



YORK

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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Our sincere gratitude,



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

York is a special place. It has a distinct character, an energy, and a willingness to move itself forward based on the will of its people. It is not without thought and energy that great places are made and thriving communities are built. It is for these reasons that this plan is developed to proudly help guide York on its way over the next 5, 10, and 20 years. This chapter establishes the purpose of the document and the strength that a well-defined vision affords its community.



YORK

WHY A PLAN?

A plan is simply a roadmap to help York most efficiently navigate to its best future. The plan has two fundamental purposes. First, it provides an essential legal basis for land use regulations such as zoning and subdivision controls. Second, a modern comprehensive plan presents a unified and compelling vision for the community derived from the aspirations of its citizens and establishes the actions necessary to achieve that vision.

LEGAL ROLE

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 live cooperatively within their community and have certain responsibilities to one another. These regulations establish the rules that govern how land is used and developed within the municipality and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. Therefore, the plan creates a vision for how the community should development and must therefore be used to make land use decisions.

COMMUNITY BUILDING ROLE

A comprehensive plan is an action-oriented conversation about the future that includes residents, businesses, and organizations operating in the community, today and in the future. The process of developing the plan and the vision for York’s future is most crucial as it articulates and implements the visions for all aspects of the community.

The vision must be continually discussed, reviewed, and augmented as changes occur. Therefore, the plan must be a living document that articulates a vision while also providing a working program for realizing the city’s potential.

DOCUMENT FORMAT

The plan is comprehensive in its scope and therefore includes an overview and exploration of the diverse topics essential to the function of the community. From land use and economic development to the less tangible topics of community character and energy policy, this plan is organized around a series of elements which collectively provide a comprehensive guide for the city. Each element is a chapter and each chapter is organized around a series of carefully crafted goals.

The goal statements were developed based on the public input received throughout the planning process from diverse stakeholders. If the community is able to adhere and implement these goal statements, it will be true to itself and efficient in its course forward.

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 this document.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

York is a collective resource for all residents, businesses, and future generations. As such, this plan belongs to York and is intended, first and foremost, to be used by the people. However, different groups and stakeholders will use this document in different ways.

THE PUBLIC

The comprehensive plan is a summary document representing the will of the engaged citizens of York as seen through the lens of demographic, physical, and economic factors. As the plan is intended to help shape the community for future generations, the public is one of the most important constituents.

- Motivate and guide personal civic involvement

CITY STAFF

City staff will be the ‘boots on the ground’ orchestrating the day-to-day execution of this plan. This document should serve as a constant reference about the broad course of action envisioned by the public. Having this resource can improve consistency and efficiency in the hundreds of small decisions that go into making a city operate.

- Serve as a constant reference for decisions and actions
- Promote consistency and long term efficiency toward a common vision

POLICY MAKERS

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

- Guide land use decisions and decisions that impact land use
- Serve as a constant reference for decisions and actions
- Promote consistency and long term efficiency toward a common vision through policy development and investment

DEVELOPERS

While guided by city policy and direction, the majority of property development in American cities is undertaken by private, market-driven developers. This plan can serve as a guide to developers who wish to operate in York. 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 their profitability.

- Help developers to understand the city’s vision to promote collaboration and reduce delays
- Promote public-private partnerships for the greatest gain

PLANYORK

The York Comprehensive plan was developed through months of public participation including steering committee meetings, facilitated stakeholder discussions, city council meetings, and several public workshops held over the course of the project. Each participant contributed to the overall tone, content, and the plan’s ability to represent the many constituencies throughout the community.

CHAPTER TWO

YORK TODAY

A city is a dynamic and ever-changing environment where the decisions of individual players have an impact on the community as a whole. York is different today than it has been in the past and how it will be at any point in the future. Its residents will change, its businesses will change, and its role in the region will continue to change and evolve. An effective plan for the future must first understand the present state of affairs to craft appropriate recommendations for its development and future growth. This chapter explores York today in order to plan for its future.



YORK

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores present conditions including the demographic and economic indicators in addition to public attitudes. On this foundation, the plan is built.

POPULATION PROJECTION

Population projections will help York to plan efficiently for future land use and community services. It is helpful to plan for a slightly optimistic growth rate which can be reasonably achieved with pro-active policies and investments to support and encourage action from the private market. Based on a number of economic and demographic indicators, a one percent annual growth rate is selected and will result in a population of approximately 9,709 by 2035. This change raises immediate questions:

- Where will people live and what will be their housing preferences?
- Where will the city attract and support new employment for industrial and commercial growth?
- How will the city best provide access to existing neighborhoods and emerging growth areas including infrastructure and transportation routes?
- How will York develop to promote health, recreation, and additional mobility options?
- What will it take to improve the experience of living in and visiting York? How does the city enhance amenities to ensure quality of life improvements for all of its residents?

The residents and businesses in York are tremendous assets and their participation was essential in answering these, and many other, questions during the planning process.

- **Natural Population Scenario:** Assumes no migration will occur and applies standard birth and death rates to the current population.
- **Annual Growth Rate:** A measure of the amount of growth that will occur on an annual basis.

RESPONSIBILITY TO FUTURE GENERATIONS (2015 THROUGH 2035)



A PLACE TO LIVE



GAINFUL
EMPLOYMENT



MOBILITY



HEALTH AND
WELLNESS

Figure 2.1: Population Projection

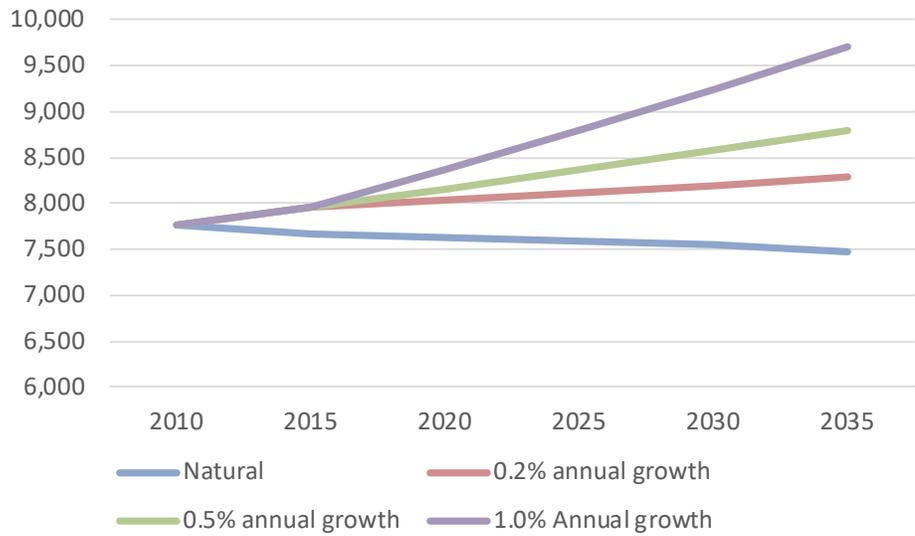


Figure 2.2: Population Projection

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2030
Natural	7,766	7,661	7,622	7,596	7,559	7,480
0.2% Annual Growth	7,766	7,957	8,037	8,118	8,199	8,281
0.5% Annual Growth	7,766	7,957	8,158	8,364	8,575	8,792
1.0% Annual Growth	7,766	7,957	8,363	8,789	9,238	9,709

Source: RDG Planning & Design

A CHANGING COMMUNITY

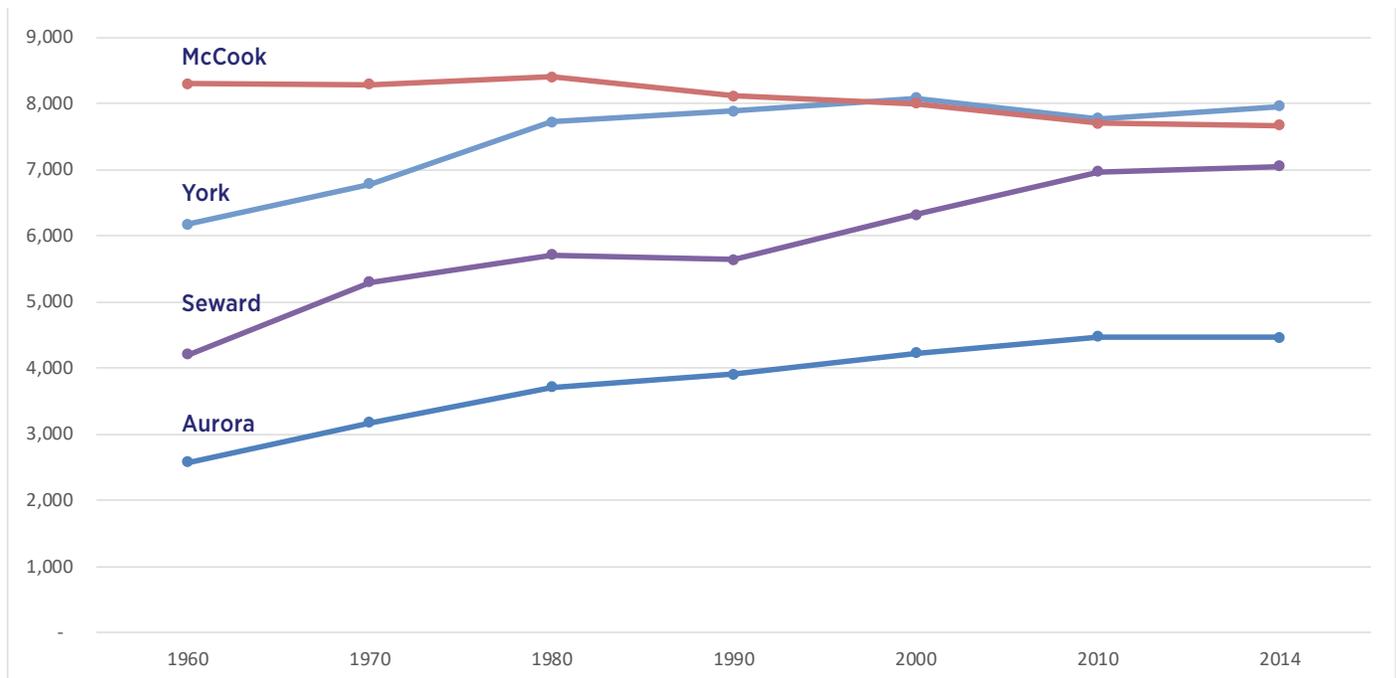
UNDERSTANDING POPULATION TRENDS

In the same way that people live in communities of their peers, cities of all types can look to their peer communities as measuring post for ideas on how to approach similar issues. This regional approach to knowledge sharing helps to raise the performance of each community. In working with city staff and members of the public, the following peer communities have been selected for comparison:

- **Aurora, Nebraska.** A fast growing community of nearly 4,500 residents located 30 minutes from York to the west. Aurora was selected as a peer community due to its proximity to York and location on the Interstate 80 Corridor.
- **Seward, Nebraska.** A growing community of nearly 7,000 residents located 30 minutes from York to the east. Seward was selected as a peer community due to its proximity to York, location near the Interstate 80 Corridor, and similar population size.
- **McCook, Nebraska.** A stable community of nearly 7,750 residents, McCook is located in southwest Nebraska and was selected as a peer community due to its similar population size and similar population change over the past decades
- **York County, Nebraska.** It is interesting to examine the surrounding county as a comparison for the communities it contains as it often reveals patterns of economic interplay. York County is home to approximately 14,000 residents including the nearly 8,000 residing in York.



Figure 2.3: Historic Population Change



- Between 1960 and 2010, York gained approximately 1,600 new residents through a period of strong growth followed by relative stagnation beginning in the 1990s through 2010. This stagnation can be attributed to a number of factors that will be explored later in this plan but indicators suggest that York is positioned to grow once again.
- Both Seward and Aurora were able to achieve continued growth from 2000 through 2014 while McCook and York remained stable or lost population.

Figure 2.4: Peer Community Population Change

	2000 POPULATION	2010 POPULATION	2014 POPULATION
Aurora, Nebraska	4,225	4,479	4,461
McCook, Nebraska	7,994	7,698	7,670
Seward, Nebraska	6,319	6,964	6,964
York, Nebraska	8,081	7,766	7,878
York County, Nebraska	14,598	13,665	13,917

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

ACTUAL VERSUS PREDICTED POPULATION CHANGE

The future population of a place can be forecasted by examining the character of today's population and extrapolating into the future using standard birth and death rates. When this analysis is applied to the past decade and compared to actual change, the amount of in-migration and out-migration can be assessed.

- The population of York was projected to be stable from 2000 to 2010 but lost 322 residents from the predicted amount indicating migration was occurring. The most notable change occurred in the following cohorts:
 - » Loss: Working adults aged 25 – 34. A loss of 419 residents
 - » Gain: Growth in residents aged under 14 years is the result of larger families and higher birth rates than predicted.
 - » Gain: Late adolescents and young adults aged 15 – 19. A gain of 86 residents
 - » Gain: Seniors aged 70 – 84. A gain of 120 residents
 - » Loss: Late adults and early retirees aged 50 – 69. A loss of 119 residents

A variety of reasons drive people to move to and from communities (such as jobs, housing, and quality elder care) but the change suggests that the York was unable to meet certain needs of its residents over the past decade. Economic and housing indicators suggest shortages in both employment and housing combined to stagnate the economy and the city's ability to grow.

Figure 2.5: Actual Versus Predicted Population by Age Cohort

	2000 ACTUAL %	2010 PREDICTED %	2010 ACTUAL %	DIFFERENCE (ACTUAL VS. PREDICTED)
0-4	5.8%	6.1%	6.9%	43
5 to 9	6.1%	5.6%	5.8%	-8
10 to 14	7.4%	5.8%	6.3%	21
15 to 19	8.3%	6.0%	7.4%	86
20 to 24	7.8%	7.3%	7.8%	13
25 to 29	5.3%	8.2%	6.4%	-167
30 to 34	5.6%	7.7%	4.8%	-252
35 to 39	6.2%	5.3%	5.3%	-17
40 to 44	6.9%	5.5%	5.4%	-20
45 to 49	7.7%	6.1%	6.4%	1
50 to 54	6.0%	6.7%	6.7%	-19
55 to 59	4.9%	7.3%	7.2%	-34
60 to 64	3.9%	5.5%	5.4%	-30
65 to 69	3.7%	4.3%	4.0%	-36
70 to 74	4.1%	3.2%	4.0%	51
75 to 79	3.8%	2.7%	3.3%	40
80 to 84	3.2%	2.6%	3.1%	29
85+	3.4%	3.9%	3.8%	-23
Total				-322

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

UNDERSTANDING ECONOMIC TRENDS

EMPLOYMENT

Much like other essential services, a community's employment landscape dictates where and whether residents can access work to support themselves, their families, and their community through local spending. Employment within a community can be assessed in two different ways, by occupation and by industry. Employment by occupation describes the type of work a person performs while employment by industry focuses on the type of work the business performs. For example, a person may be employed as an accountant (their occupation) for a major manufacturer (the industry).

Occupation and Employment

- Many employed in York are employed in occupations classified as management, business, science, and the arts comprising 32.2% of the workforce. Other significant occupations include sales and office at 21.8%, and service at 21.0%.
- The most prevalent business segment in York is educational services, health care, and social assistance comprising 26.5% of the workforce. Other significant segments include manufacturing at 15.1% and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services at 9.7% of the workforce.

Figure 2.6: Employee by Occupation for York, Nebraska

	2014	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Total Workforce 16 Years and Older	4,267	100%
OCCUPATION		
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	1,374	32.2%
Service occupations	896	21.0%
Sales and office occupations	930	21.8%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	499	11.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	572	13.4%
Military specific occupations	0	0.0%

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

Figure 2.7: Employee by Industry for York, Nebraska

	2014	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Total Workforce 16 Years and Older	4,267	100%
INDUSTRY		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting, and mining	158	3.7%
Construction	213	5.0%
Manufacturing	644	15.1%
Wholesale trade	90	2.1%
Retail trade	367	8.6%
Transportation and warehousing, & utilities	256	6.0%
Information and finance & insurance, & real estate & rental & leasing	260	6.1%
Professional, scientific, management, & administrative & waste management services	256	6.0%
Educational services, & health care & social assistance	1,131	26.5%
Arts, entertainment, & recreation, and accommodation and food services	414	9.7%
Other services (except public administration)	311	7.3%
Public administration	158	3.7%
Armed forces	0	0.0%

Source: 2014 American Community Survey

PERSONAL EARNINGS AND COST OF LIVING

The median personal and household wages earned impact the amount of disposable income available and the portion of their earnings committed to housing and transportation.

Median Household Income Trend

- The median household income in each peer community grew by between 33.6% and 44.6% since 2000.
- Seward and Aurora increased the greatest percent and at the greatest rate while York and McCook grew at a similar and more gradual pace.

Figure 2.8: Household Income Change

	2000 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	2014 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	PERCENT CHANGE	ANNUAL PERCENT CHANGE
Aurora, Nebraska	\$37,690	\$54,484	44.6%	2.90%
McCook, Nebraska	\$31,105	\$41,560	33.6%	2.65%
Seward, Nebraska	\$41,264	\$58,261	41.2%	2.91%
York, Nebraska	\$36,069	\$48,622	34.8%	2.75%
York County, Nebraska	\$37,093	\$50,922	37.3%	2.80%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Average Household Income by Range

By examining the percent of residents in each income bracket, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of the household incomes being earned in York and in its peer communities.

- The largest number of households in each community, with the exception of McCook, earn between \$50,000 and \$74,999.
- In the peer group there is a significant margin between Aurora and Seward (\$54,484 and \$58,261 respectively) and McCook and York (\$41,560 and \$48,622 respectively). Contributing to this margin is that both Aurora and Seward have double digit percentages of households in the \$75,000 to \$99,999 and the \$100,000 to \$149,999 income ranges due in part to the proximity to major job centers and the prevalence of higher paying jobs.

Figure 2.9: Household Income by Range and Peer Community

	AURORA, NEBRASKA	MCCOOK, NEBRASKA	SEWARD, NEBRASKA	YORK, NEBRASKA	YORK COUNTY
Total Households	1,779	3,332	2,487	3,347	5,599
\$0-\$14,999	8.90%	15.20%	10.90%	10.50%	9.20%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	11.90%	14.00%	9.20%	11.60%	11.20%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	23.00%	30.10%	22.60%	29.90%	28.00%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	22.40%	16.40%	24.30%	24.80%	22.80%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	17.80%	10.00%	15.60%	8.60%	12.00%
\$100,000 or more	16.00%	14.30%	17.50%	14.70%	16.80%
Median income (dollars)	\$54,484	\$41,560	\$58,261	\$48,622	\$50,922

Source: 2014 American Community Survey

RETAIL SALES

Retail sales are an economic indicator of the overall health of the community. It generally suggests whether the community is, or should be growing, stagnant, or declining. Retail sales demonstrate the strength of local business, local industry, and tourism. Additionally, monies spent locally tend to recirculate within the economy fostering further job growth and economic prosperity. The data is provided by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and excludes motor vehicle sales.

Taxable Retail Sales

- The amount of spending in each of the communities has increased significantly between 14.4% and 29.9% from 2005 to 2015. The taxable sales in York increased by 19.5% over this period.
- While the percent increase in York is consistent with its peer communities, neither ahead or below the pack, its 2015 per capita sales exceeds the average per capita sales by more than \$7,500 per person. This demonstrates that York has a very strong economy, most notably with its presence on Interstate 80, with the ability to attract a significant amount of spending from throughout the region.
- York has a very strong retail economy due to its prime location and commercial presence along Interstate 80. This ability to attract spending is a major opportunity for the community and its role in the region. The retail economy has experienced growth at a rate comparable with its peer communities. However, this growth builds upon a strong base which suggests that the already strong retail economy continues to become stronger.

Figure 2.10: Taxable Retail Sales

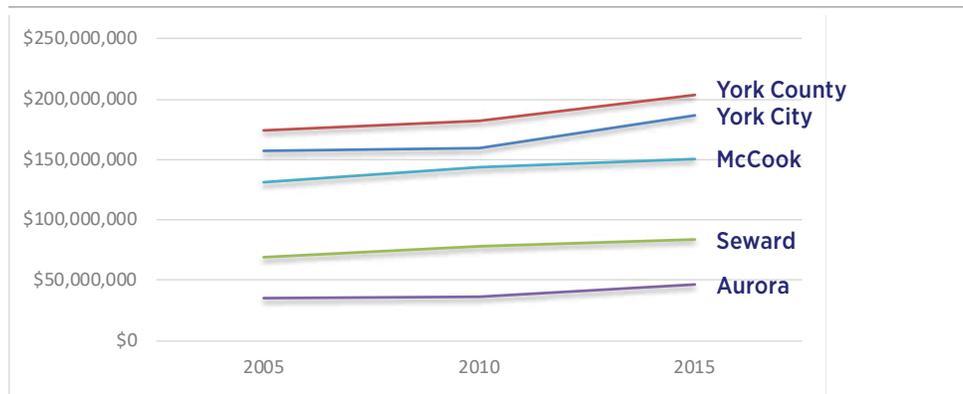


Figure 2.11: Taxable Retail Sales Standardized by Population

	POPULATION	2015 SALES	PER CAPITA SALES
Aurora, Nebraska	4,461	\$46,487,779	\$10,420
McCook, Nebraska	7,670	\$150,194,970	\$19,582
Seward, Nebraska	6,964	\$83,342,062	\$11,967
York, Nebraska	7,878	\$186,258,097	\$23,642
York County, Nebraska	13,917	\$203,537,669	\$14,625

Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development; U.S. Census Bureau; RDG Planning & Design

UNDERSTANDING HOUSING TRENDS

The expense, nature, and disposition of a community’s housing stock are some of its most defining characteristics. The housing market is universally experienced by all current residents, prospective residents, and future generations. For these reasons, it is important to consider whether the existing housing stock is adequate to meet the needs of the community. Additionally, observing housing trends on housing tenure, median value/rent, and price relative to income can help reveal important information about a community’s current economic trajectory.

A community’s housing stock can enable and support growth by meeting the needs of the economy or stagnate growth through the limited availability of certain housing products, certain price-points, or quality housing units in general. The 2016 York County Housing Study provides greater insight into the housing market in York and in the region.

HOUSING OCCUPANCY ANALYSIS

- The owner to rental ratio is stable at approximately 60% / 40% and this proportion is conducive to growth by allowing prospective residents to enter the market, first as a renter before establishing themselves more permanently as a homebuyer.
- The low vacancy rate, approximately 3% in the rental market, is a barrier to growth and makes it difficult for new residents to enter the market or for existing residents to move within the market without purchasing an existing home. If prospective residents are unable to establish in York, this has a profound ability to stagnate the overall economy.

Figure 2.12: Occupancy Analysis

	2000		2010		2014		NET CHANGE (2000-2014)
	Number	Percent of Occupied Unites	Number	Percent of Occupied Unites	Number	Percent of Occupied Unites	Number
Owner-Occupied	2,094	63%	2,090	64%	1,982	59%	-112
Renter-Occupied	1,210	37%	1,163	36%	1,365	41%	155
Total Vacant	228	-	380	-	390	-	162
Vacancy rate	6.5%	-	10.5%	-	10.4%*	-	-
Total	3,532	-	3,633	-	3,737	-	205

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

AFFORDABILITY ANALYSIS

“Housing affordability” is a relative measure which considers the spectrum of incomes in a place, the need for prices which enable banks and residents to perpetuate the stability of the market through transactions, and housing conditions that enable sale and resale of properties.

- In general terms, an affordable housing market is one where the median value of a home is approximately 2.5 times the household’s annual income. With ratios below 2.0, a market exhibits the negative pressures of undervalued housing. With ratios above 3.0, a market begins to exhibit the negative conditions of a market that is unattainable for many of its residents and prospective residents.
- York’s housing market is relatively affordable with median homes being valued at 2.16 times the median household income. This means that, if housing is available, the market is affordable relative to its population. The greatest challenge appears to be one of availability rather than base cost.

Figure 2.13: Affordability Analysis

	MEDIAN CONTRACT RENT	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	MEDIAN HOME VALUE	VALUE TO INCOME RATIO
Aurora, Nebraska	\$415	\$54,484	\$112,100	2.06
McCook, Nebraska	\$398	\$41,560	\$84,800	2.04
Seward, Nebraska	\$509	\$58,261	\$140,500	2.41
York, Nebraska	\$474	\$48,622	\$104,800	2.16
York County, Nebraska	\$460	\$50,922	\$113,000	2.22

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

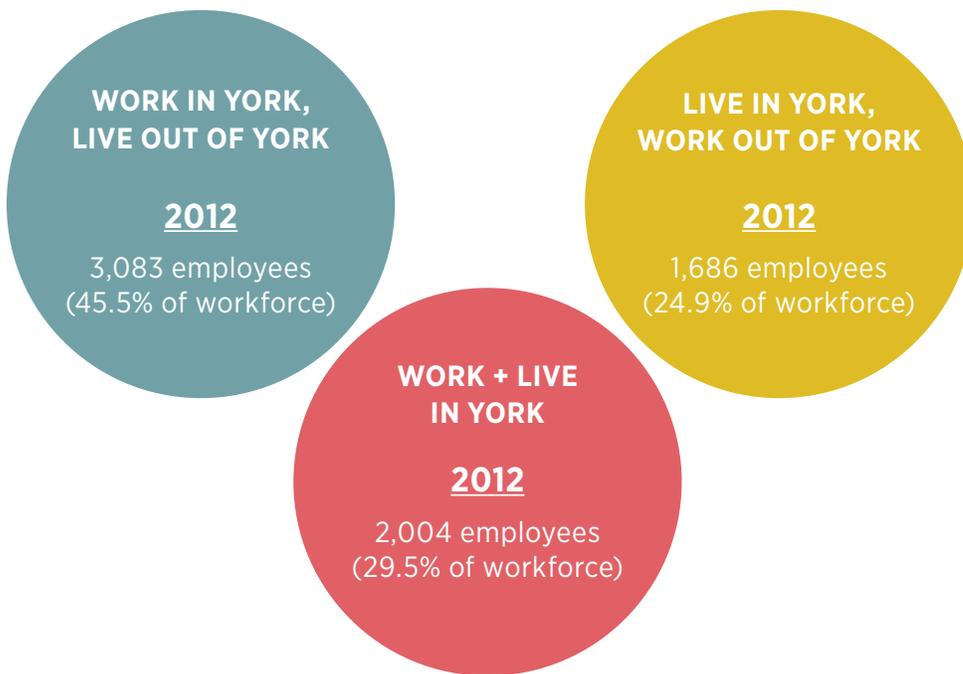
UNDERSTANDING TRANSPORTATION CHARACTER

Transportation has been a guiding force in community development for all of human existence. From the importance of waterways, sea currents, railroads, and land routes including city streets and the Interstate Highway System, these routes have driven human settlement and its economic systems. In York, this story is continued with Interstate, the railroad, and city streets all guiding the way people and businesses interact with the community.

COMMUTING CHARACTERISTICS

The movement of people from their homes to their place of employment and, by extension, back home again illustrates how a community functions in the region. Both the location of jobs and homes are critical components of the economic development equation.

- The total workforce with primary jobs in York increased by 177 from 2008 to 2014, a positive change of 2.62%.
- The share of employees that both work and live in York has decreased by 5.96%.
- The share of employees commuting into York for work has increased by 3.46%
- York is growing as a job center but not increasing the number of workers living in the community



MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

The way employees commute to their place of employment impacts their particular needs and desires including transportation infrastructure and housing types. These factors impact the cost of living, the share of income dedicated to transportation, and for some, the opportunity to maintain gainful employment.

- The share of employees commuting by private vehicle has remained stable at approximately 90% but within this mode, the number driving alone increased by 2% and the number carpooling decreased by 2% possibly following lower gas prices.
- The number of employees who walk to work has decreased by nearly 2% (66) while the number riding a bicycle has increased by nearly 1% (37). Additionally, the number of employees working from home has increased by 0.5% (29)

TRAFFIC ROUTES AND VOLUMES

Transportation pathways impact the shape and function of our cities, region, and the nation. At the local level, major routes shape and support commercial and industrial potential and also contribute to the equation of where people choose to live. The obvious role of these transportation routes cannot be overstated.

- Interstate 80 has the greatest impact of all transportation routes with between eight and nine million vehicles passing York annually.
- Highway 34 is a major east-west route that serves as a convenient connection for the string of communities between Lincoln and Grand Island. This scenic route is a pathway for employees commuting to their workplace, for freight and agricultural traffic, and for travelers seeking an alternative to the interstate.
- Highway 81 has long been recognized for its national importance as a north-south connection from Texas to Canada. Improvements to reinforce the significance of this national route would have the potential of increasing York's economic role in the region.

Figure 2.14: Mode for Transportation for Workers in York

	2000	PERCENT	2014	PERCENT	CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE (2000-2014)
Total:	4,008		4,267		259	6.46%
Car, Truck, or Van: Drove Alone	3,165	78.97%	3,456	80.99%	291	2.03%
Car, Truck, or Van: Carpooled	449	11.20%	367	8.60%	-82	-2.60%
Public Transportation:	0	0.00%	4	0.09%	4	0.09%
Bicycle	16	0.40%	53	1.24%	37	0.84%
Walked	257	6.41%	191	4.48%	-66	-1.94%
Other Means	23	0.57%	69	1.62%	46	1.04%
Worked at Home	98	2.45%	127	2.98%	29	0.53%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey

Figure 2.16: Traffic Volume

ROADWAY	TOTAL VEHICLES PER DAY	TOTAL HEAVY COMMERCIAL VEHICLES PER DAY
Interstate 80 (East of York)	24,790	8,130
Interstate 80 (West of York)	22,525	7,952
Highway 81 (South of York)	9,140	1,425
Highway 81 (North of York)	4,265	515
Highway 81 (York Beltway)	3,675	851
Highway 34 (East of York)	2,860	405
Highway 34 (West of York)	2,725	305

Source: Nebraska Department of Roads, 2014

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Over the course of two years, this plan was developed through study of the major components that characterize a community and support its future. The foundation of this plan are the residents of York as they represent the collective spirit of the community, its aspirations and potential, and the energy to achieve its goals. The process was tailored to engage as many stakeholders as possible in a variety of ways:

PUBLIC MEETINGS

While all meetings throughout the process were advertised and open to the public, a number of meetings were specifically designed to solicit public dialogue around the future of the community with members of the public. Public meetings were held over the course of 2016 and 2017 including steering committee meetings, Planning Commission meetings, and City Council Meetings,

STEERING COMMITTEE WORKSHOPS

From the onset of this project a steering committee was assembled to represent the diverse attitudes and constituencies present in York Today. This group of 13 residents served as liaison and barometer for the plan. Their opinions and guidance was sought throughout the process to ensure the adopted plan truly represents the community and its path forward.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

A series of two public workshops were held to provide the opportunity to residents, business owners, and other stakeholders the opportunity to work side-by-side with the planning team and city staff. These workshops invited individuals to lend their ideas and input to the direction of the plan.

YORKFEST AND PUBLIC PLACES

Public festivals are a great place to share community ideas and to gather input because it is a place where the community gathers. At a YorkFest Booth, a display board and comment box described the process and allowed attendees to contribute their comments and ideas. This display board and comment box was then moved to other public venues to gather additional input from different stakeholders in York.

PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW SESSIONS

Between February and July of 2017, the Planning Commission completed a detailed review of the plan at their public sessions.



SURVEYS

Surveys are a popular, accessible, and helpful way to gain a deeper understanding into the attitudes and aspirations of residents and stakeholders. For these reasons, this plan uses the findings of three surveys to guide the ideas of this plan.

YORK COUNTY HOUSING STUDY – COMMUNITY SURVEY

The York County Housing Study Community Survey asked residents from throughout York County to rate the conditions of the housing market and the direction of the community. Of the 351 total responses, 241 indicated their home Postal Code as York (68467) and 238 indicated they work in the York Postal Code.

Findings:

- Common Themes



- » Quality and availability of entry level housing including rental and ownership options
- » The cost of entry level homes relative to the quality of the housing product
- » Cost and availability of residential lots for new home construction
- » Limited contractor availability
- » Limited workforce housing

YORK COUNTY HOUSING STUDY – WORKFORCE STUDY

The York County Housing Study Workforce Survey asked residents from throughout the region with employment ties to York County to rate the conditions of the housing market. Of the 539 total responses, 369 indicated they live in the York Postal Code and 471 indicated they work in the York Postal Code.

Findings:

- Common Themes



- » Many York employees seek more affordable and available housing in surrounding communities and counties
- » Many dual income families choosing to reside at a central point along the interstate with one member traveling east and the other west
- » Seniors desired smaller single family independent homes or units with shared maintenance, lawn care, and snow removal

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SURVEY

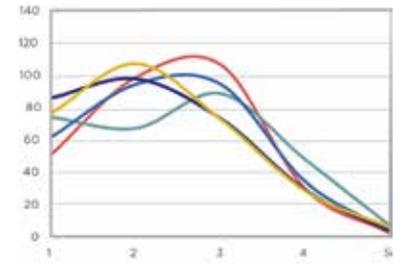
The Plan York Survey was designed specifically for the comprehensive plan and therefore sought a deeper understanding of the diverse components that drive how York functions today. During the time the survey was open, 322 respondents accessed the survey. The survey included an assortment of questions structured around the performance of York and its many systems.

The survey included a series of rating questions where respondents were asked to rate issues on a scale of one to five with one being poor and five being excellent.

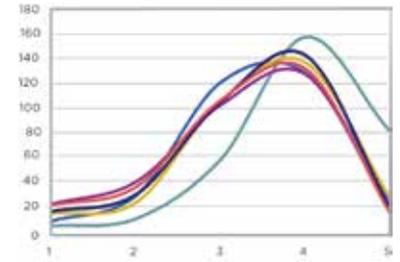
It is possible to gain insight into the true level of satisfaction expressed by examining the deviation from the average as a graph. The graphic illustrates how to read these bell-curve diagrams.

To the right are two graphs which represent the ways that individuals responded to two separate questions with one being poor and five being excellent (Horizontal Axis) and the number of responses on the vertical axis. Both questions have a consistent number of responses and a similar average rating. However, the way that people responded to the survey tells dissimilar stories. Question one illustrates that respondents sway to the negative side of the spectrum while question two illustrates the opposite.

The survey then includes a number of open ended question to invited respondents to provide additional comments in regard to what they believe are the highest priorities and big-ideas for York and its future.



Example Question 2:
A less favorable response

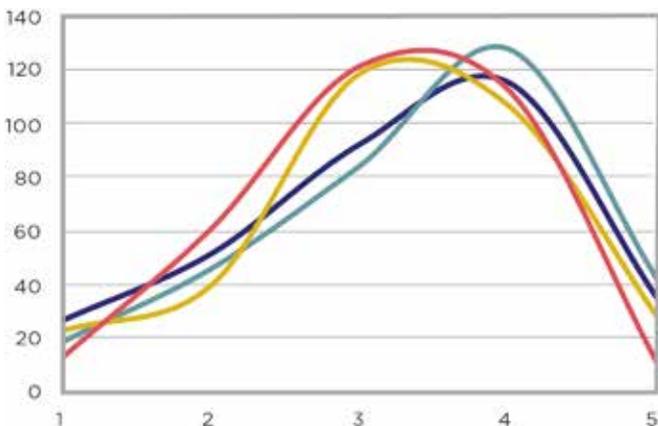


Example Question 2:
A favorable response

Findings: Community Image and Values

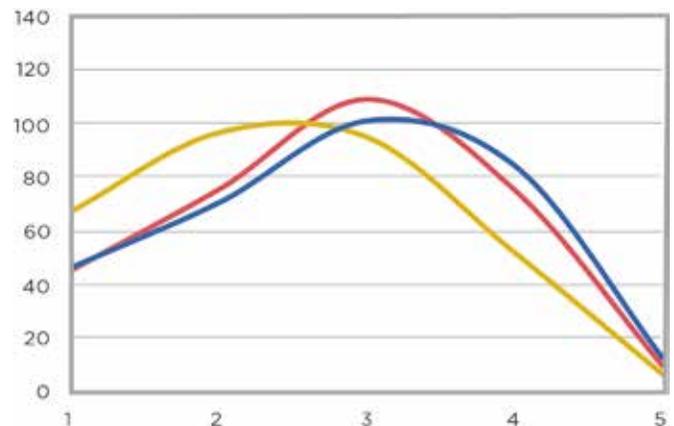
- On the topics related to Community Image and Values, the trend is generally positive with the average responses typically between 3 (adequate) to 3.5 (adequate to good).

Most Positive



■ Community Spirit
■ Your Overall Happiness with Living in York
■ Strength of Community Institutions
■ Community Appearance

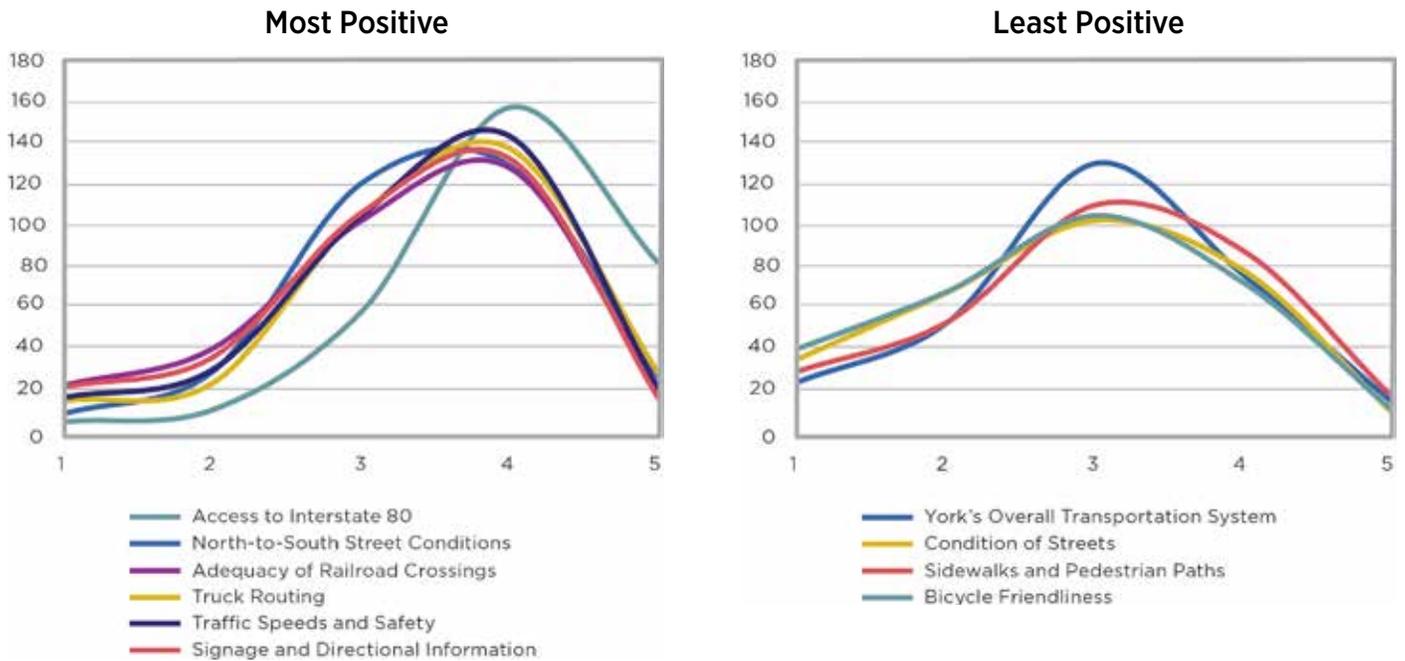
Least Positive



■ Image of the Downtown
■ Ability to Attract New Residents
■ Welcoming Attitude for New Arrivals

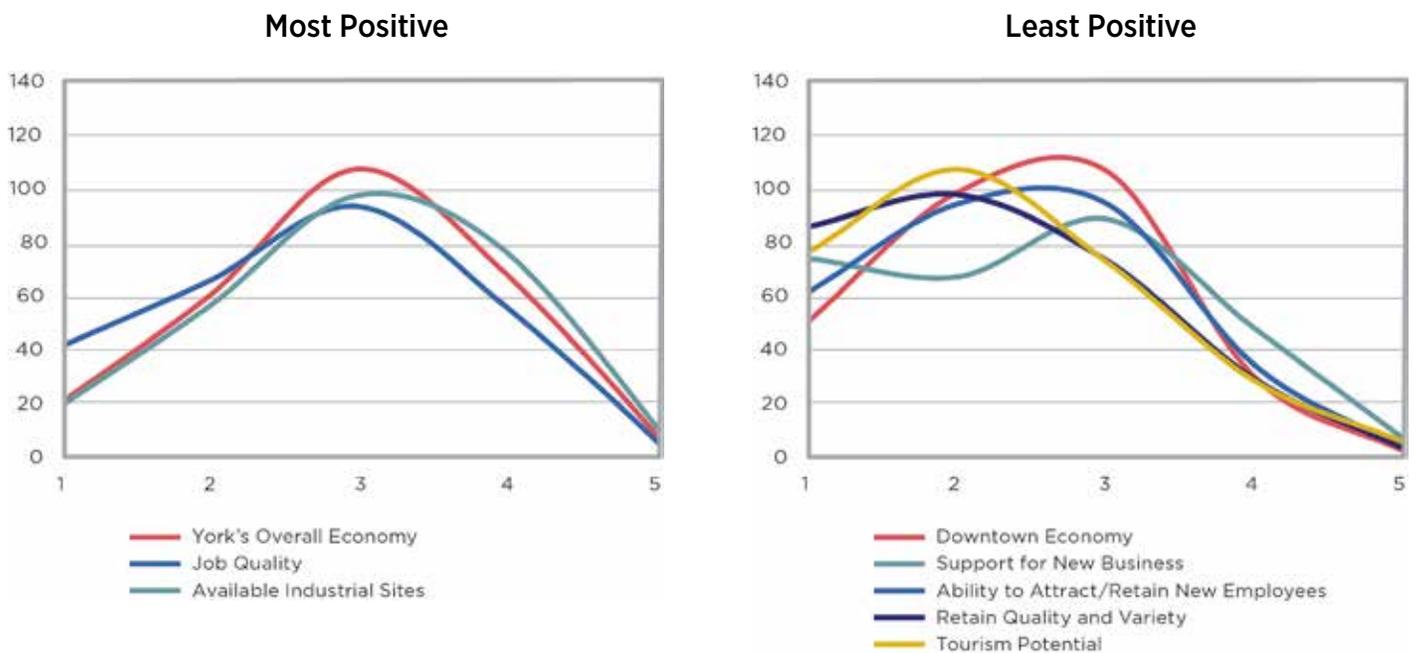
Findings: Transportation System

- On the topics related to York’s transportation system, the trend was generally positive with the average responses typically between 3 (adequate) to 3.5 (adequate to good).



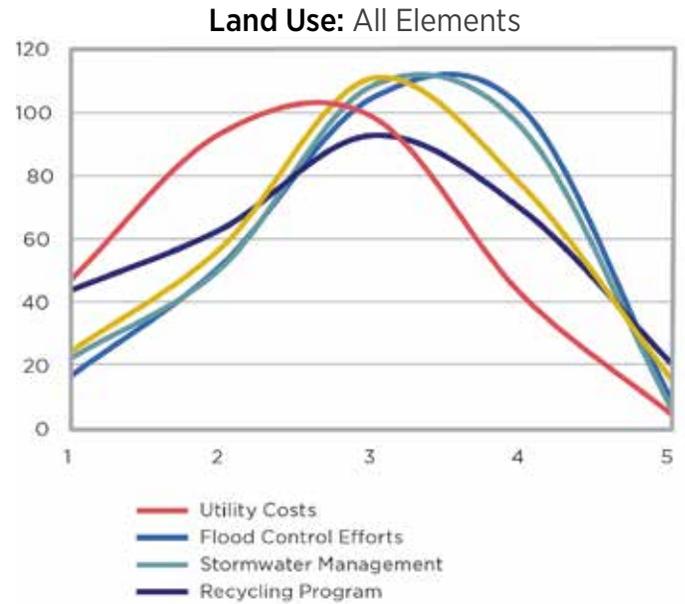
Findings: Economic Development

- On the topics related to York’s economy, the trend was neutral with topic swings from fair to good.



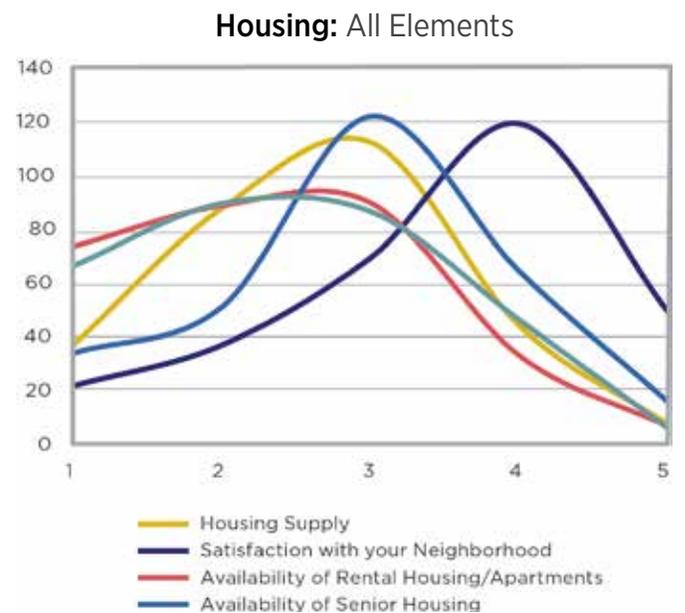
Findings: Land Use

- On the topics related to Land Use in York, the trend was generally neutral.
- Respondents were especially favorable for the following topics:
 - » Flood Control Efforts
 - » Stormwater Management
 - » New Areas for Growth
- Respondents were less favorable for the following topics:
 - » Recycling Program
 - » Utility Costs



Findings: Housing

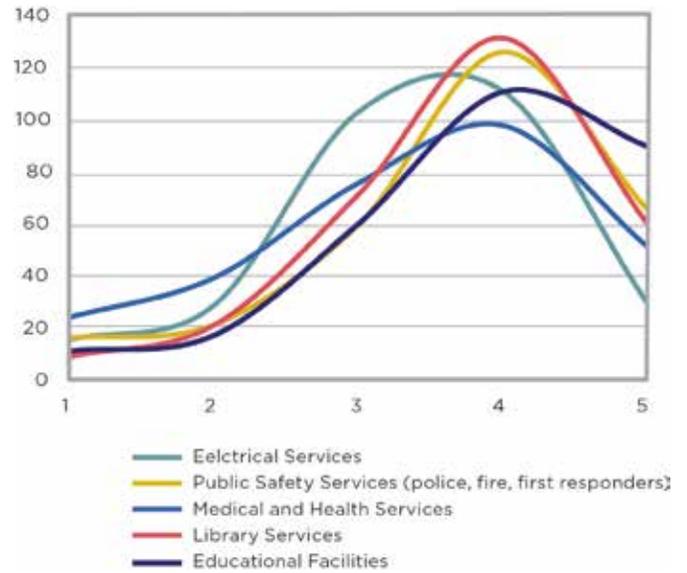
- On the topics related to Land Use in York, the trend was general neutral.
- Respondents were especially favorable for the following topics:
 - » Satisfaction with Your Neighborhood
- Respondents were less favorable for the following topics:
 - » Availability of Rental Housing
 - » Housing Affordability



Findings: Public and Community Facilities

- On the topics related to Public and Community Services in York, the trend was generally neutral with few exceptions.
- Respondents were especially favorable for the following topics:
 - » Public Safety Services
 - » Library Services
 - » Educational Facilities
 - » Electrical Services
 - » Customer Friendliness
 - » Water Services
- Respondents were less favorable for the following topics:
 - » Arts and Cultural Features
 - » Museums and Historical Attractions

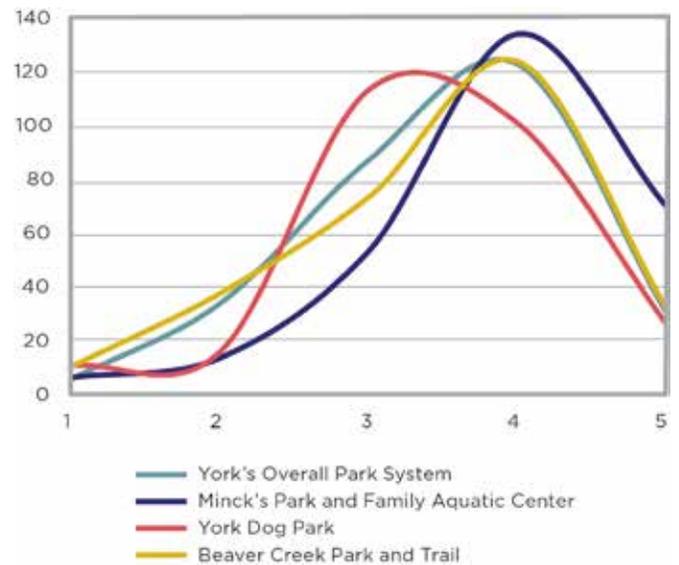
Public & Community Services: All Elements



Findings: Parks, Recreation, and Culture

- On the topics related to Parks, Recreation, and Culture in York, the trend is predominately positive as respondents overwhelmingly express pride in their park and recreation system.

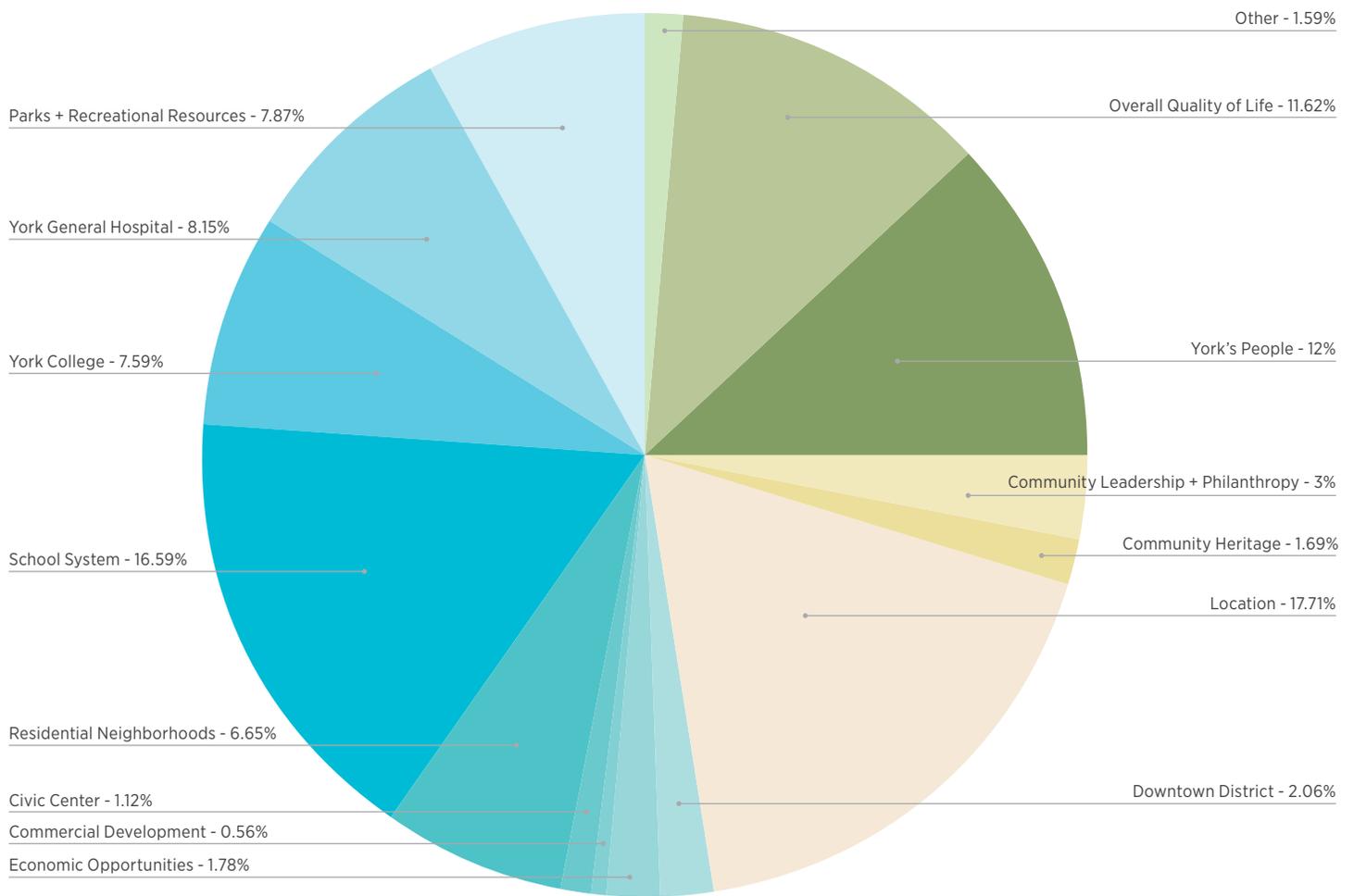
Parks, Recreation, & Culture: All Elements



WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE YORK'S GREATEST ASSETS?

Respondents were asked to identify York's top five assets. The responses revealed a balance of assets suggesting that many strong resources drive the stability of the community. The trends align closely with those topics which received high ratings in the previous questions, most notable the following assets:

- Location: 17.71%
- School System: 16.59%
- York's People: 12.00%
- Overall Quality of Life: 11.62%
- York General Hospital: 8.15%



PLAN GOALS

The plan is organized around a series of goals with each tailored to guide decisions around a specific component of the community. Together, these goals construct the collective framework that should be used to make decisions, guide investment, and create partnerships. Each of the goals was crafted through the ideas, values, and aspirations of York including its many residents, business owners, and community leaders.

Chapter 3: Land Use

Encourage contiguous land development that maximizes the efficiency of infrastructure, builds and reinforces the character of York, and integrates environmental preservation and transportation decisions into land use decisions

Incorporate greenspace and community features to complement existing development areas, to encourage and support new high quality development, and to catalyze reinvestment in underutilized areas

Encourage and support private investment for the rehabilitation, reuse, or redevelopment of vacant or underused sites in developed areas of the city

Continue to market and expand the industrial park to recruit new businesses and facilitate new business growth

Chapter 4: Community Character

Promote public and private investment in the beautification of activity centers and corridors to welcome and engage visitors with a positive first impression of York

Expand the amount and quality of greenspace in activity centers and along corridors to add beauty, amenities, and to responsibly manage stormwater

Fashion the high visibility corridors and gateways as visually cohesive environments that foster a strong sense of community and pride through an attention to landscaping, architectural quality, and human scale

Provide connections between community destinations, current and future, that improve access for all residents through signage, streetscape design, and physical pathways including walking and bicycle paths

Chapter 5: Transportation

Provide safe and efficient transportation opportunities for all users of the system including walkers, bicyclists and drivers

Use improvements and enhancements to the transportation system to support efficient and desirable patterns of community, neighborhood, and economic development

Connect neighborhoods and community destinations with pedestrian and bicycle facilities to provide safe, healthy, and viable transportation alternatives

Develop a system of wayfinding and theming to augment the transportation network to both connect and market York's amenities and quality



Chapter 6: Downtown

Enhance the flow of traffic in the downtown in ways that will both improve safety and access to businesses while conveying the importance of downtown as a destination

Establish downtown as a neighborhood where residents and visitors can find culture, housing, jobs, and services in the heart of the community

Continually identify and implement catalyst projects to improve the appearance and function of the district while facilitating increased self-sustaining private market investment

Chapter 7: Housing and Neighborhood Reinvestment

Address the underlying causes of the housing shortages in the targeted market areas especially rental and gateway housing

Strengthen neighborhoods through investment in the existing housing stock and infrastructure and guiding policy to reinforce neighborhood quality

Increase the availability of diverse housing options through new construction to make York more welcoming and competitive for new residents and businesses

Chapter 8: Economic Development

Support the expansion of York's economy by taking a broader view of 'economic development' to include improving all factors that impact business operations and expansion efforts such as workforce housing, quality of life, and overall community image to create a robust economic system

Market and expand upon the character, quality of life, amenities, and visitor experience to recruit new residents and businesses

Support and facilitate private business investment through public-private partnerships including the use of municipal real estate, financing tools, and infrastructure

Chapter 9: Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Use infrastructure extensions and enhancements to support efficient and desirable patterns of community, neighborhood, and economic development

Continue to use 'citizen guided investment' to identify potential projects and evaluate funding priorities

Provide public services in a manner that balances cost efficiency and level of service while using innovative funding sources when possible

Chapter 10: Energy

Energy strategies should support affordable, efficient and reliable services and find ways to expand the city's job base

Policies and strategies should reinforce the relationship between energy use and land use patterns, transportation, and community health

Partnerships should be created between the city, businesses, residents, and utility providers to expand the alternative energy options used within the city



CHAPTER THREE

LAND USE

Guiding the way land is used is one of the principle responsibilities of a city. It has direct, immediate, and long lasting impacts on the way the community functions, the way people live, and the way businesses operate. Thoughtful land use plans and decisions support strong property values, a vibrant economy, and a high quality of life for its inhabitants. The land use chapter builds upon the population forecast to articulate a physical plan for how the city can develop over the next 20 years.



YORK



CHAPTER GOALS

- Encourage contiguous land development that maximizes the efficiency of infrastructure, builds and reinforces the character of York, and integrates environmental preservation and transportation decisions into land use decisions
- Incorporate greenspace and community features to complement existing development areas, to encourage and support new high quality development, and to catalyze reinvestment in underutilized areas
- Encourage and support private investment for the rehabilitation, reuse, or redevelopment of vacant or underused sites in developed areas of the city
- Continue to market and expand the industrial park to recruit new businesses and facilitate new business growth

PATTERNS ON THE LANDSCAPE. LAND USE IN YORK

One can read the history and character of a place through its land use patterns. Each generation of residents and community leaders leave an imprint, some more profound than others, on the way York looks, feels, and functions today. From its first residents who created a center of commerce from the railroad to more contemporary patterns of recent generations. These patterns dictate, and are dictated by, the technology of that generation and the decisions made by community leaders.

For these reasons, thoughtful planning is important to crafting a strong community legacy and a timeless city. Each of the many land use decisions contributes to the landscape that future generations will find. The purpose of this plan is to identify the common goals and values of York residents and to generate a plan that will leave an imprint that current and future generations can be proud of.

York's land use framework is a core component of this comprehensive plan. It establishes the development vision to accommodate future growth, maintain and enhance the quality of existing development, and provide a sound basis for making public and private decisions including infrastructure investment. The land use plan will provide a physical framework for recommendations in subsequent chapters in this document.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

▶ 10 PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE LAND USE DECISIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

These principles describe the desired characteristics for all of York's existing and future development and should be used as a guide for land use decisions.

▶ ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK

A healthy system is symbiotic with its environment. In the case of a city this means that development should operate within the environmental features and limitations to the greatest benefit of both human and natural systems.

▶ EXISTING LAND USE

The existing land use map illustrates the way land within York is used today. This is the benchmark from which the plan begins to build for the next 20 years.

▶ DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The development concept illustrates a system of land uses and transportation connections to support the creation of strong neighborhoods and commercial centers at strategic locations while also enhancing existing areas through the application and provision of quality of life amenities such as trails and open space. The components of this concept are explained in further detail in their individual chapters of this plan.

▶ FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The future land use map presents the land uses that York envisions for the future. The new land uses represented in this map will transition over time, as land owners voluntarily sell, develop, or change the use of their properties.

▶ LAND USE CATEGORIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

This section describes the character of each land use category shown on the development concept and the future land use map.

▶ LAND USE COMPATIBILITY MATRIX

This matrix illustrates which land uses are compatible to help identify potential conflicts before they happen.

▶ ANNEXATION STRATEGY AND MAP

The six-point annexation strategy provides specific guidelines for a proper annexation process that helps minimize unnecessary conflicts and expenditures. The map presents the areas that York should consider for annexation both in the short term (5-10 years) and the long term (10-25 years).

RECOMMENDED IN THIS CHAPTER

1. Use the 10 principles of land use development as criteria for making land use decisions, such as reviewing new subdivision proposals.
2. Preserve sensitive natural areas from development, using the development suitability map as a guide.
3. Use the future land use map, along with compatibility matrix, to guide all land use decisions, such as subdivision review or re-zoning.
4. Base all annexation decisions on the six-point annexation strategy and the annexation map

PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

A series of key principles will guide land use decisions. Each provides a focus on efficiency, reducing costs, enhancing quality of life, leveraging the power of partnerships, and creating places where people want to live, work, and play. These principles are the criteria, along with the Plan Goals, that frame the land use directions outlined during this workshop.

1. USE URBAN SERVICES EFFICIENTLY

Urban services include streets, sewers, water infrastructure, parks and recreation resources, police and fire services, and many other facilities and resources. Each provides an essential service which supports a platform on which a community is able to thrive. However, these services are costly to provide and the cost can vary drastically based on land use decisions; for example, far flung development that must be serviced by city infrastructure may require additional staff, equipment, and maintenance. Land use and facility decisions should be economical and create the greatest amount of private market investment long term.

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

2. PROMOTE INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Infill development supports the economic and social value of York'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 reducing development cost to the developer and limiting unnecessary expansions and their associated expenses. Such development should respect the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

3. PRESERVE OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS

Developing in a way that respects the natural systems on which the city is built would allow York to benefit from its natural landscape. Natural open space improves property values, quality of life, and provides environmental benefits such as reducing flash-flooding events by providing natural stormwater drainage. York's natural features are often less visible but preserving flood zones and activating water courses protects property and adds a community amenity. A network of natural preserve areas would enhance community character and make York more attractive to new residents.

4. PROMOTE DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS

Residents and workers of York have expressed a clear desire for more diverse housing options, at prices that more people can afford. At the same time, housing needs and preferences are diversifying. The mortgage crisis and 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. York can increase its appeal to potential residents by promoting housing options for a diverse population.

5. PLAN FOR COMMUNITY AMENITIES SUCH AS PARKS AND SCHOOLS

In much the same way as traditional infrastructure, community amenities including parks, schools, and open spaces serve as neighborhood focal points that promote community activity, personal interactions, and a sense of place. These spaces can serve as an attraction for potential residents, encourage new development nearby, and support new investment in existing neighborhoods.

6. PROVIDE A MULTI-MODAL AND CONNECTED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

A network of streets, bikeways, and pedestrian paths should provide connectivity throughout York and accommodate a diverse set of mobility needs and preferences. A robust bicycle and pedestrian network would provide better and more efficient access for York's residents to its parks, schools, and commercial centers. Street networks should provide well connected routes that make both private travel and public services more efficient.

7. 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.

8. ENCOURAGE BALANCED AND CONNECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

Balanced and connected 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.

9. USE PUBLIC INVESTMENTS TO PROMOTE PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

York's public investments in streets, water, sewer, parks and schools can be leveraged to promote private investments. When strategically located, a new park or school can inspire private residential development, while targeted infrastructure improvements can attract new industry.

10. 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 the county, 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK

York's natural environment can be an asset for future growth if development is sensitive to key environmental features. Preserving natural areas can increase property value for adjacent development, enhance and connect the park system, protect plant and animal habitats, and reduce flood risk by providing natural stormwater drainage.

ENVIRONMENTAL LIMITATIONS

Figure 3.1 identifies the areas with certain environmental limitations to traditional development types. While sensitive to traditional development, these areas offer value as open space, as host to a trail system, and as natural stormwater infrastructure.

Developers, the Planning Commission, City Staff, and City Council should use the development suitability map to determine if proposed developments adequately protect and preserve sensitive environmental areas. In exploring sensitive features, each site is unique and should be treated accordingly to create the best development for the natural context of the site. If a site analysis identifies an environmental constraint, such as a wetland, further site analysis may be required before the proposed development can be approved.

DEVELOPING WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

While developers may voluntarily choose to preserve sensitive natural areas, reaching the desired level of preservation will require the force of city regulations. The following policies, either alone or in combination, should help implement the environmental vision:

- Prohibit all development in the 100-year floodplain
- Prohibit or restrict development in the 500-year floodplain
- Restrict development surrounding wetland areas and require natural buffering of the wetlands. If wetlands must be developed, requiring the replacement of new wetland habitats equal or greater than the resource removed.

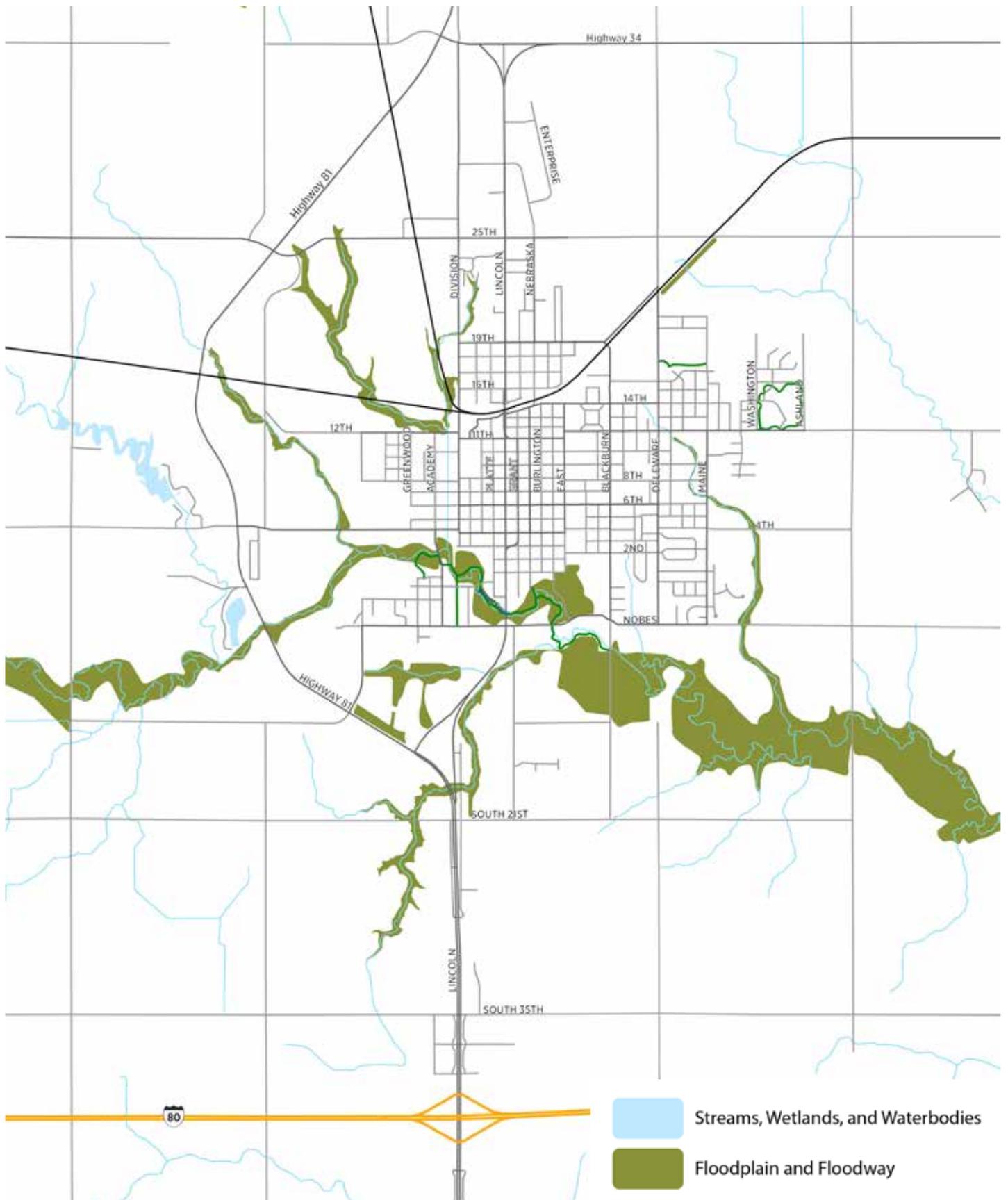


FIGURE 3.1: Environmental Features



AN ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO LAND DEVELOPMENT: A HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE IN YORK

Building within the environmental constraints of the land enables development to mitigate potential risks while using the natural character of the landscape as an asset rather than a constraint.



A. Start with an analysis of the natural environment, including hydrology and topography. The aerial shows a possible growth area in York west of Lincoln Avenue and South of Nobes Road.

B. Identify sensitive natural areas that should be preserved. The development suitability map for this area shows some areas with varying degrees of environmental consideration.



C. Create a land use plan that preserves the sensitive natural areas as open space. In this example, the critical natural areas are preserved to allow natural drainage that serves the proposed residential uses.

EXISTING LAND USE

The Existing Land Use Map - Figure 3.2 - classifies parcels of land in York per their use. Land use is typically the central element of a comprehensive plan because it establishes the overall physical configuration of the city - the mix and location of uses and the nature of the community systems that support them. Figure 3.3 explores the city's composition of land uses that is used to calculate the amount of land that will be needed to accommodate future population growth.

RESIDENTIAL USES

Like many communities, residential uses account for a significant portion of the developed land within York. The housing market offers a range of choices that range from single family homes on large lots to apartment units. Despite this variety, the clear majority of residential land (93%) is developed as single family housing styles.

COMMERCIAL USES

York has a strong commercial presence on the Interstate resulting in a higher percentage of the commercial land use (12%) than many other communities of its approximate size. In addition to a large supply of commercial land currently developed, York also has a large supply of land with high development potential in the Interstate 80 / Highway 81 Corridor. A main concept of this plan is to identify a framework to make this district appealing to business, York residents, and economically resilient over time.

INDUSTRIAL USES

In the late 1990s, the city vacated its airport in favor of a new airport at the present location. The former airport became the industrial park which has developed to near full occupancy today. Because of this ready supply of prime industrial land, the city has a larger share of industrial land (10%) than many other communities.

PUBLIC AND CIVIC USES

York features several large areas of public and semi-public use including the hospital, properties owned by school district, York College, the Cornerstone Soccer Complex, and the fairgrounds. Many of these land uses represent the elements most essential to the quality of life enjoyed by residents of York, and are attributes that distinguish it from other cities in the region.

PARKS

York's city park system includes several parcels of land throughout the city ranging from small facilities to large city parks and sporting complexes. These facilities are explored further in Chapter Five.



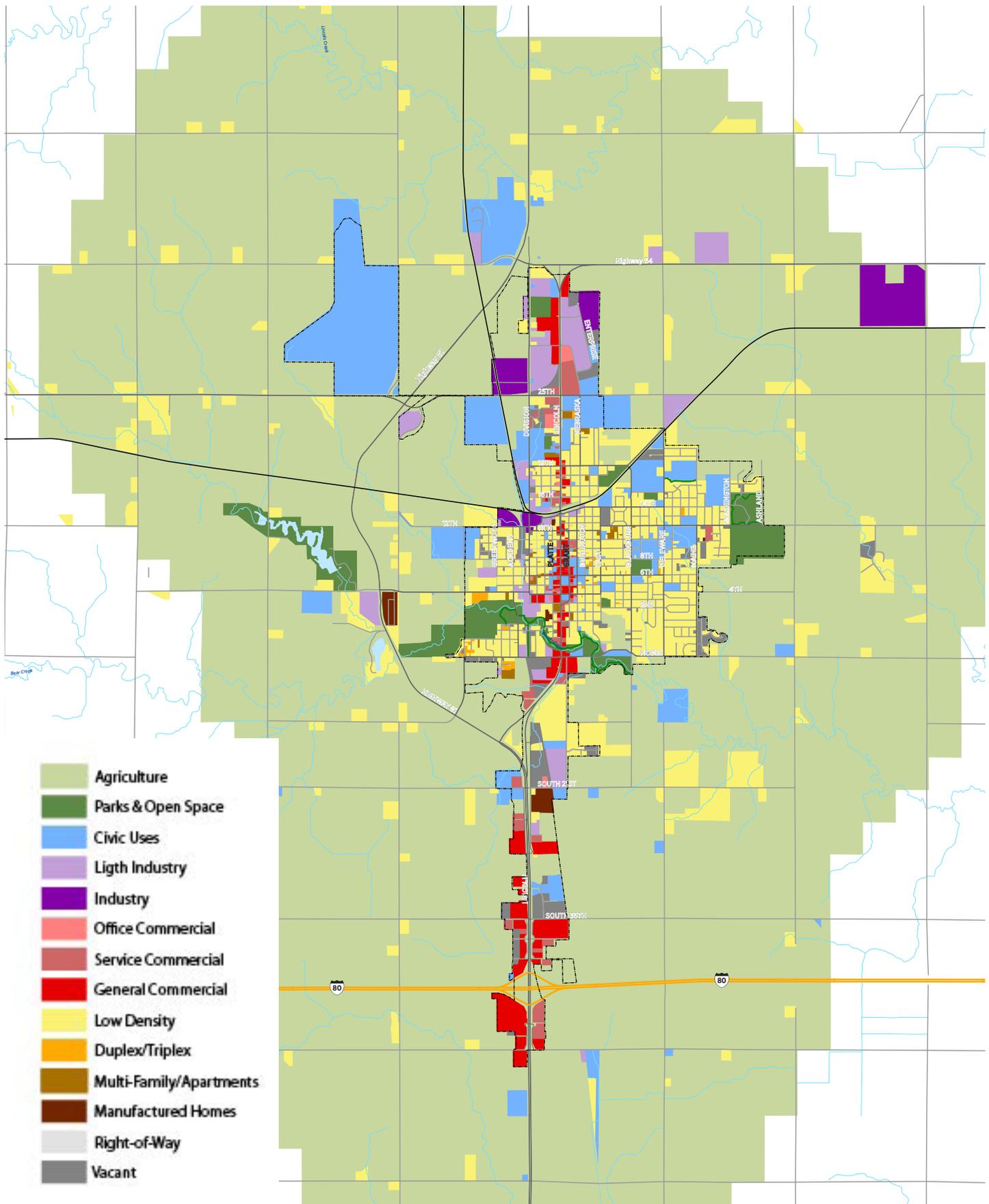


FIGURE 3.2: Existing Land Use Map

FUTURE LAND USE

As York grows, new land will be developed to accommodate housing, commercial, industrial and other uses. The planning team and the steering committee identified preferred growth areas based on environmental features, the existing land use pattern, infrastructure capacity, and market trends.

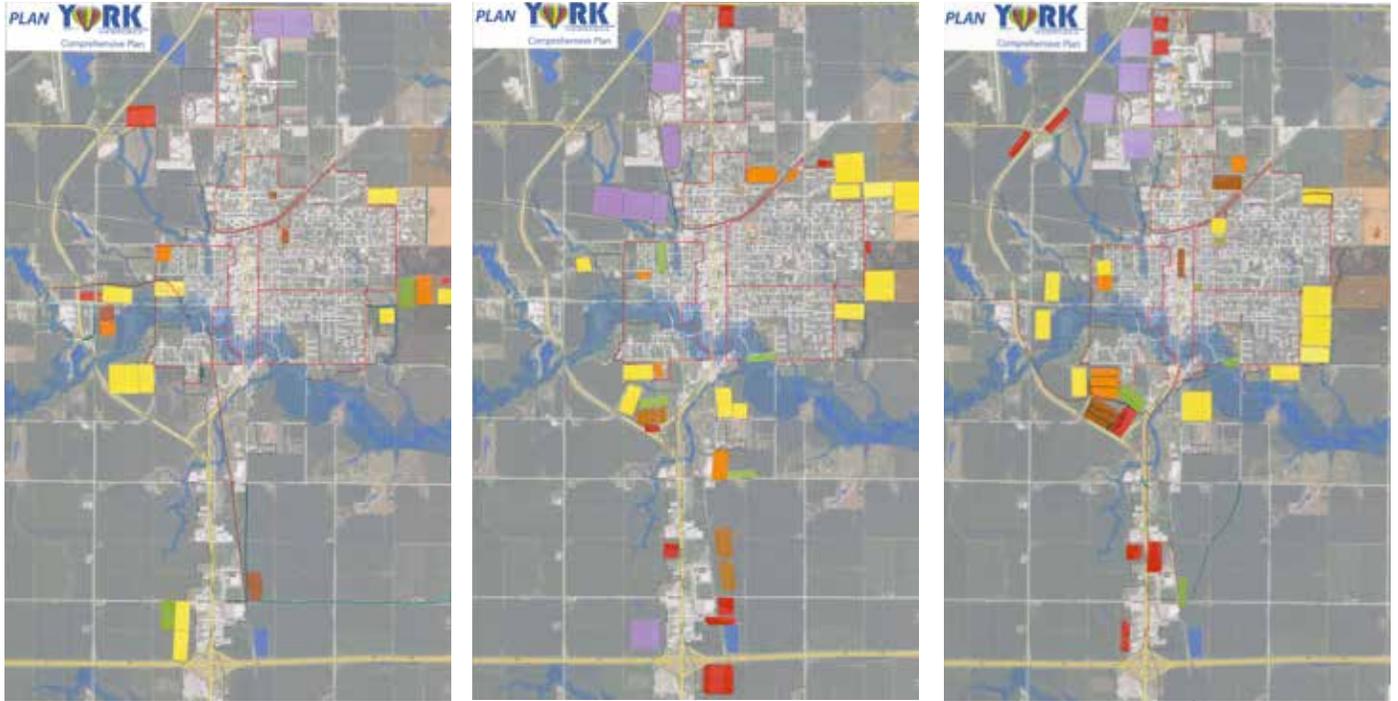
PLAN YORK EXERCISE:

The planning team led the steering committee in a development exercise to identify strategic growth areas that would segue into the creation of a development concept and future land use map contained in this document. The steering committee was divided into three groups, received a presentation on the basics of land use planning including the ten principles of development, and then, based on existing infrastructure, environmental limitations, and existing land use, developed three scenarios for how York might develop. This exercise allowed the committee to apply their local knowledge and expertise to provide direction to the creation of a future land use map. The scenarios are located on the following page:

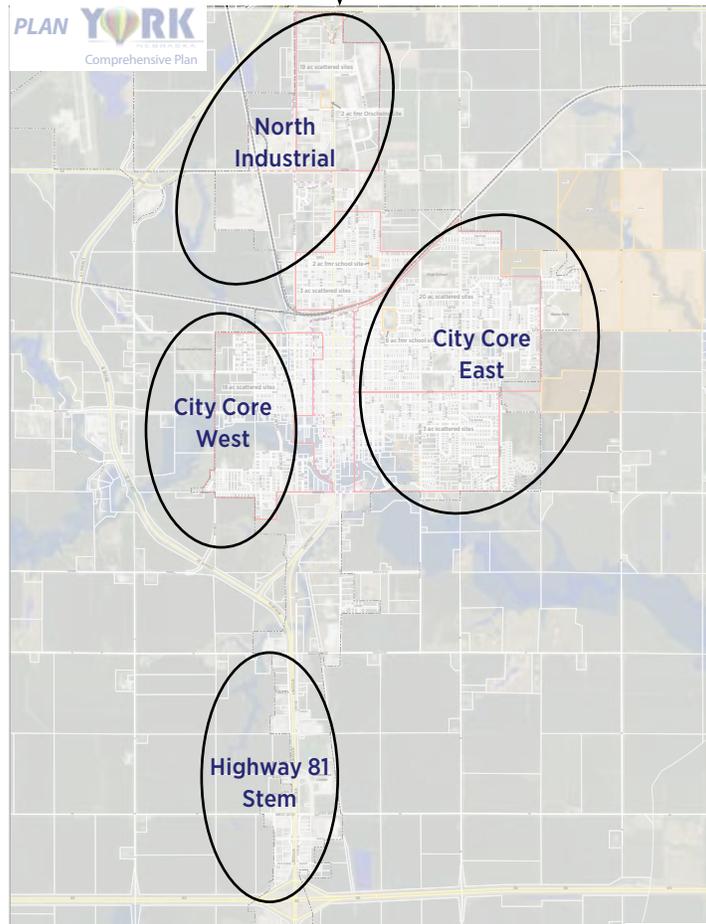
Through this exercise, the steering committee identified several opportunity areas and ideas to guide development in the future.



Steering Committee Concepts



Opportunity Areas



OPPORTUNITY AREAS

HIGHWAY 81 STEM

There is a significant amount of existing commercial development along Highway 81 extending from the Interstate 80 Interchange. This land is of special importance due to its proximity to the Interstate as a rapid mobility route and, as such, should be carefully considered for a complementary mix of service commercial, transportation based light industry, and housing.

CITY CORE WEST (WITHIN BELTWAY)

The Highway 81 Beltway was constructed between 2003 and 2005 to provide more efficient mobility on Highway 81. The area encompassed within the beltway and its interchanges provide a perimeter and also provides ready access to this increasingly important north-south route. The city core west area includes a mix of agricultural, residential, and industrial uses and also lands impacted by floodplain and floodway issues. This area is of strategic importance.

CITY CORE EAST

The city core east includes the fewest environmental limitations and has been the location of recent investments including new school facilities, the water park, and the baseball complex. This area has developed as primarily residential with a mix of civic uses and vacant residential lots that have not yet developed. Due to the major civic investments, the York College Campus and vacant or underused schools, this area is of strategic importance.

NORTH INDUSTRIAL

Much of the land north of the railroad is characterized by industrial, agricultural, and civic uses including the hospital, the soccer complex, and the fairgrounds. Existing residential neighborhoods are relatively strong and the commercial concentration located along North Lincoln has little vacancy. The area north of 25th Street includes the business park which is nearly at capacity with little vacancy and a number of other parcels acquired by the city for economic development activities. The amount of property controlled by the city and the economic development corporation with strong access to the both Highway 34 and Highway 81 make this area a strategic location.

GENERAL NOTE ON MIXING LAND USES

In certain areas, the practice of carefully integrating complementary land uses has the potential to increase value, vitality, and the overall quality of the place. For example, a commercial center may benefit from the ingrained customer base that nearby housing may offer and a residential neighborhood may benefit from an appropriately scaled neighborhood commercial center. Mixing land uses should follow the guides found later in this chapter

GENERAL NOTE ON DENSITY AND DEVELOPMENT COSTS

Development is one of the largest costs that a city, and the private market, makes in the community. Infrastructure is a balance of the public costs and the private investment that it supports. A few of the required costs include: streets; sidewalks; sanitary sewer; storm sewers and retention; water lines; and seeding and erosion control. It is important to note that development costs vary based on the project type, configuration, and amount of new infrastructure that is needed for the new development.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Not all development can, or should, be accommodated on existing city lots however, the redevelopment of an infill site is often more cost effective than green-field development and further contributes to the stability and vitality of existing neighborhoods.

To illustrate this point, the cost of providing infrastructure for a new green-field residential lot is approximately \$33,644 compared to approximately \$23,200 for an infill lot based on a 12 unit residential project (note cost can vary depending on site conditions).

IMPACT OF DENSITY ON DEVELOPMENT COST

Density is a measure of the number of units (residential or commercial) located within a given land area. A neighborhood with more people per acre is more efficient for the community to serve with both infrastructure and public safety. Over the past 50 years, zoning codes and lending requirements have driven communities to prefer the creation of residential lots between 70 and 80 feet wide compared to the 50 – 60 foot lots located in the older neighborhoods of many Midwestern communities including York. While there will always be a demand for larger residential lots that support higher cost homes, many developers have found that by decreasing lot widths, and consequently increasing density, they can generate neighborhoods more affordably with better amenities. In the example below the road represents all infrastructure that is needed to serve the residents: streets, sidewalks, sewer, water, parks, fire, police, and other services. The north side of the street shows 60' residential lots compared to the 75' lots on the south side of the example.

A development with 60' lots is more affordable for the developer to create and is more affordable for the community to serve initially and through the course of its lifecycle.



CURRENT LAND USE COMPOSITION

The city's current use of land sets the stage for how it can be expected to change over time with population growth. Figure 3.3 establishes two metrics that can be extrapolated to estimate the current amount of land that will be consumed to accommodate future growth: first, by looking at the percent of the developed land and second, by identifying the number of acres per 100 residents. Both methods are used in the following section to estimate the future land needed.

Figure 3.3: Current Land Use Composition

LAND USE CATEGORY	ACRES	% OF DEVELOPED	ACRES PER 100 PEOPLE
Residential	909.1	30.72%	11.43
Single Family	837.4	28.29%	10.52
Duplex/Attached	26.8	0.91%	0.34
Multi-Family	24.4	0.82%	0.31
Mobile Homes	20.5	0.69%	0.26
Commercial	346.1	11.69%	4.35
General Commercial	227.6	7.69%	2.86
Office Commercial	19.8	0.67%	0.25
Service	98.7	3.33%	1.24
Industrial	297.2	10.04%	3.73
Light Industry	209.2	7.07%	2.63
Industry	87.9	2.97%	1.10
Civic	1062.7	35.91%	13.36
Church	71.7	2.42%	0.90
City	95.5	3.23%	1.20
Civic	51.3	1.73%	0.64
College	50.7	1.71%	0.64
Utilities	85.9	2.90%	1.08
Schools	86.4	2.92%	1.09
Airport	442.0	14.93%	5.55
Parks & Open Space	179.3	6.06%	2.25
Agriculture	344.6	11.64%	4.33
Agriculture	344.6	11.64%	4.33
Total Developed Land	2959.6	100.00%	37.20
Total Undeveloped Land	945.7		11.88
Right of Way	740.7	25.03%	9.31
Open and Undeveloped	205.0	6.93%	2.58
Total Area inside the City	3905.3		

FUTURE LAND NEED

With population growth, York’s physical footprint will grow adding infrastructure for new residents, new enterprise, and new public facilities. This physical expansion depends on the rate of growth and the density of development that occurs. Based on the projected population of 9,709 in 2035, York will need to allocate approximately 700 acres to accommodate this population and the associated residential, commercial and industrial land requirements.

RESIDENTIAL LAND NEED

Community development must include a reasonable and sustainable amount of housing development based on market demand. This housing demand absorbed through the maintenance of existing units and the construction of new units. Residential land need is based on the following factors:

- New construction will be based on the following distribution: 40% low density, 20% medium density (small lot single family and attached units), and 40% high density (attached and multi-family units)
- Average gross residential densities will be three dwelling units per acre for low density, six units per acre for medium, and 12 units per acre for higher density projects
- Land designated for residential development during the planning period will be twice the area needed for actual construction to provide market choice and to prevent the artificial inflation of land costs

To support the land economics of residential development, it is important that options are available for development and, therefore, it is recommended that land designated for development is double the projected demand. This projection indicates the need for 192 acres for residential land development between 2015 and 2035 and therefore, approximately 385 acres should be designated over the next 20 years.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LAND NEEDS

A growing population needs additional commercial services, a key part of York’s economic development strategy. While this plan does not include a retail market analysis, adequate commercial space should be identified to meet market demands. That said, designating too much commercial land can produce inefficient land patterns, requiring customers to travel greater distances. Instead, commercial developments should be located closer to customers and be designed to encourage active transportation modes such as pedestrian, bicycle, and potentially public transportation.

The demand for future industrial land is linked to opportunity and recruitment, rather than exclusively to population growth. A single major corporate decision can dramatically increase (or decrease) the projected industrial demand in a community. In addition, a decision by the city to pursue industrial development aggressively can affect industrial land needs. Despite these differences, similar projection methods are used to predict future commercial and industrial land needs. For York, the two methods used are:

- **Population proportion.** This method relates land needs to population projections. It assumes that the absolute amount of commercial or industrial land per 100 people will remain relatively constant and that new development will grow in proportion to population growth.
- **Residential use proportion.** This assumes a constant relationship between the amount of land used for residential and commercial purposes, thereby relating commercial and industrial growth rates to residential development rates.

FIGURE 3.4: Future Land Need

DESIGNATED LAND ON DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Residential	385 acres
Commercial	101 acres
Industrial	216 acres

Source: RDG Planning & Design

DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT AND FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Development Concept Map, Figure 3.5, illustrates some of the key development areas in the city. These areas are discussed in detail later in this chapter. The concept shows approximately the amount of land needed to accommodate 2035 population projections and focuses on areas that are most strategic for shorter term growth.

The Future Land Use Map combines the development concept with the long-term vision for existing developed areas. It is not unusual for cities to have uses that are no longer compatible with surrounding development. For example, a light industrial use that was allowed in what is essentially a residential area. Over time these grandfathered uses should transition to uses that are more capable with the character and form of the neighborhood. The Future Land Use Map tries to identify these land use transitions and also protect areas that will not likely be development for many years, beyond the 2035 time frame.

Both the development concept and future land use map are based on the development principles at the beginning of this chapter.

THREE POINTS ABOUT FUTURE LAND USE MAPS

1. PROPERTY OWNERS DECIDE

The maps depict new land uses for privately owned properties. The transition of these properties from their current use to the depicted use is expected to occur over time, in response to market demands, as property owners voluntarily sell, develop, or change the use of their land.

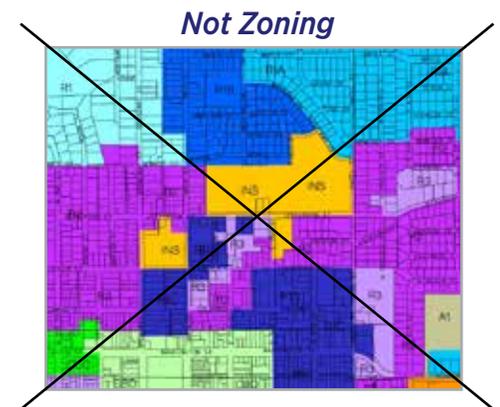
2. A GENERALIZED MAP

The Future Land Use map should be interpreted generally and is not intended to provide the specificity or the rigidity of a zoning map or engineering document. The map should provide guidance for:

- **Generalized land use locations and transitions.** The boundaries between land uses on the map are “fuzzy” lines and are meant to show approximate areas for transition, rather than rigid boundaries. Minor variations in land use, such as a small civic use on a residential block, are not reflected in this generalized map, but may still be permitted per zoning regulations.
- **Collector and Arterial Street connections.** Critical arterial and collector street connections are specified on this map, though the exact routes will depend on detailed engineering studies. Local streets will be determined as development occurs.
- **Natural Resource Preservation Areas.** Preserves on the map are based on the environmental limitations map. The boundaries of the preserves should be given significant weight in decision-making.

3. A GUIDE FOR LAND USE DECISIONS

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



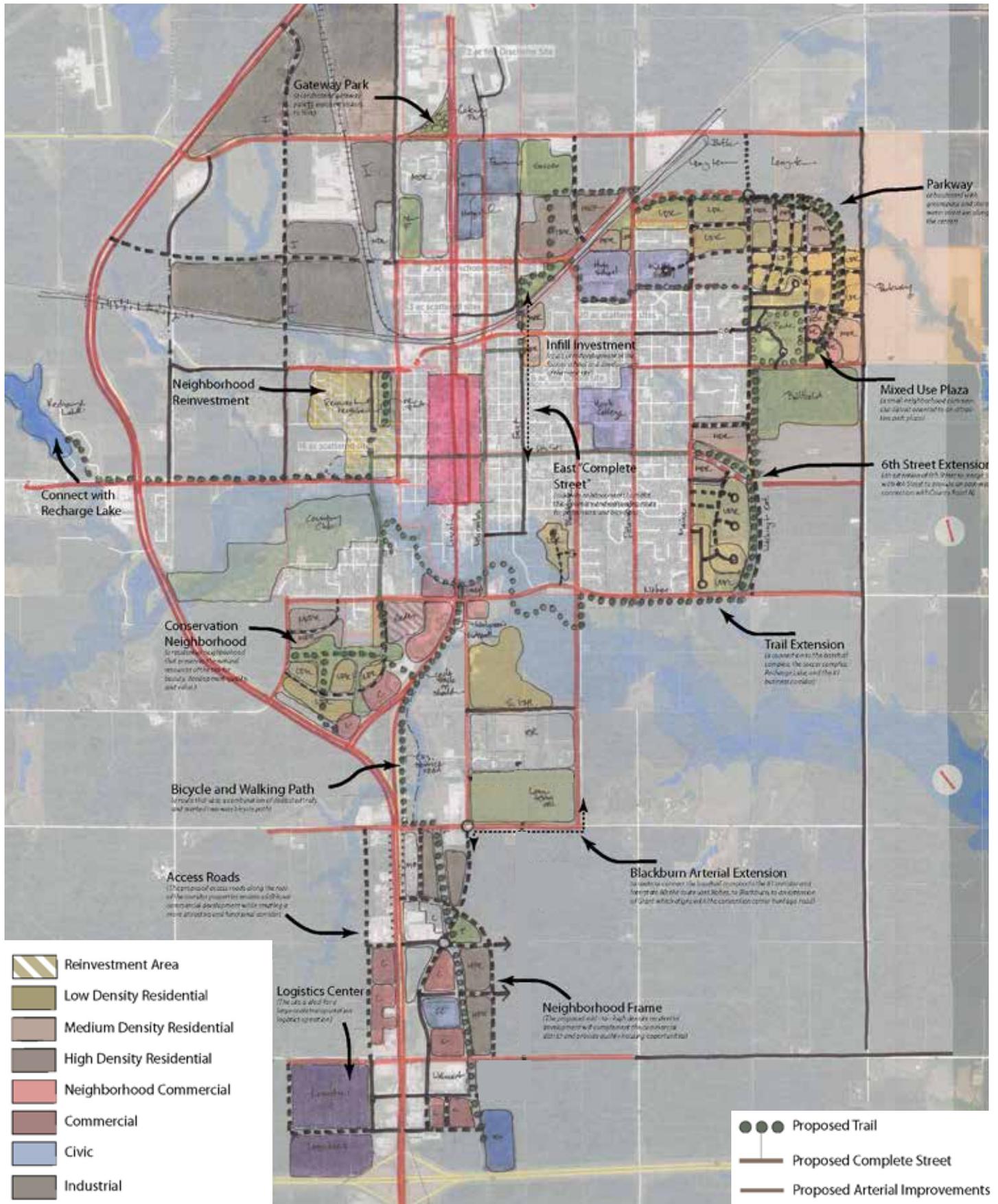


FIGURE 3.5: Development Concept

REINVESTMENT IN THE CORE

The plan identifies key reinvestment sites in the core of the city. These sites are central to the fabric of the area in which they are located. Reinvestment sites include:

- Former High School at East Avenue and 12th Street
- Former Athletic Fields north of the former high school at East Avenue and 14th Street
- Former Epworth School at Iowa Street and 18th Street
- West York Neighborhood west of downtown, north of 4th Street and south of the railroad.

These sites can contribute a significant number of housing units to the city's market and potentially provide a quicker response to housing demand. However, some of these sites may provide more than just housing but offer an opportunity to connect work and play elements close to housing and existing residents.

Reinvestment strategies should be appropriate to the context of the site, be tailored to create the greatest amount of private market reaction, and include a balanced array of interventions. Interventions may include:

- Assembling properties under common ownership to facilitate large scale projects
- Recruiting developers for individual projects
- Establish policies that provide incentives and assistance for individual property owners to upgrade or maintain their property
- Establish policies to enforce property maintenance issues that encourage district wide improvement

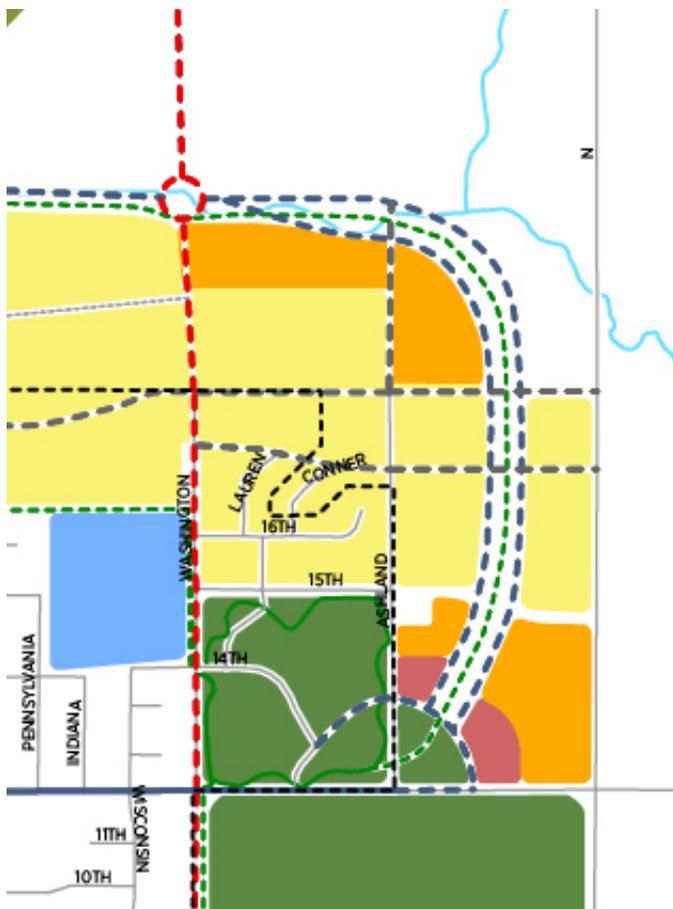


NORTHEAST PARKWAY AND DEVELOPMENT

While much of the city's housing demand could be met through redevelopment areas, variety and options are needed for a healthy market. A key opportunity area would be in the Northeast quadrant of the city on both city and private property. This site is the ideal opportunity to create a new neighborhood that builds upon the momentum created by the recent investments in the ballfield complex, Minick's park, and the school complex.

Principles of the concept follow:

- Neighborhood commercial cluster and plaza
- The Northeast Parkway
 - » A roadway with linear park between the one-way pairs. The linear park serves as a trail corridor, park resource, and natural stormwater infrastructure.
- Connections with existing roadways
- Integrated land uses and various intensities



ROADWAY AND TRAIL ENHANCEMENTS

As the city's greatest investment public spaces, roadways and trails are the most visible and used public spaces. The plan proposes roadway enhancements to more comfortably convey pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers through the community. Transportation investments and treatments may include:

- Targeted improvements to enhance specific roads to create a more clearly defined transportation system by: slowing traffic on local roads, by improving bicycle and pedestrian comfort on collector and 'complete streets', and enhancing arterial streets as visual gateways as well as transportation routes for all road users.
- Complete street treatments to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along critical linkages in the transportation system
- Arterial extensions and enhancements to provide access to strategic land resources
- Trail extensions to build a transportation system for non-motorized transportation which connects origins and destinations



VILLAGE 81

The Village 81 concept proposes a development plan for the Highway 81 corridor and Interstate 80 junction to connect the commercial and employment hub with the city core and more of its residents. Village 81 proposes a framework of roadways, trails, and strategic development sites to unify the many enterprises in the district for the mutual benefit of all users and businesses.

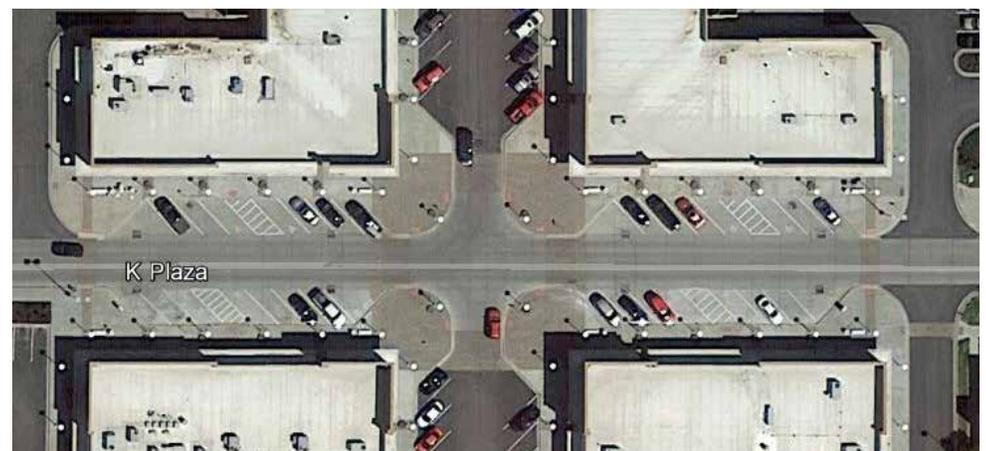
EXAMPLES OF PLANNED CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL: Ankeny (IA), Allouez (WI) and Omaha (NE)



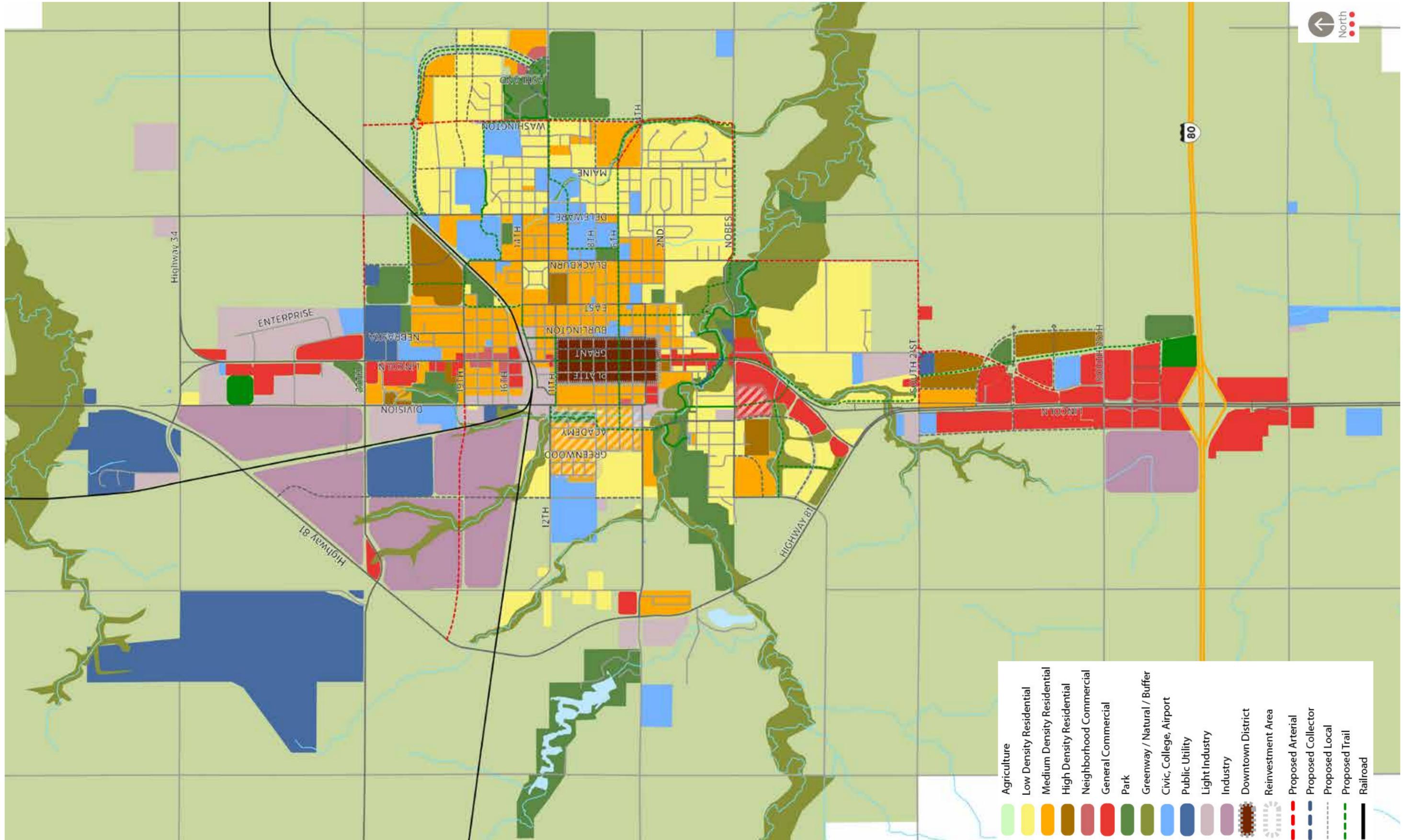
Example: Ankeny, Iowa



Example: Allouez, Wisconsin



Example: Omaha, Nebraska



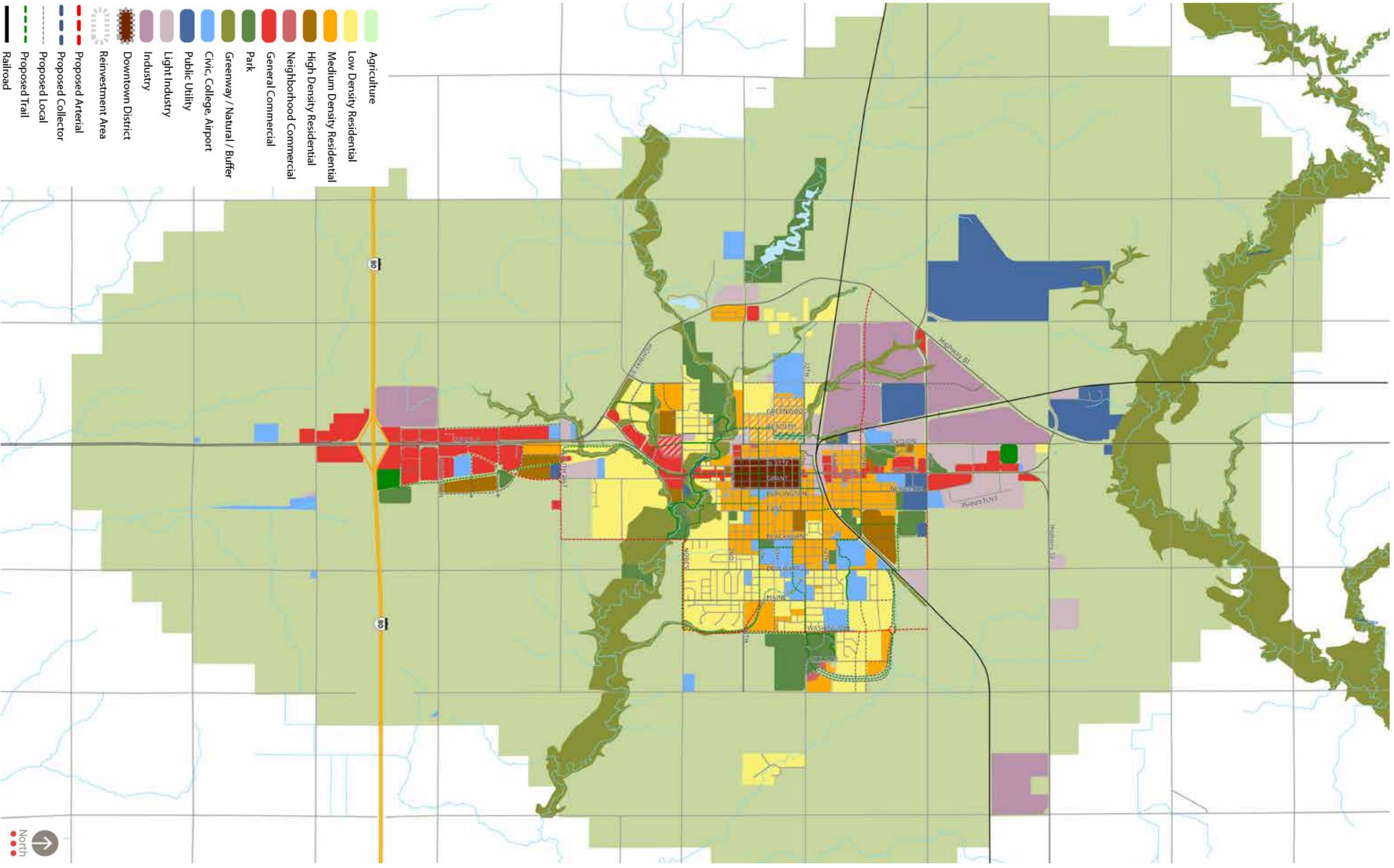


FIGURE 3.7: Future Land Use Map - Extraterritorial Jurisdiction



Low Density Residential

DESCRIPTION

Restrictive land uses emphasizing single-family detached residential developments. Innovative single-family attached projects may be considered with special review.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- Density of 1 to 4 units per acre. Higher density may be allowed for innovative projects
- Provide a framework of open spaces, streets, and trail connections to integrate with the community



Medium Density Residential

DESCRIPTION

Restrictive land use emphasizing housing. May incorporate a mix of housing types including single family detached homes, duplexes, and multi-family buildings with fewer than 14 dwelling units per acre.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- 6 and 14 dwelling units per acre. Innovative design encouraged
- Development should maintain the identity of the individual housing units
- This is a common density for the city's pre-1970 neighborhoods



High Density Residential

DESCRIPTION

Allows multi-family and compatible civic uses and the integration of limited office and convenience commercial within primarily residential areas.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- 12 units per acre or higher at sites with direct access to arterial and collector streets. Locate with access to major amenity and activity centers and avoid creation of isolated enclaves
- Require attractive landscaping and innovation

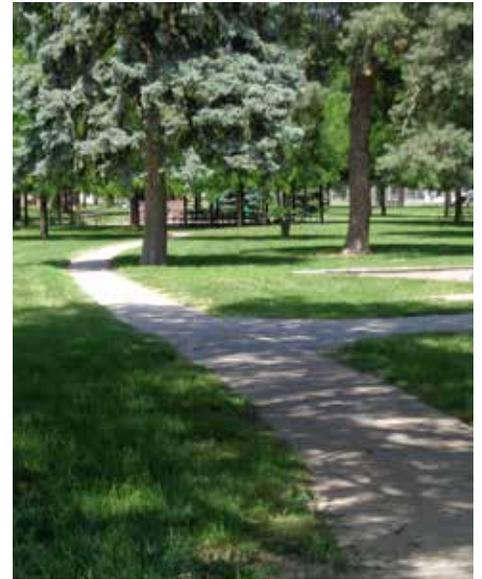
Parks, Recreation, and Parkway

DESCRIPTION

Traditional park and recreational resources including pocket-, neighborhood-, and community-parks. A parkway is a road or pathway that is parklike in its character which may integrate a trail, gathering space, and/or stormwater retention.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- Think of parks as a system and as a community service to provide access to quality of life amenities for all residents.



Civic and Public

DESCRIPTION

Includes schools, churches, community centers, cemeteries, publicly owned buildings, and other public or quasi-public facilities that serve as centers for community activities.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- May be permitted in a number of different areas depending on specific type and impact
- Individual review of proposals requires an assessment of characteristics, project design, and traffic management.



Neighborhood Commercial

DESCRIPTION

A mix of small scale commercial uses focused on serving the immediate neighborhoods. Neighborhood commercial nodes should be situated at collector streets, be integrated with the surrounding land uses.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- Integrate pedestrian and bicycle pathways to and through the site
- Promote walkability, visual interest, and greenspace
- Incorporate site considerations to reduce site impact





Community Commercial

DESCRIPTION

A variety of commercial and office uses with a community and regional focus. May include a mix of small to large box retailers, restaurants, and complementary uses.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- Sites should include clear pedestrian paths, landscaping, and integrate best stormwater practices.
- Site plans should integrate flow (auto, bicycle, and pedestrian) with the surrounding area and future development concept.



Reinvestment Area

DESCRIPTION

These opportunity areas identified for reinvestment are under-utilized and/or represent important community or neighborhood nodes, such as former schools. Thoughtful reinvestment in these areas can restore stability to the area and support reinvestment.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- Due to the strategic importance of these sites, proposals should be reviewed for innovation, appropriateness, and potential catalytic impact for investment
- Proposals should include a master plan for the entire site



Limited Industrial

DESCRIPTION

A mix of industrial uses including logistics, warehousing, and office uses with little external effects.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- Strict control over signage, landscaping, and design is necessary for locations near lower intensity uses.
- Limited industrial uses may be located near office, commercial, and with appropriate development standards, some residential areas.

Industrial

DESCRIPTION

May combine office, business parks, warehouse, and manufacturing uses and limited supporting commercial. Generally include uses with low to moderate external effects further reduced by site design considerations.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- Design standards should be more restrictive controls for locations nearer to low-intensity uses.
- Uses that involve significant peak traffic volumes should locate near major arterial streets and regional highways and provide multiple access points.



Utilities

DESCRIPTION

Includes schools, churches, community centers, cemeteries, publicly owned buildings, and other public or quasi-public facilities that serve as centers for community activities.

FEATURES AND CRITERIA

- May be permitted in a number of different areas depending on specific type and impact
- Individual review of proposals requires an assessment of characteristics, project design, and traffic management.



FIGURE 3.8: Land Use Compatibility Matrix

	OPEN / SENSITIVE	PARKS AND RECREATION	LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	MIXED-USE RESIDENTIAL	MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL	COMMERCIAL	DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE	INDUSTRY	LIGHT INDUSTRY	UTILITIES	CIVIC
Open / Sensitive Areas	-	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Parks and Recreation		-	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	2	3	2	3
Low Density Residential			-	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
Medium Density Residential				-	3	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
High Density Residential					-	3	4	4	3	2	2	3	3
Mixed-Use Residential						-	4	4	3	2	2	3	3
Mixed-Use Commercial							-	4	4	3	3	3	3
Commercial								-	4	3	3	3	3
Downtown Mixed-Use									-	2	3	2	4
Industry										-	4	4	4
Light Industry											-	4	3
Utilities												-	3
Civic													-

Land Use Compatibility

Figure 3.8 provides a land use compatibility guide that indicates which land uses can be located near one another and which combination of land uses will create significant conflict. The creation of new conflicts should be avoided moving forward. Existing conflicts should be eliminated over time as property turns over to new property owners. This chart should be used to assess the relationship between land uses and provide a basis for the development proposal review process. The compatibility of each pairing is rated on a scale of 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 Conflicts**

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.

EXCLUDED CATEGORIES

In this table, several similar uses are combined (for example, schools are contained in the civic category). Preserves are not included in the matrix as the location of preserves is determined by environmental factors and any use could be adjacent to a preserve.

ANNEXATION STRATEGY AND MAP

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

The development concept is predicated on attractive community growth 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. York 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 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 (Figure 3.9) illustrates those areas around York 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.

A SIX POINT PROCESS

The six-point annexation strategy provides specific guidelines for a proper annexation process that helps minimize unnecessary conflicts and expenditures. The map presents the areas that York should consider for annexation both in the short term (5-10 years) and the long term (10-25 years).

1. Pursue Voluntary Annexation

York should use the “voluntary annexation” provisions of Nebraska annexation law and should avoid annexing areas under “involuntary” procedures. The drawbacks of involuntary annexations include:

- » More complex annexation process
- » Confrontation with land owners
- » Susceptibility to court challenges, which add delays and expense
- » Costly extension of city services are mandated within a short time period, even if development is not imminent
- » It may be appropriate to pursue involuntary annexation for any areas already receiving city services

In contrast, the benefits of voluntary annexation are:

- » Allows city to promote areas for development without having to install costly infrastructure ahead of that development. The annexation/infrastructure extension plan becomes a negotiated process between the property owner, developer and the city.
- » Does not require the city to “pick winners and losers” among potential annexation areas. Instead, the private market determines development timing and location.
- » Simpler process, less controversial and generally more productive

To make the voluntary annexation approach work the city must:

- » Enact Parts 2-6 of this strategy
- » If necessary, it may be appropriate to use involuntary annexation to include areas of urban character as part of a larger voluntary annexation to create logical jurisdiction boundaries.

2. Initiate Outreach to Property Owners

Initiate ongoing communication with owners in the annexation priority areas. Communicate the potential benefit of annexation including that the extension of city services/infrastructure greatly enhances the development potential and maximizes its sale value.

3. Negotiate Development Agreements

Development opportunities in the annexation priority areas should be pursued on a “negotiated development agreement” basis, with zoning, infrastructure extensions, and any applicable development incentives as part of the negotiation process. The Future Land Use Map should serve as the guide for uses in the annexation areas.

4. Wait to Zone

Annexation areas should not be zoned for future uses until the areas are voluntarily annexed and a negotiated development deal is accomplished. Discussion of appropriate zoning, consistent with the Future Land Use Map, should be a part of the negotiation process.

5. Prioritize Contiguous Parcels

Annexation priority should go to parcels contiguous to current city boundaries. It is not recommended to annex property that is not contiguous to current city property, and would not be permitted by state law in most circumstances.

6. Continue Use of Extra-Territorial Zoning and Subdivision Review (for selected areas)

The City of York's zoning and subdivision ordinances are applied to a portion of the unincorporated land within two miles of its jurisdictional boundary (its "extra-territorial" area). The city applies these controls only in select areas that are important for York's long-term growth. Exercising zoning and subdivision control in these areas helps ensure that the city has space to grow, and that developments in the city's growth area are built to certain standards.

Growth areas are zoned as Agriculture to keep the land as farmland or open space until there is demand to develop to another use. Development, including large lot subdivision development, should be discouraged in these areas. Such development could inhibit efficient growth of the city in the future.

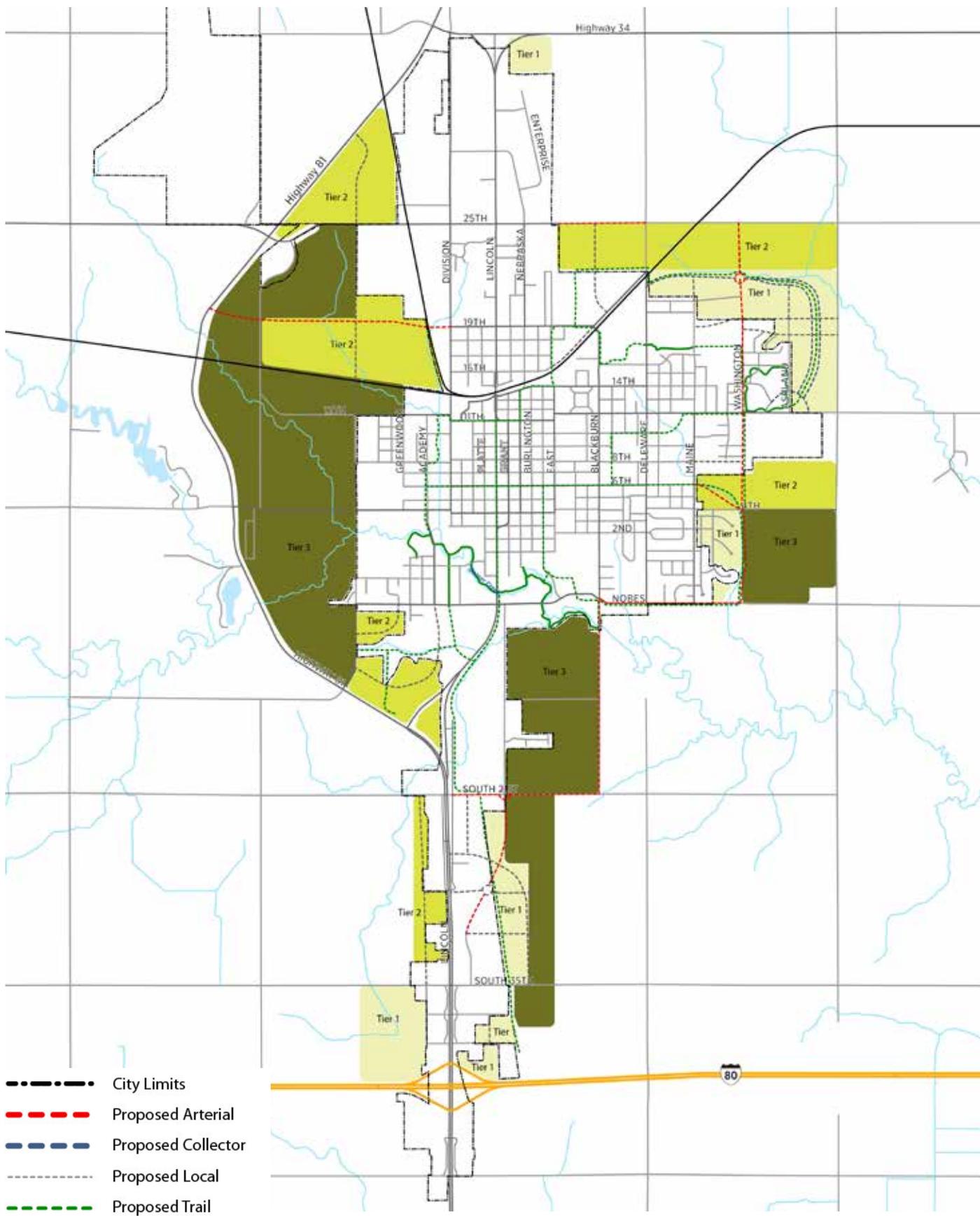


FIGURE 3.9: Annexion Priority Areas

CHAPTER FOUR

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

York's natural and built environment combine to create the daily experience of residents, visitors, and businesses. This is the the character and the personality of the community that can make a community special place. Community character exists at the intersections of design, development, and investment decisions in both the little details and the over-arching vision for the community. York's character is one of its greatest marketing and quality of life assets and should be protected and enhanced through ongoing policy decisions.



YORK



CHAPTER GOALS

- Promote public and private investment in the beautification of activity centers and corridors to welcome and engage visitors with a positive first impression of York
- Expand the amount and quality of greenspace in activity centers and along corridors to add beauty, amenities, and to responsibly manage stormwater
- Fashion the high visibility corridors and gateways as visually cohesive environments that foster a strong sense of community and pride through an attention to landscaping, architectural quality, and human scale
- Provide connections between community destinations, current and future, that improve access for all residents through signage, streetscape design, and physical pathways including walking and bicycle paths

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

People often consider good community design a luxury, unnecessary or too costly to the process of business and economic growth. Yet in fact, enhancing the quality of a community is a strategic economic decision, adding value to the community, increasing property values, and producing a city that residents can find pride within.

Good urban design promotes community growth and forms the foundation on which healthy neighborhoods and commercial corridors are formed. Just as the land use, transportation, parks, and community service elements of this plan define aspects of the community's vision, the community character element works to articulate the long range vision for the image and character of the city.

People choose to live in places that are attractive, interesting, and offer a high quality of life to its residents. Building on its considerable assets will be vital as York continues to compete for new investment, new jobs, and new residents. One of the best economic opportunities in York is to treasure and enhance the best of the city's urban fabric and apply the lessons learned to patterns of new growth.

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

- **Place Character.** Addressing the nature of important places in York's private and public environment, and including the principles that should guide development.
- **Neighborhood Character.** Addressing York's residential areas, their relationships to one another, and to the city.
- **Green Character.** Addressing York's natural features and landscape as a defining element of the city's identity.

PLACE CHARACTER

All parts of a community are important and contribute to the character of the community. With that being said, some parts are especially important due to their historic or symbolic role in the city's development, their visibility, their role in the daily lives of residents, or their special or even spiritual qualities. When we think about the special places in a city, often the shared spaces in the community come to mind; the downtown shopping district, ceremonial parks, and educational campuses form the 'image centers' that define the visual, health, and even economic quality of the overall city.



PRINCIPLE 1: DEFINE AREAS OF CIVIC IMPORTANCE

In many cities, the traditional city center and adjacent neighborhoods are viewed as having the greatest importance as an image center. These spaces represent a shared space and experience for generations of residents from its original founders to current residents and future populations. Examples in York include the campus of York College, East Hill Park, the Forest Park Arboretum, and the historic and walkable neighborhoods. These unique features and areas help define create York's distinct personality.

1. Define areas of civic importance that should receive special design review and attention as they grow and evolve. These should include: the downtown, York College and adjacent blocks, and strategic parks.
2. Streets and public spaces within areas of civic importance should receive special design attention to preserve and enhance character. In some cases it may be appropriate to identify major streets and pathways as Urban Design Corridors with specific streetscape and landscape standards which should be developed. Private development in these areas should abide by these guidelines through a required site plan review process. These corridors and spaces should include: Lincoln Avenue (south of downtown and through downtown, East Avenue, Division Avenue; 6th Street, 12th Street, and Nobes Road.



PRINCIPLE 2: A DISTINCTIVE HEART OF THE CITY

Downtown York is a diverse district with rich historic and cultural importance, a physically attractive environment, and home to many businesses. Despite the growth of retail and commercial services on Interstate 80, the downtown retains considerable vitality and remains the focus of civic, financial, professional, and a reasonable share of commercial life for residents of York. Even with its many assets, residents felt the district could be stronger.

A healthy and thriving downtown will serve all parts of the city's development program. By strengthening the image and role of the downtown district, the city can expect reinvestment in existing neighborhoods, new businesses, and new residents who choose to reside in York because of its focus on community quality. [Additional discussion on downtown can be found in Chapter 7].

1. Maintain the quality of the downtown as the city's image center, a visually attractive place filled with life and activity through reinvestment in the physical environment such as streets, sidewalks, lightings, and buildings.
2. Strengthen the district by activating underused sites within the corridor and at the periphery.
3. Provide stronger and more intentional connections to welcome visitors from the surrounding neighborhoods and attractions into the central business district.



4. Introduce landscaping and traffic treatments to slow the pace at which residents and visitors – walkers, bicyclists, and drivers – experience the downtown district. The heritage buildings were designed at a pedestrian scale, pace and traffic speed, and landscaping should frame the importance and architectural quality of this image center.

PRINCIPLE 3: GATEWAYS

Like buildings, communities have entrances – points of transition between the “outside” and the “inside.” At these gateways a person passes into an urban sphere and the city has its first opportunity to communicate its quality and sense of place. In York, there are two distinct gateway opportunities with individual features, opportunities and challenges.

First, the junction of Interstate 80 and Highway 81 is the most prominent entry-point to the community. The Interstate corridor carries an immense volume of traffic each day at high speeds. As evident from the sales generated at the junction, this area is successful in drawing travelers from the Interstate into the Highway 81 corridor. For the vast majority of travelers including those who visit the Highway 81 businesses, this is their only exposure, thereby the only opportunity for the city to share its image, quality, and character.

Second, the Lincoln Avenue turn-off from Highway 81 serves as the gateway into the core of the community. This pathway provides a more gradual transition into the heart of the community and its most important civic, business, and employment attractions

1. A comprehensive system of wayfinding should be established to help guide visitors around York. This should include key destinations such as York College, schools, athletic facilities, the downtown district, and the hospital. Each of these areas should have site-specific signage directing visitors to key features and attractions, as well as to parking facilities.
2. York should develop a community gateway enhancement program that will effectively communicate the quality of the community and invite visitors to explore more of the community. The city has enhanced the Lincoln Avenue turn-off from Highway 81 with an adornment of flags along the length of the corridor toward the heart of the city. Specific target areas should expand upon this success by introducing enhancements to the 81 corridor south of the Lincoln turn-off. Other priority areas should include Lincoln Avenue approaching and through downtown, and the Highway 81 beltway including each access into York.
3. The city’s frontage along Interstate 80 warrants special attention and design consideration to promote an attractive first impression from the interstate. Projects in this area should have good landscaping and attractive signage.

PRINCIPLE 4: BUILDING DESIGN AND SCALE ALONG CORRIDORS

York’s most important urban transportation corridor – Highway 81 south of the beltway and Lincoln Avenue to the north - is largely, but not entirely, commercial in character. Auto-oriented development places the function of providing vehicle access to ample parking at the forefront of its design. In an auto-oriented corridor, oftentimes this pattern pervades the development pattern with frontage roads, parking lots, and drive aisles to the point where a patron of one business would drive to another business that is merely steps away.

These clusters, seen across the country, offer limited accessibility for non-drivers, little complement to nearby businesses, and create an unpleasant visual environment.





Development along transportation corridors must enable public and private environments to interact effectively to provide access to all patrons regardless of their mode of transportation in a pleasant environment.

1. The highway corridor should integrate a clear circulation pattern which provides efficient access into and within the development area for all users. This network of roads, trails, sidewalks and landscaping should establish the framework on which individual businesses interact with one another as an economic system.
2. Buildings and adjacent 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. For wide transportation corridors such as Highway 81 and its frontage roads, the fronts of the buildings should be designed oriented to provide a strong and welcoming 'edge' to the corridor.
3. A clear connection should be provided between public sidewalks and pathways and the entrances to buildings and adjacent major development.
4. Buildings should be at least as apparent as signs and parking lots to travelers along major corridors.
5. 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

In many ways, a community is built from its base of neighborhoods with diversity and character arising from the many eras of development that have occurred through the city's existence. As with many communities in the Midwest, these neighborhood patterns grew from the original street grid with development character changing with the preferences of the era and a slow evolution toward tract style developments. The residential neighborhoods in York are most directly identified by similarities in their design character rather than by the name of the development. These neighborhoods are the building blocks of the community and the lifeblood of the community wherein the health of the neighborhoods directly corresponds with the health of the community as a whole.

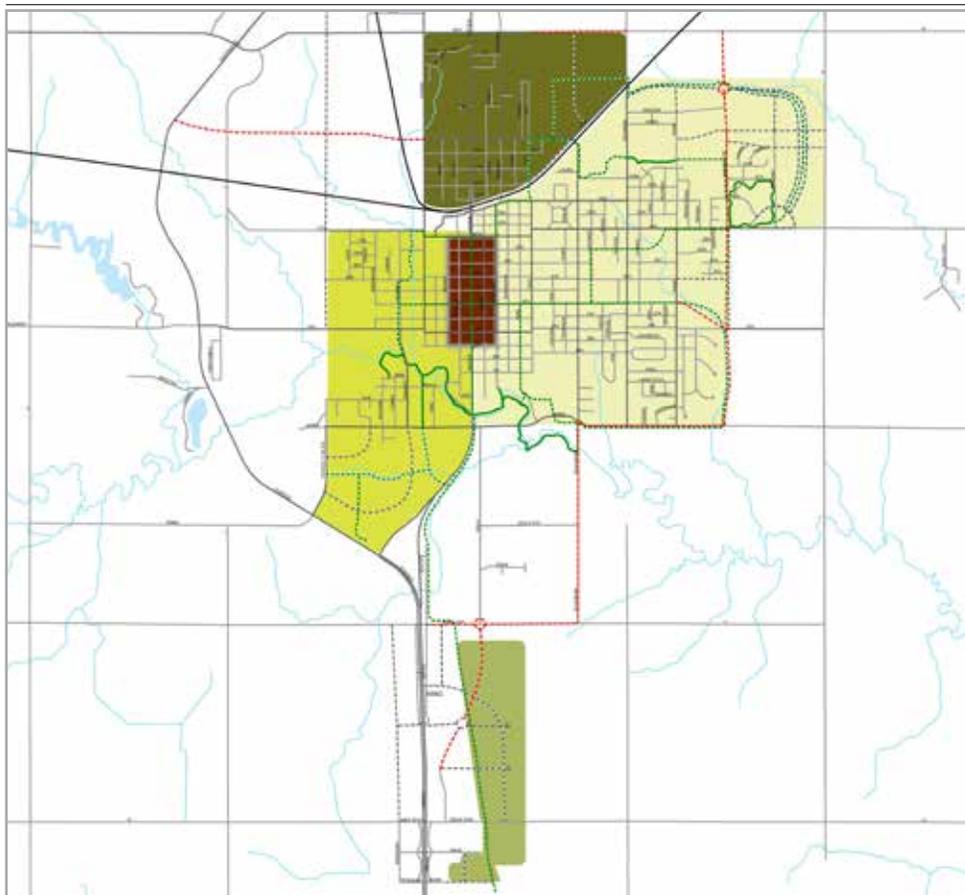
PRINCIPLE 1: SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

1. Divide the community into five sections and adopt a neighborhood toolkit to encourage residents to define neighborhoods throughout the community. These areas will, in some cases, represent clusters or alliances of separate subdivisions that share street patterns, public features, or other aspects of character. Several neighborhood associations could exist within an individual section but the sections should be used to guide the distribution of grants.
2. Adopt a neighborhood toolkit and consider implementing a Neighborhood Enhancement Grant program that can be awarded to eligible neighborhood associations for eligible character projects such as signage, landscaping, and other treatments. The program should seek to reinforce and stabilize neighborhoods, build capacity and engagement, and create public/private partnerships. Stabilization and enhancement grants should seek distribute assistance throughout the community.

PRINCIPLE 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.

Figure 4.1: Potential Neighborhood Enhancement Districts



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 primary public streets for the neighborhood. From a functional perspective, the neighborhood connector is the collector that runs throughout the neighborhood, and channels 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.

1. The identification of York’s neighborhoods should be reinforced by attractive gateways, usually at the intersection of 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. When considering major new neighborhoods for approval, York should require attractive neighborhood gateways or other appealing entry features.
2. Neighborhood connectors should serve as the main streets of York’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

NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

Many communities throughout the Midwest have incentive programs in place to stabilize and enhance their neighborhoods. The format and requirements of enhancement programs vary but the following principles often apply:

- Require neighborhoods to register as not-for-profit organizations.
- Grants range from \$500 and \$25,000 and may require a matching contribution.
- Competitive application process.

While the details of each program varies slightly, these programs have several primary benefits:

Capacity and Organization.

Most enhancement programs require that the neighborhoods establish as not-for-profit organizations. The step of formalizing the membership and geographic bounds of a neighborhood help build its capacity for projects beginning with the enhancement.

Public Private Partnership. An incentive program can require local support in the form of cash or in-kind contribution.

Civic Engagement. The incentive provides an opportunity to engage in the municipal responsibility of community-building.

Figure 4.2: Gateways

- » Interstate 80
- » Highway 81 and Beltway
- » Lincoln Avenue
- » Downtown York
- » Ballpark Complex
- » Soccer Complex & Fairgrounds
- » Convention Center



Figure 4.3: Connectors

- » 15th and Delaware
- » 6th Street
- » 11th / 12th Street
- » East Street
- » Division Avenue



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.

PRINCIPLE 3: NEIGHBORHOOD FORM IN NEWLY DEVELOPING AREAS

The Neighborhood Character section explicitly addresses the character of York’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.

1. New residential development should be consistent in basic structure with the city’s existing neighborhood 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 local streets that are evident in many existing neighborhoods. When new neighborhoods expand the size of an existing neighborhood, the local street should be extended to connect the new and established parts of the neighborhood district.

GREEN CHARACTER

York’s natural environment is a composite of its rich agricultural landscape etched by prairie streams and their broad floodplains which created today’s landscape. There is beauty, function, and character in this landscape which becomes an essential piece of York’s urban identity which should be protected and enhanced. Although this element has its genesis in natural processes, it can be augmented by wisely directed human interventions around the built environment. The land use plan considers measures to help the city conserve these natural features and expand the use of these features (see Chapter 3).

PRINCIPLE 1: A COMPLETE TRAIL AND PATHWAY SYSTEM

Both the Transportation and Parks elements of the York 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.

1. York should complete the trail network and increase 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.
 - » The expansion of this system should connect all parts of the city especially the hotels and RV campground along the 81 Corridor.
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. York should expand its 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 and neighborhoods should be connected to the pathway system and be designed to extend the system through the site or the development.

PRINCIPLE 2: GREEN STREETS

Streets cover more than 25% of York'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 York'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.
- Raised medians, pedestrian crossings, and bike lanes can slow traffic for a safer and more comfortable environment for everyone.

While major streets are very important and experienced by most visitors, but most of York'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.



1. York's 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. York's local streets should be appropriately landscaped to reinforce the residential character and reinforce the quality of each neighborhood

IMPLEMENTING CHARACTER

This chapter proposes a variety of policies that use the inherent character of York 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

York 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 the leading stakeholder groups that should be involved in a participatory process to complete relevant ordinance modifications.

One such option that could be encouraged in a review phase is the use of innovative stormwater management strategies. Traditional pipe systems can be costly due to the depth of the system and the material costs. In certain applications, it is appropriate to use retention ponds which both handle stormwater and can serve as a site amenity which makes the development project more unique and desirable. These ponds should not be hidden behind buildings but should be incorporated into the site design as a functional amenity. By encouraging innovation and dialogue in development plans, it is possible to create more attractive projects.



2. INTEGRATE VISUAL DESIGN IMPROVEMENTS INTO PUBLIC PROJECTS

This simply includes changing the normal way of doing business to 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. For example, it may be appropriate to replace the process of reseeding the space between the curb and the sidewalk with native grasses. These types of improvements are of similar initial cost but of greater visual interest and environmental benefit.

3. EXISTING PROJECT ENHANCEMENT

The York 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 and, therefore, should encourage greater private market reaction.

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 York 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 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 FIVE

TRANSPORTATION

A transportation system should move people efficiently, along a variety of routes to destinations, and accommodate multiple modes of transportation including freight, cars, bicycles, and pedestrians. Planning for streets, trails, and sidewalks should be fully integrated with land use planning because transportation investment has an inherent and significant impact on how growth occurs.





CHAPTER GOALS

- Provide safe and efficient transportation opportunities for all users of the system including walkers, bicyclists and drivers
- Use improvements and enhancements to the transportation system to support efficient and desirable patterns of community, neighborhood, and economic development
- Connect neighborhoods and community destinations with pedestrian and bicycle facilities to provide safe, healthy, and viable transportation alternatives
- Develop a system of wayfinding and theming to augment the transportation network to both connect and market Yorks' amenities and quality

TRANSPORTATION TODAY

The transportation framework impacts the form and function of the community. It is the responsibility of the city to provide efficient and equitable mobility for all residents in addition to creating an atmosphere which supports the commerce, industry, and other essential community functions. The transportation system is classified by the Federal Functional Classification System which divides the city's roads into five categories based on the amount of traffic and the intended speed of travel for the roadway.

- **Interstate Highways:** These routes connect cities and allow travel over multiple states at high speeds
- **Expressways (Highway 81):** These routes connect major regional activity centers and allow for long distance travel at high speeds with minimal interference.
- **Major Arterials (Highway 34):** These routes connect secondary regional activity centers and serve as routes for regional connectivity.
- **Minor Arterial (Lincoln Avenue):** These routes connect locations within the city and serve as primary intra-urban circulation networks.
- **Collector (Nobes Road):** These routes provide additional access to specific neighborhoods and districts within a city and connect with the arterial network.
- **Local:** These routes provide access to individual properties and to higher order streets at low speeds designed for short trips.

STREET CLASSIFICATION AND WHY IT MATTERS

- **Funding.** Classification affects the amount of state and federal funding available for construction and maintenance.
- **Land Use Compatibility.** High intensity land uses should locate near 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.

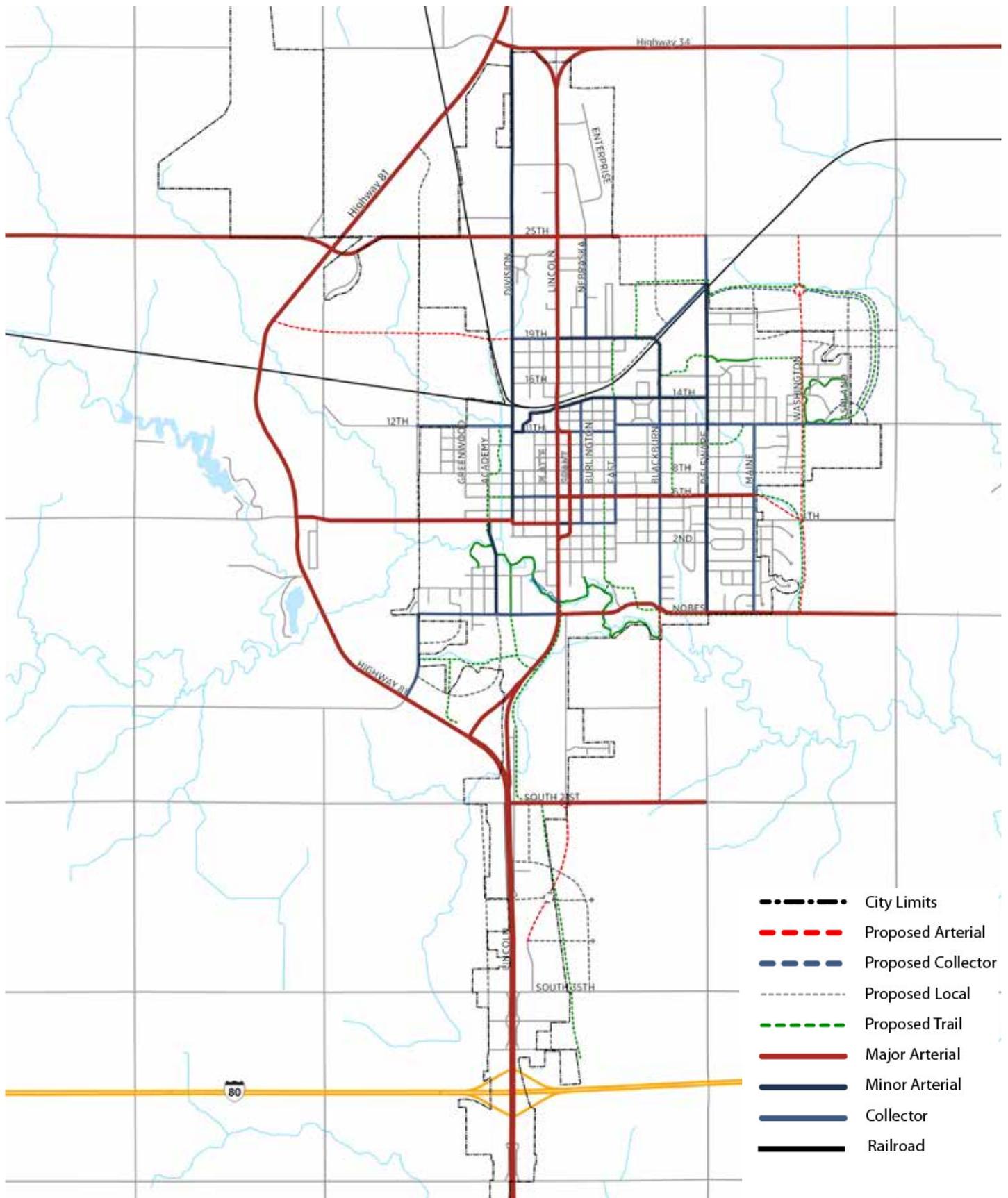


FIGURE 5.1: Roads and Highways by Federal Classification

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION

The framework of future streets, roadway enhancements, and corresponding land use decisions will impact the future of the community. Therefore, as York grows and constructs new streets, all street decisions should comply with the following principles:

CREATE CONNECTIONS

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.

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 treatments. Streets should provide sidewalk on at least one side of new local streets, and on both sides of new arterial and collector streets.

PROMOTE YORK'S CHARACTER

Streets are York'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.

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 investment in the existing transportation network pays dividends into the future.

STREET PLAN

The street plan is a guide for future investment in street infrastructure to improve mobility or open additional land for quality urban development. Most importantly the following themes must be followed to understand and implement the true intent of the street plan.

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. The plan (Figure 5.1) illustrates a framework of connections to enable access to the land resources needed to accommodate the growing population.

FLEXIBLE

While the routes shown 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.



Example: Complete Street



Example: Street with Landscaping and Sidewalk



Example: Ghost Plat

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.

IMPLEMENTING THE STREET PLAN

To implement the recommendations shown in the street plan, York should follow two guidelines:

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.

BUILD WITH DEVELOPMENT

York should work with developers to extend new roads as development demand arises, in conjunction with development agreements. Streets are one of the most expensive components of new development, and high costs of development make it difficult to build new homes at prices that most families can afford. A phased approach to road construction allows developers to more cost-effectively produce neighborhoods.

FUTURE STREET IMPROVEMENTS

VILLAGE 81

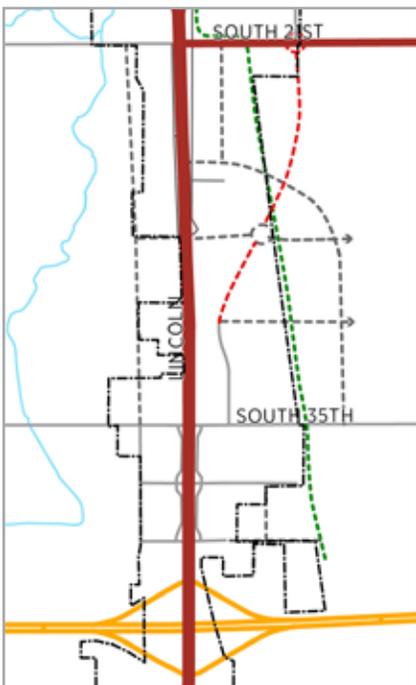
The Highway 81 Corridor from its junction with Interstate 80 is a tremendous asset for the city of York. The area developed to serve the interstate traffic including convenience and general commercial activities ranging from restaurants, hotels, and big box retailers. The strength of the interstate will continue to support development in this corridor including a large share of the total commercial development that will occur in the city as a whole.

This corridor developed in an auto-oriented manner with its public realm dominated by vehicle routes, drive aisles, frontage roads, and parking lots. While these features make an area that is easily accessed from the interstate, these same features have made the development isolated from the core of the community and uncomfortable for bicyclists and pedestrians. The Village 81 concept proposes that this strategic commercial area be designed and developed in such a way that the 81 Corridor contribute to York's quality of life. The concept includes walking and bicycle trails from the existing trail system, a network of streets designed to support a town center format, and the integration of mid-to-high density residential land uses.

Major components:

- Integrate the commercial corridor with the heart of the community
- Strong north-south collector street
- Incorporate medium-to-high density residential
- Construction of a multi-modal trail that connects to the existing trail
- Support a comfortable pedestrian and bicycle environment through the form of streets and development plans.
- A new collector route that connects this area with the ballpark area (see north-south connectivity)

More discussion on the Village 81 can be found throughout the plan.



BETTER NORTH-SOUTH CONNECTIVITY

Recent development in the northeast quadrant of the community including the baseball complex, waterpark, and the school complex has led to increased need to improve access to this part of town. The proposed enhancement uses several roads to direct traffic directly and efficiently between the northeast quadrant and the Highway 81 junction at Interstate 80.

1. Maine Avenue, a north-south arterial, will carry traffic south to Nobes Road
2. Nobes Road, an east-west arterial, will carry traffic west to Blackburn Avenue
3. Blackburn Avenue, a north-south arterial, will carry traffic south to 21st Street
4. 21st Street, an east-west arterial, will carry traffic west to either an enhanced junction at Highway 81 or to a proposed collector street through the heart of the Highway 81 commercial center.

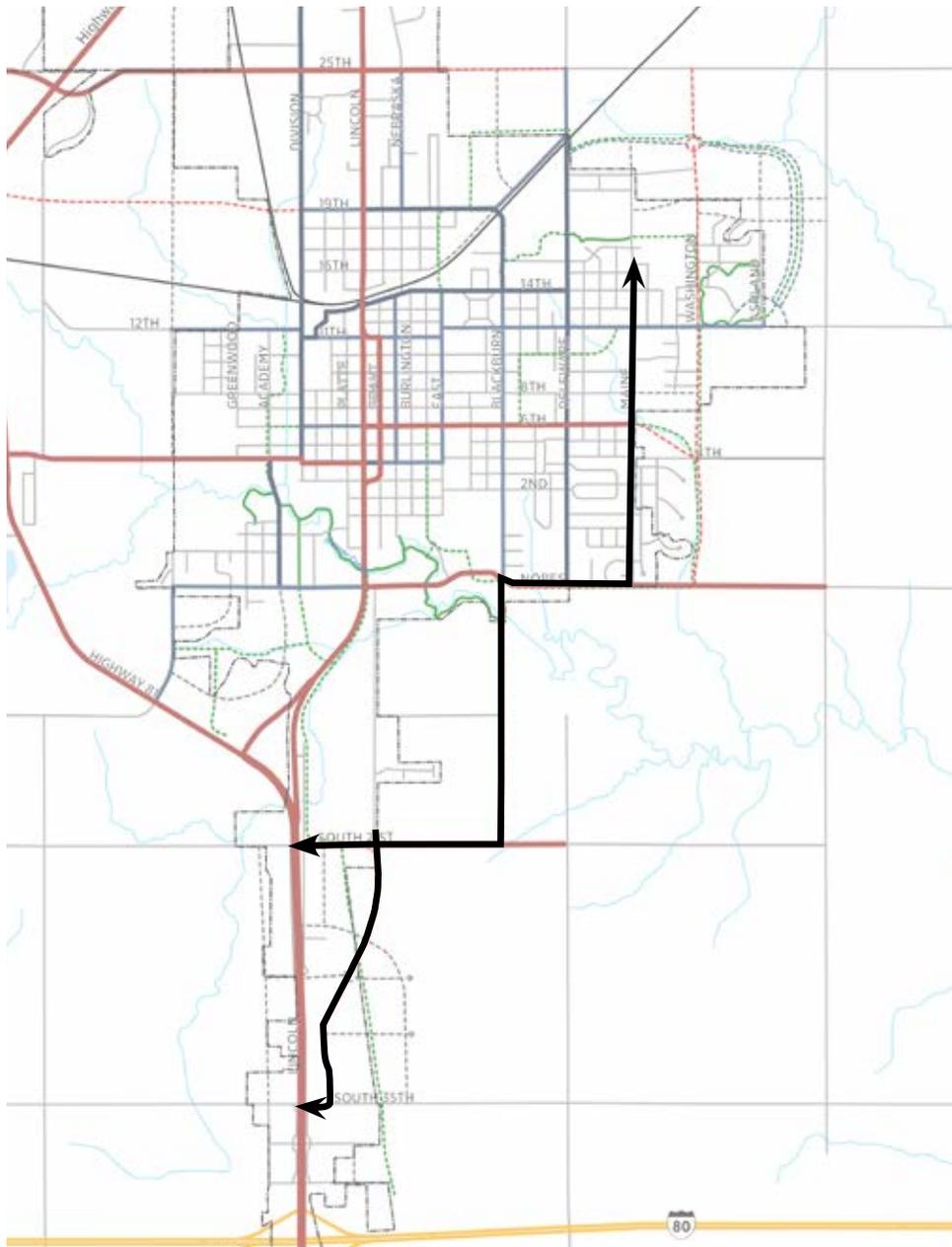
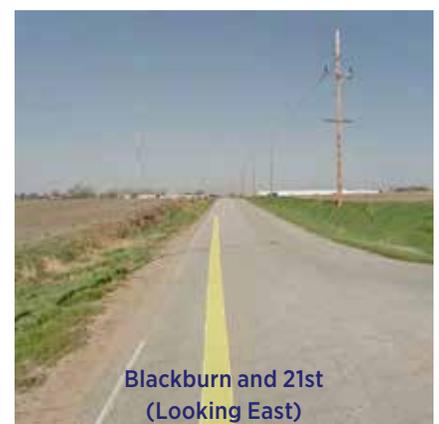
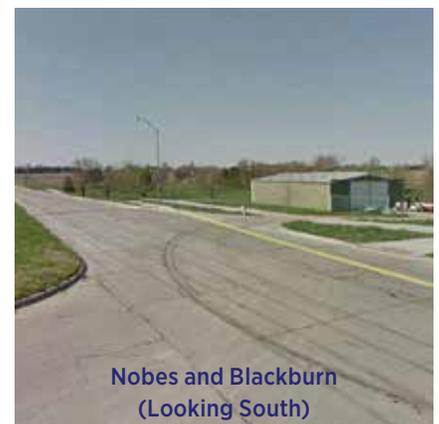
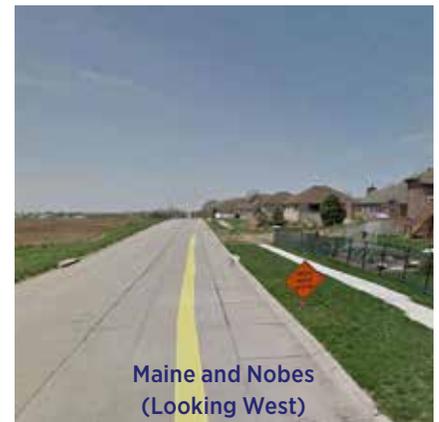


Figure 5.2: North-South Connectivity Concept

**Proposed Progression
(From North to South)**



COMPLETE STREET ENHANCEMENTS (EAST STREET AND 6TH STREET)



21st and Proposed Village 81 Street
Interstate Connection
(Looking South)

A complete street is a conscious investment decision to make new and existing roads a comfortable space for all road users including automobiles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. These streets are designed to make the community more accessible, walkable, and bikeable as a transportation system. Specific streets identified for Complete Street Enhancements include: East Street and 6th Street. More discussion on these proposed routes can be found later in this chapter.

DOWNTOWN TRAFFIC CALMING AND EVALUATION

A transportation system must balance providing mobility and access. This spectrum requires a conscious choice in a downtown context where roads designed for higher traffic speeds and mobility but reduce the overall exposure and access to downtown businesses while roads designed for greater access to businesses have a corresponding decrease in mobility.

The current one-way pair system is extremely efficient in passing vehicles through the business district but reduces the amount of access and exposure to the businesses and character of the district. This high capacity, high mobility configuration remains from when the corridor functioned as Highway 81 through York but, since the completion of the beltway, the corridor requires less capacity.

Alternative street configurations and treatments including landscaping, strong pedestrian crossings, and two-way street patterns are shown to promote additional economic benefit in a downtown environment. A study is recommended to evaluate whether the one-way pair system is warranted and the cost of converting the system. Further, a study of the downtown should explore streetscape treatments to the district.



CASE STUDY: SO. 24TH STREET, OMAHA

The South 24th Street District in Omaha was recognized in 2016 by the American Planning Association as a “Great Street in America.” The neighborhood is the historic downtown of South Omaha - an area that has been an gateway settlement for new populations to the Omaha Community over its life. The recognition by the American Planning Association suggests that South 24th Street is an example of how to make the street right of way a cherished and celebrated public space.

In the early 2000s, this section of South 24th Street was a four-lane arterial street that placed mobility ahead of pedestrian travel until the South Omaha Neighborhood Alliance and community partners sought to reclaim the district. Following this realization, extensive public engagement, and exhaustive study, the street was converted to a two-lane road with pedestrian bump-outs.

The narrower streets caused traffic to slow and allowed drivers to focus on the environment around them including the people, the businesses, and the character of this downtown district. The bump-outs shortened the distance that pedestrians need to cross the road from 45’ to 25’ resulting in a more comfortable and walkable district. In addition to the roadway treatments, the revitalization of this district included the installation of ornamental streetscape elements that provide visual interest to the district but also a unifying theme to the experience of South 24th Street.

South 24th Street is an example of using the existing street right of way as a public space that can both support and create economic development.

NORTH PARKWAY

The north parkway is a concept to integrate green space and storm water infrastructure into an emerging development area that is forecasted to absorb much of the city's new residential growth. In this area, it is costly to service development due to the depth of the existing storm sewer and therefore a system that manages stormwater on the surface would allow this area to be developed.



THE PARKWAY

The parkway is a pair of one-way streets with a greenway in the center that functions as storm water retention which also accommodates a bicycle and pedestrian trail through the linear park. The parkway is proposed to begin at a neighborhood commercial node by the baseball complex and Minick's Park extending as a loop to the north and west connecting with Delaware. The parkway will serve the development area as a collector street, a linear park, a trail extension for mobility and recreation, and as a cost-effective way of managing storm water.

Happy Hollow Boulevard in Omaha, Nebraska. Image Courtesy of Google

PARKWAY SYSTEMS

Parkways or boulevards are an effective way of using transportation infrastructure for multiple purposes. Often these systems are comprised of narrow one way streets separated by a wide strip of green space which can be used for stormwater management and a broad range of recreational amenities. The linear green in the center of the parkway provides access to quality park amenities, a walking or bicycle pathway, and flexible a community gathering place. Nebraska examples include:

- Happy Hollow Boulevard in Omaha. Happy Hollow Boulevard is an artery of the Dundee-Memorial Park Neighborhood. The Boulevard features a bicycle route, stormwater management, and a community ice-rink. Happy Hollow Boulevard is an iconic image of this neighborhood
- Stonebrook Parkway in Lincoln. The Stonebrook Parkway is a central green in the Fallbrook Neighborhood in Lincoln. This greenway functions as community greenspace, a water feature, and an icon of the neighborhood.
- Hays, Kansas. Parkways are a prevalent building block for many of the traditional neighborhoods throughout Hays. They serve as green space and natural flood control.



Happy Hollow Boulevard in Omaha, Nebraska. Images Courtesy of Google



Stonebrook Parkway in Lincoln, Nebraska. Images Courtesy of Google

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

TRAILS

Trails are off-street paths that serve pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation. These dedicated routes provide a comfortable place away from the stresses of traffic. In York, the existing trail showcases the beauty of the stream basin but it is important to note that off-street trails can and should be transportation routes which connect origins and destinations. Proposed trail links include:

NOBES TO BALLPARK

The Nobes to Ballpark trail would extend the existing trail on the south along Nobes Road and following a proposed extension of Washington Avenue to the ballpark complex and the waterpark. This extension will align with the proposed north parkway road and trail.

NORTH PARKWAY TRAIL

The north parkway, described in this chapter, integrates an off-street trail through the center boulevard. This pathway would connect the ballfield complex and the waterpark to the soccer complex and the fairgrounds. The trail then loops back to connect with destinations near the core of the city including key reinvestment and development sites in addition to the school complex.

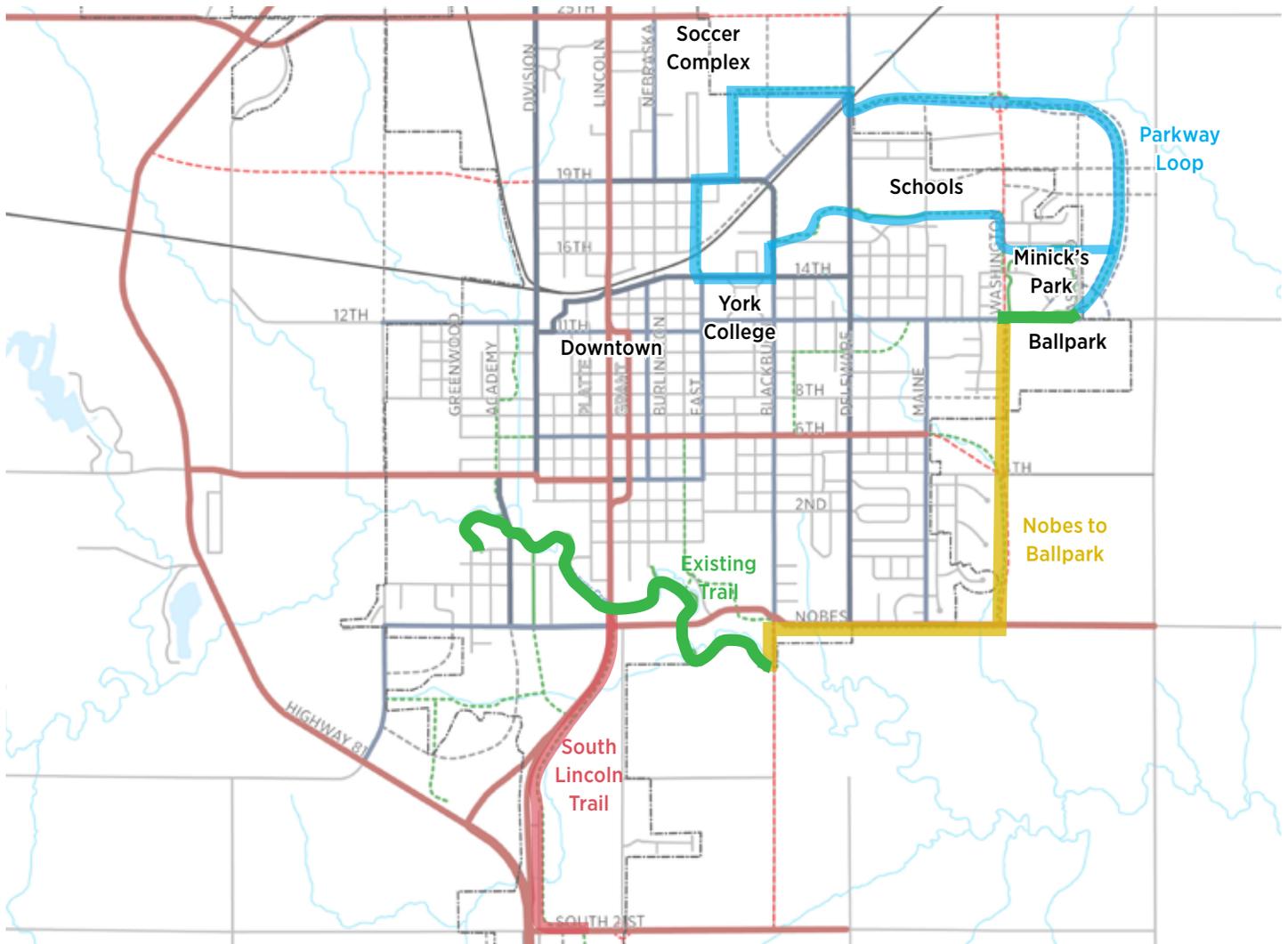


Figure 5.3: Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

VILLAGE 81 TRAILWAY

The Village 81 Trailway is a central element of the Village 81 vision which proposes the highway corridor as a mixed use neighborhood with mid-to-high density residential development at the periphery of a commercial town center. The trailway proposes to re-purpose the former railroad right of way into a multi-use trail that would safely and comfortably:

- bring patrons into the district from the core of the city without an automobile,
- allow visitors of the RV Camp and the hotels to access the core of the city, and
- provide a recreational amenity to the district and the proposed residential developments.

The Village 81 Trailway follows the former railroad right of way from the RV Camp on the south to South 21st Street where it crosses and traces to the west before joining South Lincoln Avenue on-street. South Lincoln Avenue, a long cul-de-sac, would function as a shared route due to the low traffic volume before the route transitions into a segment of off-street trail which joins with shoulder of the South Lincoln Avenue turn-off. More detail on the transition from this segment follows.

SOUTH LINCOLN TRAIL:

The South Lincoln trail extends from the Village 81 Trailway along the South Lincoln Avenue shoulder to the existing Beaver Creek Trail. This trail may be a sidepath or separated (buffered) lane to the east of the travel-lanes of South Lincoln Avenue.



BICYCLE ROUTES AND 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. York has a 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
 - » Areas with only limited gaps should be targeted to eliminate interruptions in the sidewalk system

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



CHAPTER SIX

PARKS AND RECREATION

York's park and recreation system provides a valuable public service and amenity. A quality park system contributes to property values, neighborhood stability, and resident pride. The system consists of individual park resources designed to serve an intended audience – a niche market, a neighborhood, the community, or the region. These park resources combine to create a framework of parks and trails which stretch across the community for the greatest possible service and benefit to residents of York.



YORK



CHAPTER GOALS

- Continue to maintain the current high level of service both in terms of park and resources facilities and the programs offered
- Evaluate the use of facilities at an ongoing basis and respond with action and investment accordingly to maintain a system that meets the needs of the population

INTRODUCTION

York residents enjoy access to a variety of local and regional park facilities, and parks are a vital component of community life. In York, 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 York 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.

YORK'S PARK SERVICE

An analysis of the amount, type, and location of park land provides insight into the level of service that is provided to residents by York's park system.

AMOUNT OF PARK LAND

York has approximately 145 acres of park in addition to approximately 32 acres of natural greenway along the Beaver Creek Trail; this equates to approximately 18 acres of park per 1,000 residents. Although there is no magic number, many sources consider a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 residents as a healthy number. The supply of park ground in York is more than adequate for its population. As it continues to grow, York should add park land to maintain its current level of service.

TYPE OF PARK LAND

York provides a large quantity of park land for its population, however many of these acres exist in "community parks" including the York Ballpark Complex. While these resources are valuable quality of life and economic features, they tend to be isolated from individual neighborhoods with a specialty appeal such as sport tournaments. If the York Ballpark Complex were removed from the amount of park land in the previous section, the system would have a level of service of approximately 9.85 acres per 1,000 residents.

In addition to traditional parks, the separate category of quasi-public recreational space helps serve the city of York and its residents. These facilities are privately managed, require a user-fee, or require a certain user status. These facilities, while important, are not included in the total level of service analysis.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has established a classification system for parks that helps communities identify categories of park needs that it should serve (Figure 6.1).

FIGURE 6.1: Park Classifications and Level of Service

CLASSIFICATION	FUNCTION	SIZE	SERVICE RADIUS	YORK'S LEVEL OF SERVICE	YORK 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 ac	¼ - ½ mile walking distance	3.75 acres per 1,000 residents	East Hill 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.	30-50 ac	½ - 3 miles	12.5 acres per 1,000 residents	Minicks Park
Specialty	Meet a niche recreational need for the community, such as a sports park or wilderness area.	Varies	Varies	2.50 acres per 1,000 residents	Miller Park
Quasi Public	Serving a special audience or recreational need such as a college, golf course, or privately operated complex.	Varies	Varies	Varies	Cornerstone Sports Complex

FIGURE 6.2: Existing Park Inventory

PARK	NEIGHBORHOOD PARK ACRES	COMMUNITY PARK ACRES	SPECIALTY PARK ACRES	QUASI PUBLIC ACRES
East Hill Park	6 acres			
Beaver Creek Park	5.5 acres			
Harrison Park	11 acres			
Foster Park Arboretum	3 acres			
Duke Park	4 acres			
Levitt Stadium		5 acres		
Miller Park		10.5 acres		
York Dog Park		4 acres		
Minicks Park			35 acres	
York Ballpark Complex			61 acres	
Golf Course				88 acres
High School Fields				10 acres
Cornerstone Sports Complex				35 acres
	145 acres; 9.85 acres of public park per 1,000 residents			133 quasi-public acres

DISTRIBUTION OF PARKLAND

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 York, much of the role of the neighborhood park is filled by large community parks including Mincks Park and the York Ballpark Complex.

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. Figure 6.3 illustrates the location of York's recreational facilities and the service area for each park.

Although existing parks serve a significant portion of the community, no park resources exist in the Highway 81 Corridor south of the Lincoln turnoff. While historically this area had been an exclusive commercial center, the addition of the RV Kampground introduced residents to the corridor and the development concept in this plan calls for the addition of mid-to-high density residential in this area. A park resource should be added to the corridor to promote its development as a mixed-use neighborhood and this resource should be connected to residential developments and the core of the community with a multiuse trail.

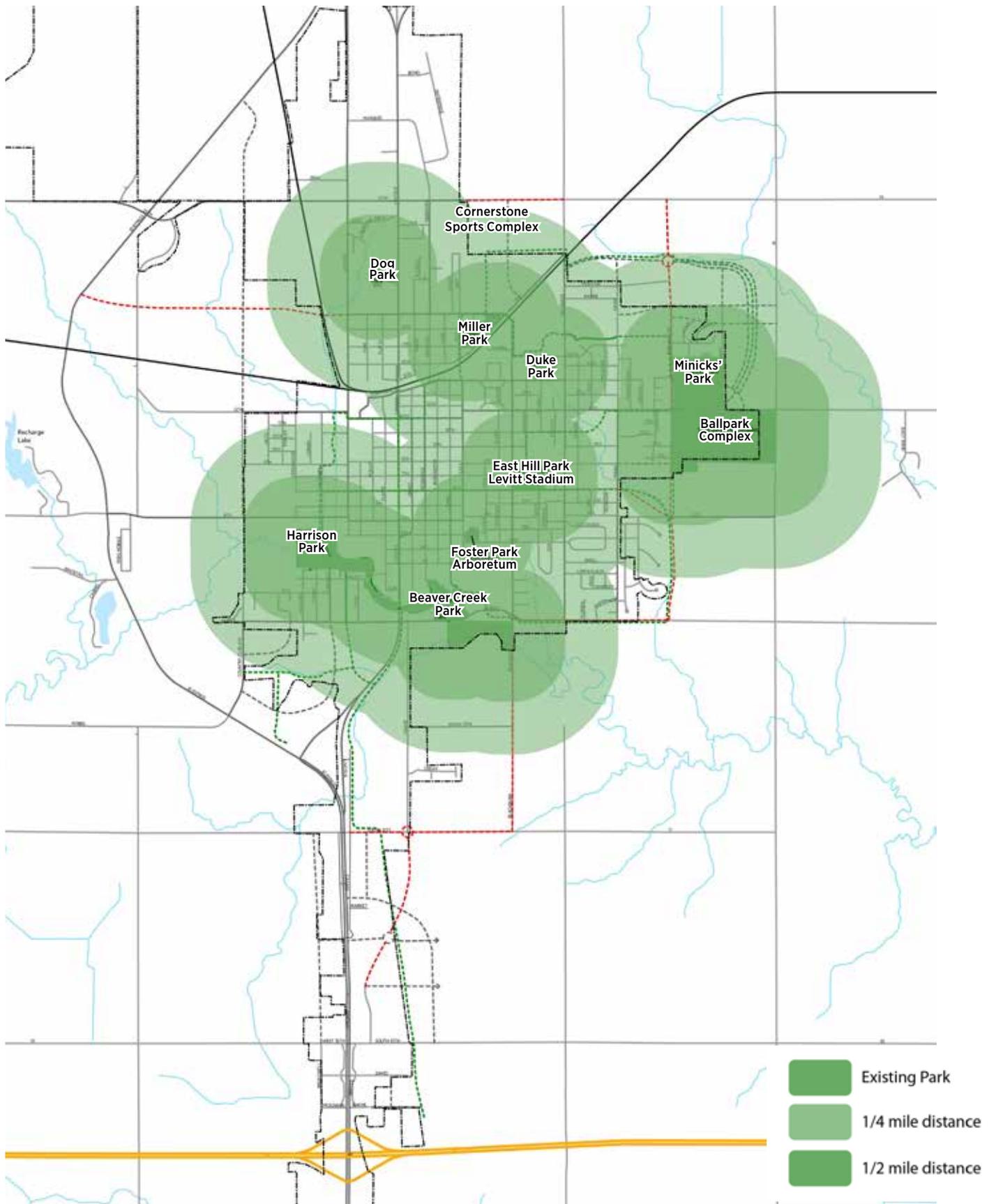
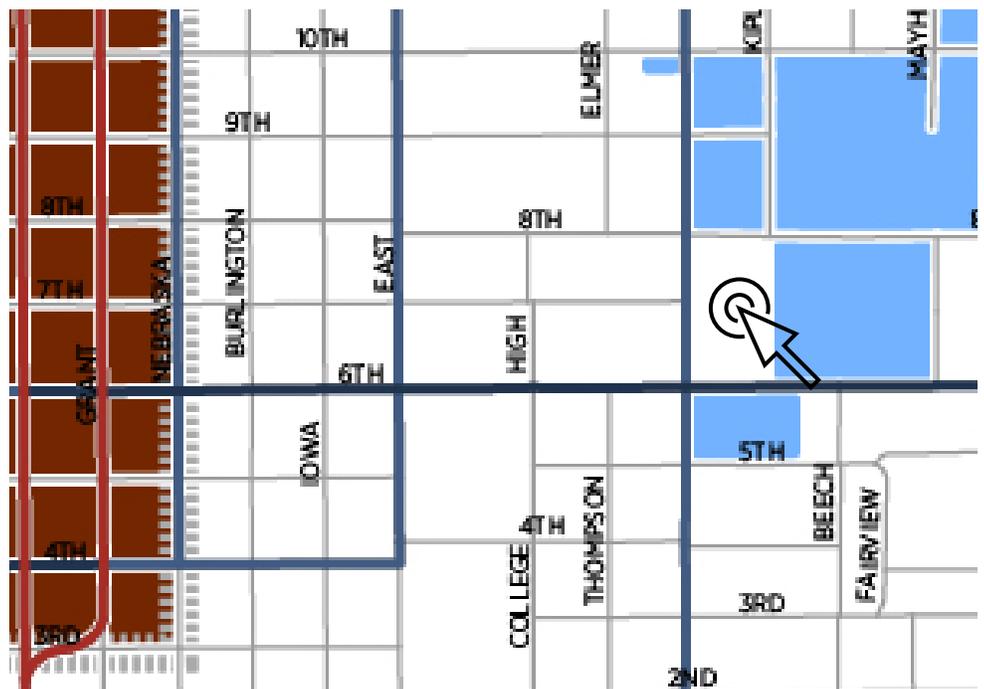


Figure 6.3: Distribution of Existing Parkland

EAST HILL PARK

- Location: 901 East 6th Street
- Type: Neighborhood Parks
- Size: Approximately 6 Acres
- Amenities:
 - » Lighted Tennis Courts; Sand Volleyball Courts; Picnic Pavilions and Grills; Modern Playground Equipment; Electric Receptacles; Restrooms; Off-Street Parking; Adjacent to Levitt Stadium; Adjacent to York College
- Role in the Development Concept
 - » East Hill Park is a pillar of York’s park system and will continue to play a major role as an anchor to both the campus of York College and the residential neighborhoods east of Lincoln Avenue. The plan calls for continued investment and enhancement of East Hill Park including landscaping, sidewalks, and bike lanes to allow more residents to enjoy this community park.
 - » East Hill Park will continue and expand its role as an anchor and essential element in the neighborhood fabric of east York.
 - » As an image center, visits to East Hill Park should be encouraged by hosting new programs at the park, such as college visit events or a farmer’s market. The more the park is experienced by visitors, the better the perception of the community becomes.
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - » East Hill Park is in excellent condition and is well used. The surrounding neighborhood exhibits a high level of architectural character and pride of ownership which extends into the park as its front lawn.
 - » The park walks the line between being a neighborhood park and being a community park. With several large picnic/event shelters, a large amount of off-street parking, and proximity to Levitt Stadium (functionally in East Hill Park), the park is used by a large portion of the community including York College students. The challenge for East Hill Park is how to find a way for the park to serve the needs of the immediate neighborhood (open space, playgrounds, and picnic spaces) while also offering this level of intimate experience to residents throughout York.
- Levitt Stadium is 4.9 acres and is adjacent to East Hill Park but this does not include the parking supply which is shared.

EAST HILL PARK



BEAVER CREEK PARK

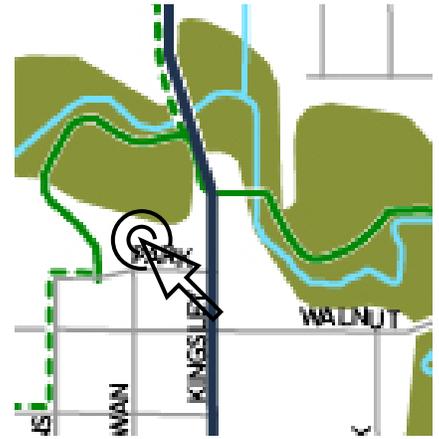
- Location: Northwest of Nobes and Iowa Avenue
- Type: Neighborhood
- Size: 5.5 acres
- Amenities:
 - » Hiking and Biking Trails; Trailhead to the Beaver Creek Trail; Electronic Scoreboards; Restrooms; Baseball Field; Picnic Pavilion with Grill; Off-Street Parking; Modern Playground Equipment; Lighted Tennis Courts
- Role in Development Concept
 - » Beaver Creek Park is the namesake trail head for the existing trail. The extension of the trail throughout the community will increase the use of the trail for both recreation and transportation. The role of the park will expand as an interesting resting and starting point for the trail.
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - » At present, the greatest challenge facing Beaver Creek Park is its isolation making it difficult to access without a vehicle. The role of this park will expand as more people can reach the park using a bike, by walking, or running – this evolving and expanding role is the greatest opportunity for Beaver Creek Park.
 - » The ballfield should be maintained for practice purposes or the park should be assessed for alternative uses based on community demand.

BEAVER CREEK PARK



HARRISON PARK

- Location: 140 South Kingsley
- Type: Neighborhood Park
- Size: 11.0 acres
- Amenities:
 - » Hiking and Biking Trails; Trailhead to Beaver Creek Trail; Sand Volleyball Court; Electric Receptacles; Restrooms; Picnic Pavilion with Grills; Parking; Modern Playground Equipment; Horseshoe Pits
- Role in Development Concept
 - » An extension of the Beaver Creek Trail to the south
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - » The city plans to install a splash pad water feature in Harrison Park in the short term
 - » Harrison Park is the only park resource serving the western core of the community. Enhancement of the park and extending neighborhood connections, including the Beaver Creek Trail, could aid the stabilization and revitalization of western York.



MILLER PARK

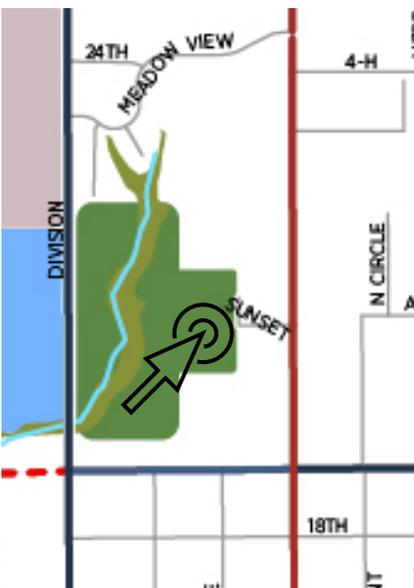
- Location: 1720 North East Avenue
- Type: Specialty
- Size: 10.5 acres
- Amenities:
 - » Security Lighting; Electrical Plug-ins; Softball Fields; Electronic Scoreboards; Modern Playground Equipment; Off-Street Parking; Picnic Pavilion with Grills; Restrooms
- Role in Development Concept
 - » Community anchor for development north of 19th Avenue
 - » Trail connection and service to infill redevelopment sites south of the railroad
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - » The neighborhood role of this park is expected to increase. The challenge and opportunity is to provide park amenities and programs to promote and serve the future residential development areas to the north and south





FOSTER PARK ARBORETUM

- Location: 202 North East Avenue
- Type: Neighborhood
- Size: 2.9 Acres
- Amenities:
 - » Arboretum, Walking Trails, Off Street Parking
- Role in Development Concept
 - » Image center and neighborhood amenity
 - » Interest node along the enhanced East Street Corridor with pedestrian and bicycle features
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - » A challenge of the Forest Park Arboretum is promoting use from the adjacent properties and greater access from the surrounding neighborhoods. Wayfinding signage may be an opportunity to improve awareness and access.



YORK DOG PARK

- Location: 2100 North Lincoln Avenue
- Type: Specialty
- Size: 4.0 Acres (2 acres fenced)
- Amenities:
 - » Off Leash Dog Park
- Role in Development Concept
 - » The dog park is immediately east of a site identified as a future park resource. The existing dog park could be an extension of this proposed park or could be incorporated into the overall park design with the current site being redeveloped.
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - » The park lacks pedestrian connections making it difficult for a person to walk their dog to the park. The park could function as a greater amenity for the community and the nearby neighborhoods if residents and their dogs could walk to the park.

DUKE PARK

- Location: 1100 Duke Drive
- Type: Neighborhood
- Size: 3.7 acres
- Amenities:
 - » Picnic Area; Off-Street Parking; Modern Playground Equipment; Restrooms
- Role in Development Concept
 - » Duke Park is immediately south of a proposed trail corridor along the south edge of the High School. As the tee-ball field has been removed recently, the future role of Duke Park still being determined but may include more extensive use by the York School District.
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - » The strategic location near the high school and the middle school is an opportunity. This site can complement and serve the adjacent neighborhood with appropriate programming. It may be appropriate to evaluate existing park amenities in the community and to engage stakeholders in the future of the park.



MINICKS PARK

- Location: 2222 East 12th Street
- Type: Community Park
- Size: 35.2 Acres
- Amenities:
 - » The Family Aquatic Center
 - » Walking trails (approximately 1 mile)
 - » Nine-hole disc golf course
 - » Playground
- Role in Development Concept
 - » Minicks Park is an essential part of the northeast development concept. It is proposed that the existing roadway network and trail system integrate with the proposed neighborhood commercial plaza to create a town center for the area.
 - » The existing trail along the southern edge of the site becomes part of a trail, which would extend south to the existing Beaver Creek Trail and north along the Parkway. This system would function for transportation and recreation, connecting the existing trail to new development in the north-east.
- Challenges and Opportunities
 - » The master plan for Minicks Park articulates a vision for a vibrant community park resource. This ambitious plan contains an amphitheater, outdoor classroom, sand volleyball court, multipurpose greenspaces, and a Frisbee golf course. The construction of the first phase – the aquatic center, the trail loop, and the playground – remained true to the master plan laying much of the foundation for future phases. The greatest challenge will be funding and implementing the remainder of the vision.



Photo courtesy of: City of York

- » In addition to the current amenities in Minicks Park, the master plan calls for a variety of recreational features including a disc golf course, an amphitheater, and an outdoor classroom. Due to the way that the development concept interacts with the potential of Minicks Park, both the master plan and the development concept should be considered thoughtfully to ensure that they complement one another to the greatest degree possible. For example, the development concept (below) proposes a loop road from within Minicks Park into the proposed neighborhood commercial district and activity plaza. The area located within this half-moon roadway that connects Minicks Park with the development concept, should be thoughtfully designed as an entryway to both the commercial center and the park resources in Minicks Park. As such, it may be appropriate to relocate the disc golf course from this area of the park.



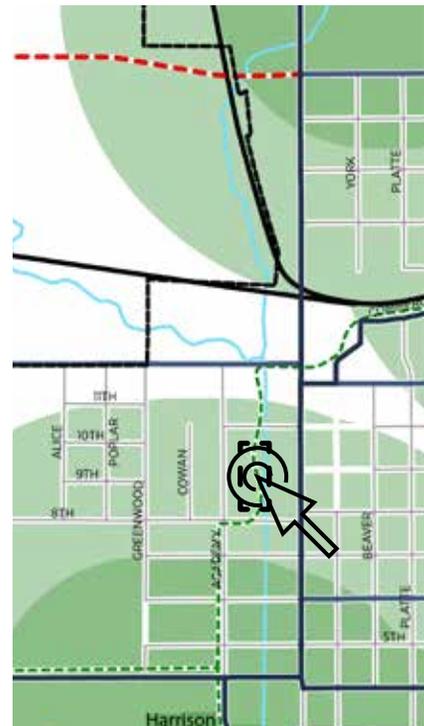
OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PARK SYSTEM

EXPANSION OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Parks should be developed to fully serve the existing population and 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 Development Concept and the Future Land Use Map illustrate areas for reinvestment, new development. The installation of new parks and the enhancement of existing parks should help drive the implementation of the concepts. Parks (new or enhancements) should be used as follows:

- **New Development Areas.** Newly developing neighborhoods in northeast York should be integrated with new park development including the parkway. The Village 81 Concept should integrate park resources including a trail to anchor the identity of this area as a neighborhood where residents can live, shop, and enjoy. The city should collaborate with the developers of these areas to ensure an appropriate level of recreation service.
- **West York.** This plan calls for infill development and neighborhood stabilization policies such as assistance for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation. A major component of improving the condition of the western neighborhoods is to improve the level of park service. A major recommendation of this plan include the expansion of the trail system and the enhancement of Harrison Park. In addition, this plan calls for the creation of a park between 8th and 12th Streets and between Academy and Division Streets on a portion of land in the floodplain.



Proposed Western Park Location

TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

York can develop a system of on-street and offstreet trails to connect residents to existing parks and community destinations. While the existing extent of the Beaver Creek Trail is one of the most highly regarded community features among residents, York has lagged behind many cities of comparable size in development of trails. York should create a phased plan to expand the trail system to connect schools, recreation sites, and other community destinations. More information on the trail framework and phasing plan can be found in Chapter 5.

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 18 acres per 1,000 residents, the York 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.

York 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, and location and access to neighborhoods.
 - » A dedication and financing policy (discussed below).

FUNDING AND MAINTENANCE

Funding the construction and maintenance of parks and trails is often a difficult task. York 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 York'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 SEVEN

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

It is in York's neighborhoods where the community lives. A neighborhood is more than a collection of homes but rather the public family room for residents of York – a place for people to live, enjoy, and to mingle with their neighbors. It is important to design neighborhoods as an extension of living space beyond the confines of individual homes. Public actions, partnerships, and design practices can strengthen existing neighborhoods, create strong new neighborhoods, and build a more engaged community.



YORK



CHAPTER GOALS

- Address the underlying causes of housing shortages in targeted market areas, especially rental and gateway housing
- Strengthen neighborhoods through investment in the existing housing stock and infrastructure and through policy to reinforce neighborhood quality
- Increase the availability of diverse housing options with new construction that makes York more welcoming and competitive for new residents and businesses

INTRODUCTION

Most land in American cities is devoted to housing. It is the place where we spend a significant portion of our time, and its condition and appearance greatly affects the lives we lead and the perception of our cities.

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

York's incremental and traditional development patterns have allowed for easy neighborhood connections and movement around the community. Like many communities of its size, York's residential land use is dominated by single-family housing styles; however, demand for quality rental and new owner occupied housing is strong and it is the responsibility of the private market and the city to ensure that new development meets the needs of current and future generations.

BASICS OF NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

In recent history, a difference emerged between "housing development" and "neighborhood development." The idea of neighborhood development connotes a greater focus on creating a place for residents to live and exist beyond the walls of their individual dwellings; a neighborhood is a collection of houses brought together in a concentrated community through a built environment that encourages interactions. A neighborhood integrates street trees, landscaping, sidewalks, and local destinations such as parks and neighborhood shops.

Housing development emerged from a combination of traditional zoning regulations and lending practices which created prototypical housing developments that were institutionalized by cities and lenders and operationalized by housing developers. The prototypical housing development model can be described as follows: a single use district consisting of a single housing product, such as single-family detached units; a street pattern designed for the rapid mobility of the automobile with sidewalks considered an amenity; and a focus on producing residential lots or homes at the lowest possible cost while serving a need within the market. The two concepts can be brought together through land use decisions, public private partnerships, and investment to create a system of neighborhood parks, trails, open-space, and amenities to serve and connect new neighborhoods. These public interventions can support market-led housing developments to create a better product at a competitive cost.

Geoffrey West, acclaimed physicist, mused on the inner workings of cities, stating that "the purpose of urban planning (is) finding a way to minimize our distress while maximizing our interactions." In the case of neighborhoods, this means that housing developments should become, or be designed, as distinct places where residents can live, connect with their neighbors, and experience the culture and amenities of the city as a whole.

CONTEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

Residential neighborhoods – new and existing – should connect with the surrounding system of roads and pathways. By integrating new developments with the existing system of streets, trails, and sidewalks, new neighborhoods can offer residents the benefit of close and direct access to existing community amenities such as parks and shops.

PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY

Sidewalks serve as both transportation and recreational amenities. Walking should not be viewed as a luxury but rather as an essential part of daily life for many and as a building block for the urban framework of the community. In a city, people regularly need to walk from a parking lot to a business so why not from their home to a park, school, or shop, the way a city functioned in years past. Further, not everyone has a car or wants to use a car; children, the elderly, and the disabled, value mobility while other who do not have a car, by necessity or choice, can travel from their home to parks, school, or shops. With an active investment in sidewalks and trails that enable and encourage residents to walk for transportation, our communities become smaller, more accessible, and more neighborly.

NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

A foundation of neighborhood development is the creation of distinct places with their own identities. Once a place has a name or identity, it is easier for its users to establish ownership and pride. Further, the creation of representative associations improves the capacity of that neighborhood to better itself and to contribute to the enhancement of the whole community. Neighborhood associations can be a method of improving community engagement, pride, and ownership.

BALANCE AND VARIETY

A community must provide balance in its housing stock to serve the essential needs of the city. Employees at all levels of the workforce need a place to live, and typically new residents desire a quality rental unit before purchasing an entry-level home. Further, neighborhoods that allow their residents to grow in the housing market from apartment, to entry-level home, to family-home, to a more maintenance free unit, can retain residents throughout their life than possible with single-type, single-price developments.

As such, a balanced neighborhood incorporates a variety of housing types to appeal to different markets and may also integrate a mix of complementary land uses such as a neighborhood commercial plaza.

“The purpose of urban planning (is) finding a way to minimize our distress while maximizing our interactions.”

- Geoffrey West

With an active investment in sidewalks and trails that enable and encourage residents to walk for transportation, our communities become smaller, more accessible, and more neighborly.



ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

HOUSING CONDITION

Based on a windshield survey completed as part of the 2015 York County Housing Study, the physical condition of York's housing was noted. The assessment included a cursory exploration of the community and sought to identify clusters of residential structures exhibiting visible characteristics of deterioration. The evaluation allowed the city to identify priority areas for reinvestment to stabilize existing neighborhoods.

Most of York's housing stock is in fair-to-excellent condition. As with any community, there are two types of condition issues:

- **Isolated and Individual Cases.** These are typically individual properties that have suffered various levels of neglect or deferred maintenance over time. Isolated or individual cases require tactical action to remove the blight conditions. While isolated to an individual property, blight and neglect can negatively affect surrounding properties, prompting disinvestment, additional blight, and decreased property values.
- **Cluster Cases.** Small clusters of deteriorated, vacant, or undeveloped properties result in either blight or a loss of density. Development, redevelopment and rehabilitation incentives can be targeted to a focused area or neighborhood to encourage holistic stabilization.

Figure 7.1 identifies areas where housing condition and other variables, including the age of residential homes and condition, 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 conserve the existing housing stock with a coordinated rehabilitation strategy.
- **Infill and Stabilization Areas.** These areas have more serious housing deficiencies and vacant lots than 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 Opportunity 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.
- **Gateway Preservation and Enhancement.** These areas are defined as the main pathways through a community. While not necessarily a district for housing development, the condition and image of these corridors does have a direct impact on the perception of the community and its housing quality.
- **Vacant Lots.** These sites are platted but undeveloped lots are still available within and adjacent to the city.

It should be noted that this condition analysis, while an important tool in understanding the state and future of York's housing stock, can only be fully understood through the lens of the demographic and economic context of the community. These factors are explored earlier in this report and expanded upon in the following section. This combined analysis helps identify imbalances in the housing market and suggests the direction of housing policy.

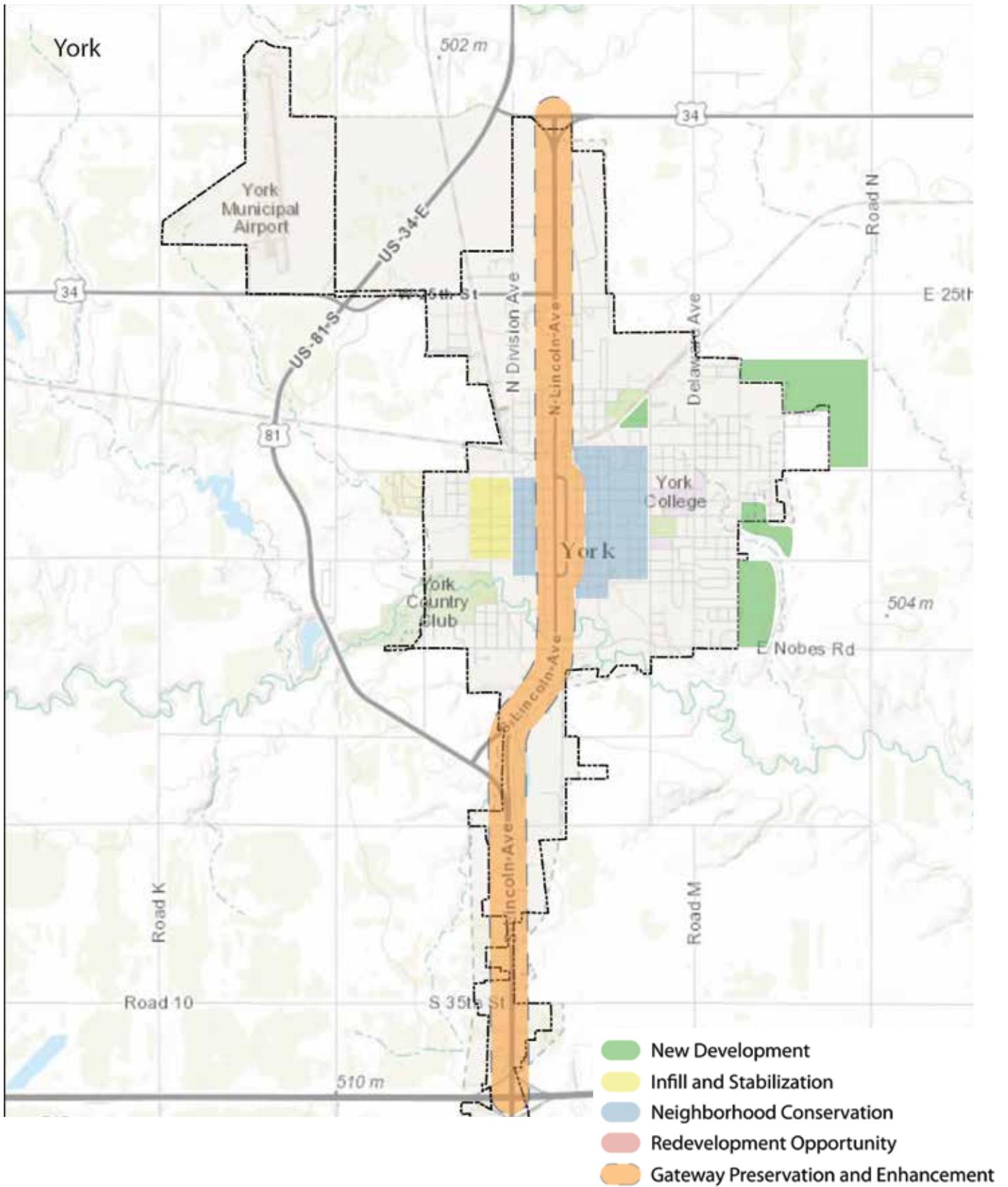


Figure 7.1: Policy Recommendation Areas

HOUSING UNITS AND OCCUPANCY INDICATORS

A LOW VACANCY RATE

A low vacancy rate may seem like a positive feature for a community; an assertion that the housing market is balanced in term of supply and demand. However, 5% to 6% percent is typically considered a healthy vacancy rate compared to York's estimated rate of three percent. A healthy vacancy rate indicates that there is availability for new residents to enter the housing market and for established residents to move-up or downsize as desired.

A healthy vacancy rate also has the effect of creating competition in the housing market which typically improves housing quality. In a low vacancy environment, a new employee may be forced to decide whether to select from a limited number of low quality units with comparatively high rents or to live elsewhere. The construction of new units or the improvement of existing, sub-par units creates additional supply which generates more opportunity for all participants in the housing market while driving up the quality of housing units.

FIGURE 7.2: Affordability Analysis

	YORK	SEWARD	AURORA
2014 Population	7,878	7,050	4,461
Median Household Income	\$48,622	\$58,261	\$54,484
Median Home Value	\$106,500	\$137,000	\$98,600
Value to Income Ratio	2.19	2.35	1.81
Median Contract Rent	\$474	\$509	\$415
Median Year Built	1965	1975	1968
Average Number of Bedrooms	2.61	2.86	2.93

Source: American Community Survey, 2014

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

COST OF HOUSING

Many participants noted that York’s market seems to cost more than other communities in the area. Based on the 2014 Census, Figure 7.2, York’s median home value and contract rent are below those in Seward. This perception may reflect the cost for quality housing or housing of a certain size. While housing in York is only slightly more expensive than Aurora, it would appear that buyers are getting less house for their dollar as indicated by the average number of bedrooms.

SHORTAGE OF HOMES IN TARGET PRICE POINTS

Affordability is a concept that is relative to the income of specific households. Therefore, Figure 7.3 looks at affordability based on household income. An affordable unit should not consume more than 30% of a household’s total income.

York has a shortage of homes that are affordable for households with incomes greater than \$50,000 with the demand most acute for households earning more than \$75,000. Conversely, there is a surplus of units that would be affordable for households earning less than \$50,000 per year, but this surplus is likely accompanied by condition and quality issues.

The shortage of units for upper income households suggests the housing market can support additional owner units priced between \$150,000 and \$300,000. Often the construction of homes priced above \$200,000 can be supported by the private market. For those priced between 150,000 and 200,000, the profit margins get much smaller and often require some incentives.

The affordability analysis assumes that units be high quality deserving of the sale price or the monthly rent requested. Further, competition is required to ensure that housing options are appropriately priced by the market.

Defining Housing Affordability:

Affordable housing is determined by a household’s income. What is affordable to one income bracket is not affordable to another. The cost of housing can also be defined as either market rate or below market rate.

Units that are below market rate require some assistance to be built. The rent or value of these units would be priced below construction costs and therefore builders need assistance to cover the cost of development and construction. These assistance packages vary but ensure that communities have safe and affordable housing for households in the lowest income ranges.

FIGURE 7.3: Affordability Analysis

INCOME RANGE	# HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH RANGE	AFFORDABLE RANGE FOR OWNER UNITS	# OF OWNER UNITS	AFFORDABLE RANGE FOR RENTER UNITS	# OF RENTER UNITS	TOTAL AFFORDABLE UNITS	BALANCE
\$0-25,000	584	\$0-49,999	210	\$0-400	375	585	1
\$25,000-49,999	996	\$50,000-\$99,999	727	\$400-800	968	1,695	699
\$50,000-74,999	491	\$100,000-\$149,999	395	\$800-1,250	22	417	-74
\$75,000-99,999	496	\$150,000-\$200,000	335	\$1,250-1,500	0	335	-161
\$100,000-150,000	499	\$200-\$300,000	204	\$1,500-2,000	0	204	-295
\$150,000+	281	\$300,000+	111	\$2,000+	0	111	-170

HOUSING PRODUCTION AND DEMAND

HOUSING PRODUCTION

Housing production in York has been relatively stagnant over the past ten years with new production not meeting the demand of the market. As a result, established residents tend to stay in their homes longer, limiting the filtration of the housing stock and reducing the availability of housing for lower and middle income households. The construction of new units at mid-high market rates would help enable more movement and activity within the existing housing stock.

Figure 7.5 illustrates a housing demand model built on a projected population of 8,789 by 2025. While this growth rate is slightly higher than the city has experienced in the last thirty years, key indicators show a significant demand for additional housing. One key factor is the extremely slow construction market of the last 10 years that resulted in pent-up demand by both existing homeowners looking to move-up or down-size and new residents trying to relocate to the community.

Compared to its peer communities such as Aurora and Seward, York has an older (median year of 1965) and smaller housing stock (average of 2.61 bedrooms). Both trends reinforce the need for additional housing construction to create a more balanced housing market with availability for different types of buyers and renters - students, first-time home buyers, the move-up market, and the downsizers.

Additionally, there are over 300 job openings within the York area, and a large number of them will require employees to come from outside the area. These employees will require housing, which they may not find in a low vacancy housing market. This model indicates a demand for an additional 470 units by 2025, though it is likely that the city can support an even higher construction rate.

RENTAL MARKET DEMAND

Participants also indicated a need for additional rental products. The large number of rental units priced below \$800 indicate that there is a limited variety of units available with higher income households out-competing other households for the highest quality units. Figure 7.6 illustrates a development program that reflects the need for additional rental housing.

LOT PRODUCTION

Residential construction in York has lagged behind its peer communities like Seward which has produced an average of 31 units per year from 2013-2015. While this can be attributed to several factors, the limited number of new lots being developed is a major limitation to the amount of housing construction that can occur. Historically most residential lots in York have been developed by the private market which has not been able to deliver lots to support population growth or at rates that support lower price points.

Residential lots can be produced in several ways: the development of greenfield sites at the perimeter of the city, the redevelopment of urban sites, or the re-purposing of existing land within the city. The private market is generally able to support the production of market rate lots on greenfield sites but the acquisition and redevelopment of urban sites generally requires support from the city.

FIGURE 7.4: Housing Construction

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	TOTAL
Single Family Units	15	12	11	5	11	10	17	23	14	6	124
Two-Family Units											0
Multifamily Units	43	0	20	32	22	0	0	4	0	2	123
Mobile Home											0
Residential Demolitions	13	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	2	1	22
Total	58	12	31	37	33	10	17	27	14	8	247

FIGURE 7.5: Housing Demand Model

	2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	TOTAL
Population at End of Period	7,957	8,363	8,789	
Household Population at End of Period	7,535	7,919	8,323	
Average Persons Per Household	2.26	2.26	2.26	
Household Demand at End of Period	3,334	3,504	3,683	
Projected Vacancy Rate	3.00%	3.75%	5.00%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	3,437	3,641	3,877	
Replacement Need		15	15	30
Cumulative Need During Period		218	251	470
Average Annual Construction Required		44	50	47

FIGURE 7.6: Housing Development Program

	2015-2020	2020-2025	2015-2025
Total Need	129	153	282
Total Owner Occupied	65	76	141
Affordable Low: <\$125,000	25	29	54
Affordable Moderate: \$125-\$175,000	16	19	36
Moderate Market: \$175-\$250,000	11	13	24
High Market: >\$250,000	12	14	27
Total Renter Occupied	65	76	141
Low: Less than \$450	19	23	42
Affordable: \$450-700	21	25	47
Market: Over \$700	24	28	52

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

PRIORITIES

INVEST IN CORE BUILDING STOCK

A community's housing stock represents its largest capital investment. A high-quality housing stock enables residents to experience a high quality of life while also supporting a strong and economically stable community. York's housing stock is generally in very good condition but faces some challenges.

Young buyers seeking a 'move-in ready' home and a shortage of contractors doing rehabilitation work results in housing that sells slowly or deteriorates further. Many structures need maintenance or rehabilitation while others are too small to meet contemporary needs.

In older neighborhoods, one or two houses in poor condition on a block can affect the marketability of the entire area. The rehabilitation of these homes is essential to providing quality entry level housing in any community, so continual maintenance and rehabilitation should be a high priority. The strength of existing housing stock suggests that targeted rehabilitation programs could be used to remove blight conditions to stabilize and support private market reinvestment in core neighborhoods.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS TO CREATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING (HOMES AND LOTS)

Most residential land development in the city of York has been led by private for-profit developers focusing their attention and resources on high-end, new construction; this construction generates homes that are 'affordable' to a segment of the population. The focus on this market is, in part, because the business model is tested with sales prices exceeding the costs of development. However, the high cost of lot development means that the sales price of land must be inflated to cover the cost of creating the development lot, often exceeding \$40,000 which, in turn, pushes the cost of the home into a more affluent market.

Several communities have generated affordable homes at various price points through creative partnerships between the municipality, the lending community, realtors and builders, and housing action organizations that often provide financial assistance to qualified homebuyers.

TARGET HOUSING TO THE STRATEGIC INTERSTATE LOCATION

York's location along Interstate 80 provides rapid mobility along the corridor. From a housing perspective, the location is a potential asset because it enables people to choose to reside in York while one, or both spouses, work in employment centers along the Interstate corridor including Lincoln and Grand Island. To embrace this opportunity, this plan recommends that mid-to-high density housing be developed in the Village 81 development area. Beyond the mobility that this location provides, the Interstate also provides York with a wealth of commercial development that is concentrated in this location which would be an asset for residents of the area.

Residential development should include a mix of high intensity apartments and medium intensity townhomes. All residential development in this area should be attractive, use high quality exterior materials, and integrate site features including sidewalks and landscaping to complement and support the development of the Village 81 town center.

CREATE NEIGHBORHOODS / INVEST FOR SUCCESS

Tract style housing development often follows the ‘build it and they will come’ mantra resulting in residential development lots with few site amenities. In this model, housing is reduced to a commodity resulting in the cheapest possible housing product which is less desirable and therefore develops slower and retains less of its value.

Both private and public investment in lot development should focus on creating high quality housing options in high quality neighborhoods where people would choose to reside. Strong neighborhoods provide amenities such as sidewalks, landscaping, and proximity to community features. While the initial cost may be higher than a bare-bones development lot, the investment to create a high-quality neighborhood is worthwhile. Additionally, investments in code enforcement and nuisance abatement can add value to an existing neighborhood and make them more appealing to potential residents.

YORK COUNTY HOUSING STUDY

Additional recommendations, analysis, and interventions can be found in the York County Housing Study. These documents should be used in coordination.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DOWNTOWN

Downtown is the heart of the community that reflects the common identity for residents and the lasting impression for visitors. While transcending any singular role, it is significant in its contributions to commerce, transportation, image and marketing, and civic personality. The health of a city's downtown can be used as a barometer for the overall health of the city. Investment in downtown is a direct investment in the future and vitality of the community. This chapter provides an overview of the downtown, its many roles and dimensions, and recommendations for study and enhancement.



YORK



CHAPTER GOALS

- Enhance the flow of traffic in the downtown in ways that will both improve safety and access to businesses while conveying the importance of downtown as a destination
- Establish downtown as a neighborhood where residents and visitors can find culture, housing, jobs, and services in the heart of the community
- Continually identify and implement catalyst projects to improve the appearance and function of the district while facilitating increased self-sustaining private market investment

INTRODUCTION

All elements of this plan, literally and figuratively, converge on the downtown. To offer a few examples, downtown functions as a major component of economic development (as a commercial center), of community character (as the civic soul of the community), of parks (as the city's ceremonial gathering space), and of transportation (at the center of the city's transportation network). These areas of convergence position the downtown as a major catalyst that could lead to improvement across all elements of this plan.

The creation of a downtown revitalization plan requires careful forethought, an inclusive public engagement process to ensure investment respects the character of York, and a strategic plan which incrementally builds capacity and momentum for the greatest positive impact to the community. In 2017, the city received a grant from Nebraska Department of Economic Development to develop such a plan. The downtown plan will identify several catalyst projects that have the potential to move the district forward. Upon adoption of the plan, the city becomes eligible to apply for competitive grant funds (up to \$350,000) to implement their highest priority project.

As an intensive downtown revitalization plan will be developed over the course of 2017, it is not the priority nor the place of this plan to articulate such a vision. However, the city may choose to amend this plan to include the downtown revitalization plan. For these reasons, this plan will provide the goals for the downtown, an overview of the district, general conditions, challenges and opportunities for the district.

OVERVIEW OF THE DISTRICT

PHYSICAL CHARACTER

The downtown core is loosely defined as being bounded on the north by 11th Street, on the south by Third Street, on the east by Nebraska Avenue, and on the west by Platte Avenue. The principal one-way pair, North Lincoln Avenue and North Grant Avenue, are defined by two-travel lanes on each road ranging between 12 and 16-feet per lane, approximately an 80-foot right of way, with most buildings situated at the property lines.

The core includes a variety of land uses, detailed in Figure 8.1:

- retail, office, and service commercial uses;
- residential units including single family detached units, multi-family buildings, upper story downtown apartments and condominium;
- light industry and manufacturing uses;
- civic institutions including city hall, the courthouse, and several religious facilities;
- parking;
- vacant; and
- public right of way including streets

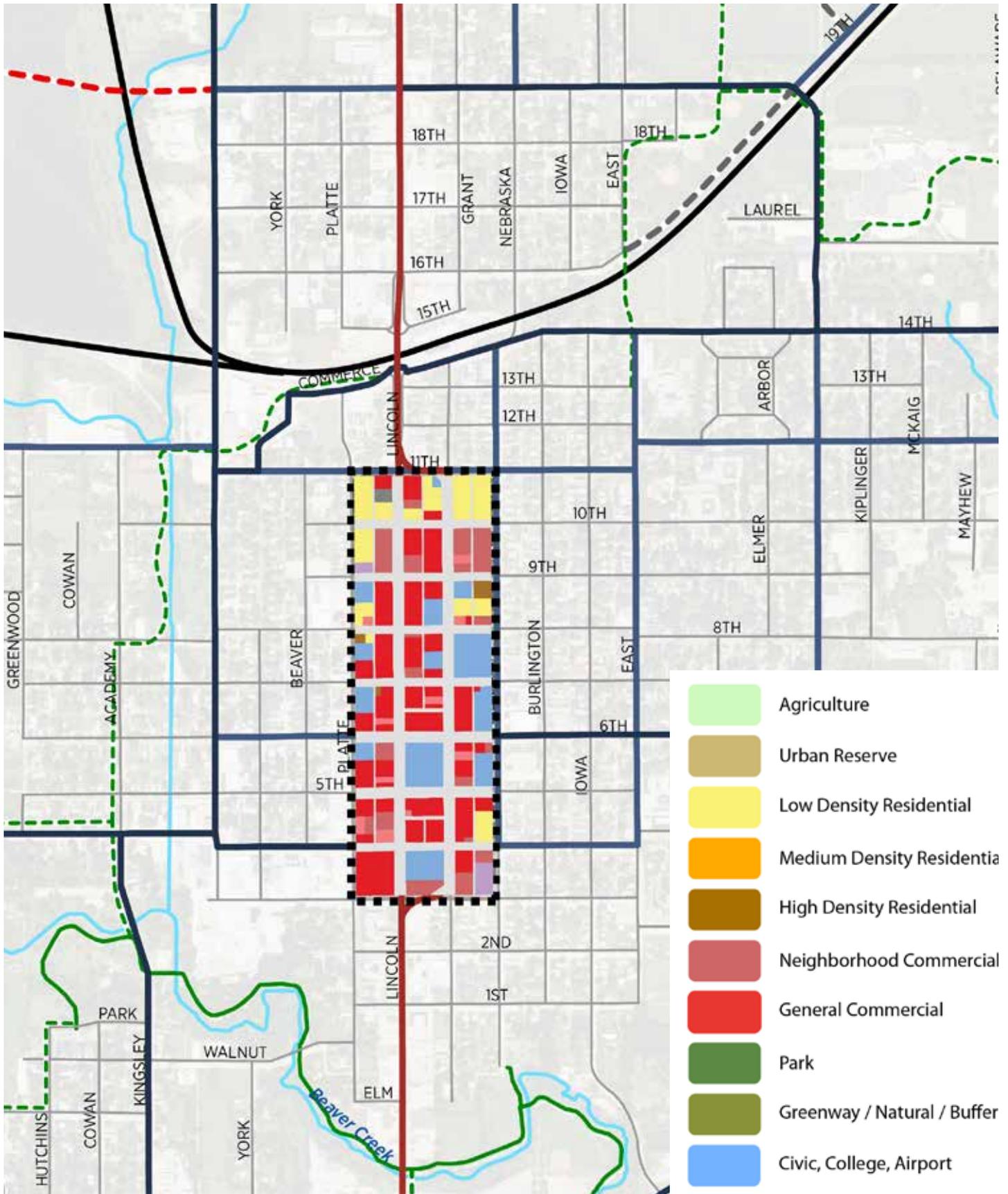


Figure 8.1: Downtown Land Use Map

FIGURE 8.2: Downtown Land Use by Parcel

LAND USE TYPE	ACRES	PERCENT
Religious	0.39	0.65%
City	7.88	12.91%
Civic	0.67	1.09%
Commercial	16.71	27.39%
Industrial	0.79	1.30%
Multifamily	0.48	0.78%
Office	1.33	2.18%
Service	5.50	9.02%
Single Family	5.86	9.60%
Vacant	0.24	0.40%
Right of Way	21.16	34.68%
Total Land Area	61.01	100.00%

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The organizational framework of downtown York contains two distinct elements:

- The interactions of the social systems that converge on the downtown district as a central feature
- The many organizations with a stake in the district

Both demonstrate alignments with the downtown – these literal and figurative connections represent opportunities to engage a broader audience in the improvement of downtown.

PHYSICAL INTERACTIONS

The downtown can play a unifying role at the center of many, otherwise independent, systems within York. These systems include those near the district and those of cultural importance to the community. Physical interactions follow:

- **York College.** A pleasant and intentional pathway between York College and the downtown district would unite each for future benefits. Parents, faculty, and students would find exposure to the civic heart of the city and the commercial amenities that it offers. The district would find greater exposure to a customer base and population that is actively engaged in culture, commerce, and entrepreneurship with a greater capacity for volunteerism than many older residents. The community would find greater engagement from the student body that may increase the ability to retain graduates, a more committed and balanced customer base for shops and civic events, and greater engagement from a major community institution.
- **The Beaver Creek Trail.** The Beaver Creek Trail is a highly-respected community amenity and will continue to be the backbone of the trail system as proposed in this plan – the trail offers pleasant scenery and allows its users to escape from the stresses of traffic while passing directly south of the downtown district. A convenient connection to the district that transitions into a comfortable system of on-street routes would enable trail patrons to use the trail for multiple purposes. First, a patron could couple a recreational trip with a destination visit to the downtown – to an ice cream shop or the library for example. Second, this connection would enable the trail to function as not only a recreational amenity but also as a transportation route.

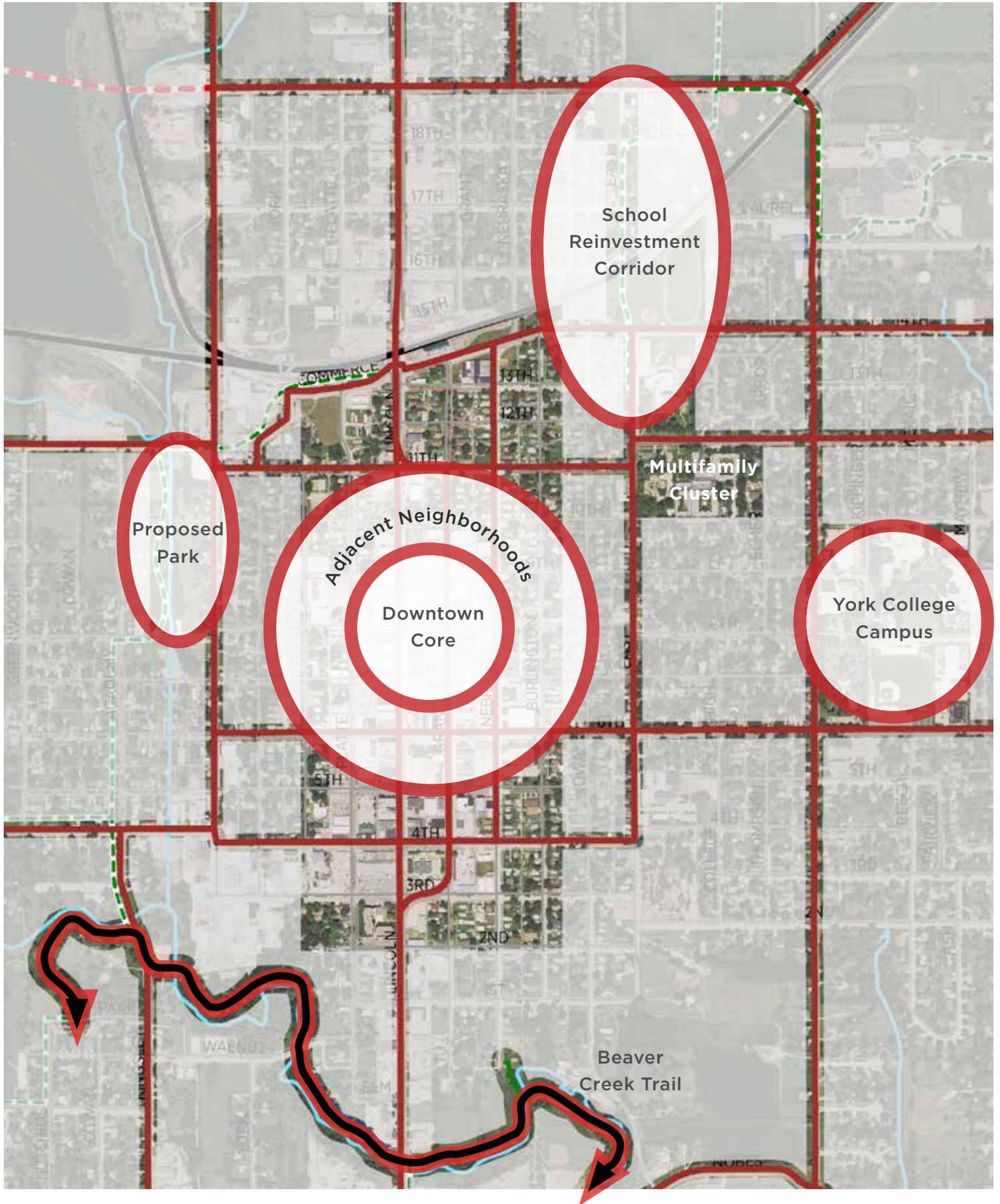


Figure 8.3: Downtown Interactions

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- **Adjacent Neighborhoods.** Often the focus on downtown revitalization is too narrow on the immediate district without paying proper attention to the neighborhoods adjacent to the district. These neighborhoods at the immediate periphery of the downtown core serve as the transition point between the residential neighborhoods and the downtown business district. These areas are important because they provide housing for the nearest customer base but also because the condition of these neighborhoods directly impact the perception of the downtown district.
 - **Business and Civic Facility Interests.** These embedded stakeholders are the individual business interests, public facilities, and other entities that reside and operate in the district. These groups are the most directly impacted by changes to the district and are also the most responsible for how the district operates and how it will change over time. Business and civic interests are essential to developing a revitalization plan, to designing improvements that will build momentum and capacity for private market action, and to creating a self-sustaining revitalization movement.
 - **Parks and Community Destinations.** Parks and community destinations can be thought about as part of the city's civic framework which also includes the downtown. The strength of each of these features, both individually and collective connections, forms the foundation on which the community is built. The idea of connections between parks, destinations, and the downtown include program alignments and pathway treatments.
 - » A program alignment is a way of using the features of one park to promote other community resources such as the downtown district. An example of alignment would be using kiosks at the ballpark complex that promotes the downtown, its location, and the type of experience that a visitor could expect.
 - » Pathway treatments are the physical connections between the parks, destinations, and the downtown that may include wayfinding signage or landscaping/streetscaping to highlight the routes between civic destinations.
 - **Neighborhood Reinvestment Sites.** This plan identifies several reinvestment sites near the downtown with the potential to align with and support momentum for the enhancement of the downtown district and its adjacent neighborhoods.
 - » Western Park. The land use plan calls for the creation of a park west of the downtown district as a strategy to support reinvestment in western York. Near the downtown district, this park could serve as a neighborhood anchor that helps to connect the neighborhood with the downtown.
 - » School Reinvestment Sites and Corridor. The land use plan calls for reinvestment and reuse of the former elementary school, the former middle school, and the former ballfield sites which align in a rough north-south swath connected by the pedestrian bridge across the railroad tracks. Much as the neighborhood schools once served as an anchor for the surrounding neighborhoods, these sites are proposed as mixed density residential sites with amenities to support the adjacent neighborhoods. A physical connection between these reinvestment sites would allow the new residents close and comfortable access to the amenities of the downtown district.

DISTRICT STAKEHOLDERS

The downtown is a shared resource among many different constituent groups including several who may be able to play a role but are not currently engaged. While each stakeholder can lead initiatives and projects to help enhance the district, the greatest gains can be achieved through partnerships that offer meaningful engagement to each group. The process of improving a shared space like a downtown district requires an approach that respects the perspective and intent of each stakeholder group through projects and policies designed to activate each group.

- **City of York.** As owner and operator of the public right of way, the city has a significant ownership interest in the district but also a leadership responsibility for all stakeholders in the district.
 - » Public Realm Ownership. The City owns and exercises jurisdiction over the public right of way which generally extends between the building faces in the downtown including sidewalks, travel lanes, and any underground utilities and infrastructure. In this capacity, the city must play a major role in any physical changes to the public environment including traffic flow, the streetscape, and pedestrian crossings.
 - » Jurisdiction. Through the application of zoning and building codes, the city is responsible for ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of the public. These codes dictate safe building practices and appropriate land uses to ensure that private decisions do not create negative impacts on residents, patrons, and businesses. In this capacity, the city is responsible for tailoring appropriate regulations that promote and clear barriers for a vibrant downtown. The city and the downtown plan should examine regulations to determine if barriers to downtown revitalization can be eliminated.
 - » Leadership. As a chief stakeholder in the district through both its jurisdiction and ownership stake, the city must invest and support efforts to create the greatest progress toward revitalization. The city has several ways in which it can demonstrate leadership and commitment to enhance the downtown district:
 - Traffic Improvements: Since the construction of the Highway 81 beltway, the city now has the sole responsibility over the transportation network through the downtown. This plan suggests the city evaluate traffic flow through the downtown corridor to identify the appropriate balance between providing a high level of access (slow speeds, on street parking, fewer lanes, two-way traffic) and rapid mobility through the district (moderate speed, limited parking, more lanes, and one-way traffic). A change to roadway design from the current format has the potential to change the way people view and interact with the downtown.
 - Streetscape: Much of the impression of the downtown comes from the appearance of the roadway and sidewalks. Are there trees and landscaping through the downtown? Is there a visual identity to the district that is reinforced through elements of the streetscape including banners, benches, and public art? Does the district convey a sense of visual interest that draw residents and visitors to stop in the downtown? A streetscape project can transform the image of a downtown district but should be thoughtfully designed to reflect the character and values of the community.
 - Business Incentive Programs: The previous leadership opportunities would demonstrate public support for the overall improvement of the downtown district. However, all efforts should be designed to build support and capacity for the next step in the process. A next step initiative is implementing an incentive program for businesses to improve the overall condition and economics of the district. Incentives could support: building condition, building appearance, commercial build-out for new tenants, and the addition of new living quarters on the upper stories of downtown buildings.

CASE STUDY: PLATTSMOUTH, NEBRASKA

Downtown Plattsmouth is a story of employing a systematic approach to downtown revitalization over time. In the late 1990's, downtown Plattsmouth had fallen on hard times with significant vacancy and poor site conditions throughout the district. In addition to many factors resulting in blight conditions, the downtown district had become isolated by the relocation of the highway which had run through downtown. Beginning in 2004, the community realized that its downtown would need a resurgence to remain a relevant feature in the city's identity and overall economy. From this, the city began implementing a systematic approach that transformed the perception and role of the district over the next decade.

The city reconstructed the entire right of way – converting four-lanes into two-lanes with perpendicular parking, adding bump-outs to reduce the distance people needed to cross at intersections from 70 feet to 27 feet, and implementing a streetscape design which conveys the character and quality of Plattsmouth. This action demonstrated the city's commitment to downtown and encouraged business owners to follow suit. With the adoption of downtown design guidelines and a façade improvement program, a partnership between the city and individual owners began to return buildings to their historic charm. While the public environment has been transformed to its signature Victorian character, the city continues with partnerships to bring business to the downtown, new residents to the upper floors, and additional life on the street.

The revitalization of downtown Plattsmouth was a success because it began with a public recognition of the problem, kick-started through a high-profile investment by the city to begin the transformation and build confidence in the revitalization process. The process followed by targeted policies and partnerships to build capacity and momentum for self-sustaining improvements. Plattsmouth understands that “revitalization” is not something to be done, but rather is a proclamation that the vitality of downtown will mirror that of the community as a whole.



- **York County Economic Development Corporation (YCDC).** In addition to the city, YCDC is engaged at all levels of economic development in York and throughout York County. Their initiatives range from recruiting large businesses, retaining existing businesses, and supporting the creation and growth of new businesses in the county. Plattsmouth appropriately recognized that its downtown is a player in the economic development picture. If it performs well as a vibrant destination that reflects the quality of the city, investment in the downtown will pay dividends across multiple aspects of economic development.
 - » Image Center. As an image center for the community, residents, visitors, and prospective businesses will associate the health of the downtown with the overall health of the community. This intangible quality is considered in virtually all decisions including, at the highest level, business recruitment where employers must compare several communities to decide in which they want to invest. The quality of a downtown either contributes to the competitive advantage of a community or detracts from it.
 - » Small Business Clusters, Incubation and Acceleration. The downtown district is ideal for small businesses to operate. A collection of small retail bays of complementary businesses allow these clusters to attract a greater market share than would be possible for any single business independently. In addition to existing small businesses, the district is a prime location for a small business incubator or accelerator. An incubator/accelerator facility could occupy one or more storefronts and provide resources and guidance to grow local businesses.
 - » Population Amenity. As discussed in previous sections, York must find a way to grow residentially to support its growing economy. In addition to upper story housing that can accommodate some new residents, a vibrant downtown is also an amenity that is strongly desired by young professionals and skilled employees. A healthy downtown will support York's ability to attract and retain a skilled workforce and young families.
- **Holthus Convention Center & Gateway Facilities.** People visit York for an assortment of reasons including work, entertainment, and family sporting events. These include the Holthus Convention Center, the Cornerstone Recreation Complex, the York County Fairgrounds, the York Ballpark Complex, and various hotels. As each of these facilities focuses on drawing residents from the region into York, these are considered gateway facilities for the purposes of this section. As regional facilities, each can contribute to the vitality of the downtown district by improving access and alignment with the downtown district.
 - » Wayfinding Connection. Visitors to any of the gateway facilities in York should be able to easily find the downtown district. This connection allows visitors the opportunity to easily find and visit businesses in the downtown for dining or shopping. This physical connection would help to improve the visitor experience and increase the financial benefit that the community receives from these event facilities.
 - » Cross Marketing. Each gateway facility exists to bring people to York for their various reasons. Through a conscious focus on marketing the community as a whole, these features can improve the experience of visits and the likelihood that visitors will speak highly of the city and return once again.
 - » Staff Training. 'Hospitality' is about making a good experience great. This idea can be applied in all gateway facilities to ensure that the staff have appropriate knowledge on how to market the community, its businesses, and its inherent quality. These gateway opportunities represent a rare opportunity for residents of York to share their knowledge, stories, and passion with visitors; these types of encounters are memorable and positive.

- **Business Owners and Association.** Downtown business owners have the greatest impact on the function of downtown and are also most directly impacted by efforts to revitalize downtown. While few small business owners have the resources to drive major improvements to the district, their buildings and business operations make them valuable partners in any revitalization process, and thus, should become partners in the improvement of their buildings and expansion of their operations.
 - » Stakeholder Engagement. Business owners should be engaged in early discussions of public realm improvements. They can share the challenges and opportunities they see from operating in the district.
 - » Partnerships and Expansions. Public-private partnerships help carry a revitalization process beyond the initial investment project and into the next phases that continue to activate space within the downtown. Opportunities may include: outdoor dining spaces, event sponsorships, upper story housing, and the recruitment of complementary businesses.

OPPORTUNITIES

In the hyper-connected and global world, communities are in direct competition with one another for business, people, and spending. American cities cycle through economic patterns and preferences. Those that are able to adapt most quickly receive the greatest advantage. For example, most recently commerce fled the downtowns across the nation in favor of shopping malls and strip centers at the detriment of our downtowns. However, this cycle has returned to refocus on historic downtowns as a place where people and businesses want to be. Unlike the shopping center of past decades, vibrant downtowns frame and emphasize the original character of each community, enable people to gather together in systems that unite rather than divide, and preserve the most cost effective buildings known – those that already exist. Residents and businesses now expect vibrant downtowns in the places they choose to live and therefore, communities that choose to reinvest in their downtowns have an economic advantage.

PEDESTRIAN PACED ENVIRONMENT

A downtown should be a place that patrons can access by walking, riding a bicycle, or by driving and parking their car to enjoy the various shops, restaurants, and attractions. This model relies on the district being pedestrian friendly, not only in the sense of simply having sidewalks and traffic signals but rather in that the district is a place where pedestrians want to be and where they feel comfortable.

A pedestrian paced environment requires:

- elements of visual interest,
- a high concentration of complementary businesses,
- a concentration of embedded residents,
- an appropriate amount of communal parking, and
- the choice to slow and restructure traffic to make the movement of people in our downtowns more comfortable.

MOVEMENTS IN DOWNTOWN

One of the most common misconceptions is that downtowns suffer from an inadequate supply of parking. While this is a valid issue in some of the most metropolitan areas, this is most often a parking perception issue driven by several primary factors:

- Patrons expect to park directly in front of the business entrance;
- Owners and employees often occupy on street parking;
- High traffic speeds make parking less used; and
- Off-street parking lacks adequate signage.

Revitalization initiatives should focus on providing access to the district for multiple modes of transportation including pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. For drivers, the district should provide well-signed and connected public parking areas so patrons can park their car once and still reach all downtown destinations.

The city should expand the reach of the current trail system so more pedestrians and bicyclists can access the downtown district and other destinations. If the number of lanes through the downtown district is changed (combined between Lincoln Avenue and Grant Avenue), a bike lane should be added through this corridor. For movements within the downtown, options such as bump-outs should be explored to reduce the distance that pedestrians need to cross at intersections in addition to painted crosswalks and stop lines.

DOWNTOWN AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Downtown is an economic development area and a contributing factor in many other elements of the economic development landscape. As an economic development area, the district is ideal for a business incubator/accelerator facility, live work spaces, or upper story apartments. Each concept is designed to facilitate innovation and the growth of local businesses and retention of young professionals.

As a contributing factor, downtown is the barometer for the health of the community as a whole. Prospective businesses and residents often consider, consciously or subconsciously, the image of the downtown in their decision whether to establish in York. In addition, many visitors from throughout the region including conference goers look for restaurant and entertainment options during their visits. By directing these visitors to high quality local businesses and increasing spending even a small amount, this money is effectively imported into the city and recycled several times within the local economy between businesses and employees in the form of revenues and wages. A healthy downtown should be a valuable piece of the economy that helps to grow local businesses, increase employment and disposable income, and convey a sense of community character and pride.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Often, more can be accomplished through partnerships than could be possible by any single stakeholder. It is through the meaningful engagement that these partnerships create that a self-sustaining energy for the improvement of the downtown district. A holistic downtown revitalization strategy should focus on systematically building capacity and momentum for the next step in the process. Potential partners should be identified along with their missions to identify where they may fit into the strategy and in what role. From identifying the passions of each group, partnerships should be developed to continue building capacity and momentum for the improvement of the downtown.

KEYSTONE PROJECTS

A city's downtown is unique to its circumstances, history, and set of stakeholders. For this reason, no two districts are the same and therefore, there is no silver bullet that will work in every community to energize their revitalization initiatives. A keystone, or catalyst, project is one that can be implemented early in the process that will lead to additional phases of the downtown revitalization process. In York, a keystone project could focus on a few central ideas:

- Streetscape, pedestrian improvements, and traffic calming
- Façade restoration
- Upper story housing

CHAPTER NINE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development is the culmination of all efforts, policies, and actions to support growth and stability of the many financial systems at play in a community at any given time. This description is broad because the topic is broad – all aspects of this plan meet this definition because all topics support the long term financial stability of York. This section explores the economic conditions of York and articulates policies and initiatives to further expand York's economy.



YORK



CHAPTER GOALS

- Support the expansion of York's economy by taking a broad view of 'economic development' which includes improving factors that impact business operations and expansion efforts, such as workforce housing, quality of life, and overall community image
- Market and expand upon the character, quality of life, amenities, and visitor experiences of York to recruit new residents and businesses
- Support and facilitate private business investment through public-private partnerships including the use of municipal real estate, financing tools, and infrastructure

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

The Economic Development Chapter explores an array of issues and opportunities related to growing York's economy.

1. Components of an Economic Development Strategy
2. Market Area Definition
3. Retail and Commercial Gap Analysis
4. Housing, Employment, and Education Analysis
5. Policy and Initiative Recommendations
6. Strategic Initiative and Area Plan Briefs

COMPONENTS OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Economic development is an umbrella term for improving the financial stability of a place through a myriad of diverse and complementary programs. An effective program balances recruiting businesses, growing and retaining businesses, and nurturing an environment in which businesses can thrive.

BUSINESS RECRUITMENT

Business recruitment is the act of soliciting existing businesses to open an establishment in the community. The "holy grail" of economic development, success in business recruitment is highly visible and brings new jobs to the community. While vital to any economic development strategy, many variables are at play in business recruitment:

- **Competition.** As recruitment is a primary mission of virtually all economic development agencies across the nation, competition is stiff for each prospect
- **Corporate Considerations.** Recruitment relies on articulating the case for why a business should establish in a place. The community can only control half of the considerations that contribute to successful recruitment. It can outline benefits, synergies, and incentive packages, but the business will also evaluate what is best for its interests including alternative sites, the national logistics of these sites, and their workforce conditions. These considerations must make sense to both the city and the business for recruitment to result in new establishments.
- **Incentives and Negotiations.** In the world of business recruitment, each community strives to assemble the most competitive deal to attract the business to their community. Recruitment proposals often include:
 - » Discounted land
 - » Tax and financial incentives
 - » Workforce development programs
 - » Infrastructure capacity
 - » Shovel ready sites

BUSINESS RETENTION

Business retention, another integral component of economic development, is about understanding and helping resolve problems that keep local businesses from thriving. While it does not always offer the high-visibility success of business recruitment, it is every bit as important. To help retain businesses:

- Provide high levels of public service including price-competitive utilities, well-maintained roads, and a strong public education system
- Maintain regular contact with business leaders
- Identify and address the barriers to success that existing businesses face
- Support existing businesses by recruiting complementary industries
- Maintain an inventory of shovel ready sites for expansion opportunities
- Maintain access to an array of incentives for use in appropriate circumstances

BUSINESS INCUBATION AND ACCELERATION

Incubation and acceleration programs focus on nurturing entrepreneurs and potential entrepreneurs by helping connect them with resources and mentorship. By fostering the development of new businesses locally, these programs improve the ability of York to retain those businesses long-term.

Incubation and acceleration programs vary based on the need and type of business cluster that the community is trying to grow. In the case of most new businesses, there are several common hurdles to starting or expanding a new business that an incubator or accelerator can help address:

- Cost of space
- Lack of legal and financial expertise
- Inexperience at business operations

Components of an incubator or accelerator generally include:

- Mentorship and Troubleshooting
 - » A roadmap through business development
 - » A voice of experience and guidance
 - » Financial and legal support
 - » May include from venture capital, subsidized or shared facility space, and/or mentorship and provided expertise.
- Targeting potential market clusters

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Economic development practitioners have long recognized that recruitment proposals can be strong and still ultimately fail if the workforce does not meet the needs of the business in terms of skills or the number of potential employees. High schools and colleges can be valuable partners by designing specialized training for future employees, especially in emerging technologies. Workforce training programs are often a pathway which allows an applicant to enter a specialized training program and emerge with a newly developed skillset and a position at a local employer.

IMPROVEMENT OF RELATED ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

Most importantly, economic development extends beyond job creation because it is directly impacted by the housing market, the workforce, and the perception of the community as a whole.

- **Housing.** The York County Housing Study and the Housing Chapter of this plan indicate that York’s housing market is near full occupancy with an approximate vacancy of three percent. This means that a prospective employee and resident will inevitably face challenges finding quality and affordable housing in York. From a job creation perspective, these employees may find housing in nearby communities, but it becomes more difficult to retain these employees long-term as they tend to establish in other communities.
- **Workforce.** A city’s workforce is an essential element evaluated by all existing and potential businesses operating in a community. At the crux of housing, education, and population, workforce can be viewed as a raw material required by all businesses. Without a sufficient and qualified workforce, the potential of a business will be limited. Therefore, the quality of the community – its neighborhoods, schools, and opportunities – is essential to nurture and retain a qualified workforce.



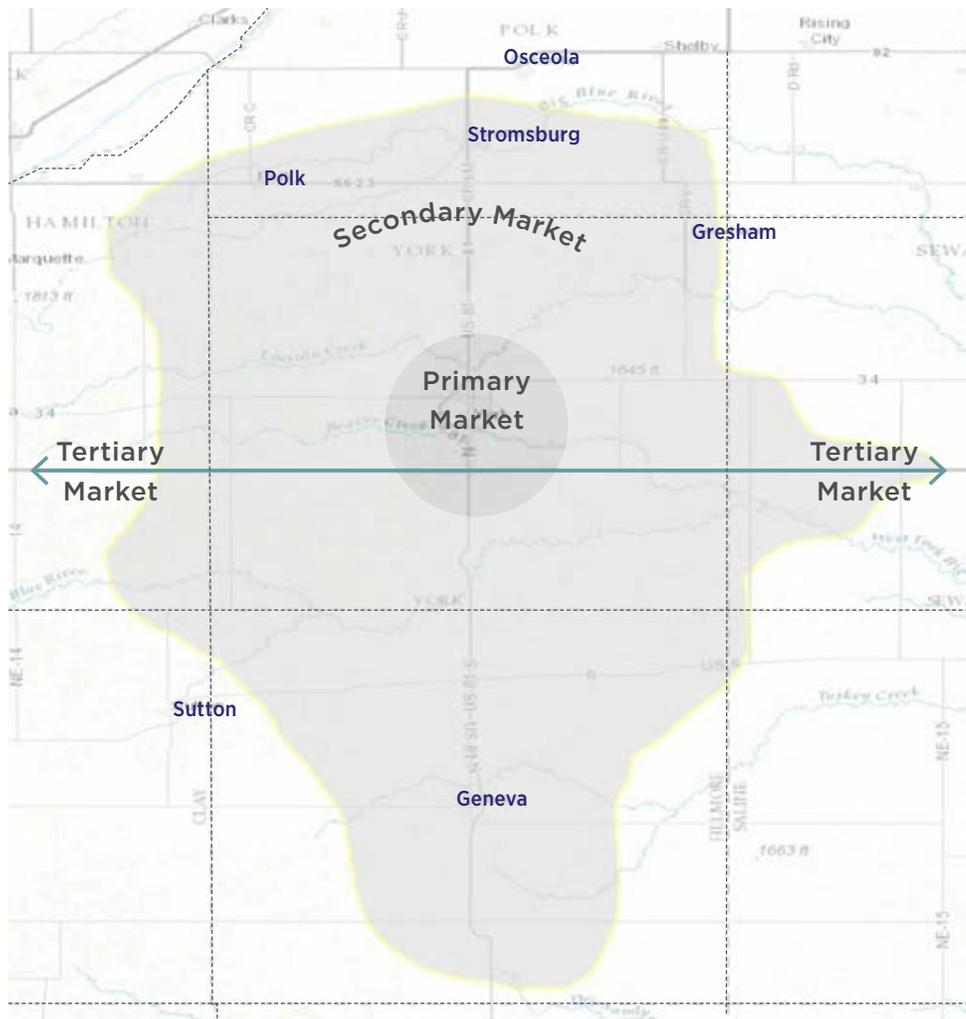


Figure 9.1: Market Area

MARKET AREA DEFINITION

York's economy relies on the region for its economic landscape, spending patterns, and employment characteristics. The market area is divided into three levels based on the role that York plays in their daily lives.

Primary Market. The Primary Market is defined by the corporate limits of the city of York and represents the geographic area where residents will look first for goods, services, and employment.

Secondary Market. The secondary market is the region surrounding York delineated by transportation routes and population centers. The secondary market is the area from which residents look to York as the nearest population center for goods, services, and employment.

Tertiary Market. The tertiary market represents a broader region that is much more difficult to define geographically. The market includes people who visit York for special events, tourism, destination businesses, and as a stop along the interstate.

By understanding the characteristics within these study areas, it is possible to shape economic development policies, initiatives, and decisions for the greatest gain. These areas form the basis for the following analysis sections.

RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL SPENDING ANALYSIS

RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL GAP ANALYSIS

One way to evaluate York's economic role in the region is to explore patterns in spending and retail sales. Figure 9.2 compares the amount of actual spending in the market areas to that which would be expected based on the characteristics of the population. The difference is either a gap (actual spending is less than expected) or a surplus (actual spending is greater than expected). Both represent different kinds of opportunities.

- A gap (shortfall) indicates an opportunity for businesses to capture spending that is currently happening outside of the market area. For example, residents in a community without a grocery store will travel outside of the city to purchase groceries.
- Conversely, a surplus (stronghold) indicates that the community is already a destination for a good or service and may be able to expand by adding additional or complementary ventures.

THEMES AND FINDINGS

- York (i.e: The Primary Market) is a retail stronghold with a surplus of more than \$71 million (adjusted retail sales). The magnitude of this surplus can be partially attributed to the strength of the commercial presence along Interstate 80. The most notable market sectors follow:
 - » Strongholds:
 - General Merchandise Stores. Typically includes big box retailers. A surplus of \$48 million with sales accounting for 45 percent of adjusted retail sales
 - Food and Beverage Stores. A surplus of \$21 million with sales accounting for 26 percent of adjusted retail sales
 - Food and Drinking Establishments. A surplus of \$10 million with sales accounting for 13 percent of adjusted retail sales

FIGURE 9.2: Retail Marketplace Table

		PRIMARY MARKET	
	2015 Actual Sales	2015 Expected Expenditures	Opportunity (Leakage/Surplus)
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$206,918,585	\$111,786,950	\$95,131,635
Total Retail Trade	\$186,828,908	\$101,888,225	\$84,940,683
Total Food & Drink	\$20,089,677	\$9,898,725	\$10,190,952
Adj Retail Sales (Exc of Auto, Gas, and Non-Store)	\$150,066,570	\$78,751,437	\$71,315,133
Industry Group			
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$15,936,898	\$22,980,162	(\$7,043,264)
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$2,288,659	\$2,217,129	\$71,530
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$1,629,013	\$6,081,132	(\$4,452,119)
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$5,356,375	\$4,789,967	\$566,408
Food & Beverage Stores	\$39,505,313	\$18,391,187	\$21,114,126
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$3,454,469	\$7,076,027	(\$3,621,558)
Gasoline Stations	\$40,915,117	\$7,809,670	\$33,105,447
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$3,491,392	\$3,216,111	\$275,281
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$748,220	\$3,115,481	(\$2,367,261)
General Merchandise Stores	\$67,844,304	\$19,551,766	\$48,292,538
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$5,659,149	\$4,413,912	\$1,245,237
Nonstore Retailers	\$0	\$2,245,681	(\$2,245,681)
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$20,089,677	\$9,898,725	\$10,190,952

» Gaps:

- Electronics and Appliance Stores. A gap of \$4.5 million with sales accounting for 1 percent of adjusted retail sales
 - Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores: A gap of \$2.3 million with sales accounting for 0.50 percent of adjusted retail sales
 - Health and Personal Services: A gap of \$3.6 million with sales accounting for 2.3 percent of adjusted retail sales
- The secondary market, including the primary market, has a leakage of \$44 million (adjusted retail sales). This includes a mix of market sectors with some performing strongly as destinations and others underserving the population. It is interesting to note that the sales in the primary market represents more than 72 percent of the total adjusted retail sales in the secondary market. The below analysis includes the total secondary market and the most notable findings follow:

» Strongholds:

- Food and Drinking Establishments. A surplus of \$3.3 million with sales accounting for 16 percent of adjusted retail sales in the secondary market

» Gaps:

- Electronics and Appliance Stores. A gap of \$15 million with sales accounting for 1 percent of adjusted retail sales
- Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores. A gap of \$9 million with sales accounting for 0.70 percent of adjusted retail sales
- Health and Personal Services: A gap of \$15.7 million with sales accounting for 4 percent of adjusted retail sales

SECONDARY MARKET			TOTAL		
2015 Actual Sales	2015 Expected Expenditures	Opportunity (Leakage/Surplus)	2015 Actual Sales	2015 Expected Expenditures	Opportunity (Leakage/Surplus)
\$159,824,569	\$251,724,277	(\$91,899,708)	\$366,743,154	\$363,511,227	\$3,231,927
\$147,174,077	\$232,262,289	(\$85,088,212)	\$334,002,985	\$334,150,514	(\$147,529)
\$12,650,492	\$19,461,988	(\$6,811,496)	\$32,740,169	\$29,360,713	\$3,379,456
\$57,811,904	\$173,128,859	(\$115,316,955)	\$207,878,474	\$251,880,296	(\$44,001,822)
\$32,876,966	\$55,135,831	(\$22,258,865)	\$48,813,864	\$78,115,993	(\$29,302,129)
\$22,133	\$4,339,087	(\$4,316,954)	\$2,310,792	\$6,556,216	(\$4,245,424)
\$1,218,578	\$12,131,295	(\$10,912,717)	\$2,847,591	\$18,212,427	(\$15,364,836)
\$8,441,703	\$12,108,844	(\$3,667,141)	\$13,798,078	\$16,898,811	(\$3,100,733)
\$20,705,809	\$41,177,049	(\$20,471,240)	\$60,211,122	\$59,568,236	\$642,886
\$4,808,815	\$16,935,710	(\$12,126,895)	\$8,263,284	\$24,011,737	(\$15,748,453)
\$67,053,037	\$18,115,022	\$48,938,015	\$107,968,154	\$25,924,692	\$82,043,462
\$366,577	\$6,171,350	(\$5,804,773)	\$3,857,969	\$9,387,461	(\$5,529,492)
\$698,256	\$7,510,641	(\$6,812,385)	\$1,446,476	\$10,626,122	(\$9,179,646)
\$4,361,874	\$41,698,377	(\$37,336,503)	\$72,206,178	\$61,250,143	\$10,956,035
\$4,537,667	\$11,594,518	(\$7,056,851)	\$10,196,816	\$16,008,430	(\$5,811,614)
\$2,082,662	\$5,344,565	(\$3,261,903)	\$2,082,662	\$7,590,246	(\$5,507,584)
\$12,650,492	\$19,461,988	(\$6,811,496)	\$32,740,169	\$29,360,713	\$3,379,456

The mere existence of destination traits (strongholds) or retail leakage does not suggest that a new business within a targeted market sector will find success. Rather, this analysis identifies potential opportunities that could be targeted for business development. There are many experts on creating success in business, and it is not a topic this plan can begin to address in detail. However, it is a difficult, costly, and labor intensive endeavor that requires an entrepreneur, recruiter, or existing business to be driven, committed, and strategic in the businesses they create or expand.

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

There may be opportunities for businesses operating in the following market sectors based on gaps in the Primary Market:

- Electronics and Appliance Stores
- Specialty Food Stores
- Health and Personal Services
- Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores

CONSUMER SPENDING PATTERN ANALYSIS

The Consumer Spending Pattern Analysis in Figure 9.3 compares annual consumer expenditures for various products and activities for both the primary and secondary market areas. National average per capita spending is equal to an index value of 100, i.e. the a ratio of a trade area's Annual Average Household Expenditures (AAHE) in each category compared to the national AAHE. Index values greater than 100 indicate that local consumers spend more on average for a good or service compared to the rest of the nation.

THEMES AND FINDINGS

Consumers in the Primary Market Area spend slightly less than those in the Secondary Market and the national average. Compared to the secondary market, primary market consumers spend significantly more on Fees and Admissions for Entertainment and Recreation.

- Consumers in the Secondary Market spend more than those in the Primary Market and the national average on the following categories: pets, recreation vehicles and fees, sports/recreation/exercise equipment, reading. They also spend more on several home and transportation related expenses including: maintenance and remodeling service, maintenance and remodeling materials, and utilities/fuel/public services. Further these consumers have higher than national levels in payments on vehicles, vehicle loan amounts, gasolines and motor oil purchases and greater investments in the value of their retirement plans and other financial assets
- These spending patterns underscore the need to think regionally about economic development.

FIGURE 9.3: Retail Marketplace Table

	PRIMARY MARKET		SECONDARY MARKET	
	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent
Apparel and Services	83	\$1,674	85	\$1,712
Entertainment & Recreation	88	\$2,553	94	\$2,739
Fees and Admissions	74	\$430	64	\$372
Pets	93	\$497	113	\$606
Toys/Games/Crafts/Hobbies	91	\$104	98	\$112
Recreational Vehicles and Fees	89	\$96	106	\$114
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment	85	\$141	108	\$178
Reading	93	\$122	100	\$131
Food	88	\$7,115	94	\$7,589
Food at Home	90	\$4,491	98	\$4,871
Food Away from Home	85	\$618	88	\$2,718
Financial				
Value of Stocks/Bonds/Mutual Funds	88	\$6,572	84	\$6,299
Value of Retirement Plans	89	\$23,262	101	\$26,343
Value of Other Financial Assets	99	\$1,115	122	\$1,377
Vehicle Loan Amount excluding Interest	91	\$2,220	100	\$2,436
Value of Credit Card Debt	87	\$497	94	\$537
Home				
Mortgage Payment and Basics	82	\$7,059	83	\$7,081
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	90	\$1,583	100	\$1,756
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials	100	\$361	121	\$438
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	93	\$4,516	100	\$4,871
Transportation				
Payments on Vehicles excluding Leases	93	\$1,928	106	\$2,203
Gasoline and Motor Oil	93	\$2,859	105	\$3,222
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	90	\$933	99	\$1,030
Travel				
Airline Fares	77	\$351	73	\$334
Lodging on Trips	83	\$387	87	\$405
Auto/Truck Rental on Trips	78	\$19	80	\$19
Food and Drink on Trips	84	\$368	89	\$389

HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT ANALYSIS

Housing and employment patterns play a major role in creating a healthy economic system. This section reviews the conditions and characteristics of each of these traits.

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT ANALYSIS

The Business and Employment Analysis in Figure 9.4 and 9.5 illustrates the number of business establishments operating in each market sector and the corresponding employees by sector. This comparison demonstrates both the number and size of businesses operating in each market area.

Themes and Findings

York's resident population includes a workforce of 4,267 employees aged 16 years or older compared to the total of 7,123 employees that work in York as their primary employment. Figure 9.6 illustrates the number of employees traveling into York for work, those who live and work in York, and those who live in York and work elsewhere.

- Figure 9.7 examines the cost of owning and renting homes in York as a percentage of household income. Households spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing are considered "housing cost-burdened" with housing that is not affordable. Cost-burdened households often struggle to pay for other basic needs, such as health care, child care, or food, forcing difficult trade-offs.
 - » Over 15 percent of York homeowners spend more than 30 percent of their income on their homes. These households are considered burdened by their housing expenses.
 - » Over 38 percent of York renters spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent and related utilities. These households are considered burdened by their housing.

FIGURE 9.4: Business Summary

	Primary Market	Secondary Market
Services	37.2%	33.9%
Industry	20.1%	30.2%
Retail	19.9%	16.1%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	11.5%	9.1%
Government	8.7%	7.5%
Unclassified	2.7%	2.9%

FIGURE 9.5: Employment Summary

	Primary Market	Secondary Market
Services	41.8%	42.1%
Retail	22.5%	25.4%
Industry	21.5%	18.3%
Government	8.4%	7.0%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	5.6%	4.8%
Unclassified	0%	2.2%

Figure 9.6: Inflow / Outflow Analysis of Employees



FIGURE 9.7: Monthly Occupant Costs as Percent of Household Income

	Total Units	Percent of Units
Owner Occupied Units with a mortgage	1,108	100%
Less than 20.0 percent	584	52.70%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	219	19.80%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	138	12.50%
30.0 to 34.9 percent (House-Burdened)	28	2.50%
35.0 percent or more (House-Burdened)	139	12.50%
Occupied Rental units paying rent (gross rent)	1,236	100%
Less than 15.0 percent	169	13.70%
15.0 to 19.9 percent	277	22.40%
20.0 to 24.9 percent	136	11.00%
25.0 to 29.9 percent	174	14.10%
30.0 to 34.9 percent (House-Burdened)	96	7.80%
35.0 percent or more (House-Burdened)	384	31.10%

POLICY AND INITIATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

An economic development strategy must be broad in its initiatives, specific in its mission and measurements of success, and targeted in its approach. A healthy strategy supports the vitality and strength of partner organizations and contributing economic systems. Meanwhile, the implementation of its projects creates an environment conducive to attracting and incubating new businesses while retaining and expanding existing ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Create a Healthy Environment for Business
 - » Explore strategies, partnerships, and incentives to address housing affordability and availability issues in York. Workforce housing initiatives should focus on:
 - Rehabilitating existing units in existing neighborhoods
 - Constructing new units on vacant or underused parcels in existing neighborhoods
 - Generating new neighborhoods with a mix of housing types, including rental units, to accommodate a spectrum of current and new employees.
 - » Partner and engage educational institutions including Southeast Community College, York College, and York High School to implement job training programs to prepare and connect graduates with employers in York. The programs should offer in-demand skills and may be coordinated with individual retention or recruitment prospects to tailor training to their specific needs.

- » Support the Highway 81 Enhancement Project to improve access to York.
- Business Retention and Growth from Within
 - » Continue outreach initiatives to existing business to identify needs, provide support, and aid in clearing barriers to development and expansion.
 - » Develop an LB 840 implementation plan that would provide additional tools to support appropriate expansion or enhancement projects
- Business Recruitment, Incubation, and Acceleration
 - » Continue recruiting businesses in target market sectors. Target industries should align with infrastructure assets while not disproportionately burdening the city's infrastructure systems such as water distribution or wastewater treatment.
 - » Develop an LB 840 implementation plan to develop additional incentive tools that support business recruitment, incubation, and acceleration efforts in addition to the expansion of existing businesses.
 - » Explore strategies to incubate potential entrepreneurs and accelerate existing small businesses through a program of financial and logistical support, mentorship, and expertise. An incubator facility should target priority market sectors that complement one another and the greater economic systems of York.
 - » Develop a guide to starting a business to help eliminate barriers for entrepreneurs by connecting these prospective businesses with available resources including construction and renovation policies, incentives, and mentorship programs.
- Invest in strategies to create an inventory of development ready sites that can be marketed for business recruitment or retention opportunities. The focus of this initiative should be identifying strategic sites, clearing the path to ownership that may include a 'first right of refusal', due diligence on target properties, and plans to provide municipal services.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND AREA PLAN BRIEFS

This plan outlines specific ideas for improving the fabric and function of York to promote its continued prosperity over the next 20 years. While these ideas touch on various elements of this plan, all exist under the umbrella goal of creating a vibrant and healthy economic environment which nurtures new business, welcomes and embraces residents, and provides the tools, amenities, and resources needed for each of these players to thrive in York. For this reason, the combined vision for several projects can be found in this section of the comprehensive plan.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Much as ‘economic development’ is a broad topic with countless contributing systems in play, the concept of downtown revitalization is just as complex. A downtown is a system of individual businesses, people, streets and infrastructure, public facilities, and collective heritage. The process of maintaining and improving vitality in a downtown district is a multi-faceted proposition. This section will focus on the major systems at play in York’s downtown.

COMMERCIAL CENTER

First and foremost, Downtown is a commercial district. With the proliferation of the automobile in the last century, the nature of retail shifted from pedestrian shopping districts to a system of arterial roadways lined with strip and big-box retail centers. While the economic role of downtowns have changed, they have begun to experience a resurgence as cities and consumers rediscover the importance of these historic business districts.

Downtown York, like many downtowns, is comprised of small storefronts that when populated, create a cluster of complementary businesses offering something unique to residents and visitors. Further, the character and heritage of historic business districts make these places popular as a place to gather and enjoy. Investing in the character and vitality of downtown will generate pride, ownership in the community, and an economic benefit for the city as a whole. The city and the York County Economic Development Corporation has begun the process of developing a retail analysis and recruitment strategies.

TRANSPORTATION

Historically downtown existed at the heart of the city’s transportation network, often at the crossroads of the highway and the railroad. While Lincoln Avenue is still important today, it is no longer a highway and therefore the one-way configuration, the number of lanes in each direction, and the traffic signals should be evaluated. Since the corridor is no longer a highway, the top priority does not need to be moving cars through this district as quickly as possible but instead should shift to a focus on the businesses and shoppers.

A traffic study should explore the existing traffic conditions and develop engineering plans for the conversion to a two-way system that will reinforce the importance of downtown as a community center and icon. Often a two-way system will encourage residents and visitors to stop and experience the heart of York rather than speed through it.



A DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

The downtown district also plays a role in the housing supply of York beyond the existing number of units already existing in the district. If only five percent of York residents chose to live downtown, the district could accommodate approximately 400 residents. Apartments and condominiums in downtown would help alleviate overall housing need, provide entry-level housing, and support the economic vitality of the district both by providing a stable income for owners and by integrating more disposable income into the district.

CIVIC SPACE AND COMMUNITY IMAGE CENTER

Downtown already hosts the farmers market, proudly decorates for the holidays, and becomes the place where parades and community celebrations are held. This role is not by chance but rather because it is inseparable from the identity of York, representing the collective image of the community. Therefore, its improvement is essential to fostering pride, community spirit, and growth over the next 20 years.



RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Complete a downtown master plan to implement a systematic and sustained revitalization process
- Encourage and support the creation of additional housing units on the upper floors of downtown buildings
- Complete a traffic study to identify whether the system warrants the one-way configuration, the number of lanes in each direction, and the traffic signals. Based on the findings of the report, implement changes as recommended.
- Install traffic calming treatments that may include pedestrian bump-outs, trees, and landscaping to reduce traffic speeds and create a more comfortable environment for patrons of the district.
- Install bicycle parking and infrastructure to make the district more welcoming and comfortable for bicyclists of all skill levels.
- Install a comprehensive wayfinding system to welcome and direct visitors to destinations within the community including its historic downtown.



LOCAL OPTION MUNICIPAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACT (LB 840)

The Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB 840, 1991) authorizes incorporated cities and villages to appropriate and spend local sales and property tax revenues for certain economic development purposes in compliance with proper procedures. Local sales taxes under LB 840 can be levied at a maximum of 0.5 percent. The use of the sales tax proceeds must be articulated in a plan which forms the foundation for the collection and expenditure of local tax revenues for economic development. If voters approve the plan, its provisions become the basis through which the municipality's economic development program operates.

Considering the high sales tax revenues collected in York, LB 840 would create a strong mechanism to foster worthwhile economic development and advance the community. LB 840 proceeds could be used for projects ranging from downtown façade renovations to site preparations for new industries bringing jobs to the community. The plan should respond to the current and future needs of the community, engage partner organizations to promote the fair and transparent use of funds, and address high-priority economic development needs in the short term.

- Establish a comprehensive LB 840 strategy for the use of funds and pursue voter approval. The plan should be specific in the type of initiatives that funds would be used to support.

VILLAGE 81

The Village 81 land use plan suggests that the commercial development driven by Interstate traffic can be used to create a community asset that reinforces the quality of the commercial experience for interstate travelers while also contributing to the quality of life and pride that residents of York have in their community. It suggests that development in the corridor does not have to be dominated by parking and drive aisles, but instead can be a place for both travelers and residents.

A master development plan should be crafted to guide future development in the corridor, utilizing public and private investment. Because this corridor is the front door for many residents and visitors to York, its appearance and function are important to the future and economic vitality of the city. A master development plan would articulate a vision for the corridor, the scale and arrangement of new buildings and parking lots, design guidelines for architecture and signage, and cohesive and economically sustainable development. In addition to its high visibility, the corridor is also home to the Holthus Convention Center which hosts guests from across the county. The master development plan would help this district welcome and impress these guests as well.

Guiding principles for the Village 81 plan:

- Uses should complement each other and the convention center
- Buildings should be arranged in a walkable manner with attractive and comfortable sidewalks
- Buildings should be developed with a unifying theme and materials to convey a sense of place
- Site design should encourage shared and connected parking lots to increase the interplay between businesses
- The identity of the town center should be conveyed with wayfinding signage. Individual business signs should be combined onto a single monument sign
- Green space, including the space in front of the Holthus, should be used as a public amenity
- Buildings and outdoor event spaces should connect to the proposed trail system and the pedestrian pathways through the commercial center
- A cluster of businesses that complement one another is stronger than any single venture in terms of overall attraction, spending and retention, and in creating an experience that will impress residents and visitors alike

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Complete a master development plan to articulate a refined plan for how the corridor will develop including a phasing plan
- Assemble a financial and incentive toolkit to support the implementation of the master plan including any public investments such as the trail system
- Adopt an overlay district to guide site development and landscaping

NORTH PARKWAY & RECREATION CLUSTER

The north parkway illustrates a way to create a new neighborhood center in northeast York. This neighborhood would focus around the parkway boulevard that would provide park space, frame the neighborhood, and provide natural storm water detention. The parkway would encompass the development and be anchored on the south by a neighborhood commercial cluster and park plaza. The plaza and neighborhood commercial center would serve the residential neighborhood and patrons to both the ballpark complex and Mincks Park.

Guiding principles for the North Parkway and Recreation Cluster:

- A mixed density neighborhood which incorporates a mix of housing types including single family detached units, townhomes and condominiums, and high quality apartments; integration would create an attractive, inclusive, and affordable neighborhood
- The parkway should be built with stormwater detention capacity to serve the surrounding development areas at surface level
- The parkway should be well-landscaped, incorporate tree lined streets, and be constructed with a trail extension along its course to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the area while connecting to the proposed commercial area and existing recreation resources
- The neighborhood commercial center should be designed to incorporate several retail and service uses in a walkable and welcoming urban environment. It should use on street parking for customers, hidden parking for employees, and buildings should include common walls, be situated at the front property line, and feature architectural details to create a unified image for the commercial center; signage should be limited to consistent flush mounted signs on the building and a single monument sign, designed at pedestrian scale, along East 12th Street.
- Appropriate business types in the neighborhood commercial center may include
 - » Convenience store (no fuel)
 - » Fast casual restaurant or bar and grill
 - Outdoor patios should be encouraged
 - » Visitor center
 - » Satellite locations of local and emerging restaurants in either a single facility or food truck lots.
- The plaza should act as an extension to the ballpark complex and Mincks Park to welcome visitors of the commercial center. The plaza should include a trail extension through its center to provide direct and intentional access to the space. Further, it should be welcoming and comfortable with tree shade, benches, tables, and pedestrian-scaled lighting. The plaza could also incorporate a gazebo or small event structure if desired.
- The neighborhood commercial center and the park plaza should be designed carefully due to the strategic importance of this cluster to not only serve the future neighborhood but also the regional recreation complex in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Refine and adopt the neighborhood plan with platting for the major components of the street plan including the parkway which will serve as the stormwater infrastructure for much of the development
- Assemble a financial and incentive toolkit to support the implementation of the master plan including any public investments such as the trail system, the parkway,

CASE STUDY: CRESCENT CHASE NEIGHBORHOOD, JOHNSTON, IOWA

Crescent Chase in Johnston, Iowa is an example of a neighborhood which includes a mix of housing types, price points, and land uses. The neighborhood is structured around a central green which provides a place for events but for the informal activity of everyday life. A system of sidewalks and trails permeate the neighborhood and common greenspaces, enabling residents to walk for recreation and transportation, including to nearby shops, restaurants, and a ballpark complex.

The Crescent Chase Neighborhood offers lessons to York for the development of the Northeast Parkway Concept. Like in York, the Crescent Chase Neighborhood is near a regional ballpark complex and is connected to the community by trail system. A prime distinction between this example and York is that the Northeast Parkway neighborhood and commercial center should focus on providing much needed retail and service businesses and that the development should integrate more medium density units that would be affordable to a greater share of York's population.

Features and Amenities

- Medium Density, Single Family
 - » 40' wide x 140' deep
 - » 6,000 - 7,000 square feet
- Low Density, Single Family
 - » 70-90' wide x 140 deep
 - » 9,800 - 12800 square feet
- Neighborhood Features
 - » Neighborhood Commercial Center (Office)
 - » Central Green
 - » Landscaped buffer along perimeter
 - » Neighborhood entrance signage
 - » Unifying design features
 - » Strong pedestrian environment and trail connections
 - » A mix of housing types





Former High School. Adapted to Residential Use



Reuse / Redevelopment Opportunity



Existing Pedestrian Bridge

School Reinvestment Corridor

The former sites of the elementary school and middle school represent a significant opportunity for the community as a valuable character and land asset. The reinvestment corridor runs approximately six blocks and extends across the railroad using the pedestrian bridge and includes the former middle school, the underused track and recreation fields owned by York College, Miller Park (as a complementary feature), and the former elementary school. With appropriate reinvestment, these sites can maintain their important historic role as part of the neighborhood fabric while also creating development energy that would help drive growth in the community.

PRINCIPLES FOR REINVESTMENT

Land and Facilities as an Asset

Much in the same way that industrial development land is reserved for an appropriate development opportunity, these sites are a strategic opportunity for the community that require attention and care. With appropriate consideration, reinvestment in these sites could instill the neighborhood and the development community with energy that will support future action. Development options should evaluate potential outcomes on the following grounds.

- **Development Yield.** The number of units produced (more below)
- **Value Yield.** The estimated amount of taxable value produced by the development
- **Qualified Developer.** Prospective developers should be evaluated to ensure that they are qualified to undertake the project.
- **Preserve Historic Components.** If economically practical, the historic structures should be preserved. If integrated as part of the development, these historic components offer three primary advantages for redevelopment:
 - » **Historic Tax Credits:** If the historic components follow certain rehabilitation guidelines, the developer may be able to qualify for State and Federal Historic Tax Credits. These credits can benefit the overall financial package of the development project.
 - » **Character Preservation:** Both school buildings represent a shared heritage for many residents of York. By preserving these historic structures, it would increase compatibility with the adjacent neighborhoods, be more attractive to young professionals and active seniors, and create a more cohesive as an overall project.
 - » **Development Yield:** By reusing the existing sites as predominantly residential, the development will be able to provide a higher yield from the development both in terms of total units but also total taxable value.
- **Development Quality.** Many aspects to contribute to the overall quality of a development project but preserving historic features would increase the identity of the project and contribute a unifying element for the overall project.

Development Yield

When considering a development project, a developer will examine the overall development yield that they can obtain from the sites. The consideration includes use regulations (single family, multi-family, or mixed use), subdivision regulations (minimum lot size, width, and the amount of parking and circulation required), and bulk regulations (height, lot coverage, and setbacks). It is recommended that these sites be viewed together as a planned unit development to articulate the expectations of the city including the amount of yield desired.

Connections

The physical location and configurations of these sites is a major factor in why they are considered a strategic opportunity as a connected district. The development concept features the pedestrian bridge as a central element for bike and pedestrian circulation and the appropriate redevelopment of these sites would expand the role of the pathway and with additional interest and character for all trail users.

Neighborhood Based / Compatibility

The adjacent neighborhoods have existed with these sites as a central piece of the neighborhood fabric for over 75 years. Reinvestment in this site should simply bring additional residents into the neighborhood but not significant compatibility issues. It may be appropriate to include a neighborhood commercial component to this site, such as a live/work spaces for entrepreneurs, a technology business incubator/accelerator, and other uses that would not generate a significant volume of traffic or compatibility issues for these neighborhood sites.

THE REINVESTMENT CONCEPTS

The reinvestment vision for these sites is a unified concept which builds upon existing features and developable land to generate a high-quality neighborhood in the northeast core of the city. By articulating a concept that will reinforce the existing character of the traditional neighborhoods, it is expected that the appropriate reuse of these sites would serve as a catalyst that will support population growth, and in turn, alleviate some of the challenges that businesses have recruiting and retaining employees.

While the site can be developed in different ways, these sites are strategic economic development opportunities which impact the housing and business markets.

Overall Concept

The reinvestment concept identifies the former middle school, former elementary school, and the underused recreation fields as redevelopment sites connected and supported by the pedestrian bridge which spans the railroad tracks and Miller Park which is a major park resource in the area. The concept mirrors the character of adjacent neighborhoods which typically include 50 foot residential lots; infill sites should generally reflect the lot size and housing types common in the area to ensure that the development is compatible with the character of the area.

The concept calls for the preservation and adaptive reuse of the historic structures on both school sites if structurally and economically feasible. These structures are appropriate for multi-family rental or condominium units and may incorporate an element of commercial activity such as live/work spaces for technology entrepreneurs. These buildings lend their architectural character and local heritage to the redevelopment plans for both sites. In addition to serving as character elements of both sites, the use of State and Federal Historic Tax Credits could help support the feasibility of the overall development plan.

Southern Concept

The reinvestment concept for the former middle school and the underused recreation fields calls for a mix of residential types and an integrated system of walkways, park features, and passive greenspace. The former school is preserved through historic and adaptive reuse of the historic portions of the building for residential – either apartments or condominiums. The school grounds would be improved to serve as passive open space for its inhabitants and residents of the neighborhood.



Example Image



Example Image



Example Image



Figure 9.7: Reinvestment Concepts

North of the reused school, the concept proposes parking and internal circulation that serves and transitions into a collection of 15 small lot, single-family detached homes. These homes are situated on 45 – 50 foot lots with alley access to two-car garages. Envisioned as bungalows or two-story structures, the western row of homes is oriented to East Avenue while the two rows of homes are oriented to a common pathway which leads between the reused school and the reinvestment site to the north.

Following the pathway north across East 14th Street, the next reinvestment section preserves and showcases the run/walk track which encompasses a two-to-three-story walkup multi-family building with parking situated to the east and the north. Additional buildings of the same architectural style are located at the northern end of the site and at the foot of the pedestrian bridge on the west. The pedestrian pathway runs north along the west side of the largest building and turns west past the softball diamond (improved and preserved) before connecting with the existing pathway and the pedestrian bridge. The pedestrian bridge crosses the railroad and provides a pedestrian connection to the northern reinvestment area two blocks to the north.

Northern Concept

Just a few blocks north of the southern reinvestment concepts, the northern reinvestment concept outlines two options for how the site can be reused for the greatest benefit and compatibility with the adjacent neighborhoods. Both concepts recommend a strong pedestrian connection such as a multi-purpose trail from the pedestrian bridge into the reinvestment site. Further, both concepts propose that the historic school building be preserved and be repurposed for residential apartments or condominiums and that the grounds be enhanced with maintenance and landscaping. From those common features, the reinvestment concepts differ.

NORTHERN CONCEPT A: ADAPTIVE REUSE AND MULTIFAMILY HOUSING

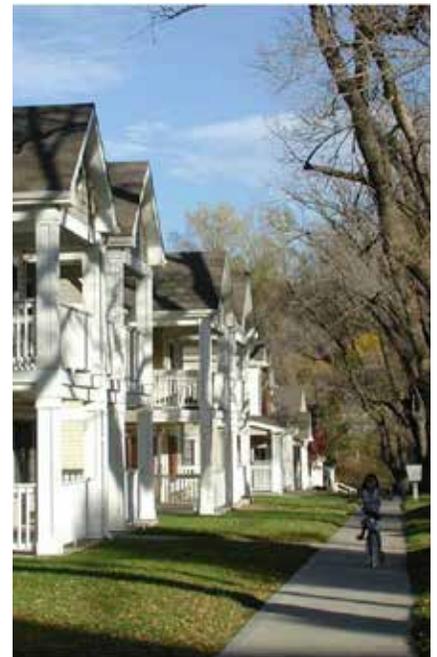
Concept A illustrates a reinvestment opportunity with a two-to-three story walkup multi-family building with parking situated throughout the site including existing diagonal parking along East 18th Street. To complement the new residents of the site and the nearby neighborhood, the site incorporates a community garden in the northwestern part of the site; together with the front lawn of the school, this configuration will pay homage to the historic role of the site as a neighborhood school

NORTHERN CONCEPT B: ADAPTIVE REUSE AND SINGLE FAMILY DETACHED HOMES

Concept B illustrate a reinvestment option with 12 small lot, single-family detached homes with two-car, attached garages that are accessed from the alleyway. The proposed lots are approximately 45-55 feet wide which is consistent with the nearby neighborhoods. Like Concept A, this concept maintains the front lawn and sight-lines to the front facade of the historic school.



Example Image from York College



Example Image

TAX INCREMENT FINANCE DISTRICTS

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a widely-used financing tool utilized by jurisdictions throughout the country and the State of Nebraska. Municipalities create TIF districts to maximize tax dollars and spur economic development where it might otherwise not occur, generally in areas that are blighted or nearly blighted. The State of Nebraska bases TIF exclusively on areas designed as slum and blighted.

When a TIF district is created, the base property tax valuation is frozen for the life of the district. As development occurs and additional value is added to the district, and new tax revenue is generated. The tax revenue collected above the frozen value, the increment, is captured by the TIF district to assist with a variety of redevelopment costs within the district. Taxes collected on the base value are allocated to typical taxing authorities (like the City or School District) and, after 15 years, all redevelopment costs must be paid off and the full amount of taxes are allocated to all taxing entities. TIF can be thought about as a self-financing district in which new development is borrowing against future increases in tax revenues.

The first step in creating or amending a TIF district is to identify a “substandard and blighted area” that needs investment for redevelopment while meeting a series of statutory requirements.

York currently has two TIF districts – one in the downtown area and one in the north industrial area. To facilitate reinvestment and redevelopment of areas located within the existing districts and strategic development sites throughout the core of the community, it is recommended that the city amend its existing TIF districts to include priority sites.

Nebraska Statute Section 18-2103 establishes a series of criteria that must be met for an area to be designated as blighted or substandard; at least one Objective Criteria must be met and at least one Subjective Criteria. Using the Census Tracts as the basis for the determination, both tracts qualify for the Objective Criteria for Blight Determination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Amend the existing Tax Increment Financing Districts to enable the use of funds for the following strategic sites:
 - » The former middle school and the underused parcel to the north.
 - » The former elementary school north of the railroad
 - » The neighborhood immediately east of downtown to encourage reinvestment in this residential area
 - » The neighborhood located west of downtown, south of 12th Street, and north of 4th Street
 - » Key sites for new development (all property must be located within the city limits before TIF can be applied)
- Continue to the use of TIF to assist with projects which eliminate blight conditions and create reinvestment in target areas including the downtown.

FIGURE 9.8: Objective Criteria for Blight Determination

1. Unemployment: At Least 120% of State or National Average
2. Age of Units: Average Age of Housing Units of At Least 40 Years
3. Per Capita Income: Less than the average per capita income for the municipality.
4. Population: A stable or decreasing population over the last two decennial censuses
5. Unimproved Land: More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in the area has remained unimproved for the past 40 years.

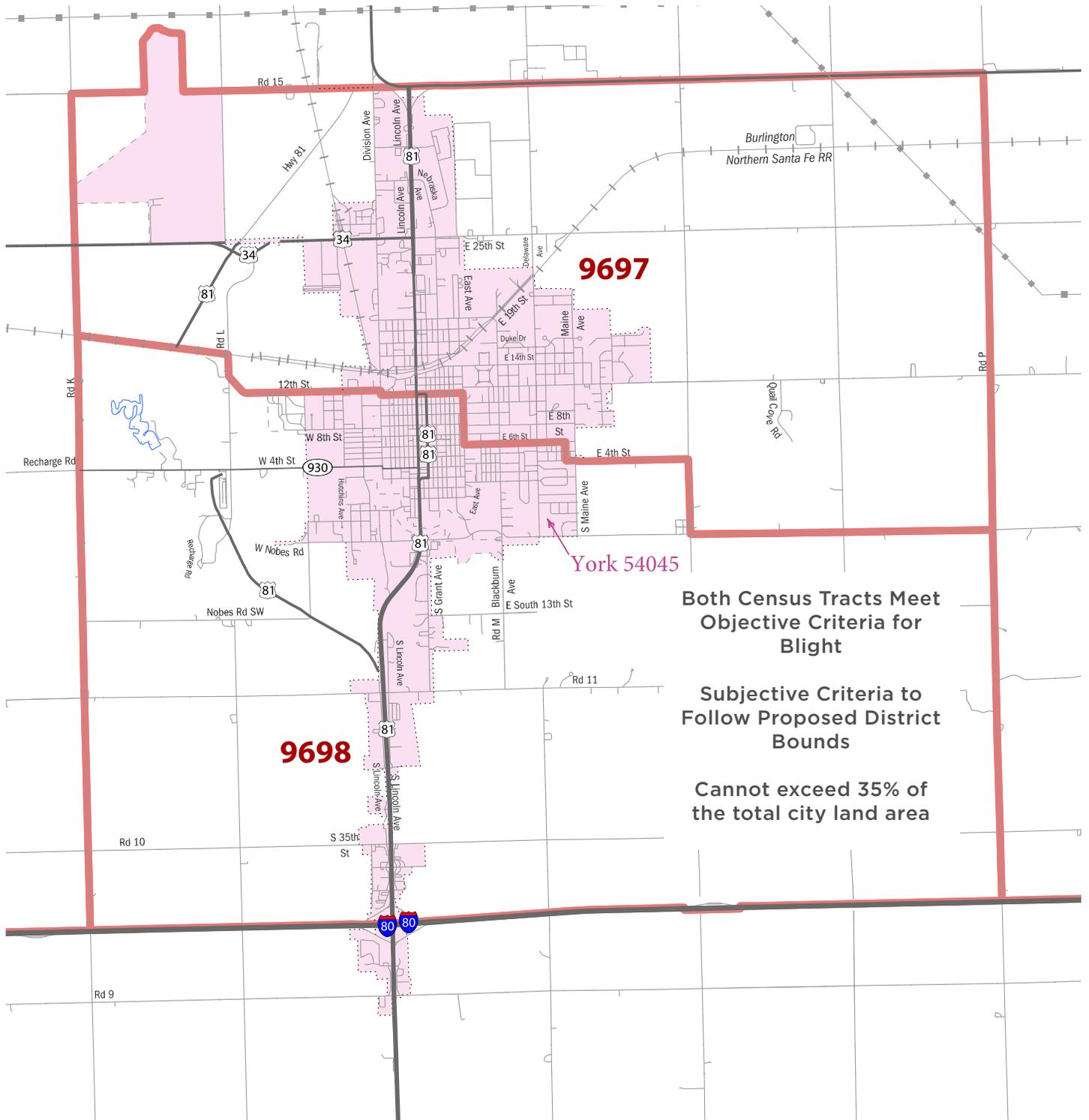


Figure 9.9: Census Tract Reference Map, York County, Nebraska

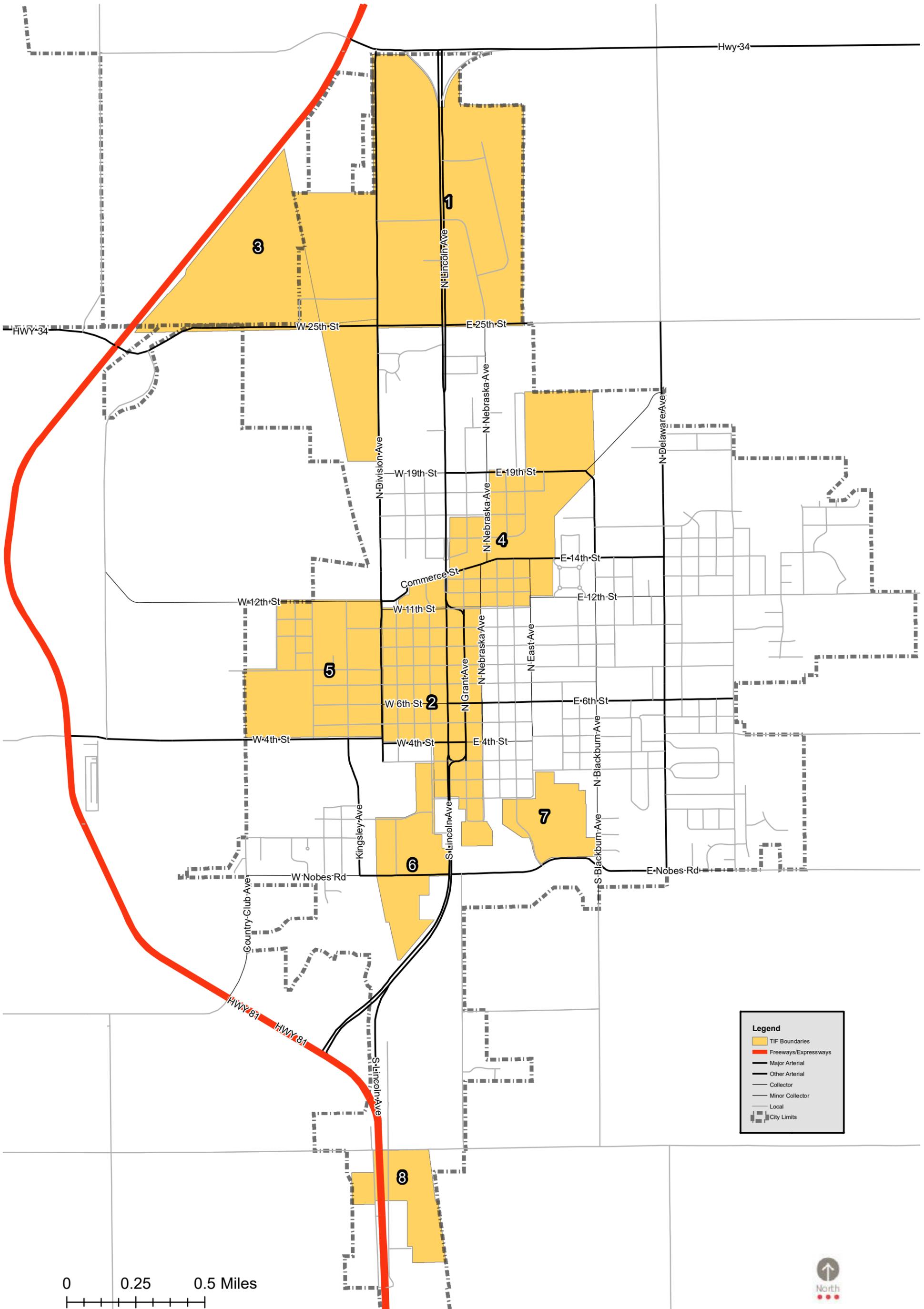


Figure 9.10: Existing and Proposed TIF Boundaries

CHAPTER TEN

ENERGY AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION

The City of York should strive to be a judicious steward of its resources by focusing on managing its resource consumptions and environmental footprint. It is the responsibility of the city to provide leadership in resource conservation through proactive steps in policy, public investments, and promotion of private sector action in energy and water conservation.



YORK



CHAPTER GOALS

- Energy strategies should support affordable, efficient, and reliable services and find ways to expand the city's job base
- Policies and strategies should reinforce the relationship between energy use and land use patterns, transportation, and community health
- Partnerships should be created between the city, businesses, residents, and utility providers to expand the alternative energy options used within the city

ENERGY USE AND CONSERVATION

A philosophy of energy and resource conservation should be integrated with public operations at a base level. As public facilities and fleet vehicles near a point where they require replacement or maintenance, decisions should favor resource efficient options. In addition to improvements to public facilities, the city can support action in the private market through regulations and incentive programs to encourage resource efficient options.

ENERGY POLICY IN NEBRASKA

The State of Nebraska has increased their focus on energy in recent years with Legislative Bill 997 (LB 997) in April 2010. LB 997 modified Nebraska law by requiring public jurisdictions to incorporate an energy element when updating a comprehensive plan. By developing this Energy Element in conjunction with its Comprehensive Plan update, the City of York is complying with LB 997.

Nebraska also maintains a state energy plan that outlines more than a dozen statewide energy strategies. However, unlike LB 997, the 2011 Nebraska Energy Plan (NEP) does not impose any specific requirements or set specific metrics for the state or local communities. Still, many of the NEP strategies support and echo strategies in this Energy Element.

ENERGY TRENDS

Although Americans are accustomed to and expect cheap, reliable energy, the trend in energy prices provides evidence that energy has become more expensive. The general trend is for energy prices to increase faster than inflation.

ENERGY SOURCE, SUPPLY, AND USE

York is served by the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) for its electrical energy needs. NPPD is a public corporation and a political subdivision of the State of Nebraska which offers an integrated electrical utility that includes generation, transmission, and distribution. NPPD's mission is to safely generate and deliver reliable, low-cost, sustainable energy and provide outstanding customer service.

The partnership between the City of York and the NPPD joins their goals and opportunities as one. NPPD uses a mix of energy sources and has set the goal to provide its customer communities with 10% of their native energy production from renewable resources by 2020. In terms of wind energy production, this means a goal of providing more than 300 megawatts of wind power.

Within the City of York, the electric system consists of a 34.5kV looped sub-transmission system which feeds five 34.5/12.5kV distribution substations. From these substations, York has a looped 12.5kV distribution system which extends throughout the community. The supply and distribution network throughout York positions the community well to support growth.

ENERGY USE (LOCAL ELECTRICITY)

The Nebraska Energy Office compiles energy consumption in the state by sector.

RESIDENTIAL

In 2014, the residential sector represented 18.9% of the state's total energy use. In 2014, the residential sector consumed 27.92% of York's electrical use.

COMMERCIAL

In 2014, the commercial sector represented 16.4% of the state's total energy use. In 2014, the commercial sector consumed 44.89% of York's electrical use.

INDUSTRIAL

In 2014, the industrial sector represented 41.4% of the state's total energy use. In 2014, the industrial sector consumed 18.14% of York's electrical use.

TRANSPORTATION

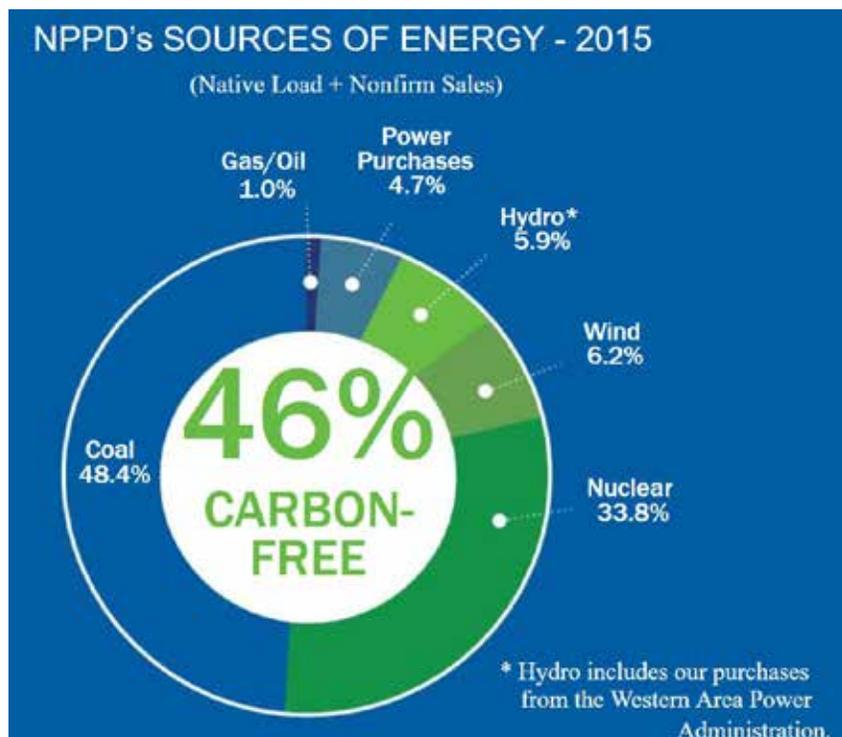
In 2014, the transportation sector represented 23.4% of the state's total energy use. The nearest parallel to transportation energy use at the local level is electrical use for public street lighting including highways. In 2014, public street and highway lighting consumed 0.83% of York's electrical use.

OTHER MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

In 2014, municipal offices and other facilities consumed 7.81% of York's total electrical use. This includes municipal offices, facilities, and shops.

RURAL IRRIGATION

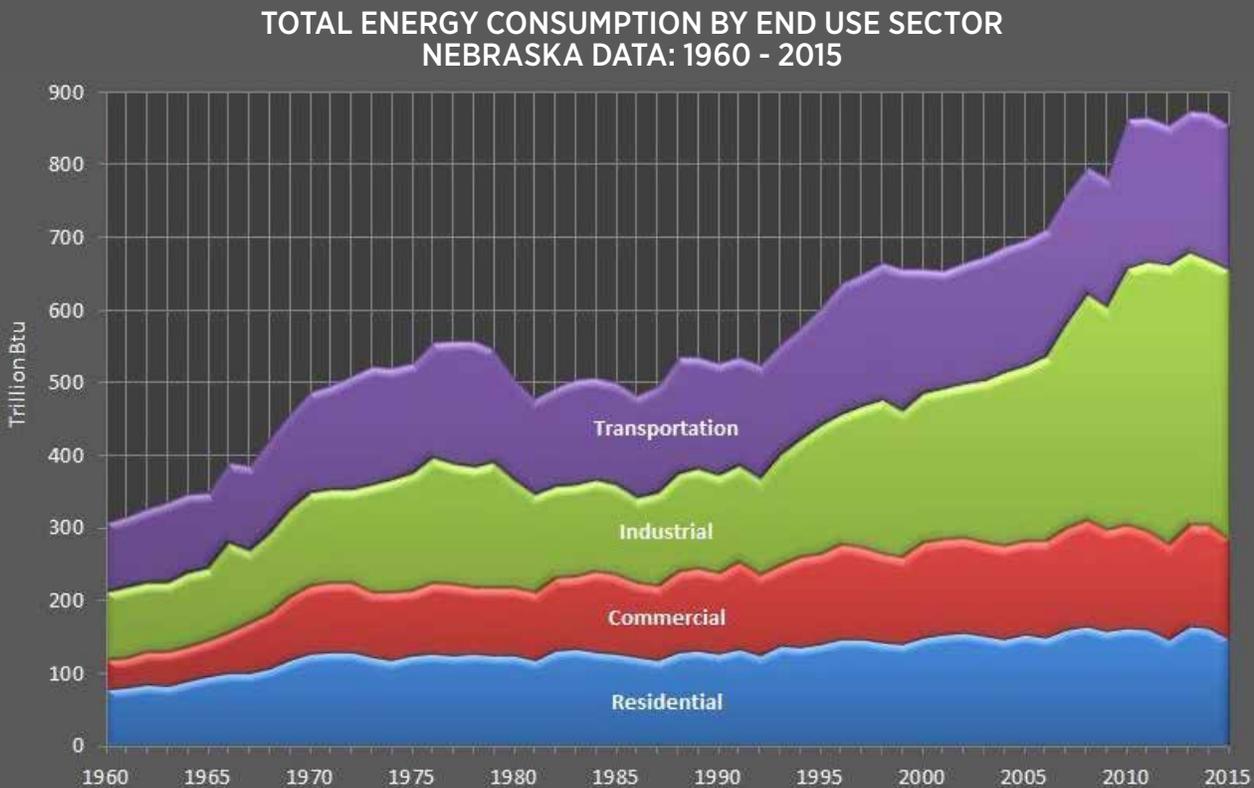
In 2014, rural irrigation consumed 0.42% of York's total electrical use.



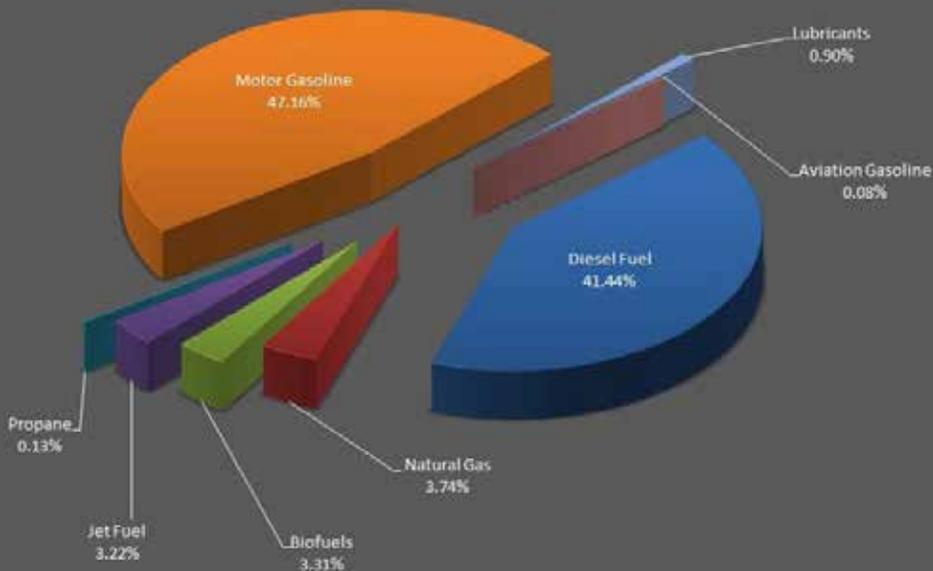
Source: 2015 NPPD Information Guide

ENERGY USE (OTHER FORMS OF ENERGY)

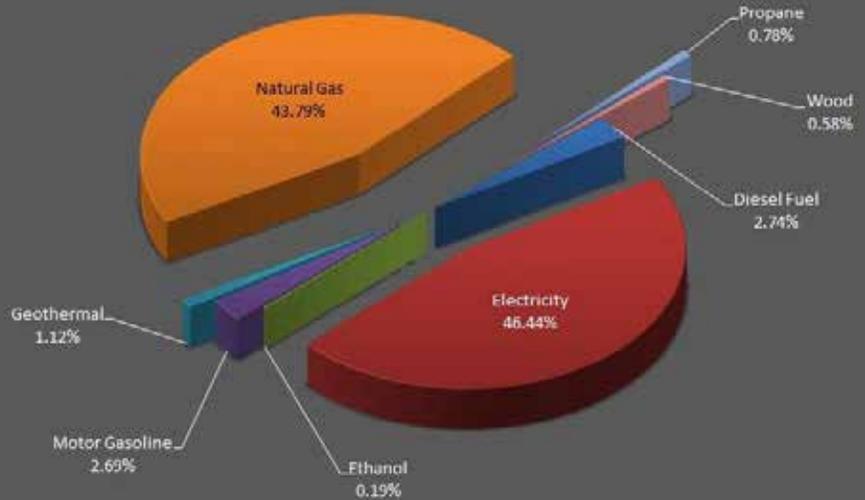
In the absence of local energy data, statewide data will be used as a proxy. As this is a percentage of total energy use, it can be reasonably considered an proportion of York's total energy use by sector. All data is from the Nebraska Energy Office for 2015.



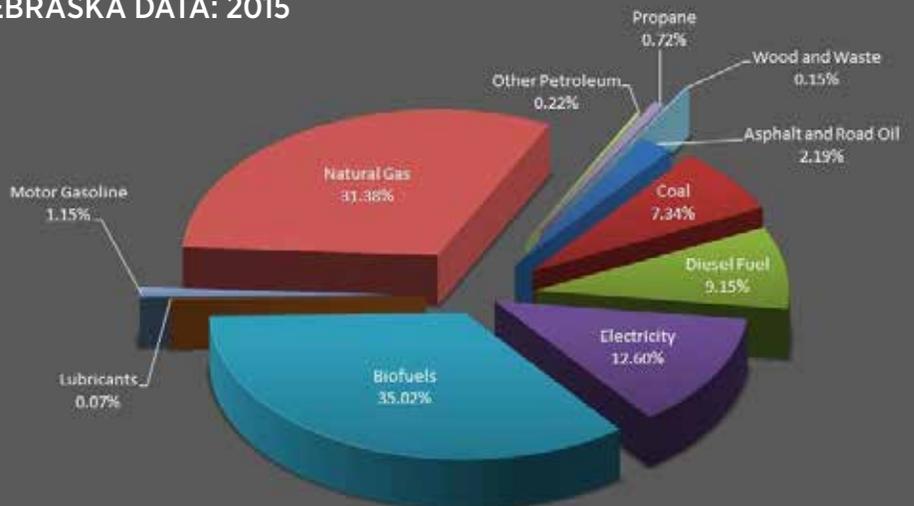
NET ENERGY CONSUMPTION: TRANSPORTATION NEBRASKA DATA: 2015



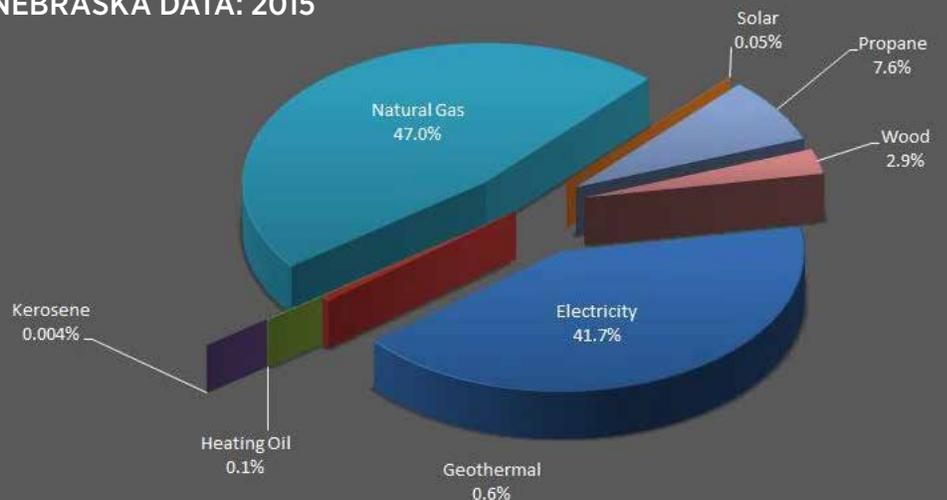
**NET ENERGY CONSUMPTION: COMMERCIAL SECTOR
NEBRASKA DATA: 2015**



**NET ENERGY CONSUMPTION: INDUSTRIAL SECTOR
NEBRASKA DATA: 2015**



**NET ENERGY CONSUMPTION: RESIDENTIAL SECTOR
NEBRASKA DATA: 2015**



USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

The Nebraska Energy Office reports that in 2010, 5.6% of Nebraska’s electrical power capacity was from renewable energy sources. Of this 5.6% of total capacity, the sources of were conventional hydroelectric (62.75%), wind (34.76%), landfill gas (1.35%), and other biomass (1.13%).

The nation as a whole used a higher percentage of renewable energy than Nebraska. In 2010, 12.8% of the nation’s electrical power capacity was from renewable energy sources. Of this 12.8% of total capacity, the sources of were conventional hydroelectric (59.40%), wind (29.49%), wood/wood waste (5.30%), landfill gas (2.78%), geothermal (1.81%), solar (0.71%), and other biomass (0.51%).

The City of York purchases its electrical power from the NPPD, therefore its use of renewable resources follow their mix of energy sources as indicated below.

ENERGY CONSERVATION MEASURES

ENERGY CODES

Under §§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. If a city does not adopt an energy code, the Nebraska Energy Office will enforce the Nebraska Energy Code in the jurisdiction.

The purpose of the Code, under §81-1608, is to ensure that newly built houses or buildings meet uniform energy efficiency standards. The statute finds

“that there is a need to adopt the . . . International Energy Conservation Code in order (1) to ensure that a minimum energy efficiency standard is maintained throughout the state, (2) to harmonize and clarify energy building code statutory references, (3) to ensure compliance with the National Energy Policy Act of 1992, (4) to increase energy savings for all Nebraska consumers, especially low-income Nebraskans, (5) to reduce the cost of state programs that provide assistance to low-income Nebraskans, (6) to reduce the amount of money expended to import energy, (7) to reduce the growth of energy consumption, (8) to lessen the need for new power plants, and (9) to provide training for local code officials and residential and commercial builders who implement the . . . International Energy Conservation Code. The Code applies to all new buildings, or renovations of or additions to any existing buildings. Only those renovations that will cost more than 50 percent of the replacement cost of the building must comply with the Code.”

The Code applies to all new buildings, and renovations or additions to any existing buildings. Only those renovations that will cost more than 50 percent of the replacement cost of the building must comply with the Code.

The City of York has adopted the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code which is roughly equivalent to the Nebraska Energy Code.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

The City will work with utility companies that supply energy to residents and businesses to promote and implement energy efficiency programs that can be utilized by these customers to improve conservation and utilization of electricity, natural gas, and other energy sources.

Residents and businesses are encouraged to work with the utility companies and take advantage of the companies’ energy efficiency programs to improve conservation and utilization of electricity, natural gas, and other energy sources.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

PUBLIC FACILITIES

- Maintain and make proactive improvements that improve the energy efficiency of public facilities
- Upgrade the city fleet with energy efficient vehicles as part of the regular fleet replacement schedule
- Replace existing streetlights with LED fixtures
- Complete energy audits for municipal buildings
- Evaluate the use of hybrid vehicle and the possible use of bio-diesel in municipal equipment

RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL

- Incentivize energy efficient building methods
- Encourage the use of all available energy rebate programs and promote energy saving tips
- Encourage developers to contact NPPD and Black Hills Energy early in their process to integrate their design reviews into the development process and to understand available energy efficiency rebates, incentives, or educational resources early in the conception of the project
- Incentivize energy improvements in older homes
- Use incentives to encourage investment in existing commercial locations
- Encourage the use of the on-line EPA energy yardsticks for their residential or commercial uses in the city of York.

INDUSTRIAL

- Encourage complementary businesses to locate in clusters to reduce unnecessary travel and to promote operational synergy. This can be encouraged through economic development initiatives and the implementation of the future land use plan.
- Connect jobs with housing using sidewalks and trails to reduce the need for employees to travel by car to their place of work. This will reduce vehicle miles traveled and also support the livelihood of low income households by reducing transportation costs.

LAND USE

- Plan for and fund alternative transportation to connect jobs, shopping, and housing using sidewalks and trails.
- Strongly support and market complementary business clusters as part of an integrated economic development strategy

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Support the goals of energy providers for renewable energy production and use
- Explore ways that renewable energy can be used in economic development

CHAPTER ELEVEN

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

York's water, sewer, and stormwater systems provide the foundation that supports everyday life while services such as police and fire make York a safe place to call home. The provision of these services in a cost-efficient manner is a chief responsibility of the city and guides the development and quality of life for the residents who rely on these services.



YORK



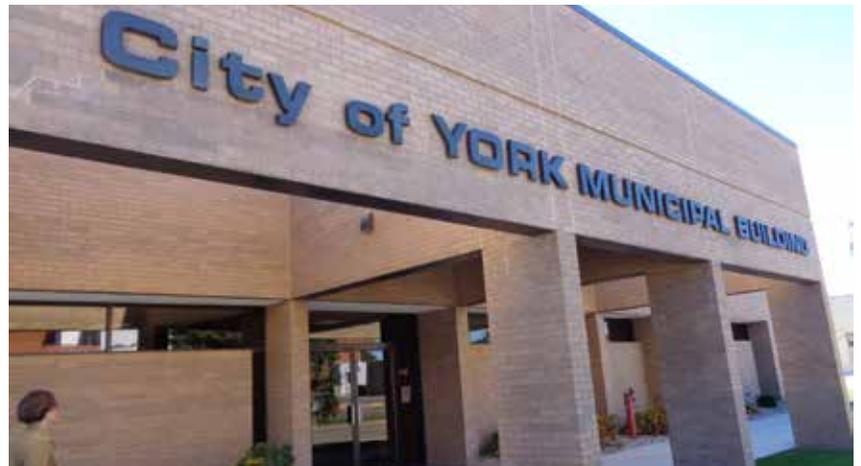
CHAPTER GOALS

- Use infrastructure extensions and enhancements to support efficient and desirable patterns of community, neighborhood, and economic development
- Continue to use 'citizen guided investment' to identify potential projects and evaluate funding priorities
- Provide public services in a manner that balances cost efficiency and level of service while using innovative funding sources when possible

INTRODUCTION

The provision of health, safety, and welfare are chief responsibilities of the York City Government. The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the current level of service, issues, and challenges, and to outline emerging approaches and technologies to consider over the life of this plan. The section provides a review of each public facility within the purview of public facilities and infrastructure.

CITY HALL: CITY OF YORK MUNICIPAL BUILDING



QUICK FACTS:

- 100 East 4th Street
- Converted to government use in late 1980s or early 1990s
- Building Use
 - » City Offices
 - » Council Chambers
 - » Police Department
 - » Utility Department

The police department is described in a separate section of this chapter

EVALUATION

The building is in excellent condition overall but may require some additional investment regularly. The HVAC system was updated in the municipal building in the past 10-12 years. As the center of government for the city of York, the municipal building should continue to be maintained and equipped with adequate technology for employee offices, meeting spaces, and other resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
- Ensure the technology and facility is adequate to provide a high level of service to the residents of York

POLICE DEPARTMENT

QUICK FACTS:

- 100 East 4th Street
- Converted to police use in late 1980s or early 1990s
- Police Force: 22 employees
 - » Chief: 1
 - » Sergeants: 4
 - » Officers: 12
 - » Dispatchers: 5
- Fleet Vehicles:
 - » Marked: 4
 - » Unmarked: 1
 - » Support Services: 1
 - » Authorized to add an additional unit
 - » Replacement Target: 4 years, approximately 120 miles



EVALUATION

The building is in excellent condition overall but requires some additional investment at an ongoing basis. The HVAC system was updated in the municipal building in the past 10-12 years. The police fleet consists of six units and will add an additional unit in 2017. All vehicles are purchased through the state contract for the current model year. The existing facility has adequate space for the current and future needs of the police force. The city and county have held early conversations on the possibility of combining city/county police communications; while the concept has merit, it should be evaluated carefully for cost, personnel issues, facility needs, and level of service.

If York continues to grow along the 80/81 stem, it may be appropriate to consider a satellite location to provide improved service for development in this area. If the city and county choose to pursue a joint communications center, additional logistic and investment decisions must be made.

There has been discussion of using the land south of the Municipal Building between Lincoln Avenue and Grant Avenue for enclosed vehicle store for Police Vehicles and other equipment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
 - » Continue to implement the fleet vehicle replacement schedule to maintain the fleet in a state of good repair
- Short/Long Term
 - » Evaluate the possibility of a combined city/county communications department
 - » Evaluate configurations for covered fleet parking, potentially south of the Municipal Building.
 - » Evaluate the need for a satellite location along the 80/81 stem

FIRE AND AMBULANCE DEPARTMENT

QUICK FACTS:

- 815 North Grant Avenue
- Fire Department Force
 - » Facility built in 1969
 - » Paid / Full Time: 14
 - » Volunteers: 30
- Fleet Vehicles:
 - » 250 Gallon Grass Truck
 - Rural Fire Department Vehicle
 - Should be replaced within 5 years
 - » 2000 Gallon Tanker 631 GMC
 - Rural Fire Department Vehicle
 - Should be replaced Within 5 years
 - » 2000 Gallon Tanker 630 GMC
 - Rural Fire Department Vehicle
 - Should be replaced Within 5 years
 - » 2003 Pierce Engine 621
 - Plan to replace in 8 years
 - » 2003 Pierce Rescue 651
 - Should be replaced within 10 years
 - Rural Fire Department Vehicle
 - » 2013 Osage Squad 11 Dodge 4-WD
 - Should be replaced within 10 years
 - » 2017 Meowerks Squad 12 Ford 4-WD
 - Arrow/Meotek Squad 10 Remounted on 2013 Dodge 4WD
 - Life expected to be 10 years
 - » 2014 Rosenbauer Engine 620
 - Life expected to be 10 years
 - » 2014 Rosenbauer Aerial 640
 - Life expected to be 25 years. Cost was approximately \$1 million



EVALUATION

York Fire Department provides Fire and EMS protection from the centrally located station at 815 N. Grant Avenue. The York Fire Department is a combination department staffed by the fire chief, a training/safety officer, and shift personnel complimented by a dedicated volunteer staff.

The department provides fire protection for the City of York and by interlocal agreement for the York Rural Fire District. The department houses, staffs and maintains all fire apparatus owned by the City of York and the York Rural Fire District. In 2015, the department received 1,220 calls and anticipates an increase of approximately ten percent per year. The York Fire Department provides an Advanced Life Support level of pre-hospital



care for the City of York and surrounding communities through an interlocal agreement designating the department as the county ambulance service. Inter-facility transfers are also provided for the two hospitals located within York County.

The existing facility is an open configuration that does not meet the modern health and safety needs of the department, specifically its living quarters. In 2016, the city installed a new roof on the building which is maintained in a state of good repair. However, the limiting factor for the current facility to meet the future needs of the department is the depth of the garage bays. A facility evaluation should be conducted to identify short and long term needs of the department and this study should establish a budget and timeline for improvements.

The fleet vehicles are used for ten years as ‘front-service’ to respond to calls as a primary vehicle, then ten years as a reserve vehicle being used only when needed, before being sold at surplus. The greatest investment in any fire department’s fleet is its aerial apparatus; the York Fire Department purchased its current apparatus at a cost of approximately \$1 million in 2014 and is expected to serve the needs of the department for the next 20 years.

The level of fire service is a major factor in establishing a community’s ISO (Insurance Service Office Rating). This rating evaluates municipal fire-protection efforts and infrastructure to estimate the risk of fire damage and loss in each community based on a series of factors which impact the ability of a city to provide prompt and effective fire service. ISO ratings place community risk on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being the best. York currently has a rating of 4 for the urban area and 4Y for the rural area. Contributing factors for this determination include high marks for water pressure, but also the opportunity to improve the rating by providing additional training facilities. In recent years, the fire department has begun conducting pre-plan reviews of development projects to promote compliance and efficient fire service to newly constructed buildings and renovation projects.

Fire service response time is strong throughout the core of the community. To accommodate ongoing development along the interstate corridor and the junction with Highway 81, the city should evaluate and plan for a satellite location.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain the facility and fleet in a state of good repair
- Short Term Capital
 - » Continually evaluate the condition of the fleet and budget for replacement of fleet vehicles as appropriate
 - » Evaluate staffing and consider adding two employees to each of the three shifts
 - » Complete a facility assessment to determine the long-term needs of the department. Plan, budget, and relocate or replace the facility.
 - » Explore the construction of training facilities to improve the ISO rating of the community.
- Long Term Capital
 - » Continually evaluate the condition of the fleet and budget for replacement of fleet vehicles as appropriate
 - » Continually evaluate the condition of the facility and budget for improvements as needed and appropriate.
 - » Consider a satellite location for fire and ambulance service based on growth near the junction of Interstate 80 and Highway 81.

RECREATION

The York Parks and Recreation system includes a series of facilities such as traditional parks, community facilities, and specialized venues. This chapter explores existing facilities, conditions, and capital investment needs.

COMMUNITY CENTER: 211 EAST 7TH STREET

Constructed around 1956, the community center includes a 25-meter lap swimming pool and hot tub, a fitness room with more than 40 cardio/weight/fitness pieces of equipment, racquetball court, squash court, gymnasium, active video game room, and a meeting room. The Community Center also houses the Palmer Museum which chronicles the history and settlement of the York County Area. A membership to the community center also allows access to the city auditorium and its amenities.

EVALUATION

The community center is well used with more than 20,000 member check-ins over the course of 2015, an increase from past years. However due to the age of the facility and its features, it now requires ongoing investment to maintain it in a state of good repair that is attractive to its users – current and future. The community center hosts a variety of uses including a fitness center, swimming pool, museum, and children’s area. The 25-meter lap pool, one of its keystone features, creates humidity that impacts the condition and operation of other features within the building especially museum artifacts. Recent investments have attempted to resolve these issues.

Based on the age of the structure and its current condition, it is estimated that the existing building has a useful life of approximately 20 years. A reconfiguration of the space may improve the visibility and use of its features. For example, relocating the Palmer Museum to Wessel’s Farm would concentrate regional history resources in a more accessible location while opening space on the main floor of the community center for an enhanced fitness center and in the basement for a children’s area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing:
 - » Maintain the structure and its amenities in a state of good repair
 - » Evaluate ADA compliance
 - » Evaluate the need for asbestos abatement
- Short Term Capital
 - » Explore reconfiguration of the space and relocation of the Palmer Museum
 - » Upgrade pool filtration
 - » Upgrade outdated fitness equipment
- Long Term Capital
 - » Plan for facility replacement

CITY AUDITORIUM: 6TH STREET AND NEBRASKA AVENUE

The City Auditorium was built in 1940 and throughout its history has hosted a wide-range of activities, including hosting wedding dances, craft shows, graduation ceremonies for York High School and York College, wedding expositions, band concerts, basketball tournaments, volleyball tournaments, soup suppers, home shows, birthday celebrations, funerals, conventions, car shows, farm shows, bridal and baby showers, and informational meetings, in addition to acting as a disaster shelter. Multiple events



are typically scheduled every week, likely because the Auditorium has the largest indoor seating capacity in the community.

The Auditorium features a large gymnasium that can be used for athletics or banquets. The main floor can seat 475 people comfortably with a dance floor included. The upstairs balcony has 952 chairs, and the bleachers on the main floor can seat about 550 people. The downstairs USO room is a large room that can house approximately 200. The North Dining Room is a smaller meeting room that seats about 75 people comfortably. There is a kitchen on the main floor as well as a kitchen in the basement. There are also men's and women's showers for sporting events.

The Children's Museum is housed on the main floor of the Auditorium. This museum has four rooms with different themes and hands-on items. The Children's Museum is open every Tuesday and Saturday mornings and can be reserved by appointment.

EVALUATION

City Auditorium remains an important civic resource for the community. It represents a collective image for many residents – past and present – and these memories and heritage contribute to the image and the historic vitality of York. However due to the size and age of the facility, it can be costly to operate and replacement equipment such as the HVAC system. A 2015 (HVAC) study estimated the present-cost of replacing the air-conditioning and heating system would be a minimum of \$1 million. As the remaining life of the system is unknown, the existing system will continue to be used until it is no longer operational.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The city should evaluate the cost and viability of maintaining the City Auditorium long-term. A study should explore the local and regional potential to continue the current use of the facility in addition to a variety of reuse alternatives. The evaluation should explore all potential options including:

- Continuation of present use and maintenance
- Reuse of the structure
- Demolition and site redevelopment

Due to public connections to this facility, it is advised that public opinion should be sought in the decision-making process. Upon the completion of the evaluation, a referendum may be appropriate to determine the future of the City Auditorium.

- Ongoing:
 - » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
 - » Market and promote the use of the venue as an extension to the community center and as a venue for large events
- Short Term / Long Term:
 - » Plan for the future of the facility. Maintain a project cost estimate which factors in inflation. Identify a course of action such as a referendum to evaluate the future of the auditorium.
 - » Evaluate ADA compliance and create a compliance plan. The addition of a patron elevator may improve the potential viability of the facility for public, quasi-public, and private uses.
 - » Develop a fundraising strategy which explore partnerships, community outreach, and additional funding mechanisms.

FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER: 2222 EAST 14TH STREET (Minick's PARK)

The Family Aquatic Center opened in 2005 with waterslides, climbing walls, deck geysers, turtle slide, zero-depth area with spray features, one meter diving board, and an eight lane, 50-meter lap pool. The water is heated, lifeguards are on duty, and the facility has a full-service concessions area with food and drink.

EVALUATION

The family aquatic center is generally in good condition but continues to require investment, retrofits, and improvements to operate effectively. An ongoing challenge has been corrosion in the pump house due to the chemical system in the same facility; this led to the replacement of the boiler in 2011, and there is a plan to move the chemical system into a stand-alone building to eliminate the issue. A second issue is that a section of the pool deck near the diving board has settled which has created a potential trip hazard. In past years, one of the two waterslides was removed leaving a notable absence in the pool area; the area is currently roped off.

To guide the enhancement of the aquatic center, the city worked with Larkin Aquatics to develop a 2015 masterplan. Phase 1 of the plan includes the installation of a family slide, a floatable walk, and a basketball goal area at the cost of \$298,000.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
 - » Complete ongoing or reoccurring investments and actions
 - » Support the enhancement of the surrounding areas as illustrated on the development concept to make the family aquatic center a more accessible and connected part of the community.
- Short Term Capital
 - » Move the chemical system to a free-standing building to eliminate continued corrosion of equipment
 - » Complete maintenance and rehabilitation actions to ensure the facility is a safe and welcoming source of pride for the community
 - » Budget and implement Phase 1 of the Master Plan
- Long Term Capital
 - » Budget and implement Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the Master Plan
 - » Support future improvements to Mincks Park

YORK BALLPARK COMPLEX

Opened in 2016, the York Ballpark Complex contains eight ballfields, four batting cages, and two service towers containing concessions, restrooms, an office, and a scorekeeping tower on the second level. The two championship fields have bleacher seating that can accommodate up to 270 spectators each and the other six fields can accommodate up to 180 spectators each. In addition to baseball and softball-oriented facilities, the site also contains a playground and a maintenance structure to house lawn mowers and other equipment.

The York Ballpark Complex has a full schedule through the summer of 2017. After the first season of operation, priorities will arise in terms of condition and enhancements that will make the complex more attractive.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
 - » Promote pedestrian and bicycle connections to the existing trails, parks, and commercial centers
 - » View the York Ballpark Complex as a gateway to the community and image center that will help form visitors' impressions, including potential residents and business owners. For this reason, the image and experience offered at the regional complex is important.
- Short Term Capital
 - » Budget and install shade over all bleachers
 - » Continually evaluate parking supply and ways to reduce the amount of parking required
- Long Term Capital
 - » Evaluate the function of the complex and identify opportunities to improve the facility through long term enhancements.

LEVITT STADIUM

Adjacent to East Hill Park, Levitt Stadium is located on 6th Street and is used for football, soccer, and baseball. The facility includes bleachers, electronic scoreboards, restrooms, off-street parking, and a concession stand. The stadium hosts a number of users and is currently in good condition including the older grandstands, the concession center built within the past ten years, and the football grandstands constructed in the past two years. The design and role of the York Ballpark Complex was created to complement the existing programming of Levitt Stadium and it is not expected that the additional baseball/softball facilities will negatively impact the use of Levitt Stadium.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
 - » Evaluate ADA compliance and develop a compliance plan

CORNERSTONE SPORTS COMPLEX

The Cornerstone Sports Complex is one of the busiest sports facilities in the City which attracts over 40,000 people a year. The facility is on land owned by York County which is leased to the York County Sports Authority, a non-profit corporation established to construct and operate the facility.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The city of York has an inventory of existing park resources that serve the residents of York. These parks are reviewed previously in this plan.

The city is in an ongoing process of evaluating existing park facilities and upgrading deficiencies to better serve the community. Priorities include: replacing dangerous or antiquated play equipment, providing amenities for all ages including the addition of a tot-play area in the short term, expanding the trail system, and exploring options for Duke Park.

HOLTHUS CONVENTION CENTER

The Holthus Convention Center opened in 2014. The 40,000-square foot facility was designed to accommodate a diverse range of events, gatherings and conferences. The Grand Ballroom is the main focal point of the venue with a built-in stage and audio/video system with retractable big screens. The Grand Ballroom can accommodate 1,500 guests in theatre-style seating, but can also be divided into five separate rooms that can be operated independently for greater event flexibility. Six additional smaller meeting rooms meet the needs of events requiring less space. The facility includes two separate kitchens that can host multiple events simultaneously.

Key Features:

- Located off the I-80 and Highway 81 interchange
- 40,000 square feet of event space
- Host events with up to 1,500 guests (meeting style) or 800 (banquet style)
- Grand Ballroom with built-in stage and dressing rooms
- Eleven total ballrooms/meeting rooms
- Wireless Internet
- Video conferencing
- On-site Audio Visual Systems

The Convention Center has a full schedule of events through 2017 with engagements ranging from professional conventions and corporate retreats to home expositions and bridal shows. The facility operates effectively with few areas for immediate improvement. However, the built-in audio system could improve the quality and extent of its coverage to better serve the needs of some events; currently, the speakers in the ballroom ceiling project sound into the concrete floor causing the sound to dissipate. While the facility is equipped with speakers throughout, the audio control system does not allow individual users to control the sound throughout the facility for larger events. These audio issues should be evaluated and resolved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
 - » Continue to evaluate technological advancements and invest in appropriate upgrades to remain competitive
 - » Support the enhancement of the surrounding area to make the area more walkable, vibrant, and attractive. The addition of restaurants, hotels, trails, and other amenities make the convention center more attractive to businesses and enjoyable for attendees.
- Short Term Capital
 - » Explore the option of entering into an exclusive use or in-house agreement with a caterer for events at the conference center. This arrangement could include one or two preferred caterers, increasing the convenience of using the venue, the level of service, and creating a more seamless experience.
- Long Term Capital
 - » Continue to evaluate the operation of the facility and peer facilities throughout the region and make appropriate investments to remain competitive
 - » Conduct a needs assessment at ten years and 20 years from the adoption of this plan to evaluate whether an expansion is needed.





KILGORE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

QUICK FACTS:

- 520 Nebraska Avenue
- Constructed in 1986
- Size: Approximately 14,000 square feet
- Collection: Approximately 64,000 items
- Circulation: Approximately 75,000 annually
- Employees: 5 full time, 6 part time. 6.5 FTE

EVALUATION

The Kilgore Memorial Library, constructed in 1986, is currently conducting a space needs assessment to identify how to use the facility and the existing site most efficiently over the next 30 years. This assessment inherently requires library staff to speculate and forecast on the role and function that a library will have through the year 2046. This space needs assessment will guide reinvestment, reconfigurations, and expansions to the library site.

In addition to traditional library services, the Kilgore Memorial Library has partnered with the Parks and Recreation Department to create the city's StoryWalk, a half mile segment of the Beaver Creek Trail with story panel installations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain the building in a state of good repair
 - » Continue community outreach activities consistent with the library's stated mission
 - » Complete the space needs assessment and implement its findings
- Short Term Capital
 - » Improve the visibility of the library and enhance the physical connection with the downtown district
 - » Evaluate and implement the short-term recommendations of the space needs assessment
 - » Through partnerships and coordination with other city departments, refine and expand the StoryWalk to enhance current and future trail systems.
- Long Term Capital
 - » Evaluate and implement the long-term recommendations of the space needs assessment
 - » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
 - » Continue to evaluate technological advancements and invest in appropriate upgrades
 - » Continue community outreach initiatives including the Story Walk treatment to major trails and sidewalk corridors and others which actively promote library resources to the community at large



WASTE WATER TREATMENT FACILITY

EXISTING WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY

The City of York, Nebraska owns and operates a wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) for treatment of organics, suspended solids, and ammonia, located at the southwest corner of Nobes Road and South Blackburn Avenue. It was constructed in 1935 with major expansions in the 1960s and in 1975. Most of the infrastructure at the WWTF has reached the end of its useful life.

The city developed a 2011 Facilities Plan to guide the updating of the WWTF. The 2014 Wastewater Treatment Facilities Plan expanded upon this report and evaluated multiple alternatives, leading to the realization that a new treatment facility was appropriate to accommodate future development in York. From this study, details were refined in a 2015 Wastewater Treatment Facilities Plan – Phase 2 Engineering Study. These studies provide a great level of detail regarding the process of evaluating the existing system, exploring alternatives, construction of a new facility, and developing the specifications required to best suit the needs of the community long term. This comprehensive plan only provides a summary of this work.

Upon the completion and operation of a new facility, the existing wastewater facility will be decommissioned. The site has a series of tanks which perform the treatment processes, an office, and several support buildings. Based on the condition of structures and the site's purpose, all but the office structure will be removed as part of its decommissioning. Once the wastewater plant is removed, the site will be regraded, seeded, and installed with a large lift station to direct wastewater to the new facility. The lift station will be equipped with an odor treatment system.

FUTURE SITE

The Waste Water Treatment Facility under construction is designed to the specifications below. The facility is expected to open in 2019. The design flows and loads were designed to exceed the peak month flow, plus a ten percent industrial reserve, and inflated to adjust for a larger population. The life of the facility is expected to exceed 50 years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Decommission the existing wastewater treatment facility. The projected cost is approximately \$800,000 and will remove all structures with the exception of the office. A large lift station will be constructed on the site as part of the sanitary sewer system
- Explore the reuse of the site for a public park or alternative purpose

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

Much of the city's sanitary sewer system developed with the community. The system handles and directs all wastewater produced in the community to the central wastewater treatment facility, currently located at Nobes Road and Blackburn Avenue. The system includes a combination of claytile sewer mains and PVC lines. The York Public Works Department recently purchased an inspection camera and plans to begin developing a comprehensive inventory of the system. Sanitary sewer replacements are done on a case-by-case basis. Most new sanitary sewer lines are developed at cost by the developer.

Pump stations are another common component of the sanitary sewer system in York because of the flat topography. The system includes three pump stations with most in fair to good condition. They include:



- South 81 Lift Station
 - » Located southeast of the Interstate 80 / Highway 81 Interchange.
 - » Constructed with the sewer extension to the south side of the interstate with design finished in 1983 and construction complete around 1985.
 - » In 2015, a series of investments were made to the lift station. Both pumps were replaced with 'drop-in' units which did not require the volutes and piping to change. The control panels were moved from inside of the lift station to above ground and also pump control floats were replaced with a pressure transducer with float backups. New concrete and a fence was also installed at the site for a total investment of roughly \$25,000.
 - » The lift station will require additional investment in the near future as the drywell side of the station is a steel structure that has corrosion through the bottom of the enclosure. The lift station also continues to have problems with trash plugging the pumps. The station is in fair condition but is the most critical because it handles all of the wastewater from the south side of the interstate.



- Wal-Mart Lift Station
 - » Located at the end of David Drive east of Wal-Mart.
 - » Constructed around 2005, this station has required no significant investment with the exception of a single pump replaced in 2017 at a cost of approximately \$5,600. It is expected that the second pump will require similar repairs in the near future. As an upgrade measure, the existing floats should be replaced with a pressure transducer and float backup system similar to the South 81 station. Overall, the station is in very good condition.

- St. Andrews Court Lift Station
 - » Located at the end of the St. Andrews Court
 - » Constructed in 1984, the lift station has required no significant investment, but the city is currently in the planning process to replace both pumps and a new control panel along with new concrete and fence with a budget of \$20,000 for the project this year. Overall, this lift station is in very good condition.
 - » At present, this lift station serves only seven residential dwellings but has additional capacity.

PROPOSED DESIGN BASIS

PROPOSED 2030 DESIGN BASIS

Parameter

Average

1.4 MGD

Max Month

1.6 MGD

Peak Day

3.0 MGD

Peak Hour

5.3 MGD

Source: 2015 Wastewater Treatment Facilities Plan - Phase 2 Engineering Study

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Continue case-by-case replacement of sanitary sewer lines as condition issues arise or as failures occur.
 - » Maintain the system in a state of good repair
- Short Term Capital
 - » Use the inspection camera to complete a comprehensive inventory of the sanitary sewer system
- Long Term
 - » Maintain the existing system in a state of good repair. Continue requiring developers to reimburse the city for infrastructure extensions. For projects of greater public or community benefit, consider using city funds or a public/private partnership.

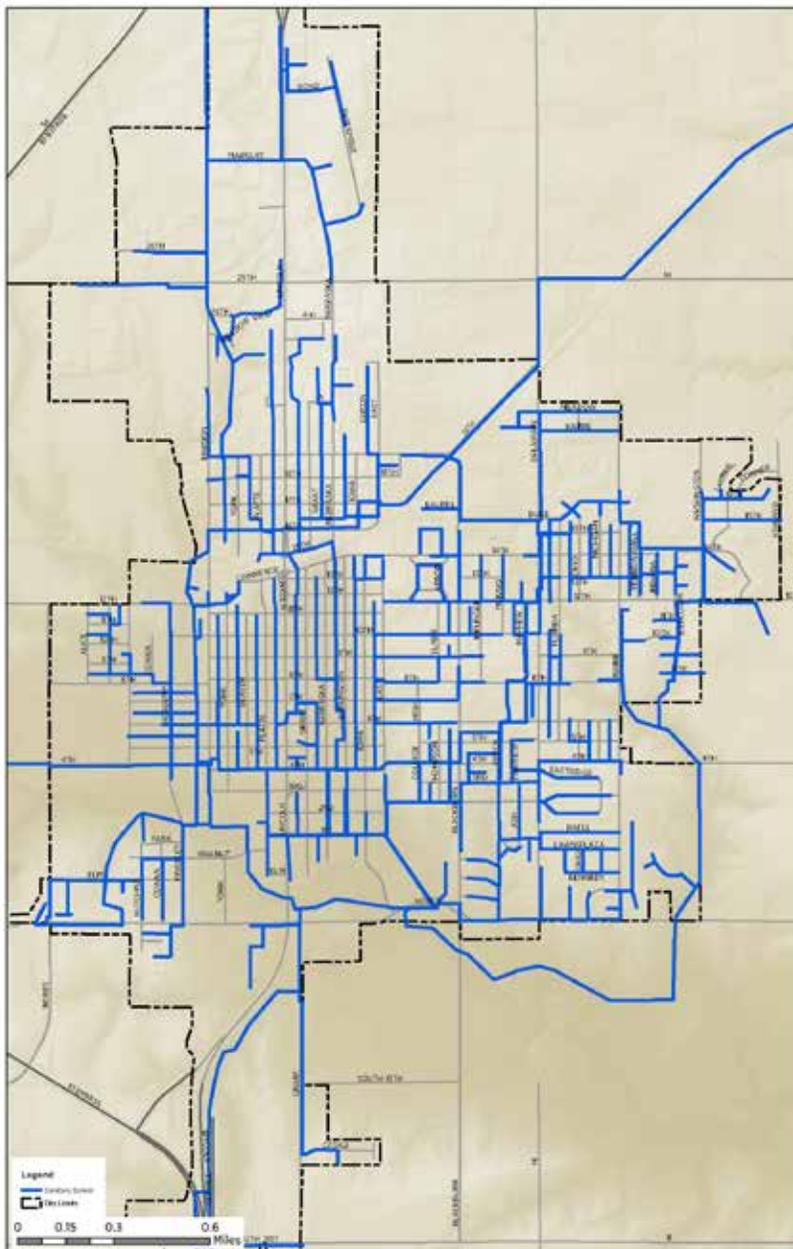


Figure 11.1: Sanitary Sewer System

WATER SYSTEM

The water system provides clean water to all households and businesses in the city. From the municipal wells which access the water from an aquifer to the system of pipes that distributes the ground water through the community, the water system is a vital part of the community and a responsibility of the city. The city well system includes eight wells in the core of the city, the oldest of which was built in 1968, and all of which are in good condition. In the past ten years, the city constructed an additional seven wells in the north-east quadrant of the community. In 2016, the city of York adopted a wellhead protection plan to restrict certain development practices and uses within a certain distance of the wells based on soil, hydrological, and geological conditions.

During the public engagement process, several residents noted a slight odor of sulfur in the drinking water. The cause appears to be that the soil in the new wellfield area is susceptible to sulfate reducing bacteria (SRBs). SRBs are produced when naturally occurring minerals dissolve over time and are released into the ground water. These bacteria live in oxygen-deficient environments. It is important to note that SRBs pose no human health hazards. The only impact of SRBs in water is a slight odor. Treatment for SRBs would include exposing the water to oxygen in the distribution process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Implement the recommendations of the wellhead protection plan
 - » Maintain the distribution system in a state of good repair through case-by-case replacement of water mains and pro-active investment in the pumps
- Short / Long Term Capital
 - » For significant infill development projects in a concentrated area, consider replacing water service lines to support the development
 - » Consider and explore the cost and viability of treating the water supply for SRBs

STORMWATER SYSTEM

York's stormwater system is responsible for the drainage of surface water from rainfall events. In a way, the city system expands upon the natural system of creeks, streams, and depressions that have evolved naturally with the land to manage rain events. Following the trend of development over the past 50 years, much of York's stormwater management system is an underground system of pipes which discharges water into the streams. The city currently replaces storm water pipes on a case-by-case basis and plans to use its inspection camera to complete a comprehensive inventory of its stormwater system.

While this system is effective and proven, it is costly to design for sufficient capacity to manage the largest rain events and the rapid discharge from these systems causes a decline in water quality and an increase in streambank erosion. Current best practices include a hybrid of traditional pipes to manage peak rainfall in addition to detention and/or retention ponds to manage smaller rain events. Based on state and national trends, it appears that additional regulations are on the short term horizon that would push communities toward requiring on-site retention/detention as a way to improve water quality and reducing flood events downstream.

In recent years, several properties have chosen to use stormwater detention ponds. Due to the flat topography in York, certain areas are very costly to serve with traditional underground stormwater pipes; one such area is the northeast quadrant of the community and, for this reason, the development concept proposes a greenway boulevard to manage storm water at the surface while also serving as a linear park and trail way.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Continue case-by-case replacement of stormwater pipes.
 - » Encourage the use of stormwater detention and retention ponds, especially on municipal sites to showcase the approach. Encourage projects which use stormwater ponds as a site amenity in projects of all scales, rather than hiding ponds behind buildings and consuming more costly land.
- Short / Long Term Capital
 - » Complete a comprehensive inventory of the stormwater sewer system
 - » Partner with the Natural Resources District to inventory and evaluate the performance of the existing system including stream condition and quality and areas with inadequate stormwater management such as the downtown district.
 - » Draft and implement regulations or guidelines on how to manage stormwater to create site amenities in the form of ponds, to reduce suspended pollutants, and to improve streambank integrity

LANDFILL

The York Area Solid Waste Agency is jointly owned by York County and the City of York and located at 1214 Road 15, York. The City Public Works Department operates the site. The disposal site serves the City of York and some adjacent counties and communities throughout York County.

Site facilities include landfill, transfer station, equipment storage building, construction and demolition disposal, and recycling facility. The agency has contracted with Mosaic to operate a recycling center on-site as a drop-off facility for general users with some collection provided for high volume users. Most recyclable materials are processed by baling, crushing and/or chipping prior to shipment. User fees finance the solid waste disposal operation. User fees are weight-based per ton with all material weighed over state-approved scales.

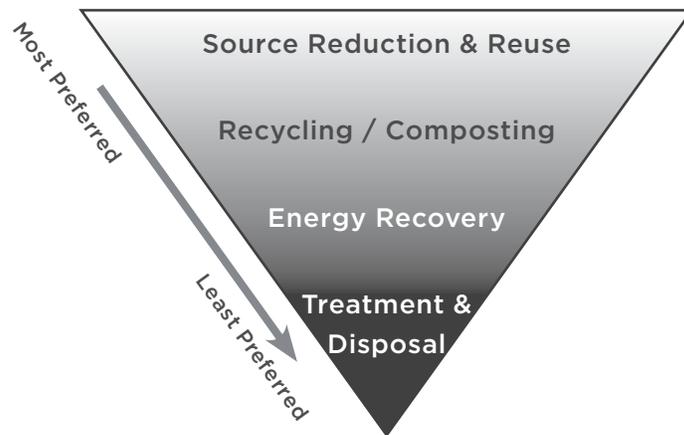
The Operations Superintendent can make provisions for no-charge concrete debris disposal at a different site. Recyclable materials are accepted at no charge, but must be separated from landfill trash. A trailer for depositing recyclable materials is located at 17th and Lincoln Avenue. Materials must be sorted into bins marked paper, plastic, cardboard, and cans.

The landfill has an estimated life of approximately 11 years in the current cell and approximately 45 years in the next cell. Beyond that time horizon, additional adjacent land will need to be purchased and permitted by the Department of Environmental Quality. Due to state and federal regulations, landfill permitting is increasingly difficult and therefore it should not be assumed that the expansion of the landfill will be permitted.

The current landfill is located in the City's wellhead protection area. Due to the potential for contamination an additional cell may not be opened and the landfill may be closed upon completion of the current cell.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain all equipment and facilities in a state of good repair
 - » Focus on implementing most preferred options on the Waste Management Hierarchy to extend the useful life of the local landfill
- Short/Long Term Capital
 - » Evaluate methane production levels and explore the need for a permanent methane system.
 - » Evaluate the need for a drying bed facility to handle sludge and products with a high biochemical oxygen demand (BOD)
 - » Invest in equipment to continue the operation of the landfill.



AIRPORT

The York Municipal Airport, a publicly-owned facility, is located one mile northwest of the City.

- Runway 17/35 is 5,900' x 100' concrete surface.
- Approaches are NDB, GPS, REIL, and VASIS.
- Hangers are available with rents starting at \$65 per month.
- Fuel service is provided with 100LL and Jet A fuel available.
- Airport courtesy vehicles are available.
- AWOS III P/T is available on the Airport site.

York Municipal Airport is operated and managed by the City of York. Aviation flight training, aircraft service, aircraft rental, and short-term hanger rental are provided by the on-site fixed base operator. All facilities are in good condition. A new large aircraft hangar was constructed in 2015. The FAA and AirNav provide the following operational statistics:

- Aircraft Based on the Field: 22
- Average Operations Per Day (based on 12month period ending 8/2014): 29*
 - » 59% Local General Aviation
 - » 38% Transient General Aviation
 - » 3% Air Taxi
 - » <1% Military

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain all facilities in a state of good repair including
- Short/Long Term Capital
 - » Complete the planned runway preservation project in 2017 estimated at \$1 million of capital investment
 - » Continue to evaluate existing facilities
 - » Coordinate with the business community on economic development initiatives



PUBLIC WORKS GARAGE

The City of York Public Works Garage is located at 303 East Nobes Road. The garage is home to the city's maintenance equipment, fleet of vehicles, and the city's maintenance shop. The facility is in fair condition and has seen ongoing maintenance and improvements.

Recommendations

- Ongoing
 - » Maintain the facility in a state of good repair
- Short Term Capital
 - » Install heat and insulation to the cold side of the building to keep vehicles warmed up and provide a better maintenance environment
- Long Term Capital
 - » Plan for the expansion of the public works garage to better suit the needs of York



CHAPTER TWELVE

IMPLEMENTATION

A plan's success should be measured by how it is used, how it is implemented, and how efficiently progress can be made.

The implementation of this plan is the responsibility of city leadership and its steadfast commitment to thoughtful and collaborative community development.



REALIZING THE VISION

The previous chapters, with their narratives and maps, are the core of the York Comprehensive Plan. This section highlights a plan for implementation by both public agencies and private decision-makers.

Actions include:

- **Development Policies and Actions.** The policies and actions proposed in the York Comprehensive Plan.
- **Annexation.** A phased annexation plan based on the areas of highest property for annexation.
- **Plan Maintenance.** A process for maintaining the plan and evaluating progress in meeting the plan's goals is recommended.
- **Plan Support.** A variety of funding sources should be sought to assist in the implementation of the plan.

Development Policies and Actions

The following tables in this chapter present a concise summary of the recommendations of the York Comprehensive Plan. These recommendations include various types of efforts:

- **Policies.** Policies require continuing efforts over a long period to implement the plan. In some cases, policies include specific regulatory or administrative actions.
- **Action Items.** Action Items include specific efforts or accomplishments by the community.
- **Capital Investments.** Capital Investments include public capital projects that will implement features of the York Comprehensive Plan.

Each recommendation is listed as part of its chapter in the York Comprehensive Plan. Some recommendations require ongoing implementation while others can be implemented within 0-5 years (short-term), 5-10 years (medium term), and other 10-20 years (long term).



LAND USE GOALS

- Encourage contiguous land development that maximizes the efficiency of infrastructure, builds and reinforces the character of York, and integrates environmental preservation and transportation decisions into land use decisions
- Incorporate green space and community features to complement existing development areas, to encourage and support new high quality development, and to catalyze reinvestment in underutilized areas
- Encourage and support private investment for the rehabilitation, reuse, or redevelopment of vacant or underused sites in developed areas of the city
- Continue to market and expand the industrial park to recruit new businesses and facilitate new business growth

LAND USE PRINCIPLES

*consult these principles with capital decisions
and private development projects*

- Use Urban Services Efficiently
- Promote Infill Development
- Preserve Open Space and Natural Resource Areas
- Promote Diverse Housing Options
- Plan for Community Amenities Such as Parks and Schools
- Provide a Multi-Modal and Connected Transportation Network
- Encourage Balanced and Connected Neighborhoods
- Enhance Public Safety and Minimize Hazard Risk
- Use Public Investments to Promote Private Development
- Make Decisions in a Transparent and Collaborative Manner

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Use the following resources to review development proposals and capital projects with respect to land use, site design, environmental constraints, and buffer treatments between adjacent land uses:
 - Future Land Use Map; Land Use Categories; Land Use Compatibility Matrix; Environmental Constraints Map
- Base all annexation decisions on the six-point annexation strategy and the annexation map
- Reinvestment strategies should be appropriate to the context of the site, be tailored to create the greatest amount of private market reaction, and include a balanced array of interventions. Interventions may include:
 - Assembling properties under common ownership to facilitate large scale projects
 - Recruiting developers for individual projects
 - Establish policies that provide incentives and assistance for individual property owners to upgrade or maintain their property
 - Establish policies to enforce property maintenance issues that encourage district wide improvement
- Examine the city's development regulations, identify and address barriers that limit the efficient use of land, the recommendations of this chapter, or the recommendations of this plan



COMMUNITY CHARACTER GOALS

- Promote public and private investment in the beautification of activity centers and corridors to welcome and engage visitors with a positive first impression of York
- Expand the amount and quality of greenspace in activity centers and along corridors to add beauty, amenities, and to responsibly manage stormwater
- Fashion the high visibility corridors and gateways as visually cohesive environments that foster a strong sense of community and pride through an attention to landscaping, architectural quality, and human scale
- Provide connections between community destinations, current and future, that improve access for all residents through signage, streetscape design, and physical pathways including walking and bicycle paths

COMMUNITY CHARACTER PRINCIPLES

consult these principles for public facility and roadway improvements, and private development projects

PLACE CHARACTER

- Principle 1: Define Areas of Civic Importance
- Principle 2: Reinforce the Distinctive Heart of the City [Downtown]
- Principle 3: Enhance Gateways
- Principle 4: Building Design and Scale Along Corridors

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

- Principle 1: Support Neighborhood Character
- Principle 2: Gateways and Neighborhood Connectors
- Principle 3: Neighborhood Form in Newly Developing Areas

GREEN CHARACTER

- Principle 1: A Complete Trail and Pathway System
- Principle 2: Implement Green Streets

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a York Civic Character Capital Plan to guide future character and to enhance existing character
 - Develop design and development guidelines and incorporate into the city's review procedure for public and private projects
- Integrate visual design improvements into public projects to lead by example
- Support reinvestment to enhance the character of existing projects such as the addition of landscaping, trails / sidewalks, or gateway signage
- Fund and implement catalyst projects that will create significant progress toward the implementation of the York Civic Character Capital Plan



TRANSPORTATION GOALS

- Provide safe and efficient transportation opportunities for all users of the system including walkers, bicyclists and drivers
- Use improvements and enhancements to the transportation system to support efficient and desirable patterns of community, neighborhood, and economic development
- Connect neighborhoods and community destinations with pedestrian and bicycle facilities to provide safe, healthy, and viable transportation alternatives
- Develop a system of wayfinding and theming to augment the transportation network to both connect and market Yorks' amenities and quality

TRANSPORTATION PRINCIPLES

consult these principles with decisions that will require new transportation infrastructure (public or private projects) or the improvement of existing roads

CREATE CONNECTIONS

- A robust transportation system is a well-connected one. These systems offer rapid and resilient mobility, allow prompt emergency service response, and the creation of neighborhoods.

BUILD COMPLETE STREETS

- Roads should provide mobility for all users regardless of their mode of transportation - drivers, walkers, and bicyclists should operate comfortably and safely across the street network.

PROMOTE YORK'S CHARACTER

- Roadways comprise the single greatest amount of land that is dedicated to public use. As such, these areas are a tremendous opportunity to reinforce the character of the city.

PROTECT AND ENHANCE INVESTMENTS

- The roadway network is the single greatest public infrastructure investment and, as such, it should be maintained in a state of good repair.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Village 81 Roadway Improvements.** A framework of road investments will guide development in the Highway 81 Corridor. The framework, accompanied by a master plan, should prioritize walkability, trail access, and park-adjacent commercial developments
- **North-South Connectivity.** A new north-south access community will alleviate long term congestion issues and support growth
- **Evaluate Downtown Transportation.** Explore opportunities to convert the downtown transportation system from one-way to two-way, to calm traffic, and incorporate multi-modal facilities
- **North Parkway.** Develop a parkway to anchor a new neighborhood that function as stormwater detention and as a trail amenity
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Network.** Develop a bicycle and pedestrian network that provides transportation and recreational service



PARK AND RECREATION GOALS

- Continue to maintain the current high level of service both in terms of park and resources facilities and the programs offered
- Evaluate the use of facilities at an ongoing basis and respond with action and investment accordingly to maintain a system that meets the needs of the population

PARK AND RECREATION PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

consult these principles for any developments (public or private) that impact the park level of service or park programming

OFFER RESIDENTS AN APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF PARK LAND

- A healthy park system offers a certain amount of parkland relative to the city's population. York performs well in this dimension and should seek to continue providing a healthy supply of parkland.

OFFER A DIVERSE ARRAY OF PARK TYPES

- A healthy park system offers a variety of different type of parks. York performs well in this dimension and should seek to continue providing a healthy assortment of park resources.

OFFER A STRONG DISTRIBUTION OF PARKS

- A healthy park system also offers a the geographic distribution of parkland and where every resident is within walking distance of a park amenity; this should be a guiding principle of community development
- York performs well in this dimension with only two opportunities to improve the level of service.
 - **West Side Park.** West York is underserved and a public park could serve as a catalyst to promote development and reinvestment
 - **Northeast Quadrant Parkway.** While currently undeveloped, it is the clear direction of residential growth. The greenway recommended in the parkway concept would anchor this neighborhood.

STATE OF GOOD REPAIR

- A city's park system is judged not only by the amount, type, and distribution of its parks, but also by the quality of these parks. Proactive measures should continue to ensure the amenities remain in a state of good repair, remain relevant, and effectively serve their target audience.



HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS

- Address the underlying causes of housing shortages in targeted market areas, especially rental and gateway housing
- Strengthen neighborhoods through investment in the existing housing stock and infrastructure and through policy to reinforce neighborhood quality
- Increase the availability of diverse housing options with new construction that makes York more welcoming and competitive for new residents and businesses

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRINCIPLES

consult these principles for programs and developments proposals that impact the city's housing market

CREATE NEIGHBORHOODS

- A neighborhood is fundamentally different than a subdivision: a neighborhood is an extension of the city framework for its residents to grow while a subdivision is nothing more than a collection of dwelling units
- **Connected with their surroundings (context).** A neighborhood should be connected with the landscape, with park and natural resources, and with the remainder of the community
- **Pedestrian friendly.** A resident should be able to experience their neighborhood and community as a pedestrian. To be pedestrian friendly, a neighborhood must offer sidewalks but also a public environment that is safe, comfortable, and worth visiting.

PROMOTE BALANCE AND VARIETY

- A housing market that offers a variety of housing styles and price-points provides greater opportunity for residents to establish their lives in York. Variety provides opportunities for residents to remain in York.

PROMOTE REINVESTMENT IN THE CORE

- York's existing neighborhoods are responsible for the small town character that many associate with York and, as such, these areas should be preserved, reinforced, and supported as a vital piece of housing and community stock.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement the recommendations of the York County Housing Study
- Support the construction of a variety of housing types at a variety of price-points
- Promote the creation of neighborhoods



DOWNTOWN GOALS

- Enhance the flow of traffic in the downtown in ways that will both improve safety and access to businesses while conveying the importance of downtown as a destination
- Establish downtown as a neighborhood where residents and visitors can find culture, housing, jobs, and services in the heart of the community
- Continually identify and implement catalyst projects to improve the appearance and function of the district while facilitating increased self-sustaining private market investment

DOWNTOWN PRINCIPLES

consult these principles for strategies to strengthen the core of the city

STRENGTHEN PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS

- Enhance connections to: York College, Beaver Creek Trail, Adjacent Neighborhoods, Business and Vicic Facility Interests, Parks and Community Destinations, Neighborhood Reinvestment Sites

STRENGTHEN PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH DISTRICT STAKEHOLDERS

- Enhance connections to: City of York, York County Economic Development Corporation, Holtus Convention Center, Gateway Facilities, and Business Owners and Association.

SUPPORT KEYSTONE PROJECTS

- A keystone project is one that serves to create additional action by: (1) succeeding in an untested market, (2) demonstrating public commitment to support reinvestment, and/or (3) uniting stakeholders in a meaningful and transformative project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a targeted downtown plan
- Design and implement a keystone project
- Use the momentum generated by the keystone project to enable additional progress toward downtown revitalization
- Support traffic calming initiatives throughout the downtown district including, but not limited to, conversion of the one-way streets to two-way, the reduction of lanes and cartway width, and the addition of multi-modal features



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Support the expansion of York's economy by taking a broad view of 'economic development' which includes improving factors that impact business operations and expansion efforts, such as workforce housing, quality of life, and overall community image
- Market and expand upon the character, quality of life, amenities, and visitor experiences of York to recruit new residents and businesses
- Support and facilitate private business investment through public-private partnerships including the use of municipal real estate, financing tools, and infrastructure

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

consult these principles for programs, efforts, and capital programming to strengthen the local economy

CRAFT A HOLISTIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- Business Recruitment
- Business Retention
- Business Incubation and Acceleration
- Workforce Development

TARGET THE REGIONAL MARKET BASE

- The number of residents in York and the amount of disposable income they can contribute to the local economy will always be limited. However, the Interstate 80 corridor provides York with a larger customer base that York (and its business community) can embrace. By positioning this I80/Hwy 81 Corridor as an extension of the community, the highway amenities can become community amenities.

DOWNTOWN AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- A downtown is the lasting impression that many residents, visitors, and businesses have of a community. A downtown is more valuable than the individual businesses that it comprises. By strengthening the quality of the downtown district, these efforts will promote reinvestment in the downtown, at the periphery, and will offer a stronger impression to all visitors, including prospective businesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a comprehensive LB840 strategy and pursue voter approval
- Target financial incentives to support reinvestment in key reuse/redevelopment sites including the former school sites and other strategic locations
- Develop a master plan for Village 81, the North Parkway Neighborhood, and the School Reinvestment Corridor have the ability to create a transformative impact.
- Expand incentive districts to allow for the use of tax increment financing on key opportunity areas.



ENERGY & RESOURCE CONSERVATION GOALS

- Energy strategies should support affordable, efficient, and reliable services and find ways to expand the city's job base
- Policies and strategies should reinforce the relationship between energy use and land use patterns, transportation, and community health
- Partnerships should be created between the city, businesses, residents, and utility providers to expand the alternative energy options used within the city

ENERGY AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

consult these principles for energy and resource conservation programs, initiatives, policies, and decisions related to public facilities

ADOPT A BROAD VIEW OF “RESOURCE EFFICIENCY”

- Energy efficiency is often viewed with a focus that is too narrow. Efficiency must challenge the premise of the status quo (only a limited amount of efficiency can be achieved) when energy is the only variable in focus; a shift in the way a building or neighborhood is built can have a much greater impact on energy and resource efficiency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider energy efficiency and resource efficiency in all public projects and integrate if practical
- Continue collecting energy use data and incorporate into decisions related to public facilities
- Assemble a resource toolkit to help residents, commercial tenants, and industries undertake energy efficiency improvements and resource conservation efforts.



PUBLIC FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

- Use infrastructure extensions and enhancements to support efficient and desirable patterns of community, neighborhood, and economic development
- Continue to use ‘citizen guided investment’ to identify potential projects and evaluate funding priorities
- Provide public services in a manner that balances cost efficiency and level of service while using innovative funding sources when possible

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

consult these principles and recommendations when evaluating public facilities and infrastructure of projects that may have a significant impact on the ability to serve development

MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF SERVICE

- York currently offers a high level of service through its public facilities and infrastructure. This should continue through maintenance and attention to how public infrastructure will need to respond to a growing and changing community.

MAINTAIN FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN A STATE OF GOOD REPAIR

- One of the highest infrastructure cost comes from deferred maintenance which also reduces the overall level of service that a facility can offer. Investments should be targeted to ensure that facilities and infrastructure are maintained in a state of good repair.

CONTINUALLY EVALUATE FACILITIES AND THE LEVEL OF SERVICE TO REMAIN RESPONSIVE TO THE CHANGING WORLD

- York’s public infrastructure and facilities should be evaluated on an ongoing basis with interventions that will promote: a state of good repair, a reasonable longevity of the facility, and a high level of service to residents of York.

REFER TO THE CHAPTER FOR INDIVIDUAL FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- As with other sections of the plan, this section contains detailed recommendations that cannot be addresses in an overview. This section should be reviewed in detail as part of a capital improvements plan and be updated at regular intervals.

APPENDIX

The development of this plan included the collection of a wealth of information, analysis, and complementary planning efforts.

The appendix contains these supplemental materials not included in the body of the comprehensive plan.



FIGURE A.1: Traffic Incidents by Location

INCIDENT LOCATION	NUMBER OF INCIDENTS (5/2014 - 4/2017)
LINCOLN AVE(US81) & DAVID DR	20
LINCOLN AVE(US81) & RAMP TO WB I80	7
2ND ST & LINCOLN AVE	6
E 9TH ST & GRANT AVE	6
I80 WB RAMP AT LINCOLN AVE(US81)	6
LINCOLN AVE(US81) & S 21ST ST	6
E 6TH ST & NEBRASKA AVE	5
5TH ST & LINCOLN AVE	4
E 6TH ST & GRANT AVE	4
LINCOLN AVE(US81) & FRONTAGE RD-N OF S 50TH ST	4
LINCOLN AVE(US81) & RAMP TO EB I80	4
LINCOLN AVE(US81) AT DAVID DR	4
W 6TH ST & PLATTE AVE	4
25TH ST & LINCOLN AVE	3
8TH ST & LINCOLN AVE	3
BLACKBURN AVE N OF E 2ND ST	3
CITY STREET	3
DAVID DR AT LINCOLN AVE(US81)	3
E 6TH ST & BLACKBURN AVE	3
E NOBES RD & BLACKBURN AVE	3
LINCOLN AVE & NOBES RD	3
LINCOLN AVE S OF NOBES RD	3
LINCOLN AVE(US81) & EB RAMP TO I80	3
WISCONSIN AVE N OF E 12TH ST	33

Source: City of York

TRAFFIC SYSTEM ANALYSIS

The review of traffic incident data reveals locations in the overall transportation system that are problematic and should be evaluated.

Figure A.1 summarizes traffic incidents by locations (included are locations with three or more incidents during the reporting period). This indicates a level of regularity and the locations highlighted in this list should be evaluated for the following factors:

- Speed; Roadway Design; Severity of Incidents; Number of Movements and Potential Incident Zones

Based on information provided by the city of York, the following issues exist, should be evaluated in detail, and resolved. The recommended

- Undesirable performance issues: intersection of David Drive, 35th Street, and Highway 81. A traffic study is currently underway by the Nebraska Department of Transportation. The city and the NDOT should implement the recommendations of the study currently underway.
- Site visibility issue: intersections of 9th Street and Lincoln Avenue. This issue should be studied and resolved.
- Primary obstacle for non-motorized transportation is the lack of marked or signalized crossings over arterial or collector streets throughout the city. The city should identify these locations using the Functional Classification Map, develop appropriate interventions for each crossing, and implement the projects in a phased manner.
- Potential traffic capacity issue: intersection of East 12th Street and Delaware Avenue. The city should complete a traffic analysis, identify alternatives to resolve the issue, and implement the most appropriate intervention.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

A listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is contains both the honorary title and financial incentives available for qualifying historic renovations. Beyond the recognition, these properties represent the cultural heritage of York and should be preserved, reused, and reinvigorated. Listed properties are contained in Figure A.2

NRHP Eligible

Any structure aged more than 50 years may be eligible for the NRHP if it meets one of the following criteria:

- associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or that have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Potential candidates follow:

- Heritage buildings on York College Campus; Former York Middle School; Former York Elementary School; Former Lincoln School; Additional to be investigated by local historians or the State of Nebraska.

FIGURE A.2: National Register Sites in York County Nebraska (Updated November 2010)

 Official Nebraska Government Website

 STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Nebraska National Register Sites in York County

Rural Sites



[W. S. Jeffery Farmstead, pdf](#) [YK00-002] Listed 1982/07/26

The homestead of the W. S. Jeffery family, near Benedict, is a fine example of a prosperous farmstead in eastern Nebraska dating from 1878 to the present. The largest and oldest structure is the board and batten horse barn, built in 1879-80. On the opposite side of the road, the Queen Anne style house, built in 1900-1902, is placed on a slightly higher elevation than the barn. It is surrounded by a well-maintained yard outlined by a windbreak, rows of trees and shrubs, and a decorative wire fence. Other structures of the farm group include the 1899 cow barn, the 1930 hog house, brooder house, milk house, wash house, cob house, privy, and windmill. William and Laura (Dickey) Jeffery, of English descent, were early settlers in the area, and Jeffery became one of York County's most successful farmers and stockmen. Their eldest son, Orman S. Jeffery, continued to operate the farm and became a prominent York County landowner.

Urban Sites



[Bradshaw Town Hall, pdf](#) [YK03-001] Listed 1984/05/31

The Bradshaw Town Hall, a two-story brick municipal building constructed in 1902-3, is a good example of the town hall, a building type that became common in many Nebraska communities in the early twentieth century. The hall served as a public meeting place for local civic and governmental activities.



[Clem's Opera House, pdf](#) [YK04-001] Listed 1988/09/28

Located in Gresham the two-story brick building was constructed about 1891 by local businessmen W. N. Hylton, N. Clem, and A. L. Clem. The first level was retail space, with the opera house located on the upper floor. The opera house has a box office and stage with trapdoor. Later known as the Gresham Opera House, it offered entertainment such as "The Mysterious Harrell," magician, and "The Great LaWayne, an Australian Hypnotist."



[York Public Library, pdf](#) [YK11-010] Listed 1990/12/04

Constructed in 1901-02 in York, the library is a fine example of educational architecture. Designed by Marrison H. Vail, the building incorporates elements of the Romanesque Revival-style of architecture. The York Public Library represents one of a small number of libraries built in the state prior to, and without Andrew Carnegie funding. Mrs. Lydia Woods, a local citizen, donated monies to build the facility, the first permanent home for the library since its early beginnings in the 1880s.



[York Subways, pdf](#) [YK11-051] Listed 1992/06/29

In 1938-39 Nebraska's Bureau of Roads and Bridges undertook a federal aid project. It entailed grading, paving, and culvert construction along a thirty-eight-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 81 between Fairmont and Osceola. Included in this was construction of three underpasses in York, designed to carry the highway under 14th and 15th Streets and the tracks of the C.B.&Q. Railroad. Bureau engineers developed plans for the three concrete/steel structures in August 1938 and awarded a contract to Peter Kiewit's Sons a month later. Using ornamental iron railings and stairs fabricated in Omaha, the Kiewit crew completed the three York subways the following year. Although the three structures differ in detail, the three underpasses are structurally similar as concrete rigid frames. The York subways have functioned in place in unaltered condition since their completion in 1939.

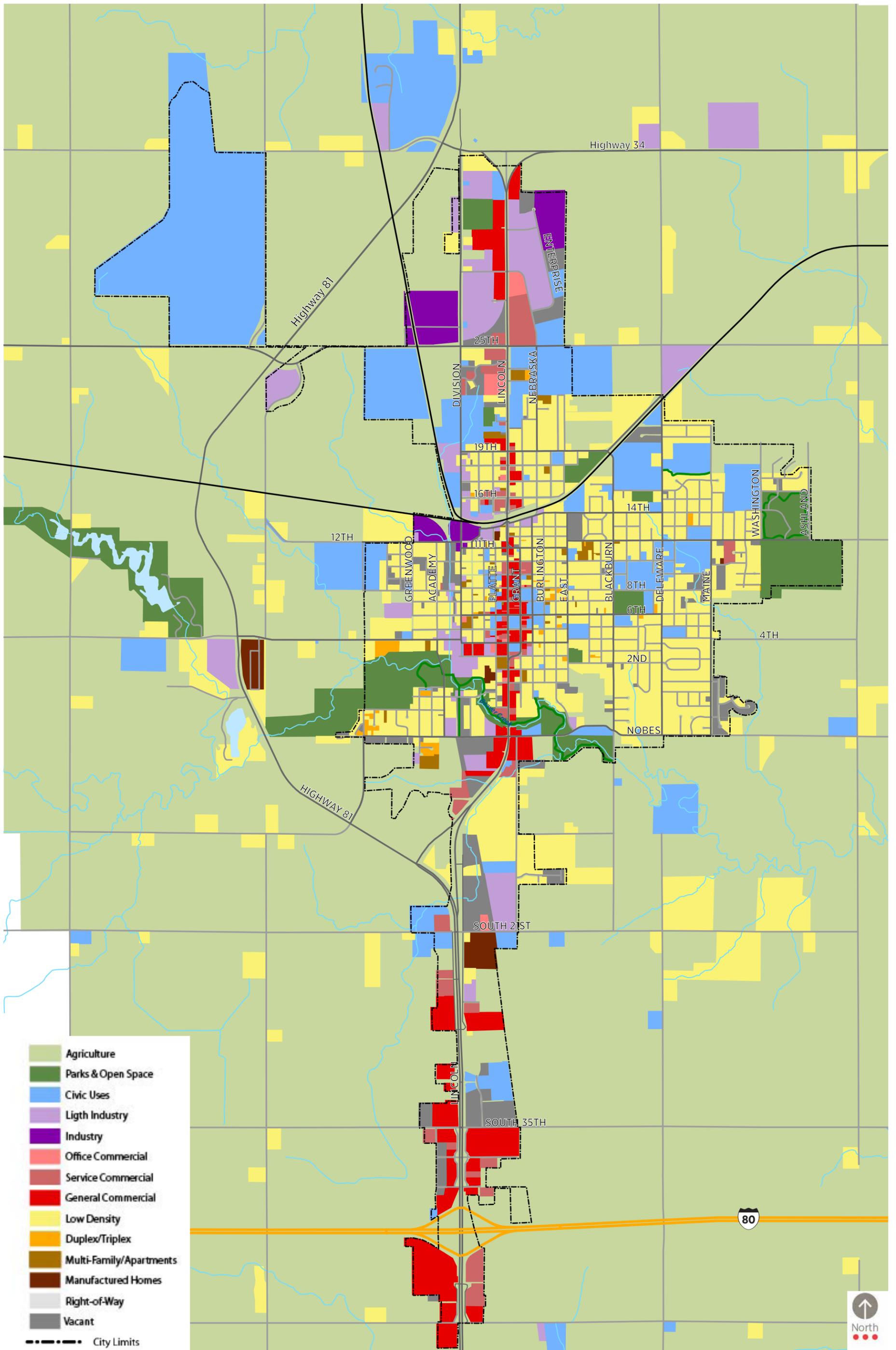


FIGURE A.3: Existing Land Use Map (City Limits)

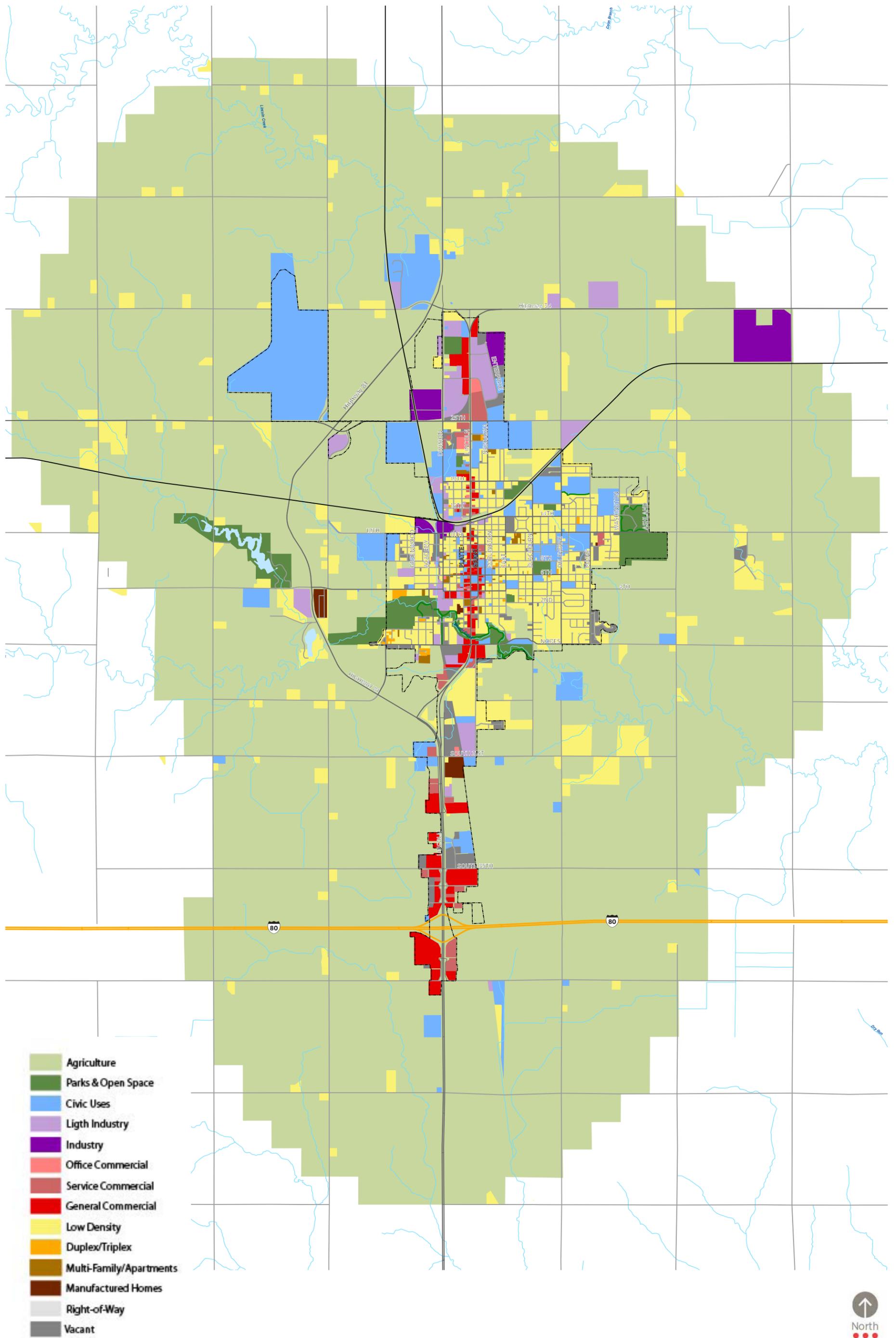


FIGURE A.4: Existing Land Use Map (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction)

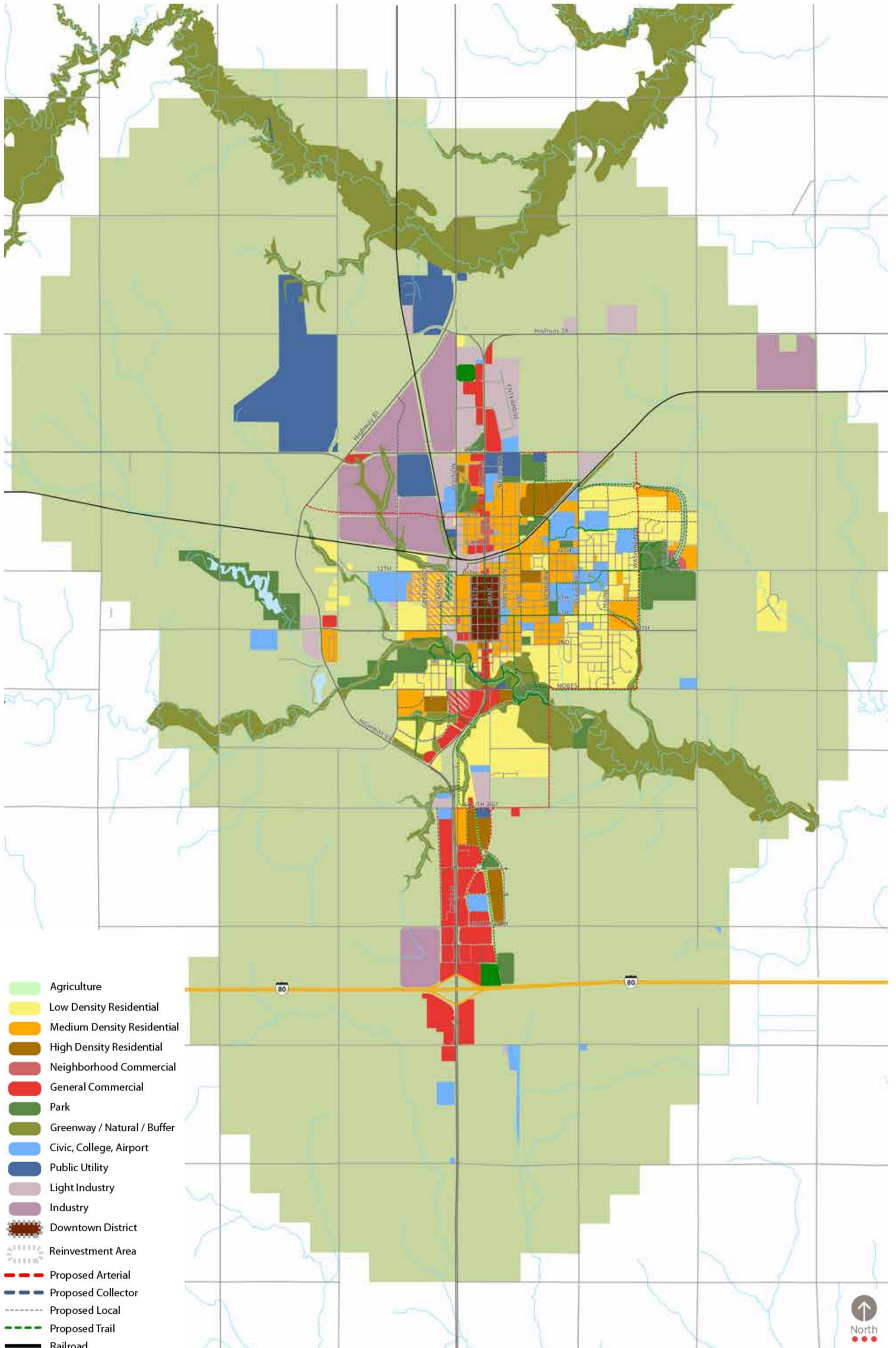


FIGURE A.5: Future Land Use Map (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction)

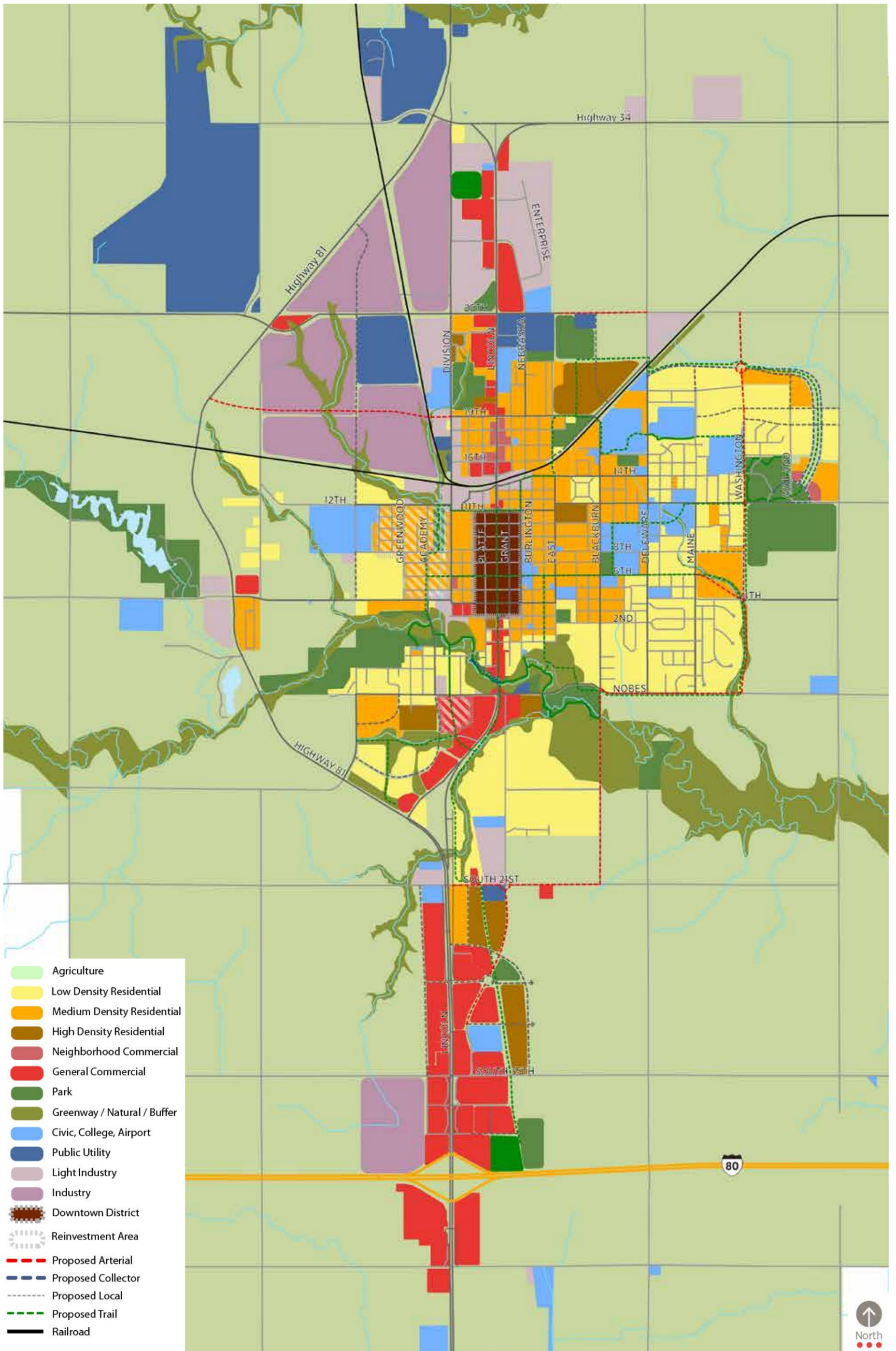


FIGURE A.6: Future Land Use Map (City)

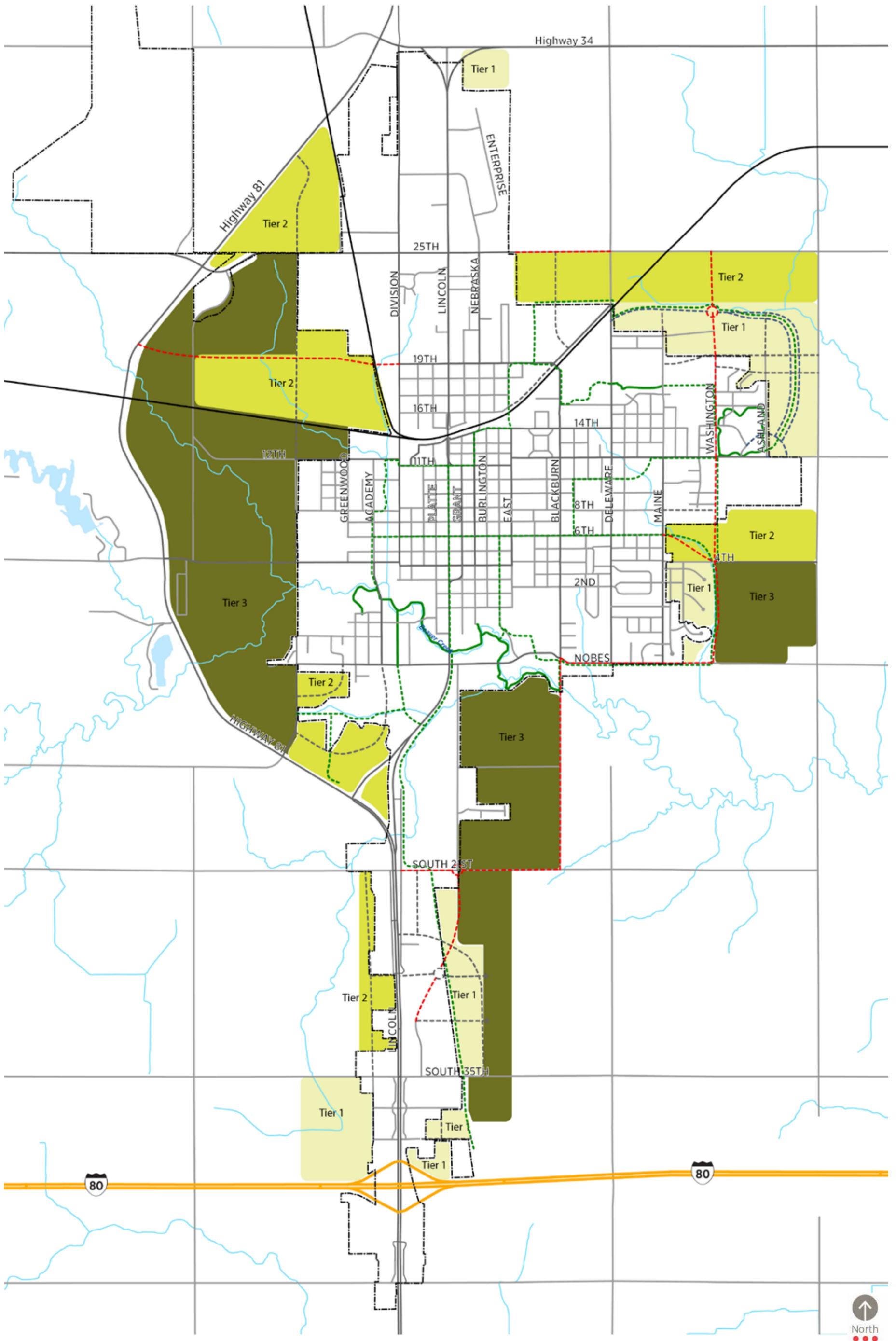


FIGURE A.7: Annexion Priority Areas

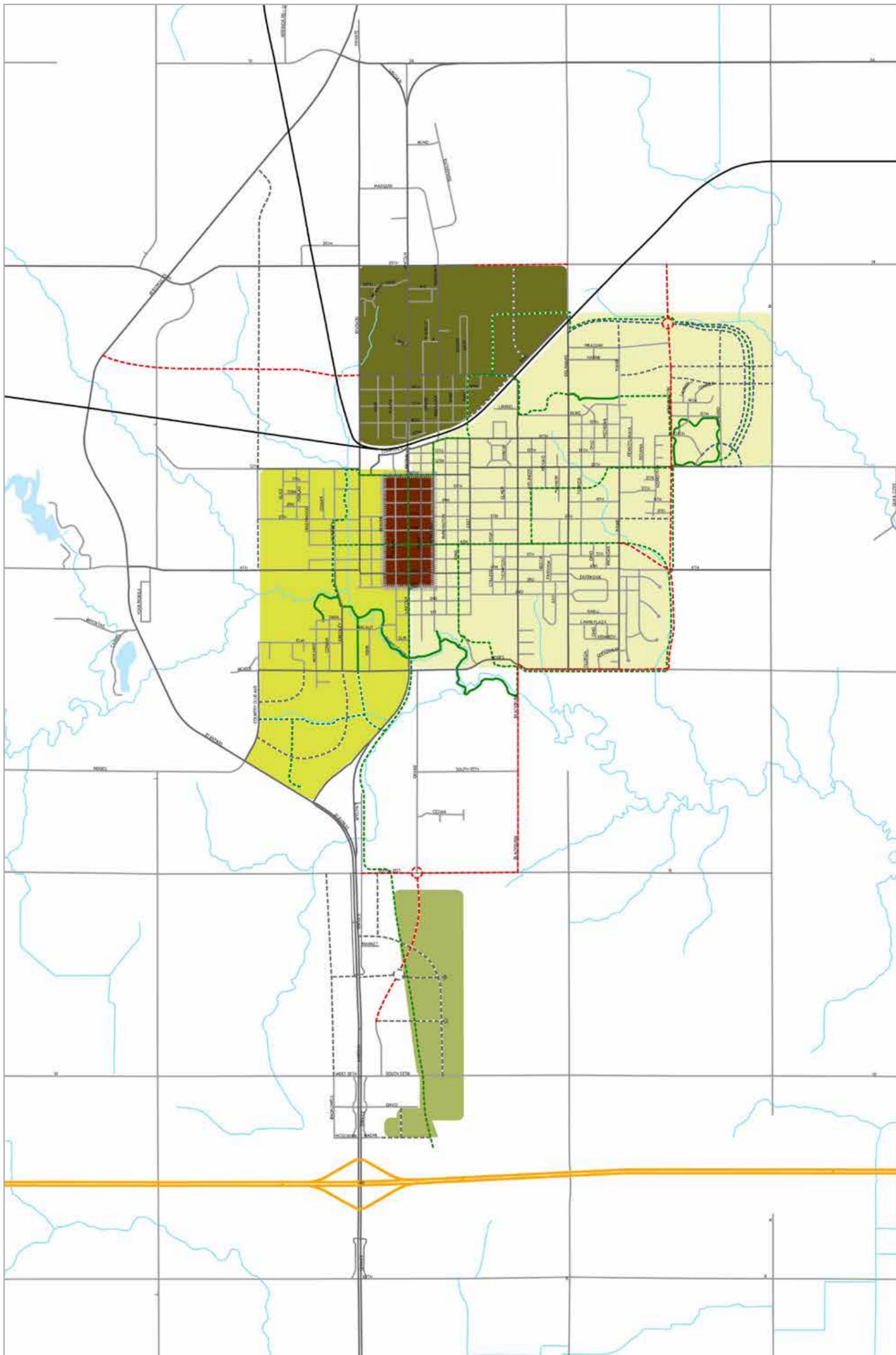


FIGURE A.8: Potential Neighborhood Enhancement Districts

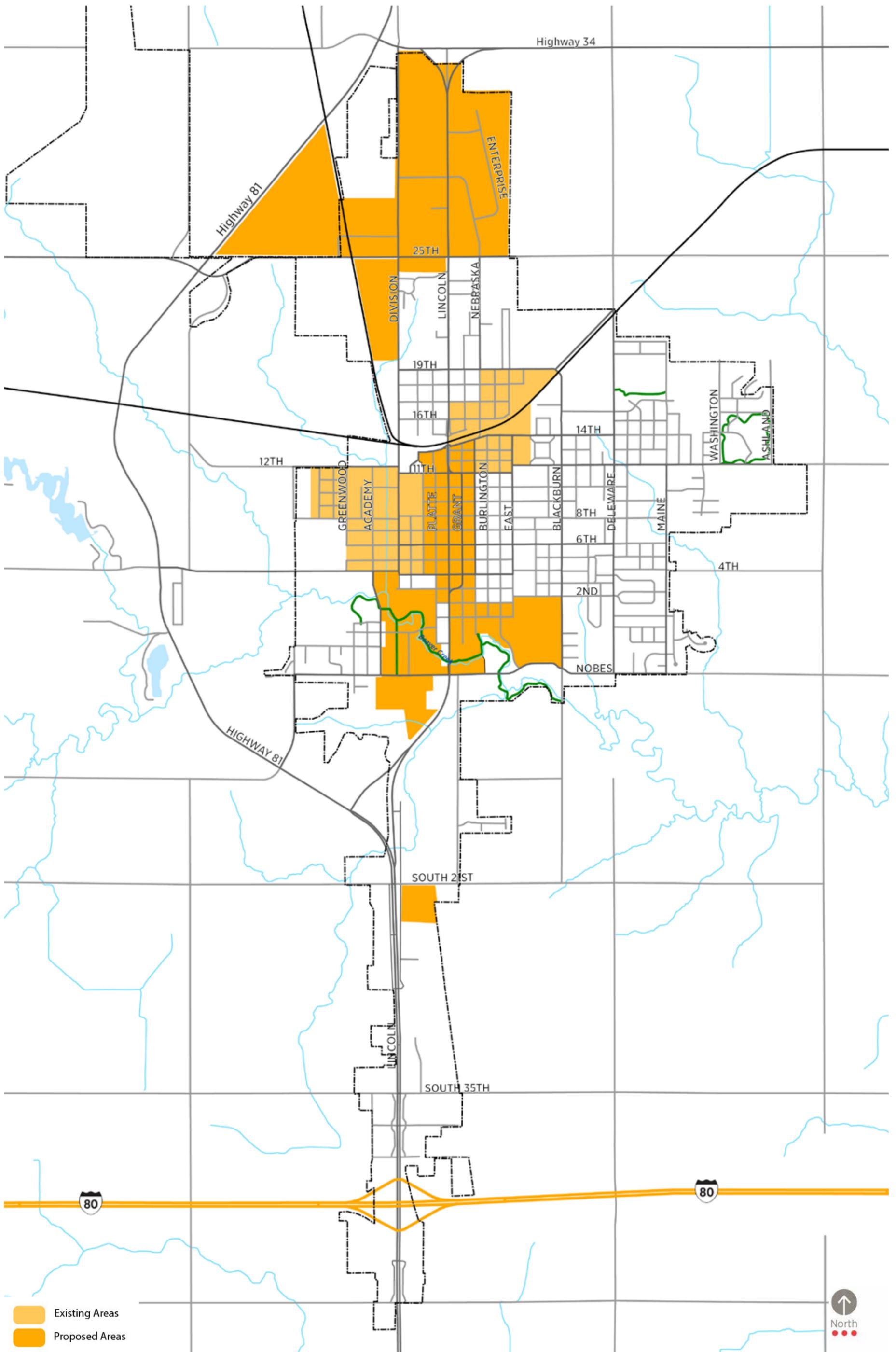


FIGURE A.9: Blight Areas (Existing and Proposed)

