing demand and economic character: affordable equity housing, rental housing development, and rent-to-own projects.

### Affordable Equity Housing

New owner-occupied housing can upgrade the city’s housing stock by attracting new target households looking to build equity in the city. New housing may be built in either contiguous developments or on infill lots within built-up areas. New developments should take advantage of Plattsmouth’s environmental features and in configurations that make them unique from other standard subdivisions. Infill sites should be clustered in redevelopment areas, discussed below. In either case, a housing trust fund may provide recoverable, front-end funding for such items as project design; the city may acquire property or develop infrastructure through TIF or revenue bonds; the CDC is the master developer and contracts with private builders for home construction; and the lenders consortium provides interim financing for the CDC. Realtors may also participate by reducing commissions on selected projects. Potential target markets for new affordable units may include younger households, people with stable incomes, and downsizing empty-nesters.

Another proven affordable ownership development technique is an acquisition/rehab/resale program. Here, the CDC acquires houses that are then rehabilitated and resold on a “turnkey” basis to new owner-occupants. The lending community may participate cooperatively in this effort by providing interim financing. Mortgage financing for low and moderate income buyers may be assisted by CDBG or HOME “soft-second” loans. This approach recognizes the limited number of prospective buyers who want to carry out a major home rehabilitation project. It works best when candidate houses can be purchased at relatively low cost – a common condition in some parts of Plattsmouth.

Several organizations in the Omaha area have extensive experience with these program types, and Plattsmouth should take advantage of this experience in structuring its own program. These organizations include the Holy Name Housing Corporation, Omaha Economic Development Corporation, and New Community Development Corporation.







### *Rent-to-Own (CROWN)*

CROWN projects provide a middle-ground approach between ownership and rental occupancy, giving new residents who cannot afford homeownership at present an avenue to build equity in the city. In the rent-to-own program, the development corporation may build houses using the Low Income Housing Tax Credit. A portion of the family's rent is placed in an escrow account for a future downpayment. At the end of a specific period, the residents can then use the accumulated downpayment escrow to purchase either a new house or an existing unit. Rent-to-own programs have the advantage of providing rental housing to residents, while incorporating aspects of owner-occupancy.

The rent-to-own approach gives young families the opportunity to try out the city as well as building equity and wealth. It provides a transitional opportunity by which young households can build equity and become integrated into the larger community. In Nebraska, some rent-to-own units are also being developed by private parties. Successful examples can be seen in communities close to Plattsmouth, including Omaha and Nebraska City.

### *Rental Housing*

Demand for rental housing in Plattsmouth crosses several income ranges. New rental housing should include market-rate rentals for professionals, workforce housing, and housing for people with urgent needs. Funding sources such as the lending consortium and housing trust fund can be used to develop new inventory, and tax credits may be employed to address the needs of lower income households. Tax Increment Financing, CDBG/HOME funds, and tax credits can also help create affordable multi-family housing. The housing partnership and lending consortium should be active participants in multi-family housing finance by distributing the risk of projects across several lenders.

## **3. REDEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

The city should encourage and help finance one or more significant housing redevelopment projects in areas identified through the housing opportunity map (Map 6.2).

The city should identify a targeted housing redevelopment area that provides a critical mass necessary for success. In many cases, vacant lots or obsolete houses are scattered so that their redevelopment can stabilize an entire block. In other cases, a cluster of lots is needed to create a "tipping point" that can successfully change a neighborhood and provide buyers with the security necessary to sustain market values. While the more scattered approach would work in many areas of Plattsmouth, Map 6.2 identifies larger areas that could have a significant impact on housing quality and equity. These include relatively substandard or obsolete mobile home developments, and:

- » An area north and west of A Avenue and 10th Street
- » The neighborhood west of downtown, east of 9th Street and south of Main Street
- » The blocks coming out of downtown along 3rd Street south of 2nd Avenue
- » The Lincoln Avenue area south of 12th Avenue

The first step in target area development is preparation of redevelopment plan to guide implementation. The plan identifies areas for land acquisition, project phasing, relocation and housing options, and funding arrangements. Buildable vacant lots can be acquired through demolition of vacant or seriously deteriorated units, tax sales, and negotiated purchases. Housing development for the infill projects may be accomplished by the CHDC and/or private builders and financed by the Lenders Consortium. When private developers own infill lots, the city should work creatively with them, encouraging innovative project designs and planned unit developments that may require different standards from conventional development.

## 4. REHABILITATION AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS

The city should implement a comprehensive approach to rehabilitation that broadens the reach and effectiveness of rehabilitation efforts, and reduces the amount of substandard housing in the city.

Plattsmouth's rehabilitation program focuses should include:

### *Owner Assistance*

A majority of Plattsmouth's housing units require at least moderate repairs or rehabilitation. A coordinated rehabilitation strategy, operating on a reliable, multi-year basis, is vital to ensure preservation of the area's critical supply of existing housing. A comprehensive rehabilitation program, appropriate to the respective needs of individual residential areas, should include five program types. These include:

1. Emergency repair program. For very low income residents, an emergency repair program should be established. This type of program is usually funded through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in the form of grants or forgivable loans. The loans are recaptured over time but additional funding from both private sources and grants should be added to expand the program. Emergency repair programs are designed to meet critical individual needs, but also to keep viable housing from deteriorating further. Thus, when funds are limited, assistance should be focused on fundamentally sound structures.
2. Direct rehabilitation loan programs. This program would make direct forgivable loans and grants to homeowners from CDBG funds. The program is most appropriate to homeowners with low incomes who are not otherwise bankable. These efforts should generally be focused in strategic areas where loans support other areawide investments, such as substantial infill development.
3. A leveraged rehabilitation loan program. This approach leverages private loan funds (often through the FHA Title I Home Improvement Loan program) by combining private loans with CDBG or other public funds to produce a below market interest rate for homeowners. The program works most effectively in moderate income neighborhoods with minor rehabilitation needs and some demand for home improvements. Target areas for Plattsmouth would include those areas identified for Neighborhood Conservation in Map 2. The program is effective in expanding the amount of improvements completed by a fixed amount of public funding. Loans in a leveraged loan program can be originated through individual lenders or through the proposed lenders' consortium.

4. Acquisition/rehab/resale programs. An acquisition/rehabilitation/resale program is particularly useful in adapting older houses to the preferences of contemporary, moderate income buyers.
5. Energy efficiency loans. Funding may be leveraged through OPPD to provide loans that improve the energy efficiency of older homes. These low-interest or no-interest loans can be used to replace windows, heating and cooling systems, or any other upgrades that improve the energy efficiency of the home. Primary funding for these rehabilitation activities may include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or HOME funds, administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

### *Rental Rehabilitation*

The city should also consider a rehabilitation program focused on rental properties that provides leveraged loans combined with code enforcement. While the city's large multi-family structures are in good to fair condition, a number of single-family rental houses are in poor condition. This program provides financing for the improvement of sound rental properties in need of rehabilitation.

Rental rehabilitation must include effective housing code enforcement to require that units meet minimum housing standards. But the reluctance of tenants to file complaints can seriously hamper effective life safety enforcement. Some communities have instituted rental registration or licensing programs. Here, all rental units must register to be certified for occupancy. Registration requires a life safety inspection and compliance with minimum standards. These programs can be effective, but are staff-intensive and must be administered to avoid displacing low-income households. However, the potential of loss of revenue, combined with available financing, can induce participation by property owners in this kind of program.

Mechanically, the foundation of a rental rehabilitation program should be private financing. An individual institution or the CDC, acting as a referral agency, may take a leading role in marketing the availability of rehabilitation loans to small rental property owners. A reservation of HOME funds could be utilized by the city to provide blended loans when some form of subsidy is needed.





## Property Maintenance Program

The best housing and neighborhood conservation programs combine awareness of the need for reinvestment with the tools to finance home repairs and rehabilitation. The strategy begins with a Property Maintenance Standards Program, an effort that encourages voluntary compliance with community standards while also establishing a legal basis for code enforcement. In recent year, Plattsmouth has made significant strides in this area combining the efforts of a Code Enforcement Officer and Police staff. The city should consider expanding its current efforts to include:

- » Preparing and distributing a Property Standards Manual. This should be a friendly and clear document that sets out the expectations that Plattsmouth as a community has for individual building and property maintenance. It can also help to provide useful information, such as sites to dispose of or recycle unwanted household items.
- » Organizing voluntary efforts through church and civic groups to assist seniors and disabled people with property maintenance, including fix-up items, painting, routine repairs, and disposal of trash and other items.
- » Review and modify the city's current Property Maintenance Ordinance, assuring that the ordinance clearly addresses those items that have the greatest impact on life safety, visual quality, and preservation of community maintenance standards. This review should be done in light of recent efforts to identify those areas that remain a concern or continual issue.
- » Holding neighborhood focus meetings. City staff and community organizations should set up periodic neighborhood meetings to explain the city's property maintenance standards and to answer any questions. These should be done at locations within each neighborhood and focused to the needs of each area.
- » Backing up the property maintenance standards program with rehabilitation financing. Possible funding sources are discussed above.



## 5. LOT DEVELOPMENT

Plattsmouth should institute a program to develop buildable lots within or adjacent to the existing city limits.

Components should include:

- » Innovative direct land development through the development partnership
- » Special assessments or financing partnerships
- » Infrastructure bank
- » Tax increment financing
- » Osage Ranch restructuring

### Land Development

In addition to assembling infill lots, the city may partner with a private developer or CHDC to complete a specific project. Such a development should produce a distinctive environment that differentiates itself in the market by expressing the traditional character of Plattsmouth. The project could use the lending consortium's interim financing pool, allowing construction of a critical mass of moderately-priced homes that would otherwise be impossible for a small-scale homebuilder in the Plattsmouth market.

### Financing Partnerships

Financing techniques that avoid burdening moderate income homebuyers with land and infrastructure development costs can be extremely important, and can give Plattsmouth competitive parity with land in other parts of the region or on surrounding rural sites. In many communities, special assessments are used to finance infrastructure. While assessments reduce the initial purchase price of the house, they are retired through monthly payments, and so add to the monthly or overall cost of housing. Other devices include:

- » Infrastructure Bank. In a new subdivision targeted specifically to affordable ownership housing, Plattsmouth should consider an "Infrastructure Bank" approach. Here, the city finances the infrastructure as a "participatory" deferred loan. The infrastructure loan comes due when the house is sold by the original owner. The city may choose to forego interest, may establish an annual simple interest rate, or may participate in the appreciation (or depreciation) of the property. In a participation alternative the repayment represents the same percentage of the sale proceeds that the initial infrastructure loan made up of the original price. Figure 6.10 provides an example of such a scenario. In this scenario the cost of infrastructure related to the price of the house is 10%. When this same portion is applied to the final sale price of the house (\$125,000) the city earns \$2,500 that can be put towards new housing projects. In addition, the property taxes generated by a house that might otherwise not be built must also factor into the equation. Grants from the Federal Home Loan Bank, TIF, NIFA, or state-administered Federal programs such as CDBG or HOME can also help with infrastructure financing.
- » Tax Increment Financing (TIF). In redevelopment areas, TIF can be a significant tool for land acquisition and development financing. TIF uses the added tax revenue created by the redevelopment to finance project-related costs like land acquisition and public improvements. Use of TIF requires designation of an area as "blighted" according to the criteria established by state law and preparation of a redevelopment plan for the area. Because incremental taxes can only be used for fifteen years after approval of a redevelopment plan, subdivisions using the technique should be phased, with development phases tightly following market demand. New phases can be added by amending the overall redevelopment plan.

The following is an example of how TIF can be applied to a residential subdivision.

- » The city master plans a 50 lot project in an area that is included in a “blight” declaration. The project is divided into five 10 lot phases, with services improved when each successive phase is opened. Each phase requires an amendment to the redevelopment plan that establishes the use of TIF for that phase.
- » Assuming that each house increases the value of each parcel by \$100,000. Added tax revenues may support up to \$12,000 to \$15,000 in debt, essentially paying back the cost of public improvements. The front-end cost may be loaned by the finance consortium, or even potentially by the city.

FIGURE 6.10 SAMPLE RETURN SCENARIO ON DEFERRED INFRASTRUCTURE LOAN		
	Initial Price	Price at Sale
Sale Price	\$100,000	\$125,000
Infrastructure Cost (deferred in initial price)	\$10,200	
Infrastructure/Price Ratio	.10	.10
Amount of Repayment (based on initial investment/price ratio)		
Equivalent Interest Rates		
5-Year Resale		4.56%
7-Year Resale		3.24%
10-Year Resale		2.26%

Source: RDG Planning & Design

### Osage Ranch Restructuring

An initial key project would be the restructuring/replatting of Osage Ranch as a mixed density village. Lot sales in this subdivision have been slow, and construction has been focused around two cul-de-sacs. While slow build-out is partially attributable to post-2008 economic conditions, there are other issues at work, including:

- » A conventional project image that places Osage Ranch in direct competition with other West Omaha and Sarpy County residential development. Because the project does not differentiate itself from other area subdivisions, buyers are more inclined to build in well-tested areas than in the less-tested Plattsmouth market.
- » The failure of the Walmart project to proceed. A major commercial development may have generated a significant demand for conveniently located houses. It also would have greatly improved the financial performance and tax revenues of the entire development area.
- » The resonating effects of slow development. Generally, lagging development creates an image of marketability that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. In addition, the development is not creating tax value fast enough to repay the SID’s general obligation debt, creating another source of significant uncertainty and high potential tax rates.

Osage Ranch remains an important land resource for the community. A repositioning of the project could make effective use of this resource and provide a source of urban land to help the city meet its housing needs and potentials. Ingredients of this restructuring could include:

- » A redesign of the subdivision to include more diverse housing types and a community character that is distinct from competitive and conventional metropolitan area subdivisions. A redesign must respect existing single-family housing, but could include more diverse configurations such as multi-family, attached, and small-lot designs, as well as neighborhood-scale commercial and service development. An overall area plan could include a public square, better street connectivity, mixed use principles, and design features that allude to historical Plattsmouth. The high exposure of the area from Highway 75 also provides a strong marketing image for both the project and Plattsmouth as a whole.
- » As part of a redesign, a financial restructuring of the project, with potential annexation. With a restructuring, bondholders would accept a reduced payment on the face value of the investment, with the remaining obligation taken out by the city on annexation. The presumption is that the tax value created by higher density development would both pay the reduced principal and create an overall increase in tax revenues to Plattsmouth over time.





# KEY HOUSING STRATEGIES

## PRIORITIZING PLATTSMOUTH'S HOUSING ACTION

### Property Maintenance

Plattsmouth has a number of homes that are beginning to deteriorate and show their age. By supporting property owners in preventative maintenance, the city can support its tax base and demonstrate value to potential future residents. Additionally, by helping homeowners address problems early, Plattsmouth can help prevent more costly repairs that, if left incomplete, can lead to property deterioration.



### Housing Rehabilitation

Plattsmouth has a strong stock of smaller housing that could be exceptionally attractive to a first-time buyer. Unfortunately many first-time home buyers are looking for a property that is 'move-in ready'. By working to identify areas with concentrations of challenged housing, and partnering with property owners and investors to rehabilitate these properties, Plattsmouth can create a desired resource in the regional housing market and protect the value of adjacent properties.



### Land Development

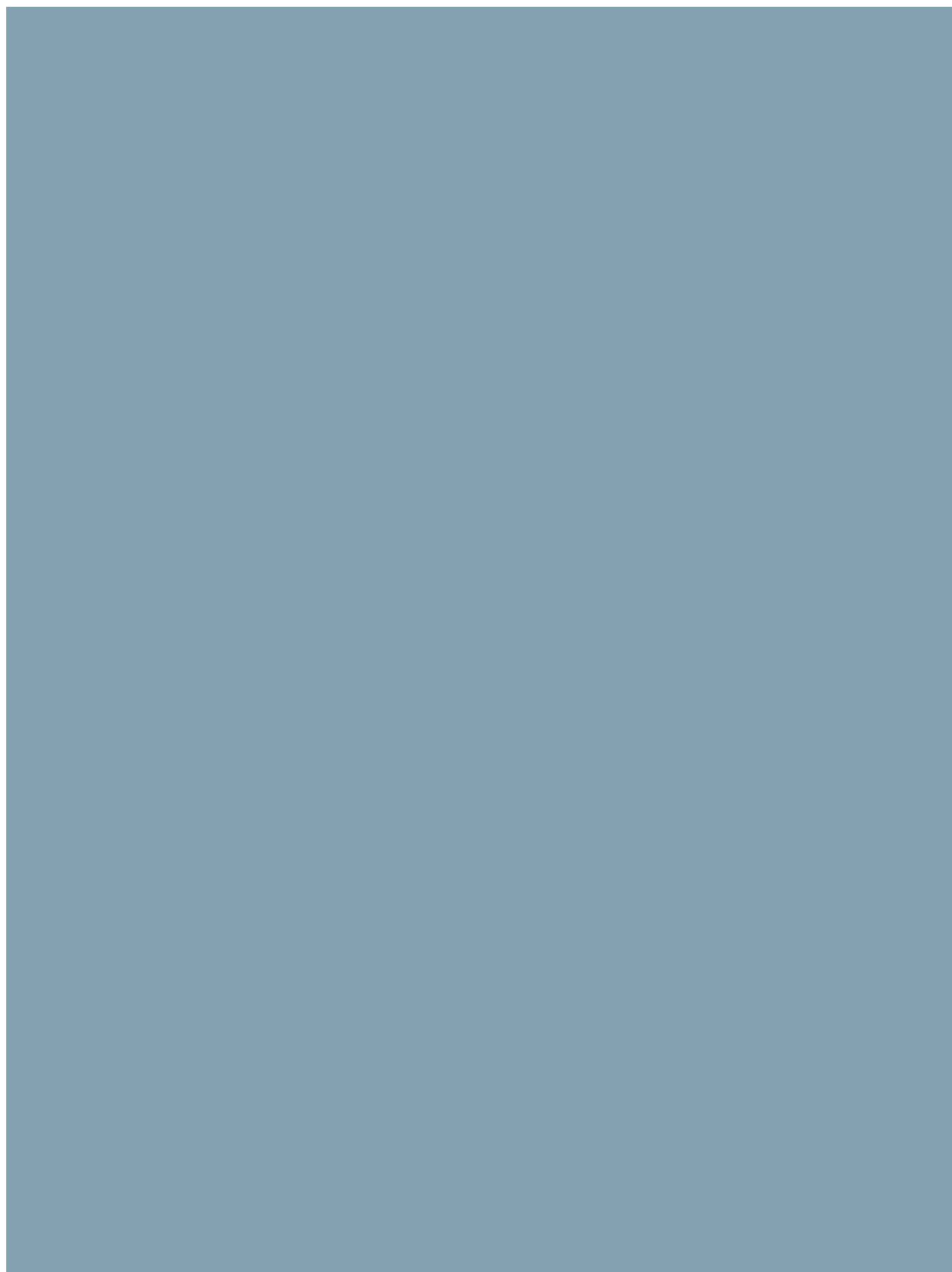
The city can support the development of new residential neighborhoods by reducing the costs and risks to a potential developer. This can take a wide range of forms from expedited permitting and waiving city review and permitting fees. The city can encourage the development of new residential properties by underwriting a portion of the infrastructure costs in new residential neighborhoods. This reduces the costs to a developer.



### Multi-family Housing

One area where Plattsmouth is notably short of housing is multi-family rentals, or apartment buildings. New rental housing should include market-rate rentals for professionals, workforce housing, and housing for people with urgent needs. The creation of a local funding sources such as the lending consortium and housing trust fund can be used to develop new inventory, and tax credits may be employed to address the needs of lower income households.







# chapter 7

## Parks and Civic Recreation

Plattsmouth should provide a quality parks and recreation system by maintaining and improving existing facilities and serving future and underserved areas.

# PARKS AND RECREATION

Plattsmouth residents enjoy access to a variety of local and regional park facilities, and parks are a vital component of community life. In Plattsmouth, parks are more than an amenity but rather a central way to achieve the strategic goals of this plan. Parks and recreation areas have both economic and humanistic attributes by improving quality of life and raising property values.

Studies show that a high quality and diverse recreation system ranks second only to good schools in attracting new residents to a community. For Plattsmouth to maximize these community benefits, the park and open system must be integrated into the city’s development pattern to provide recreational opportunities to all residents.

## PLATTSMOUTH’S PARK SERVICE

An analysis of the amount, type, and location of park land provides insight into the level of service provided by Plattsmouth’s parks. A descriptive table of the size, location, category and features is included in the appendix.

## AMOUNT OF PARKLAND

Plattsmouth offers approximately 100 acres of park land, more than adequate for its population.

» Plattsmouth’s 100 acres of park land amounts to approximately 15.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Although there is no “magic number” for acreage, a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 is a frequently cited rule of thumb. As Plattsmouth grows, it should add park land to maintain its current level of service.

FIGURE 7.1 PARK SUPPLY ANALYSIS

Classification	Existing Acreage	Acres Per 1,000 Residents	NRPA Standard (per 1,000 residents)
Neighborhood	1.80	0.27	1.5 acres
Community	94.4	14.51	10 acres
Specialty	4.74	0.72	Varies
Total	100.94		

Source: RDG Planning & Design; City of Plattsmouth, NRPA

# TYPE AND SUPPLY

The National Recreational and Park Association (NRPA) has, in the past, recommended 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. At present, Plattsmouth’s park system covers 101.94 acre, or about 15 acres per 1,000 residents. This can be attributed to the prevalence of community parks such as Memorial, West Memorial, and Rhylander Parks.

While the overall supply of parkland technically meets the NRPA recommendation, this ratio does not consider geographic distribution of parks nor proximity to city neighborhoods. As Plattsmouth grows, it should maintain the present level of service and plan future parks near developing or underserved neighborhoods.

The park classification system developed by the NRPA is used to classify Plattsmouth’s facilities and includes the following categories:

## Mini Parks

Mini-parks typically address specific recreation or open space needs. These parks typically cover less than an acre and have a service area less than 1/4 mile. Due to the size and disbursed nature of these assets, maintenance can be difficult and costly and should therefore be discouraged. Other than small green spaces along Lincoln and Chicago Avenues, Plattsmouth has no mini-parks.

## Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks are considered the basic unit of a community park system and provide a recreational and social focus for residential areas. Ideal for passive recreation and informal activities, these spaces have a service area between 1/4 and 1/2 mile. Neighborhood parks are typically at least 5 acres to accommodate the requisite equipment. A neighborhood park between 5-10 acres is ideal.

Garfield Park is Plattsmouth’s only neighborhood park and the NRPA standard is to provide 1-2 acres of neighborhood park per 1,000 residents. In Plattsmouth, this level of service is approximately 0.27 acres per 1,000 residents. While this is below the recommended standard, much of the demand is met by large community parks including Memorial, West Memorial, and Rhylander Park. It will be important for Plattsmouth to plan and provide future neighborhood park services in growth areas.

FIGURE 7.2 PARK CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTION (NRPA)

Classification	Function	Size	Service Radius	Plattsmouth Level of Service	Plattsmouth Example
Neighborhood	Basic unit of a community’s park system, providing a recreational and social focus for residential areas. Accommodate informal recreational activities.	5-10 acres	1/4 to 1/2 mile (walking distance)	0.27 acres per 1,000 residents	Garfield Park
Community	Meet diverse community-based recreation needs, preserve significant natural areas and provide space for larger recreation facilities. May include special attraction such as a pool or trails.	30-40 acres	1/2 - 3 miles	14.51 acres per 1,000 residents	Memorial Park
Specialty	Meet a niche recreational need for the community, such as a sports park or wilderness area.	Varies	Varies	0.73 acres per 1,000 residents	Two Rivers Water Park

Source: RDG Planning & Design; City of Plattsmouth, NRPA



## Community Parks

These are typically areas of the most diverse in use and environmental quality. Community parks are used to meet the community based recreation needs, often provide significant natural areas, and provide areas for intense recreational areas.

The following criteria for a community park include:

- » Adequate size to accommodate activities associated with neighborhood parks but with space for additional activity.
- » A special attraction that draws people from a larger area, such as a swimming pool, pond or lake, ice skating rink, trails, special environments or cultural features, or specialized sports complexes.

These park areas generally cover 30-50 acres, serve a variety of needs, and have a service radius of 1/2 to 3 miles. Examples of community parks in Plattsmouth include Memorial, West Memorial, and Rhylander Park. With approximately 14.5 acres per 1,000 residents, Plattsmouth exceeds the NRPA standard of 5-8 acres per 1,000 residents for community parks.

## Special Use Parks

Defined as a broad range of facilities oriented toward a single use, this category includes Twin Rivers Water Park, Caboose Park, On-The-Green, and the Boat Ramp. While not included in the supply calculation, the Plattsmouth Country Club offers recreational opportunities to its membership and the Schilling Wildlife Refuge is an important regional attraction northeast of Plattsmouth.

## LOCATION

Much of the community lies within the service area of a park asset. In many communities, the neighborhood park is the building block of the recreation system - providing a series of park assets within the convenient walking distance (1/4 mile) from the city's neighborhoods. In Plattsmouth, much of the role of the neighborhood park is filled by three large community parks.

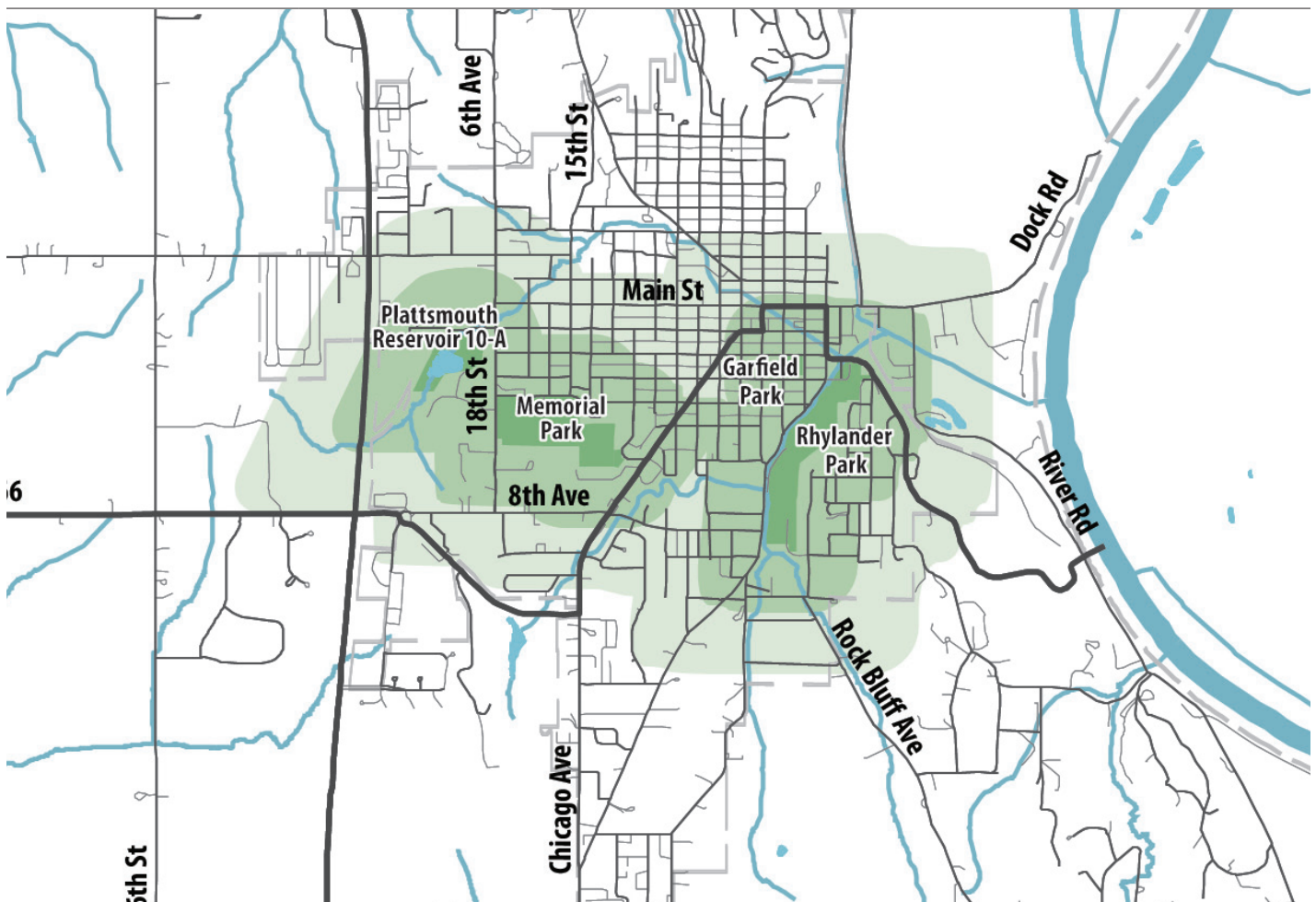
Geographically, neighborhood park service can be evaluated using the NRPA standard of 1/4 mile radius while a community park is evaluated using a 1/2 mile radius. Map 7.1 illustrates the location of Plattsmouth's recreational facilities and the service area for each park. Although the existing parks serve a significant portion of the community, both the northern and the southern extents of the city are underserved.

**FIGURE 7.3 FUTURE PARKLAND NEEDS**

Classification	Existing Acreage	Existing Acres / 1,000 Residents	2020 Total Parkland Needed	Additional Parkland Needed
Neighborhood	1.80	0.27	9.858	8.36
Community	94.4	14.51	Maintain	Maintain
Specialty	4.74	0.72	Maintain	Maintain
Total	100.94			

Source: RDG Planning & Design; City of Plattsmouth, NRPA

**MAP 7.1 NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITY AREAS**



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARKS

Plattsmouth has several opportunities to strengthen the park system and to improve the overall quality of life by using recreation amenities. The greatest opportunities for the future of Plattsmouth's parks and recreation system include:

- » Expanding neighborhood parks into underserved areas
- » Adding recreation and greenway trails
- » Enhancing existing parks
- » Establishing a funding strategy for parks and trails

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARK EXPANSION

Parks should be developed to fully serve the existing population and also to serve the future growth areas. A well maintained and accessible park system is a major driver of residential sales in both established neighborhoods and new growth areas.

Neighborhood parks should be approximately 5 acres and positioned to serve existing and future populations within a 1/4 to 1/2 mile radius.

The location of future park areas is illustrated on the Development Concept (page 24) and the Future Land Use Map (page 25) to coincide with residential and commercial growth areas. These areas follow:

- » New Development Areas. The area west of US Highway 75 is likely to experience new residential development in the coming years. At present, this area has no dedicated land for the development of parks and recreation spaces. The city should collaborate with the developers of these areas to ensure an appropriate level of recreation service.
- » Northern Plattsmouth. The northern residential areas of Plattsmouth currently have limited park and recreational assets. Though this area is currently built out with residential properties, should the opportunity arise, a neighborhood park would be an appropriate addition to the area.

## RIVERFRONT RECREATION AREA

The city has acquired property at the site of the former marina. The area will feature the scenic beauty of the riverfront and the layout should align with the Shilling Wildlife Refuge to encourage access to both the riverfront park and the natural area. Located in the 100 year floodplain of the Missouri River, the park will be designed for passive recreation and will be resilient to flooding.

## TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

Plattsmouth has the opportunity to use a system of on-street and off-street trails to connect residents to existing parks and community destinations. Plattsmouth has lagged behind many cities of comparable size in development of trails. Plattsmouth should create a phased plan to expand the trail system to connect schools, recreation sites, and other community destinations.

- » Lincoln Avenue "Complete Street" - Lincoln Avenue serves as a strategic connection between the southern extent of the community, the historic commercial district, and Rhylander Park. An expanded westerly loop could also provide a connection to Osage Ranch and the high school campus.
- » Chicago Avenue Trail - Chicago Avenue presents an opportunity to act as a bicycle thoroughfare to connect neighborhoods, the historic business district, and the high school campus. This route could manifest itself as an shoulder bike lane or as a dedicated multi-use path potentially funded through a Safe Routes to School Grant.
- » Washington Avenue Trail - Like the proposed Chicago Avenue Trail, a trail along Washington Avenue would provide a link between

the northern neighborhoods to the community core including the wealth of community park assets.

- » Main Street to Riverfront Trail - The development of a trail to connect the riverfront to the downtown district would support the use and development of the riverfront park. This trail section should be completed in conjunction with any riverfront park development as the trail will be mutually supportive of downtown commerce and the use of the riverfront park and the Shilling Wildlife Refuge.

## ENHANCING EXISTING PARKS

The existing park system is well sized to the current population based on the NRPA standards. With over 100 acres of parkland, approximately 15.5 acres per 1,000 residents, the Plattsmouth park and recreation system is a valuable asset to residents and visitors. The park system is important to preserving quality of life and the system should be maintained, improved and enhanced, in accordance with a parks master plan. Plattsmouth should develop a parks master plan that outlines a park improvement program and identifies broader system improvements.

A neighborhood park improvement program should:

- » Establish a systematic improvement program, with site rehabilitation projects scheduled on a regular basis through the capital improvements program.
- » Establish criteria for priorities, these may include eliminating safety hazards, need to provide facilities for underserved geographic areas, and replacement or enhancement of features that receive intense use.
- » Develop a neighborhood park policy, elements of which include:
  - A menu of recreational facilities to be part of any neighborhood park. These should include structure and unstructured spaces, picnic areas, playgrounds, paths, lighting, tree planting and landscaping, and site furnishings.
  - Site criteria that defines minimum park size, street exposure, trail connections, limits the percentage of land in the park that can be used for stormwater management (the park should be expanded to accommodate these needs), and location and access to neighborhoods.
  - A dedication and financing policy (discussed below).



A broader park master plan should identify:

- » Sites for future parks and plan for acquisition.
- » Plans for funding and maintenance of park assets.
- » Locations for a potential sports complex
- » Ways to capitalize on the city's existing baseball, softball and soccer fields through facility improvements and marketing of those facilities.
- » A detailed trail plan. This may also be completed as part of a separate bicycle and pedestrian plan for the city.

## FUNDING & MAINTENANCE

Funding the construction and maintenance of parks and trails is often a difficult task. Plattsmouth should establish a funding strategy not only for construction, but also for maintenance and enhancement of parks and trails. The funding sources for parks and trails can differ and the city should pursue all options.

### Funding Strategy for Trails

- » Establish an ongoing budget item for trail construction and improvement
- » Identify and take advantage of available grant funding from local, state and federal agencies and from non-profit foundations. Recent emphasis on healthy lifestyles and tourism has made trail funding more available, but highly competitive.
- » Use budgeted trail funds as a match for grant opportunities

### Neighborhood Park Funding Approaches

Often times, a lack of developer-dedicated land results in large subdivisions being developed without convenient neighborhood park services. This can be resolved through a common policy that requires a park dedication for all development, established through the city's land development ordinances. The obligation for land dedication/trail construction is typically a function of:

- » Acres in the development
- » Development density
- » Number of people per housing unit
- » The city's desired level of service of parks

Due to the piecemeal nature of development, the required amount of land dedication for any single development may be smaller than the ideal neighborhood park size. There are two approaches that the city can take to resolve this issue:

1. Request that developers locate dedicated land at the edges and corners of the development, so that adjacent developments can combine several small parcels of dedicated land to form one larger parcel.
2. Allow payment of cash in lieu of dedication of land by developers. This money should not and often by statute cannot go into the city's general park fund. This money needs to go to the direct benefit of those individuals living in the subdivision. A park within walking distance or a trail connection that ties the subdivision directly to a park or a larger trail system are good examples of a direct benefit.

### Other Park Funding Sources

Other financing sources can contribute to the growth and improvement of Plattsmouth's park system, including:

- » **General Obligation (GO) Bonds.** GO bonds obligate general tax revenues toward retirement, and represent the highest level of security to bondholders. Issuance of GO bonds requires voter approval. These bonds typically form the core of park financing mechanisms, with proceeds used for a variety of rehabilitation and development purposes.
- » **Transportation Enhancements (TE).** TE funds are appropriated through federal transportation legislation for trails, corridor beautification, and enhancement. This program is administered through the Nebraska Department of Roads and provides 80% funding for approved projects. Matching funds are typically provided through general obligation park bonds. Projects funded by TE funds must have a demonstrable transportation function. The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) of the US Department of the Interior, can finance projects that have solely recreational uses.
- » **Surface Transportation Program (STP).** This has been the primary federal road financing program, though 2016 will see it phased out among 'first class' cities in Nebraska. STP funds have previously been used for path facilities that are developed as part of a major transportation corridor, and unlike TE, can finance trails for motorized users.
- » **Private Foundations and Contributions.** Foundations and private donors can be significant contributors to park development, especially for unique facilities or for major community quality of life features.









# chapter 8

## Connectivity

Plattsmouth should focus on establishing and reinforcing safe multi-modal connections between major activity centers and areas of interest using existing and new streets, sidewalks and trails.

# CONNECTIVITY: WALKING, BIKING, AND DRIVING

## TRANSPORTATION TODAY

Figure 8.1 is a map of the streets and of Plattsmouth, as classified by the Federal Functional Classification System. This system divides roadways into five categories, based on the amount of traffic and intended speed of travel on the road.

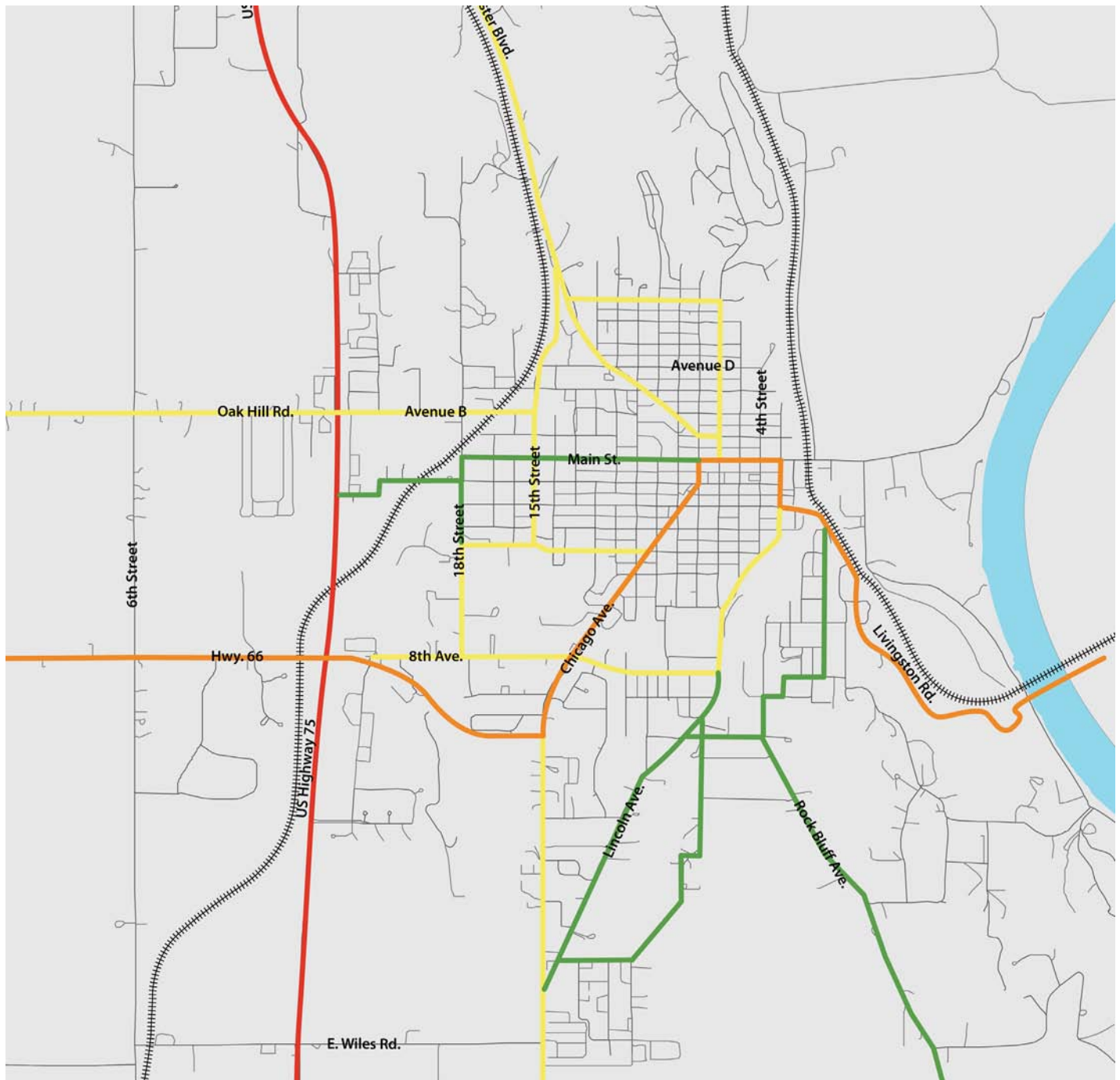
- » Interstates (not present in Plattsmouth) - Connect cities and allow travel over multiple states at high speeds.
- » Expressways (Highway 75) - Connect major regional activity centers and allow long distance travel at high speeds with minimal interference.
- » Major Arterials (Highway 66/Chicago Ave) - Connect secondary regional activity centers and serve as routes for regional connectivity.
- » Other Arterial (8th Ave./Avenue B/Webster Boulevard) - Connect locations within the city and serve as primary intra-urban circulation network.
- » Collector (Lincoln Ave./Rock Bluff Ave./Main St.) - Provide additional access to specific neighborhoods and districts within a city and link to arterial network.
- » Local - Link individual properties to higher order streets at low speeds. These roads are designed for short trips.



### Street classification is important for a number of reasons.

- » **Funding.** Classification affects the amount of state and federal funding available for construction and maintenance.
- » **Land Use Compatibility.** High intensity uses should locate along high level streets and vice versa.
- » **Sharing the Road.** Classification guides bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure decisions. For example, bike traffic should be directed to lower traffic local streets when possible, while sidewalk updates should prioritize collectors and minor arterials.

**MAP 8.1** ROADS AND HIGHWAYS IN PLATTSMOUTH BY FEDERAL CLASSIFICATION



**Existing Road Network**  
Plattsmouth, Nebraska

- Expressways
- Major Arterial Roads
- Other Arterial Roads
- Collector Roads
- Local Streets

# FUTURE TRANSPORTATION

## BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR STREETS

As Plattsmouth grows and constructs new streets, all street decisions should comply with three basic principles:

1. **Enhance Connectivity.** New streets should line up with existing streets and connect new development to existing neighborhoods using multiple entrances. Single access cul-de-sacs should be avoided unless environmental factors preclude other options.
2. **Build Complete Streets.** Streets should accommodate multiple modes of transportation, including walkers and bikers. Multi-modal features include: sidewalks, bike lanes, bike pavement markings, bike signage, or traffic calming. Streets should provide sidewalk on at least one side of new local streets, and on both sides of new arterial and collector streets.
3. **Promote Plattsmouth's Character.** Streets are Plattsmouth's largest public space, and should be designed in a way that reflects the pride that residents feel in their community. Streets provide the first impression for many visitors, and have a daily impact on how residents view their community. Landscaping, street furniture, public art, green boulevards and other attractive street features should be considered an investment in community character and a tool to promote tourism and economic development.
4. **Protect and enhance existing investments.** Streets, sidewalks, and trails should be maintained in good repair and function. Addressing small maintenance issues before they grow is a cost-effective way of ensuring that the public's investment in the existing transportation network pays dividends into the future.



## FUTURE STREET EXTENSIONS

Plattsmouth should work with developers to provide street extensions for new development. Figure 8.2 illustrates the priority future street extensions for Plattsmouth, including:

### Southern Connectivity Improvement

By creating a connection between the Osage Ranch Development and the intersection of Chicago and Lincoln Avenues, Plattsmouth can open new lands to residential development while promoting ease of circulation for the southern portion of the city.

### Western Residential Site Access

As residential development pressure grows in the region, new areas will need to be made available for housing. The areas to the west of the US 75 Corridor are strong candidates and additional access roads will enable development of these properties.

### Southern Residential Site Access

Likewise, some additional streets in the southern area of Plattsmouth will enable development of properties which are currently in agricultural production. Additionally, these streets could serve to improve access and circulation within the southern portion of Plattsmouth.

### Southwest Industrial Area

This road, which connects the Osage Ranch development with East Wiles Road, provides access to and through the parcel of land indicated for future light industrial land uses. This is a project that would support regional economic development efforts by preparing new land for development as a site for light industrial or manufacturing.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF STREETS PLAN

To implement the recommendations shown in Figure 8.2, Plattsmouth should follow two guidelines:

1. **Reserve Right of Way in Advance.** The city should work with developers and property owners to reserve Right-of-way for major streets in advance of development. Developers should leave room to extend streets to future adjacent development by leaving stub streets or empty lots where extensions are planned.
2. **Build With Development.** Plattsmouth should work with developers to extend new roads as development demand arises, in conjunction with development agreements. Street construction is one of the most costly pieces of new development, and high costs of development make it difficult to build new homes at prices that most families can afford.

## UNDERSTANDING THE PROPOSED STREET MAP

**Big Picture:** The map does not show every street that would be needed for future development. The local street pattern should be determined as development occurs, using the above basic principles.

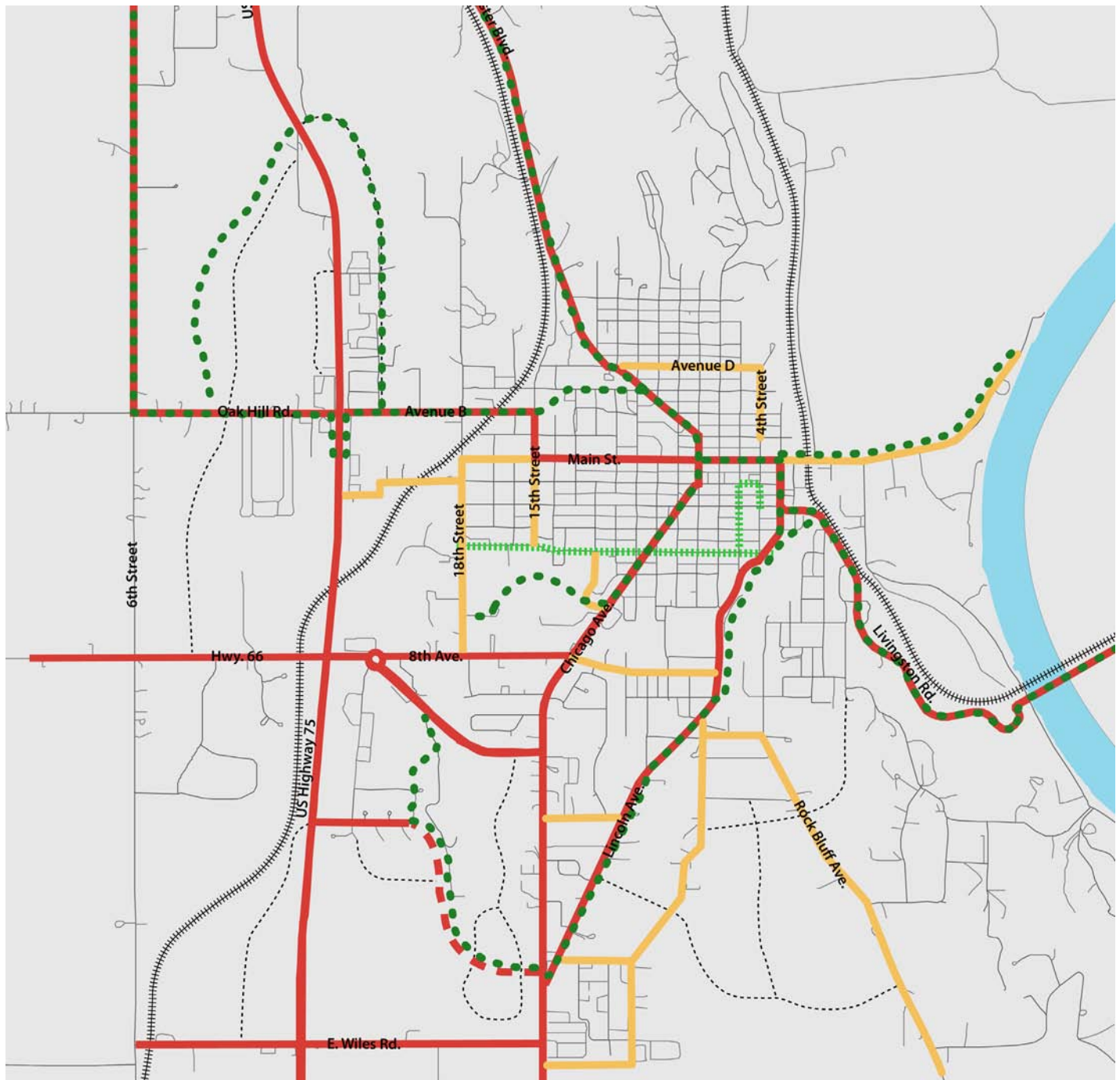
**Flexible:** While the routes shown in Map 8.2 have been carefully thought out, the exact path of these streets may vary depending on the details of development as it occurs. The priority is to maintain the principle of connectivity, to provide access to the key connecting points, and to follow the general path shown in the map. Minor modifications can be made as needed on a case-by case basis. Detailed engineering studies will be needed before undertaking any new road construction.

» The collector streets in the map have a higher "status" than the local streets. The collector routes should be given significant weight when making development decisions, while the local streets are more flexible.

**Working with Property Owners:** Many of these new roads run through property that is privately owned, and their implementation will therefore depend on the decisions of the property owners. The city should reach out to property owners in these key areas to discuss plans for the future.



MAP 8.2 PROPOSED FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK - PLATTSMOUTH, NE



### Circulation Concept Plattsmouth, Nebraska

- Current/Proposed Primary Circulation
- Current/Proposed Secondary Circulation
- Current/Proposed Road
- Proposed Bike and Pedestrian Connection

# BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

## TRAILS

Trails are off-street paths that serve pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation. Proposed trail links include:

**Northside Residential Connector:** This trail would run through a future residential neighborhood west of US Highway 75 in northeast Plattsmouth, connecting Oak Hill Road to a future local street to the east of US Highway 75.

**Chicago Avenue to 18th Street:** This trail would improve the east-west connectivity between Chicago Avenue and 18th Street.

**Southern Residential Connector:** This route connects from US Highway 34 to the intersection of Lincoln and Chicago Avenues. It would help link the Osage Ranch development and new southern growth areas and provide connectivity to the back side of Plattsmouth High School

## BIKE ROUTES & COMPLETE STREETS

Another approach to promoting non-motorized transportation is to identify streets that are good choices for bicyclists, due to their relatively low traffic and access to popular community destinations. These bike routes should be designated using “sharrows” and signs. Future streets that are designated as bike routes could potentially include bike lanes or side paths if appropriate.

## SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are the central piece of pedestrian infrastructure. Plattsmouth has a somewhat well connected sidewalk network, though gaps exist. This should be maintained and improved upon as the city grows. As a general policy:

- » New streets should provide sidewalks on both sides of the street, especially new collectors and arterials.
- » Existing streets should provide sidewalk on at least one side of the street. Priority areas for retro-fitting are:
  - Arterial and collector streets
  - Streets within a quarter mile radius of schools and parks

Construction of sidewalks on existing streets should be done over time in conjunction with other street or infrastructure improvement projects.











# chapter 9

## Public Services and Infrastructure

Plattsmouth should continue to strive to provide high levels of equitable, effective, and responsive public service. The systems and infrastructure which ensure this high-quality service should be continually maintained and expanded as necessary to support reasonable, contiguous urban growth.

# PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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## GOALS

To maintain first-rate municipal services for its taxpayers and users, Plattsmouth should:

- » Ensure that utility systems can meet capacity and environmental quality standards
- » Maintain quality public services in a cost effective manner
- » Rehabilitate aging infrastructure to the standard expected by users
- » Establish an equitable and objective method of financing future infrastructure extensions
- » Keep all infrastructure in a state of good repair through pro-active maintenance and improvements as feasible

The following section provides an analysis of the public facilities, infrastructure, and community services to identify city priorities in the coming years.

## CITY HALL

136 North 5th Street

### Description:

The Plattsmouth City Hall is a historic masonry structure originally constructed as a U.S. Post Office and used as City Hall since the 1960s. The one-story building has 4,250 square feet with additional space in the basement used for office and storage. Off-street parking is available to the west and south and on-street parking is available to the north and east.

### Evaluation:

The building is in good overall condition, is structurally sound, and is being well maintained. A portion of the basement was converted to office space and, in 2012, the boiler was replaced. Meeting space is insufficient and the Council Chambers require upgrades to accommodate electronic presentations and to improve acoustics. The facility is not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair.
- » Evaluate the facility to identify options to develop existing meeting spaces. Consider reconfiguring the existing footprint or expanding to the west
- » Analyze the facility to identify a strategy to comply with the ADA and budget for improvements
- » Upgrade the City Council Chambers to improve acoustics and to allow for electronic/multi-media presentations

## FIRE STATION

133-43 North 5th Street

### Description:

The Plattsmouth Fire Station is a masonry structure built in 1969. The one-story, five-bay building has 5,544 square feet with no basement.

In 2007, the city undertook a \$1.7 million program of including significant remodeling and expansion. The project added six bunk rooms, a meeting/training room, and offices for future growth.

The Plattsmouth EMS hired full-time paramedics in 2010 and now operate using of both paid and volunteer employees. The rural station, built in 1993, is located immediately south of the main building and contains three-bays.

### Evaluation:

The structure is in good condition, is centrally located to many of the city's neighborhoods, and has recently been expanded and renovated; the department owns the lot to the east if expansion is needed.

### Recommendation:

- » Continue planned improvements
- » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair

## PUBLIC LIBRARY

405 Avenue A

### Description:

The Plattsburgh Public Library is a one story masonry structure built in 1916 as a Carnegie Library. The facility was expanded in 1975 to extend the upper floor and the full basement. The basement, a walk-out configuration, was converted into a children's library in 1993. The overall collection exceeds 40,600 and its circulation was 84,102 in 2013.

### Evaluation:

The structure is in good condition but is at capacity. The facility has limited meeting spaces, and an undersized technology center. Consider expansion of the existing facility. If relocation is needed, consider proximity to schools and new growth area to improve access. The lower level is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act but the ground floor is likely not compliant.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
- » Evaluate the facility for ADA compliance, identify strategies to comply with the ADA and budget for improvements
- » Further analysis of the facility and the community priorities should determine whether expansion or relocation would better meet future needs
- » Continue to build the endowment for an expanded or new facility
- » If the current building is vacated or sold, encourage a future use that serves the public interest such as a genealogy center, public record storage, or an art center
- » Improvements should include the following: additional meeting space; expanded technology center; and consider options to add additional parking for staff and customers

## COMMUNITY & SENIOR CENTER, AND TWIN RIVERS WATER PARK

308 South 18th Street

### Description:

The Plattsburgh Community Center is a 42,000 square foot facility constructed in 2008 and contains: a four-lane 25 meter swimming pool; two children's play areas; indoor walking track; group fitness room; two sets of locker rooms; three basketball courts; three volleyball courts; fitness area; and cycle studio.

The facility is also home to the senior center which delivers lunches to local seniors in addition to offering activities and medical services for a nominal fee. Adjacent to the facility is the Twin Rivers Water Park, a city run facility, with two water slides, diving board, six swimming lanes, a zero depth entry pool, and other water features.

### Evaluation:

The facility is less than ten years old and is in excellent condition. A new playground facility will open 2014-2015. Efforts are being made to increase membership, to increase the operating budget through sponsorships, grants and donations, and also to partner with schools and other groups to increase use.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
- » Evaluate and adapt programming to meet the needs of the community
- » Increase use and membership through partnerships and improved facility programming.

## PLATTSBURGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

336 Main Street

### Description:

The Joint Law Enforcement Center is attached to the Cass County Courthouse and is shared with the County Sheriff. The force includes 16 sworn officers, five reserve officers, and three support staff.

### Evaluation:

The building, constructed in 2002, is in excellent condition and currently meets the needs of both the city and county. The shared facility provides an excellent level of efficiency for both the city and the county. The facility may need to expand as the community continues to grow.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
- » Evaluate facility needs to establish a scope and timeline for expansion

## OAK HILL CEMETERY MAINTENANCE SHOP AND GROUNDS

West of US 75 at Avenue B

### Description:

Facilities at the cemetery include:

- » Main Garage and Shop – steel building, constructed in 1976, approximately 2,000 square feet
- » Older Storage Building – masonry, approximately 320 square feet

### Evaluation:

The garage/shop is in good condition and includes sufficient expansion space but the older storage building is in poor condition. The Cemetery Grounds are not irrigated.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
- » Replace the older storage building

## STREET DEPARTMENT MAINTENANCE FACILITY

444 13th Avenue

### Description:

The steel, one-story garage/shop building was constructed in 1970 includes offices, a lunchroom, a maintenance bay, and general storage space. The site also contains a small lean-to structure from the garage/shop built in 1992, a Quonset structure for miscellaneous storage, an old steel structure used for storage, and yard storage. The site is unpaved and is located in the 100-year floodplain.

### Evaluation:

A new facility should be constructed at this location to meet the needs of all public works activities including streets, parks, water, sewer, and fleet maintenance. The facility should include offices, lunchroom, and an ample maintenance and storage area. The addition of enclosed yard storage would allow the city to purchase supplies in the summer, when prices are lower.

The existing facility is in good condition but has insufficient space for storage and maintenance.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facilities in a state of good repair
- » Evaluate city-wide needs for a new maintenance facility, develop a plan for a facility at the 13th Street site, and budget accordingly.
- » Plan for the future use of the main shop building once the new facility is constructed

## PARKS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

West of 18th Street and 15th Avenue

### Description:

The garage and shop are steel structures built in 1974. The one-story buildings provide 1,040 square feet for storage and maintenance. The facility and site are relatively small, with an unpaved parking area. The site also includes an enclosed lean-to that provides another 1,000 square feet of storage.

### Evaluation:

There is a significant need for additional storage space. If a new city maintenance facility is constructed, additional storage for the Department should be programmed.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facilities in a state of good repair
- » Evaluate city-wide needs for a new maintenance facility, develop a plan for a facility at the 13th Street site, and budget accordingly.
- » Evaluate existing facilities to determine a future use

## MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Church Road West of US 75

### Description:

The airport, located three miles southwest of Plattsmouth, includes a 5,500-foot by 100-foot runway, a full parallel taxiway, four T-hangars, one corporate hangar, and the administrative building.

The facility is operated by the Airport Authority and is used exclusively for general aviation. The corporate hangar is occupied by the Fixed Base Operator (FBO).

The airport is located within the city's extraterritorial jurisdiction. Land has been acquired for a future entrance from Highway 75 and plans for safety improvements continue. The airport also operates an Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS).

### Evaluation:

All facilities are in good condition. A crosswind runway will eventually be added.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facilities in a state of good repair
- » Continue working with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on facility improvements and the implementation of the airport master plan
- » Budget and plan for the addition of an entrance from Highway 75
- » Budget and plan for the addition of a crosswind runway
- » Explore making airport a regional-serving joint venture between the city and county.
- » If developed further in collaboration with the county, the airport has the potential to be a regional economic development asset that will support both city and county tax base.



## PLATTSMOUTH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

### Description:

The Plattsmouth Community School District operates several facilities: the Plattsmouth Early Childhood Center; Plattsmouth Learning and Universal Support (PLUS); the Plattsmouth Academic, Curriculum, and Equipment Complex (PACE); Plattsmouth Elementary School; Plattsmouth Community Middle School; and Plattsmouth High School.

The Plattsmouth Learning and Universal Support (PLUS) facility, located at 812 6th Avenue, serves students who have not been successful in traditional buildings and need additional support. The Plattsmouth Academic, Curriculum, and Equipment Complex (PACE), located at 1170 South 22nd Street, offers a GED program in addition to including a copy center, maintenance shop, and technical science classes. There are also students at the Alternative School as part of an inter-local agreement with Conestoga and Weeping Water.

The total enrollment in the district is 1,807. In addition to the inventory of schools, the district also owns the former Blue Devils Stadium, which will likely be sold in the near future.

### Evaluation:

The buildings are all in good condition but are nearing capacity. The Elementary School added four portable classrooms to accommodate enrollment, however, it is still over the recommended capacity for an elementary school. Decreases in funding could force the district to pull the alternative school under the high school, necessitating expansion of the building.

There are limited sidewalks and crosswalks across Highway 34 from both the high school and the middle school.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facilities in a state of good repair
- » Monitor growth and plan for expansion of facilities nearing capacity
- » Market the former Blue Devil Stadium for redevelopment as a mixed use residential neighborhood
- » Improve pedestrian connectivity of schools with neighborhoods, libraries, and parks

## SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Plattsmouth residents contract with private haulers for solid waste pickup and disposal.

The county maintains a community brush disposal site for leaves and yard waste. Located at 13780 12th Street, the site is open to the public and used on a regular basis.

### Recommendation:

- » Assess options for solid waste disposal in Plattsmouth, including moving towards a single-source provider for waste collection
- » Identify strategies to improve compliance with best practices in material recycling.

## WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT

East of Downtown on East Main Street

### Description:

The wastewater treatment plant contains the following structures, all constructed in 1979:

- » Office, lab and garage: 1 story, 2,660 square feet
- » Digester Control Building: 1 story with basement, 6,326 square foot main floor, 1, 759 square foot basement.
- » Chlorine Unit: 1 story, 432 square feet
- » Recirculation Pump Station: 1 story with basement, 528 square feet on the main floor.
- » Grit Removal Building: 1 story with basement, 528 square foot main floor.
- » Pumping Station: 1 story with basement and subbasement, 800 square foot main floor.
- » Trickling Filters, Sludge Beds and Chlorine Basins, and Solids Removal Building.

### Evaluation:

All structures are in fair condition but are aging and will need to be replaced. While the facility has sufficient capacity to accommodate growth, changes in federal requirements may necessitate upgrades and modifications to treat stormwater and runoff. The facility is located in the 100 year floodplain and is protected by an earthen berm.

### Recommendation:

- » Maintain the facilities in a state of good repair
- » Raise and reinforce the earthen berm to protect the facility from flooding
- » Complete regular upgrades and efficiency improvements to prolong the useful life and to reduce operating expenses
- » Monitor odor control as it may become an issue with planned riverfront improvements
- » Reduce peak stormwater flow and, when possible, treat stormwater on site using detention basins in anticipation of possible changes to federal treatment requirements

## SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

### Description:

Most of the city is served by standard 8- to 10-inch sanitary sewers that feed into 15- to 24-inch trunk lines, which run to the treatment plant east of Downtown. A 15-inch trunk line also runs through the Rhylander Park drainageway and serves southeast Plattsmouth. On-the-Green and Osage Ranch are the two major areas outside the city with sewer extensions.

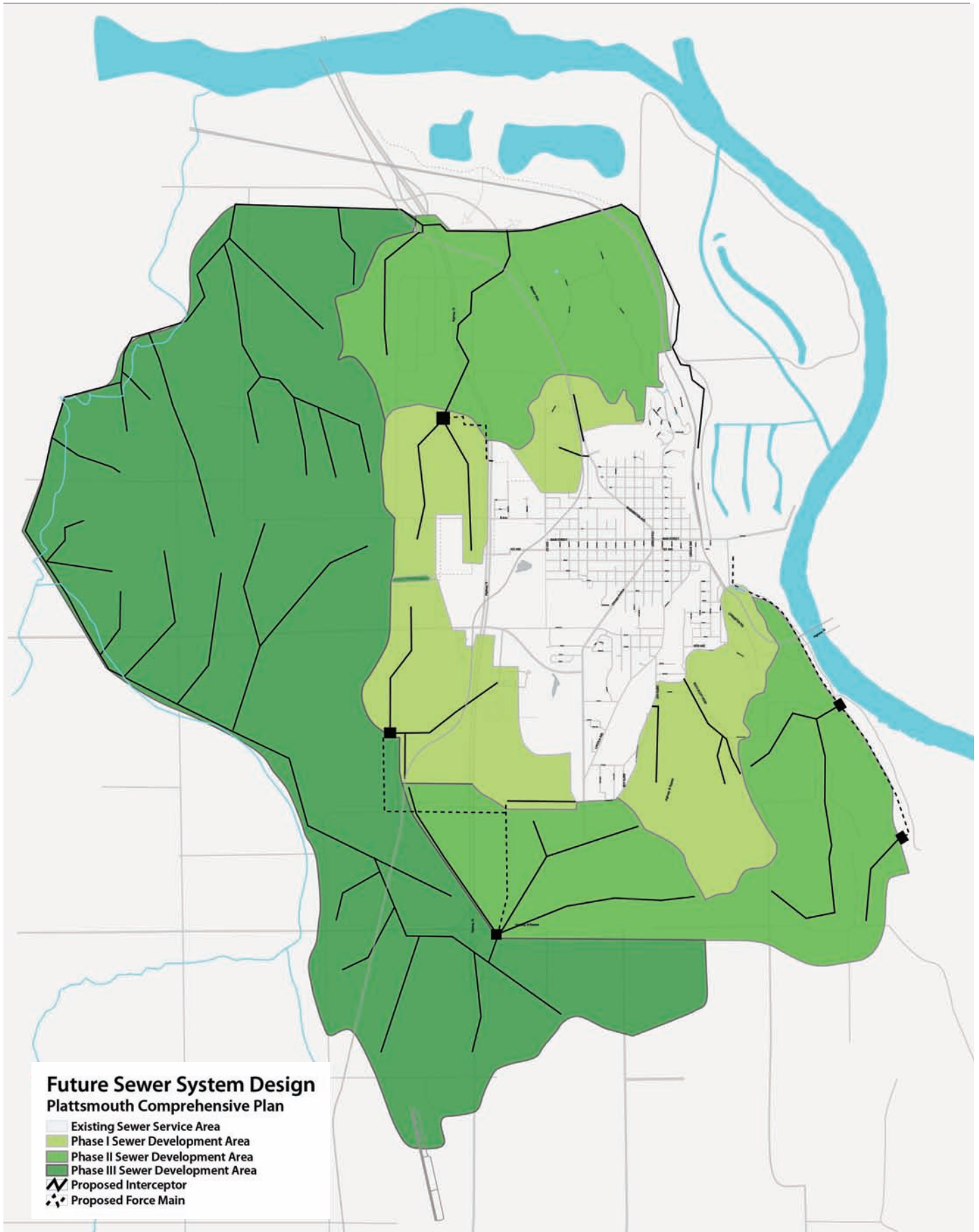
### Evaluation:

The process of separating the combined storm/sanitary sewer systems is complete. The system is in fair condition and is subject to line breaks as a result of age.

### Recommendation:

- » Continue routine maintenance of the existing system
- » Develop a systematic process to identify sewer segments at the highest risk for failure and implement a proactive replacement process using a capital improvements program for funding
- » Future extensions will be required to accommodate growth to the south of Osage Ranch and west of Highway 75 into the industrial park including a new lift station along Wiles Road
- » Future infrastructure investments must be made strategically and in accordance with the growth plan, since extensions will tend to promote and channel new development. Extension of the system should also be compatible with the larger sewer system study
- » Plattsmouth's urban growth expected to continue to the south and west, and hence the 2003 future system design created by HDR (Map 9.1) remains a reasonable and valid approach to the future extensions of urban sewer service.

**MAP 9.1** 2003 FUTURE SEWER SYSTEM DESIGN MAP (HDR STUDY)



## WATER TREATMENT PLANT

### *Description:*

Structures include:

- » Main Plant: fire resistant building, constructed in 1974, two-to-three story, approximately 7,420 square feet on the main floor, located on Schilling Road
- » Storage Building: Due to open 2014 at the 13th Street site, approximately 3,500 square feet

### *Evaluation:*

The main plant is in poor condition due to age and persistent flooding from the Missouri River. As a result of the 2011 flood event, several pumps and buildings were lost. The plant is located in the 100 year floodplain of the Missouri River and is vulnerable to future flood events.

Many of the vendors and companies responsible for creating the original machinery no longer exist and therefore, replacement parts must be specially ordered or machined.

The location of the plant and the wellfield is vulnerable to flooding on a regular basis and the age of the plant and equipment make repairs and maintenance costly.

### *Recommendation:*

- » Complete a system evaluation to determine whether the existing plant should be improved and flood proofed, whether the plant should be relocated, or if a regional solution should be explored to meet the needs of the community
- » Complete regular upgrades and efficiency improvements to prolong the useful life and to reduce operating expenses
- » Evaluate options to mitigate flood risk
- » Complete regular upgrades and efficiency improvements to prolong the useful life and to reduce operating expenses

## WATER STORAGE SYSTEM

### *Description:*

Plattsmouth maintains one standpipe and one elevated tank for water storage. In 2010, the city constructed a 500,000 gallon, elevated, multi-leg tank at 7th and Avenue G. The standpipe, constructed in 1956, provides 1 million gallons of storage at 18th Street and 4th Avenue.

### *Evaluation:*

The storage tanks are routinely maintained and are in good condition.

### *Recommendation:*

- » Continue routine maintenance

## Water Distribution System, Citywide

### *Description:*

The city is served by a system of water mains up to 18 inches in diameter. The mains are built to city specifications and provide adequate pressure for both supply and fire suppression.

### *Evaluation:*

Overall the system is in good condition. Some of the oldest waterlines have been replaced as part of a major downtown infrastructure project.

### *Recommendation:*

- » Continue routine maintenance and replacements when needed.
- » Closely monitor development that utilizes the rural water system to ensure compatibility with city standards.

## WELLS AND PUMPHOUSES

### *Description:*

The city has five wells and corresponding pump-houses at the well-field along the access road to the Schilling Wildlife Refuge. Three pump-houses were lost as a result of the 2011 floods. The pump-houses are 100 square foot, fire resistant or masonry enclosures constructed between 1942 and 2013.

### *Evaluation:*

The wells and pump-houses are in good condition. A system study was completed in 1997 by HDR Engineering. The plant and well-field are located in the 100 year floodplain of the Missouri River and have been subject to flooding and damage.

### *Recommendation:*

- » Continue routine maintenance.
- » Implement distribution extensions as outlined in the HDR study as needed.
- » Evaluate options to mitigate flood risk
- » Complete regular upgrades and efficiency improvements to prolong the useful life and to reduce operating expenses



## STORM DRAINAGE AND FLOOD-PRONE AREAS

### Description:

Plattsmouth has a limited storm drainage system. Most storm drainage uses the natural topography of the city and, therefore, most major drainageways fall within the 100-year floodplain. The largest of these is the Missouri River floodplain, east of the Burlington Northern tracks on the eastern edge of the city. The Rhylander Park and Webster Boulevard drainageways are also located within the 100-year floodplains. Chicago Avenue's flood-prone area is narrowly drawn along the street channel. These drainageways converge in the downtown. As a result, a substantial proportion of the district, mostly south of Main Street east of 5th Street, and between 5th and 6th streets between Avenue A and 1st Avenue is located in the floodplain.

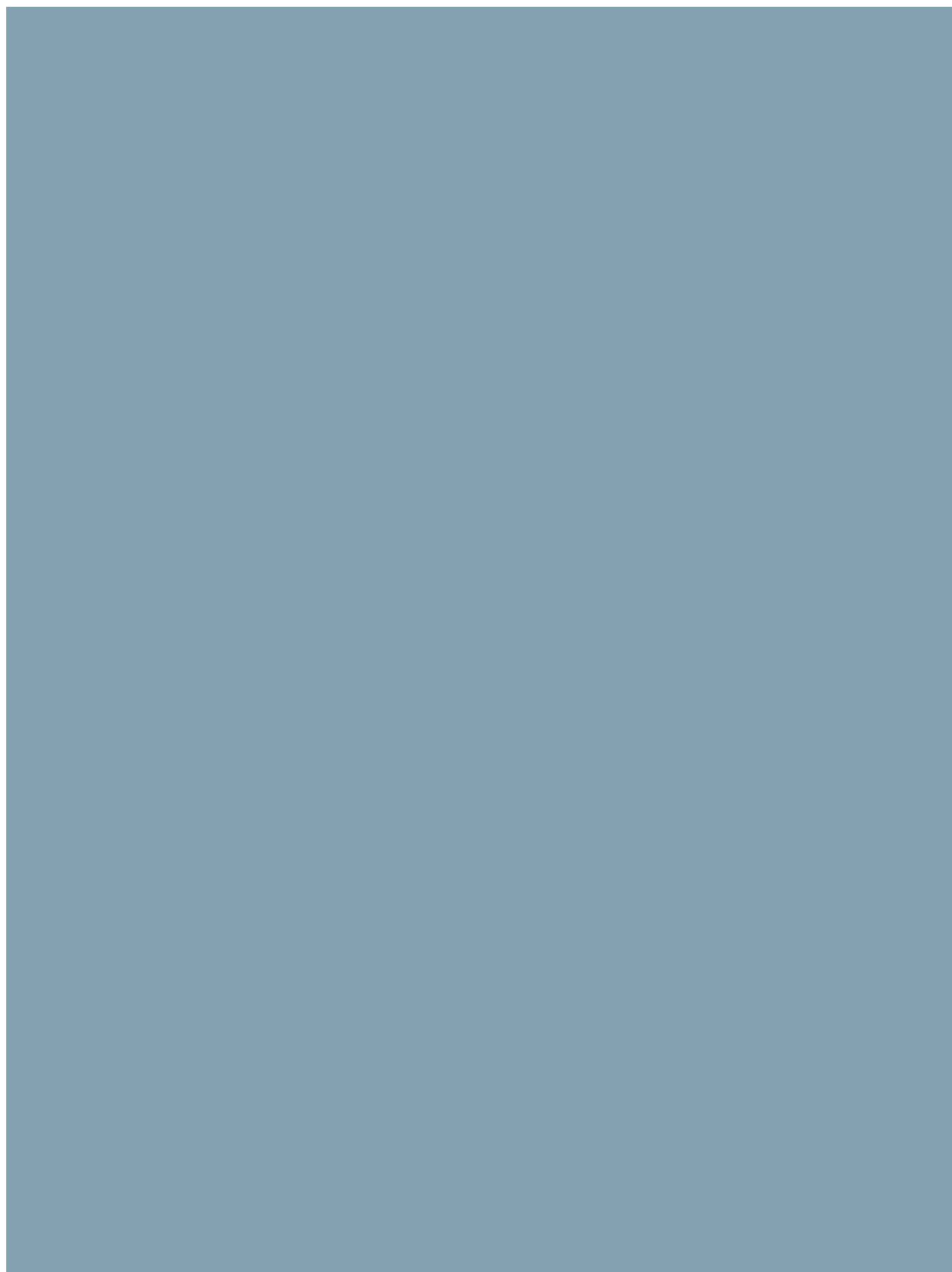
The city has constructed a detention basin to alleviate the peak flow of storm water into the Chicago Avenue drainageway and the city should continue to explore ways to reduce peak stormwater flow and to identify flood control alternatives.

The city should explore ways to mitigate the impact that new development places on the already stressed stormwater infrastructure. Strategies to mitigate the impact of new development on stormwater flows might include:

- » Increase impact fees to reflect the real cost of stormwater extension and the cost of stormwater management
- » Require onsite treatment and management of additional stormwater runoff created by the new development. Permit outflow only at the pre-development standard.

## PUBLIC FACILITY PRIORITIES

- » Evaluate the viability of the existing water plant and identify funding sources to improve the existing facility, construct elsewhere, or to explore and implement a regional solution.
- » Construct a city maintenance facility on 13th Street to meet the facility needs of the Public Works Department, the Parks Department, the Water Department, and other city departments as needed
- » Raise and reinforce the earthen berm surrounding the waste water treatment facility to mitigate flood risks
- » Develop a systematic approach to replace the sewer and waterlines at the highest risk for failure as opportunities arise.
- » Evaluate educational facility needs and consider expansion or new construction opportunities
- » Encourage the reuse/redevelopment of the former high school site





# chapter 10

## Implementation

Any plan is only as good as the follow-through and implementation on its policies and principles. This chapter reviews the recommendations outlined in the preceding chapters with additional information about making these visions a reality.

**FIGURE 10.1** SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

	Type	Impact on Resources	Ongoing	Timeframe	Task Leadership
<b>Land Use and Development</b>					
Encourage and support the development of additional housing units and housing types at strategic locations to accommodate the growing population	Policy Capital	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Developers
Support and encourage the creation of additional commercial business ventures to strengthen the role of Plattsmouth as a retail destination	Policy Capital	Mid	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Developers
Identify sites suitable for light industrial activity and encourage appropriate development on these sites	Policy	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff
Create a riverfront master plan for the city owned property on the Missouri River	Policy Action	Mid		Medium	Council, Staff
Identify strategies to leverage the Plattsmouth Airport for tourism, commercial, and industrial activity	Policy	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff
Identify future growth vectors for Plattsmouth and study how to protect the city's ability to grow with urban density in these areas.	Policy	Low		Short	Council, Staff
Use the 10 Policies for Future Land Use and Development as criteria for making land use decisions, such as reviewing new development proposals	Policy	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council
Use the Future Land Use Map and the Development Concept, along with the land use compatibility matrix to evaluate rezones and development proposals	Policy	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff
Base all annexation decisions on the annexation strategy and the annexation map (Figure 2.1)	Policy	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff



**FIGURE 10.1** SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

	Type	Impact on Resources	Ongoing	Timeframe	Task Leadership
<b>Energy, Environment, and Resources</b>					
Ensure all facilities and city resources are kept in a state of good repair	Capital	Mid	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff
Evaluate the waste management systems and consider contracting with a single company for waste and recycle pick-up	Policy	High		Short	Council
Explore transit and rideshare programs to provide transportation alternatives to connect Plattsmouth to the Omaha Metropolitan Area	Policy	Low		Short	Council, Staff
Evaluate energy efficiency improvements as an ongoing consideration. Improvements could include the replacement streetlights with LEDs or the replacement of city fleet vehicles with energy efficient models	Policy Capital	Mid	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff
Continue to support downtown revitalization initiatives and green building methods to promote efficient development	Policy Capital	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council
Encourage and eliminate barriers to solar energy and small scale wind energy production	Policy	Low		Short	Council, Staff
Evaluate and consider adopting the Nebraska Energy Code to promote efficiency across all building projects and construction types	Policy	Low		Short	Council, Staff
Encourage business clusters of industrial and commercial businesses to reduce operating expense and impacts	Policy	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff

**FIGURE 10.1** SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

	Type	Impact on Resources	Ongoing	Timeframe	Task Leadership
<b>Community Character</b>					
Define and reinforce areas of civic importance using landscaping, branding, and strategic investments to develop a high quality public realm to compliment the civic environment. Areas include: the Community and Senior Center; historic neighborhoods adjacent to downtown; the 18th Street Connection between schools; Memorial Park; and the commercial development area along Highway 75	Policy Capital	Low		Medium	Council
Continue to encourage and support the ongoing revitalization of downtown Plattsmouth as the center of the community and as a thriving business environment	Policy Capital	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council
Support and encourage the installation of public art into the Cityscape	Policy Capital	Low		Short/Ongoing	Council, Developers
Enhance the gateways to Plattsmouth through the use of landscaping, art, and wayfinding to convey a cohesive community image to visitors, tourists, and residents	Policy Capital	Low		Medium	Council
Continue to support the preservation and conservation of historic assets by promoting awareness and understanding and/or through the creation policies and design guidelines to protect the community's historic resources	Policy Capital	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Developers
Support the creation of neighborhood associations as a way to promote neighborhood identity and community pride	Policy	Low		Short	Council, Staff
Support the landscaping of neighborhood and development edges to create attractive entryways and travel corridors	Policy	Low		Short	Council
Ensure new neighborhood development follows best management practices, are attractive, and are well connected to the community	Policy Capital	Low	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff

**FIGURE 10.1** SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

	Type	Impact on Resources	Ongoing	Timeframe	Task Leadership
<b>Green Character</b>					
Create a complete trail and pathway system consistent with the recommendations of Figure 8.2	Policy Capital	Low		Medium	Council, Staff
Develop a transportation network designed for automobiles, bicyclists, and pedestrians. This network of “Complete Streets”, developed incrementally, will create a safe and friendly transportation system for all users	Policy Capital	Mid		Medium	Council
Enhance the appearance of private and public property by requiring landscaping for new private development projects and by providing incentives for existing development	Policy	Mid		Medium	Council, Developers
Review development regulations and policies, integrate green improvements into public projects, and budget for capital improvements	Policy Capital	Mid	Yes	Ongoing	Council, Staff
<b>Economic Development</b>					
Evaluate and develop strategies for the economic development opportunity areas identified in Chapter 5	Policy	Low		Ongoing	Council, Staff
Develop a plan for the continued revitalization of downtown Plattsmouth including an analysis of the market conditions and tourism horizon	Policy Capital	Low		Ongoing	Council, Staff, Developers
Evaluate options for managing the limited supply of parking spaces most efficiently and explore opportunities to expand the supply of parking in the district	Policy	Mid		Short	Council, Staff, Developers
Continue to build on the historic character of downtown Plattsmouth to encourage the reinvestment and revitalization of historic structures	Policy	Low		Ongoing	Council, Staff, Developers

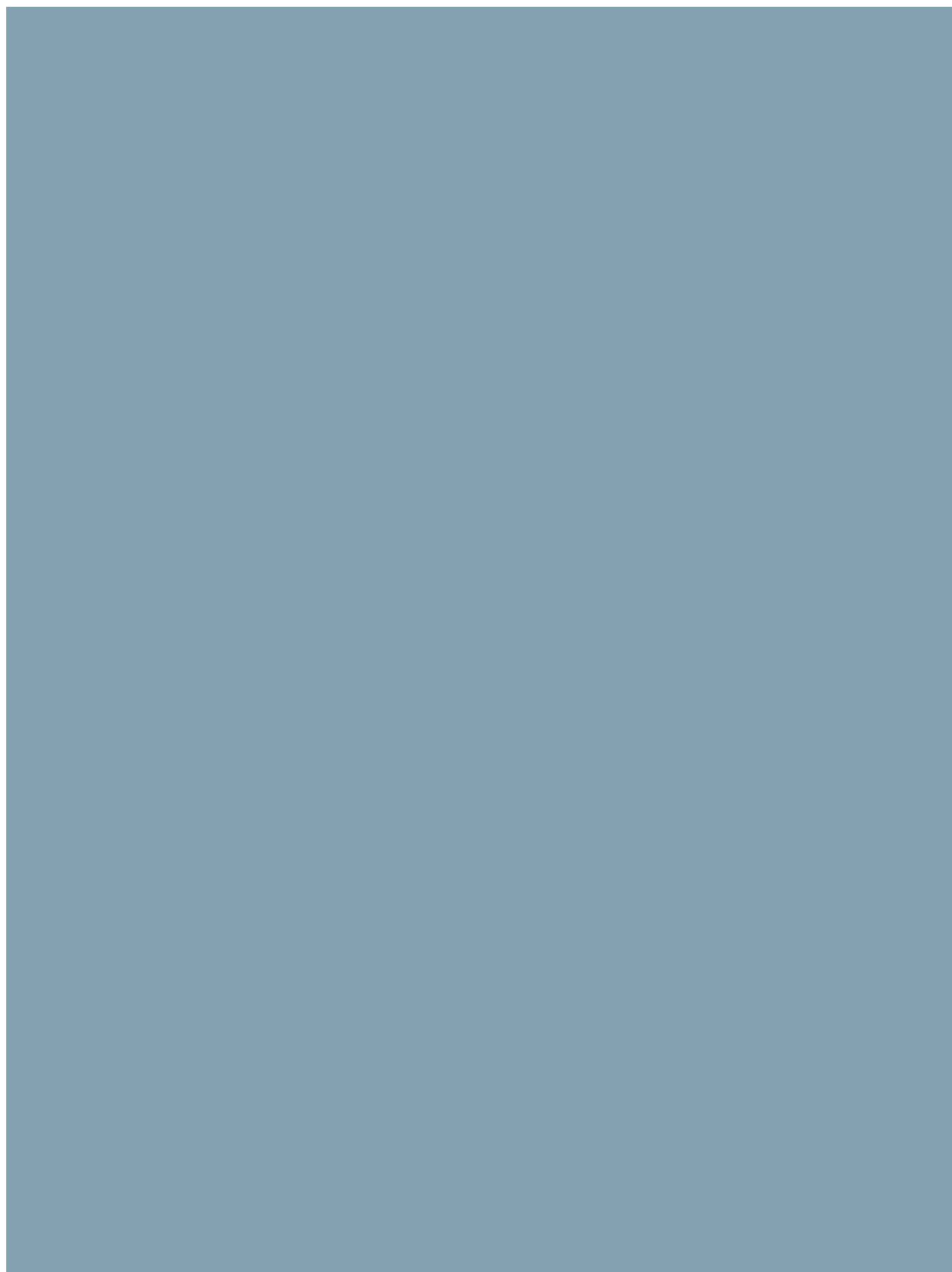
**FIGURE 10.1** SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

	Type	Impact on Resources	Ongoing	Timeframe	Task Leadership
<b>Housing</b>					
Explore and support the redevelopment of the old high school and the blue devil stadium site as a mixed use project	Policy Capital	Mid		Ongoing	Council, Developers
Encourage the build-out of the Osage Ranch residential development. Consider restructuring as a mixed density development to appeal to the regional market.	Policy	Mid		Ongoing	Council, Developers
Encourage and support infill development in the housing opportunity areas illustrated on Map 6.2	Policy Capital	Low		Ongoing	Council, Developers
Encourage private sector development of homes to meet the affordability ranges identified in Figure 6.6	Policy	Low		Ongoing	Developers
Explore modifying the zoning code to permit accessory dwelling units, (a.k.a. Granny Flats) as a means of integrating inter-generational housing into the existing urban fabric and housing market.	Policy	Low		Medium	Staff, Council
Support and encourage the creation of upper story housing units in downtown Plattsmouth	Policy Capital	Low		Ongoing	Council, Developers
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>					
Create new neighborhood parks in under-served areas of the community including the residential areas to the north, south and west as illustrated on Map 7.1	Policy Capital	Mid		Medium	Council, Staff
Develop a Parks Master Plan to outline a strategic program to enhance the existing park system and plan for new recreation areas	Policy Capital	Low		Short	Council, Staff
Create a phased plan to expand the Plattsmouth trail system with routes described in Chapter 7	Policy Capital	Low		Short	Council
Establish a funding strategy for the construction, enhancement and maintenance of park and trail facilities	Policy Capital	Low		Ongoing	Council



**FIGURE 10.1** SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

	Type	Impact on Resources	Ongoing	Timeframe	Task Leadership
<b>Connectivity</b>					
Use the Three basic principles for streets to guide the creation or reconstruction of city streets as appropriate	Policy	Low		Ongoing	Council, Staff
Incrementally create a connected network of trails, bicycle routes, complete streets, and sidewalks	Policy Capital	Low		Ongoing	Council
Acquire the right of ways for major future streets in advance of development and then construct the street concurrent with development	Policy Action Capital	Low		Ongoing	Council
<b>Public Facilities &amp; Infrastructure</b>					
Evaluate Water Treatment Facility to determine comparative costs of floodproofing and modernization, the construction of a new facility, or the implementation of a regional solution for water needs	Capital Action	High		Short	Council, Staff
Complete a facility assessment of City Hall to determine whether the building should be reconfigured, expanded, or the offices relocated and the building reused	Capital Action	High		Medium	Council, Staff
Complete a facility assessment of the Library, develop a reuse plan for the existing facility and locate a site for a new facility	Capital Action	Mid		Medium	Council, Staff
Raise and reinforce the berm around the Wastewater Treatment Plant to mitigate flood hazards	Capital Action	High		Short	Council, Staff
Evaluate the need for a central maintenance facility based on the demands of all City Departments.	Capital Action	High		Short	Council, Staff





# appendix

