



Grand Island, Nebraska

Comprehensive Development Plan 2025



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Marvin Planning Consultants, David City, Nebraska

RESOLUTION 2025-38

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Grand Island are committed to the orderly plan necessary to accommodate future growth and transportation needs of the City; and

WHEREAS, on July 13, 2004, by Resolution 2004-154, the City of Grand Island approved and adopted the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan and associated figures and maps as prepared by the firm of prepared by JEO Consulting Group, Inc of Wahoo, Nebraska; and

WHEREAS, numerous changes and amendments to the Plan have been approved since its adoption in 2004; and

WHEREAS, the Hall County Regional Planning Commission has entered into an agreement with Marvin Planning Consultants Inc. in 2022 to provide professional planning services in regard to updating the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, and

WHEREAS, Marvin Planning Consultants delivered a final draft of the City's Comprehensive Plan in December of 2024 to Regional Planning staff, and

WHEREAS, the Hall County Regional Planning Commission held a public hearing on January 8, 2025 and subsequently recommended the acceptance and adoption of the updated Comprehensive Development Plan,

WHEREAS, the Grand Island City Council held a public hearing on January 28, 2025,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA, that the City of Grand Island hereby approves and adopts the 2025 Comprehensive Development Plan.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska, January 28, 2025.


Roger G. Steele, Mayor

Attest:


Jill Granere, City Clerk



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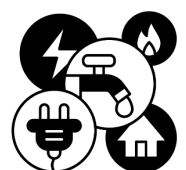


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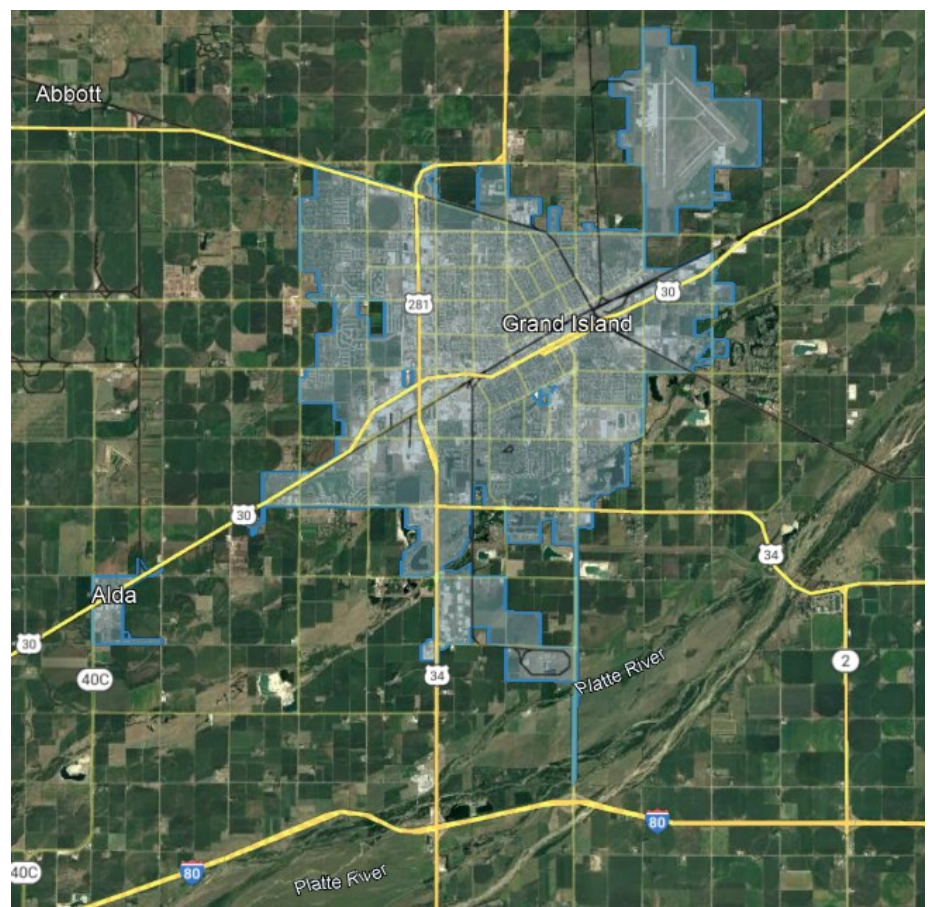
Chapter 1 Introduction

A “grand” city doesn’t just happen. A place worthy of the name Grand Island is the result of the hard work of generations who have called—and will call—this place home. This Comprehensive Plan is a guide and map describing how the people of Grand Island have told the story of the journey to their future home.

LOCATION

Grand Island is located in south central Nebraska, on the north bank of the Platte River. With a population of over 50,000, it is the fourth largest city in Nebraska, and the core of the Grand Island Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The MSA includes Hall, Howard, and Merrick counties; Hamilton County was part of the MSA from 2012, when first designated by the US Office of Management and Budget (OMB), until 2023.

Figure 1.1: City of Grand Island



Source: GoogleMaps

Grand Island is accessible from Interstate 80, US Highways 281, 30, and 34, and Nebraska Highway 2, as well as the Central Nebraska Regional Airport. The city is known as the retail hub of central Nebraska, offering lodging, dining, shopping, entertainment, service programs, and information to the 30-plus rural communities in a 90-mile surrounding area.

US Interstate 80 offers three entrances to the city of Grand Island at Exits 312, 314, and 318. US Highway 30 connects Grand Island to Columbus to the north east and Kearney to the west. US 34 parallels I-80 from Lincoln. US 281 traverses north central Nebraska, and combines with US 34 to Hastings south of Grand Island. Grand Island is part of the "Tri-Cities" area including the cities of Hastings and Kearney.

HISTORY

In 1857, an expedition of 35 German-speaking immigrants from Schleswig-Holstein set out from Davenport, Iowa. A Davenport banking house called Chubb Brothers and Barrows supported the group. They were instructed to choose their settlement's location within an area named by French Fur Traders as "LaGrande Île", a big island in the Platte River. The group arrived at their destination and began their settlement on July 4, 1857. By September, log houses had been constructed from ash, elm, and cottonwood timber near the river island.

Pawnee Indians lived along the Platte River for hundreds of years, building communities of earth lodges while farming and hunting buffalo. Fur traders traveled along the Platte River in the later 1700s and early 1800s.

After 1836, emigrants set forth across the Great Plains bound for the West. The US Army had constructed the second Fort Kearny at the far end of "LaGrande Île" in 1849. The fort became the eastern anchor of the Great Platte River Road at the junction of the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails, and the later Overland Stage Route. Grand Island's farmers found a ready market for their produce at the fort and among travelers.

In the spring of 1866, surveyors for the Union Pacific railroad laid out and platted a town called Grand Island, north of the Platte River. On July 8, 1868, the railroad extended to Grand Island and the settlement on the Platte River moved north. By 1870, the US Census reported Grand Island's population had grown to 1,057 people.

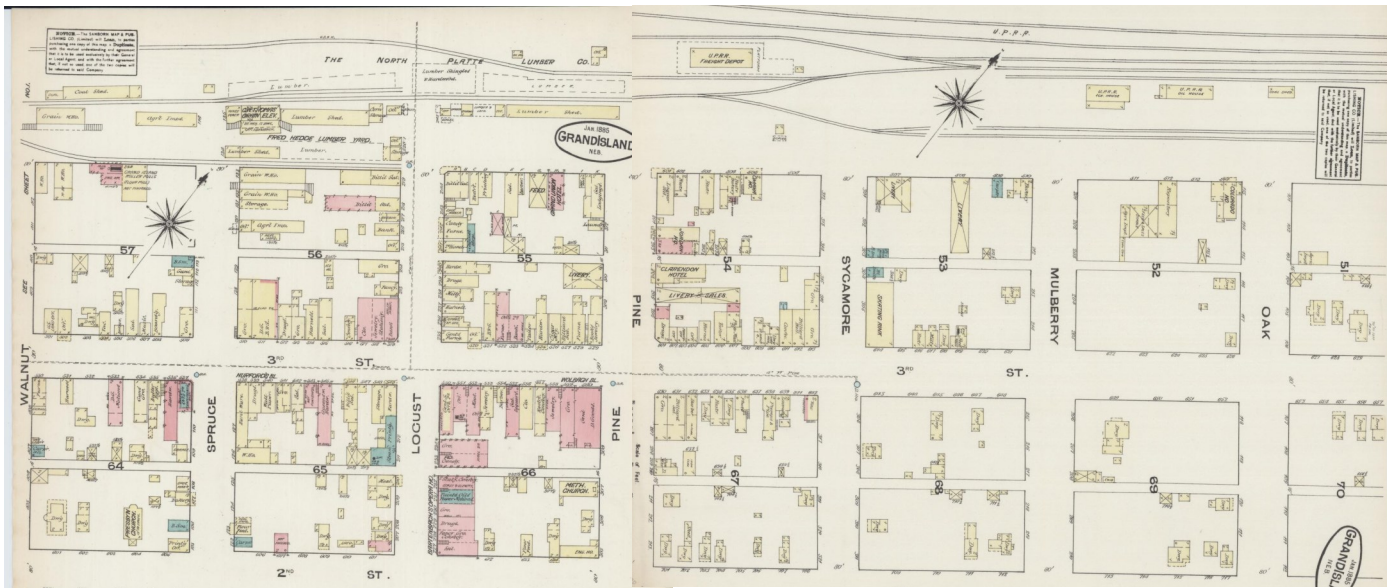
The City of Grand Island was incorporated in 1872. The first Hall County Court House was built in Grand Island in 1873, and the first fire company organized in 1874. Telephone service was established in 1880. In 1882, an addition was constructed to the Fire House to serve as City Hall. Gas and electric service was established in 1884. The City waterworks began service in 1886. The first City municipal power plant was placed in service in April of 1907. Grand Island Utilities also supplied ice to the community until 1956.

The Grand Island and Hastings railroad was completed in 1879, which connected the city to the Republican Valley. In 1884, the Burlington railroad opened a branch line from Aurora to Grand Island, which was intended to



Grand Island, Nebraska, by John Vachon, 1942
Source: Library of Congress

Figure 1.2: Sanborn Maps, 1885



Source: Library of Congress

connect to the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern railways, to provide alternate access to the West Coast. In 1887, an intra-city railway was constructed to transport citizens from their homes to the growing central business district.

Manufacturing plants were established in Grand Island with competitive rail service. By the 1880s, sugar beets were introduced as a crop in Nebraska, and a sugar beet processing factory was built in the southwest part of Grand Island. This was the first sugar beet factory built and operated in the United States. The Grand Island Sugar Palace was erected in 1890 to house an exposition devoted to the production and processing of sugar beets.

In the 20th century, Grand Island's manufacturing base grew, especially in meatpacking

The plan is only one of several tools within the toolbox helping guide the City into the future.

and farm equipment. For example, The case IH Grand Island Plant began production in 1965, and continues to produce combines for the North American market. Manufacturing continues to attract a growing workforce to the city.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Development Plan is the City of Grand Island's primary policy guide addressing the location, character, and type of growth and development anticipated over the next 20 years. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to:

- I. Promote orderly growth and development for the community;
- II. Provide policy guidelines to enable citizens and elected officials to make better informed decisions about the future of the community;

- III. Provide a guideline for the location of future development and uses within the planning jurisdiction of Grand Island;
- IV. Provide a vision and direction for the future planning period of the city, and;
- V. Act as an information and management tool for community leaders to use in their decision-making process when considering future developments.

The Comprehensive Plan **is not a static document**; it should evolve as changes in the land use, population, or local economy occur during the planning period (2025 to 2045).

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Comprehensive Development Plan is about the planning as much as the resulting plan. The comprehensive planning process begins with public and

stakeholder outreach. This includes direct contact with residents, employers, and investors, as well as surveys and a project website, including crowdsource mapping and engagement on the MindMixer online platform. Results are presented in the next chapter.

The data collection phase occurs in parallel with public outreach, in conjunction with and informing the development of goals and policies. Data are collected to provide a snapshot of past and present conditions within the community and region. Data analysis provides the basis to develop forecasts for future land use demand, as well as future

"The Plan acts as a tool to develop a road map that guides the community through change."

-Comprehensive Development Plan: Planning Towards 2024

needs for housing, facilities, and infrastructure. As part of this process, the existing city's existing plans were reviewed by the planning team, including the *Comprehensive Development Plan: Planning Towards 2024*, prepared for the City of Grand Island and Hall County in 2004.

The development of general goals and policies is based on data analysis and current and future issues identified by the community and its residents. These goals and policies are intended to be practical guidelines for addressing existing conditions and guiding future growth.

The Comprehensive Plan is a **guidebook** designed to identify, assess, and develop actions and policies with the following elements:

- Community Engagement
- Population;
- Housing;
- Economic development;
- Community facilities;
- Parks and recreation;
- Public safety;
- Public health & livability
- Communications, utilities, and energy;
- Sustainable Development;
- Hazard mitigation;
- Land use;
- Annexation; and
- Transportation.

This document is also a management tool containing recommendations which will be of value to the community and its residents when implemented. The tools necessary to carry out the recommendations will be

identified throughout the process. Implementation of the development policies contained within the Comprehensive Plan is dependent upon adoption of the plan by the City's governing body and future leadership exercised to implement the plan.

PLAN PREPARATION

The Plan was prepared under the direction of the Hall County Regional Planning Commission, with the assistance and participation of the Grand Island City Council, City staff, the Plan Review Committee, and citizens of Grand Island and the Tri-Cities region. The planning consultant team

The comprehensive plan is a vision presented in text, graphics, and tables representing the desires of the county and its residents for the future.



PLAN COMPONENTS

Nebraska State Statutes require the inclusion of certain elements in a Comprehensive Plan. A "Comprehensive Development Plan," as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 19-903 (Reissued 1997), shall meet the following descriptions and requirements:

The regulations and restrictions authorized by sections [19-901](#) to [19-915](#) shall be in accordance with a comprehensive development plan which shall consist of both graphic and textual material and shall be designed to accommodate anticipated long-range future growth which shall be based upon documented population and economic projections. The comprehensive development plan shall, among other possible elements, include:

(1) A land-use element which designates the proposed general distributions, general location, and extent of the uses of land for agriculture, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, education, public buildings and lands, and other categories of public and private use of land;

(2) The general location, character, and extent of existing and proposed major roads, streets, and highways, and air and other transportation routes and facilities;

(3) The general location, type, capacity, and area served of present and projected or needed community facilities including recreation facilities, schools, libraries, other public buildings, and public utilities and services; and

(4)(a) When next amended after January 1, 1995, an identification of sanitary and improvement districts, subdivisions, industrial tracts, commercial tracts, and other discrete developed areas which are or in the future may be appropriate subjects for annexation and (b) a general review of the standards and qualifications that should be met to enable the municipality to undertake annexation of such areas. Failure of the plan to identify subjects for annexation or to set out standards or qualifications for annexation shall not serve as the basis for any challenge to the validity of an annexation ordinance.

Regulations shall be designed to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers; to promote health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to secure safety from flood; to avoid undue concentration of population; to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements; to protect property against blight and depreciation; to protect the tax base; to secure economy in governmental expenditures; and to preserve, protect, and enhance historic buildings, places, and districts.

Such regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, for the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such municipality.

Planned growth will make the City more effective in serving residents, more efficient in using resources, and able to meet the standard of living and quality of life every individual desires.

consisted of experienced professionals from Marvin Planning Consultants, Inc., Community Planning Insights, MSP Design, and Leland Consulting Group.

The time period for achieving the goals and objectives identified in the Grand Island Comprehensive Plan is 20 years. However, the community should review the plan annually and update the document every ten years (by 2033), or when major, unanticipated opportunity arises.

The Comprehensive Plan presents where Grand Island has come from, where it is today, and the likely direction it may be heading into the future. Performing regular review and undertaking updates every ten years or so will allow the community to incorporate ideas and developments not known at the time of the present comprehensive planning process.

GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The Grand Island City Council is the governing body for the City of Grand Island, which is classified as a City of the first class. Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 16-901 and § 19-925 *et. seq.*, the planning and zoning jurisdiction for the City includes the corporate area and

unincorporated area **two miles** and adjacent to its corporate boundaries, or as provided by Neb. Rev. Stat, §16-902.

The Hall County Regional Planning Commission was established by an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement in 1967, with the basic purpose to establish and maintain a cooperative and comprehensive approach to land use planning among the region's member municipalities. Avoiding duplication of staff and services, this approach has also proven to be both efficient and cost effective in the delivery of land use planning services.

The Regional Planning Commission consists of 12 appointed members from the public at large, who serve without compensation. Four members are appointed by the Grand Island City Council; four members are appointed by the Hall County Board; and one member each are appointed by the City of Wood River Council, and the Village Boards of Alda, Cairo, and Doniphan. Members are appointed to 3-year terms. The number of terms a member may serve varies accordingly to the policies of the respective governing boards.

"Designing a dream city is easy; rebuilding a living one takes imagination."

-Jane Jacobs

AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Under State statute, the Regional Planning Commission is an advisory body on land use planning matters to the respective participating elected governing bodies. State statute prohibits governing bodies from making decisions on matters associated with the Comprehensive Plan, capital improvements, annexation, building codes, subdivision plats or zoning until a recommendation has been received from the Planning Commission. However, these recommendations are not binding upon the elected bodies.

The staff of the Commission functions as a unified Regional Planning Department for Hall County and the participating municipalities, including the City of Grand Island. The Department is responsible for the development, maintenance, and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, administration of the development review process, and administration of land use regulations established by the member entities. The Department reviews and processes all development proposals and provides direct support to the:

- Public,
- Planning Commission,
- Grand Island City Council and staff,
- Hall County Board and staff,
- Wood River City Council and staff, and
- Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, and village boards and staff.

PROCESS FOR ADOPTION

When it is time to adopt this Comprehensive Development Plan, the City Council has the opportunity to choose the means of adoption. State Statutes allow for the Plan to be adopted as either a Resolution or an Ordinance. However, the means used to adopt the plan is the process to be used in the future to amend it.

Adoption of the Comprehensive Development Plan requires both the Planning Commission and City Council hold separate Public Hearings. After the Planning Commission Public Hearing, the Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, who then holds their Public Hearing.

Notice of both public hearings is required to be published in the newspaper of general circulation a minimum of ten days prior to each hearing.



Chapter 2 Community Engagement

Community engagement is vital to a successful planning effort. Public participation makes it possible to have a clearer understanding of how the residents feel regarding *their* communities. During every planning process, there are limited numbers of individuals concerned about the effort either because things are going in a good direction or specific issues do not impact them. Regardless, this does not minimize the importance of community engagement. Knowing, recording, and then acknowledging what residents think of their communities makes the comprehensive plan truly belong to a community.

PARTICIPATION METHODS

Transparent and frequent public participation was designed as a major

component of this plan. The process included multiple approaches. The Regional Planning Commission also provided advice and guidance throughout the project.

Public participation was structured in a manner allowing for stakeholders to be involved in numerous ways throughout the process - if stakeholders missed a meeting, they were still able to provide their thoughts and input through other means.

The key elements of public participation for this project included:

- A project website;
- Focus groups;
- Interviews with leaders in City government;
- Town hall meetings;
- Crowdsourcing photography and mapping;

- MindMixer, and;
- Citywide survey.

PROJECT WEBSITE

A special project website, "tinyurl.com/gicomplan", was established at the onset of the planning process. The project website served as a means to notify residents about meetings, inform interested readers on the importance and purpose of comprehensive planning, provide links to input methods, and provide updates on the status of the project. Online engagement is especially important with less patronage of traditional media.

MindMixer

Leveraging the power of the Internet and social media, MindMixer's online engagement tools



energize communities by cultivating meaningful relationships within them, creating a catalyst for community achievement.

FOCUS GROUPS

The planning team of Marvin Planning Consultants, Community Planning Insights, and Leland Consulting Group, met with several different focus groups throughout the planning process.

On June 9, 2022, the planning team met with city officials, the County Sheriff, and area real estate professionals to discuss the development situation in the region. Participants saw many assets for growth in Grand Island, while also highlighting the need to address challenges.

On October 26, 2022, the planning team met with different real estate professionals, including developers and contractors. On October 27, 2022, the planning team met with the mayor, realtors, and other local business leaders. On October 28, 2022, the planning team met with a local manufacturer and an affordable housing developer.

Interviews

The planning team met with City of Grand Island and Hall County department heads later in the process to confirm data and discuss their strategic outlook.

On August 22 and 25, 2023, staff from Marvin Planning Consultants met with the City Parks and Recreation Director, Hall County/Grand Island Emergency Management &



Town Hall Meeting, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Communications, Public Library, Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Works, as well as Hall County Park/Facilities Department. On October 5, 2023, staff met with Grand Island Utilities and the Hall County Public Works Director. The planning team followed up with several key actors throughout the planning process.

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Residents and business owners of Grand Island and Hall County were invited to public Town Hall meetings to learn more about growth and development in the city and offer input into the comprehensive planning process.

The first round of Town Hall meetings were held beginning at 6:00 PM on October 25, 26, and 27, 2022, at Barr, Walnut, and Westridge middle schools. A fourth Town Hall meeting was

held on January 31, 2023, at the Bosselman Corporate Meeting Room, to offer another opportunity for public engagement.

Discussion Topics

At the first round of meetings in October, attendees were asked five broad questions about their opinions and experiences of Grand Island.

- Why do you choose to live or have a business in Grand Island?
- What do you love about Grand Island?
- What are the biggest opportunities Grand Island has for the future?
- What are the biggest weaknesses Grand Island has right now?
- How would you describe the ideal Grand Island 20 years from now?

At the fourth meeting, in January, attendees split into groups of five

to six. Each group was given the same five questions to answer. After answering these questions as a group, each table reported out their top responses.

Complete results of the Town Hall meetings are presented in detail in Appendix A.

Why do you live here?

Participants cited a variety of reasons why they live or have a business in Grand Island. They may have been born here or raised their families here. Many found jobs here. Some live here because they feel the cost of living is reasonable.

Participants may have chosen Grand Island for its size—not too big, not too small—or the location mid-way across Nebraska in the center of the nation. Some stated Grand Island is a welcoming community, and not over-restrictive. Some chose Grand Island, while others felt Grand Island chose them.

What do you love about Grand Island?

Participants love the hustle and can-do attitude of Grand Island's leadership. They love the entrepreneurial opportunities to grow. They love the library, the community college and the choice of local schools. The love that Grand Island has room to grow.

Participants love having big city amenities with a small town lifestyle. Some love the diversity in the community. Many cited bike trails, soccer fields, and other parks and recreation amenities as part of that lifestyle. This includes the proximity to the Platte Valley, hunting and fishing,

and the shooting park. Stuhr Museum is also well-loved by Grand Island.

What are Opportunities?

There are many opportunities for local residents and businesses. Participants called out the need to be creative to keep people in the community. They noted Downtown and the emerging 4th Street multicultural district. The Entrepreneurship Center and technical training at the community college, are important opportunities, as is support for small business growth as well as industrial growth. With the city's location on I-80 and two railroads, participants see even more opportunities in manufacturing and freight development.

Participants see opportunities in infrastructure development and the airport. They cited healthcare choices with two hospitals in the community now. They see opportunities as a tourism destination and as a destination for young people to live. They see opportunities in the diversity of the community.

What are Weaknesses?

Participants were realistic about the need to identify things to improve. They see infrastructure as an opportunity, but also as a weakness to be improved. Public safety is a concern. While diversity is a strength, it also presents challenges to be addressed. Affordable housing is an increasing concern.

Overall, participants noted that plans need to be implemented to improve the quality of life in Grand Island.

What is the Ideal Grand Island?

The Town Halls wrapped up by asking participants to describe how they would like to see their community in 20 years. They cited practical concerns, such as equitable tax rates and not hearing train whistles all day, every day. They also cited more general concerns such as public safety, affordable housing, and becoming an attractive community.

Overall, participants described the future Grand Island as "A place where your dreams come true".

SURVEYS

The project team used SurveyMonkey, a web based survey tool, to gather input on Grand Island and Hall County. The survey process allows individuals to provide input while remaining totally anonymous.

A community survey was created for Grand Island. The survey was advertised using a specially designed card, as well as announcement on the city website. This survey was also made available on the project website. For those who preferred to take the survey on paper, the survey was made available at the Public Library, City Hall, and at all Grand Island town hall meetings.

The Grand Island survey was opened concurrently with the Town Hall Meetings in October, 2022, and stayed open through the beginning of June 2023. There were 569 respondents to the survey, with the largest group

(12.7%) living in Grand Island for 50 or more years. Just under 5% lived outside the city. The largest age group (20.7%) were age 45-54 years. Over two-thirds (68.4%) were employed full-time. Over one-quarter (26.7%) were employed in Education and health, while 12.5% were retired. Approximately 2/3 work at/from home or have a commute less than 15 minutes.

Grand Island Survey Results

Results of the community survey inform each element of the comprehensive plan. Certain themes were raised in the survey, including:

- Almost half (46%) of respondents felt Grand Island is neither a high nor low quality place to live, while 29.5% stated Grand Island is a high quality place to live. Some noted that the quality of life varies across the city.
- Among respondents, 47% agreed they were confident in Grand Island's future, while 35% disagreed.
- Approximately 60% strongly agree that traffic issues on Diers avenue need to be fixed.
- 43% strongly agree that more affordable housing is needed for young families.
- 41% strongly disagree that there are enough homes for sale in the \$80,000 to \$150,000 price range.
- 39% strongly agree that retaining current business is key to Grand Island's economic survival.
- 36% strongly agree that Grand Island's history and architecture should be preserved.



4th Street BID began implementing results of this plan while still in process.
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

- 36% strongly agree that there should be more places where kids can hang out with their friends.
- Most people do most of their shopping in Grand Island. The greatest number go to Omaha for furniture shopping (46%).
- 23% of respondents go to cultural events in Grand Island. 40% go to Omaha and 26% to Lincoln (multiple responses permitted).
- 58% stated that youth retention was a very important economic development focus. 51% states more jobs.
- 40% stated that they plan to stay in Grand Island for retirement. Respondents stated concerns with the cost of living.

Hall County Survey

A county-specific survey was then created focusing on Hall County, with specific questions

pertaining to unincorporated areas of Hall County. This survey was held open through October, 2023. Results are available upon request to the Regional Planning Director.

ADDITIONAL PLANS AND ANALYSIS

The planning team completed specific analysis, plans, and special reports throughout the comprehensive planning process. These additional inputs informed understanding of existing conditions, and informed selection of planning policies.

GRAND ISLAND AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN

Early in the comprehensive planning process, consultants Community Planning Insights worked with the City of Grand Island to supplement and update

the community housing study to address the requirements of LB 866—the Municipal Density and Missing Middle Housing Act. The comprehensive planning process benefitted from the data analysis and enhanced stakeholder engagement in the process. The resulting *Grand Island Affordable Housing Plan* (November 2022) is incorporated into this plan by reference.

GRAND ISLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MARKET ANALYSIS

As part of the comprehensive planning process for Grand Island and Hall County, Leland Consulting Group performed a Market Analysis including elements of demographics, housing, and economic development. The report is incorporated into this plan by reference as Appendix B.

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The City of Grand Island initiated an update to the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* (see Chapter Seven) while the comprehensive planning process was underway. While not directly involved in this parallel process, Marvin Planning Consultants met with Parks and Recreation staff and Pros Consulting to share data and better coordinate goals and objectives of the plans. Chapter Three incorporates results of the Parks and Recreation Master Planning demographic analysis and projection scenario as well.

GOALS AND POLICIES

Planning for future land use is an ongoing process of goal setting and problem solving aimed at creating the conditions for a better quality of life. Planning focuses upon ways of solving existing problems within the county, and providing a management tool for Grand Island leaders and residents to achieve their vision for the future.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The goals and policies of the *Grand Island Comprehensive Development Plan* are intended to address existing conditions and trends, issues, and concerns of citizens as expressed through community engagement.

Members of the Hall County Regional Planning Commission evaluated goals, and interjurisdictional cooperation between the county and municipalities.

The goals and policies for the comprehensive plan are presented throughout the plan. Each chapter contains goals and policies to address the elements in that chapter.

- **Goals** express desired outcomes. Goals are statements of community desires and necessities. A goal should be stated in a manner which allows it to be accomplished. Goals in this plan may include specific objectives as a definable, measurable step to achieving a goal. Goals and

objectives also inform public policies.

- **Plan Policies** are more specific statements in support of goals and objectives. Well-stated plan policies are useful in review of development proposals for compatibility with this plan. Plan policies may also be implemented by specific, measurable action items.
- **Action Items** are intended to achieve the community's goals. Action items are future-focused measures, projects, plans, or activities proposed to implement the comprehensive plan.

It is important to establish goals, objectives and policies for short-term as well as long-term accomplishments. Goals, policies, and action items should be evaluated, reviewed, and updated regularly as conditions and resources change.

Tools and Strategies

There are a variety of tools and strategies that lend further support to achieving the City's goals and policies, beyond specific action items identified in the comprehensive plan. For example, a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) covers many different areas of investment across the City. These activities should be reviewed during regular plan maintenance and included in the plan if and when appropriate.

Plan Maintenance and Review

As stated in the introductory chapter, the comprehensive plan is intended to address growth and development anticipated over the next 20 years. Goals and policies are focused on the next 10 years, with more specific action items identified for short-term and long-term implementation. As noted in the final chapter, Implementation and regular review are essential to bring this plan to life.

A VISION FOR GRAND ISLAND

This comprehensive development plan presents data and analysis grounded in local and national trends. This comprehensive development plan also presents a vision of the people of Grand Island for their future, and the future for their community.



Civic Art at Grand Island Public Library
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants





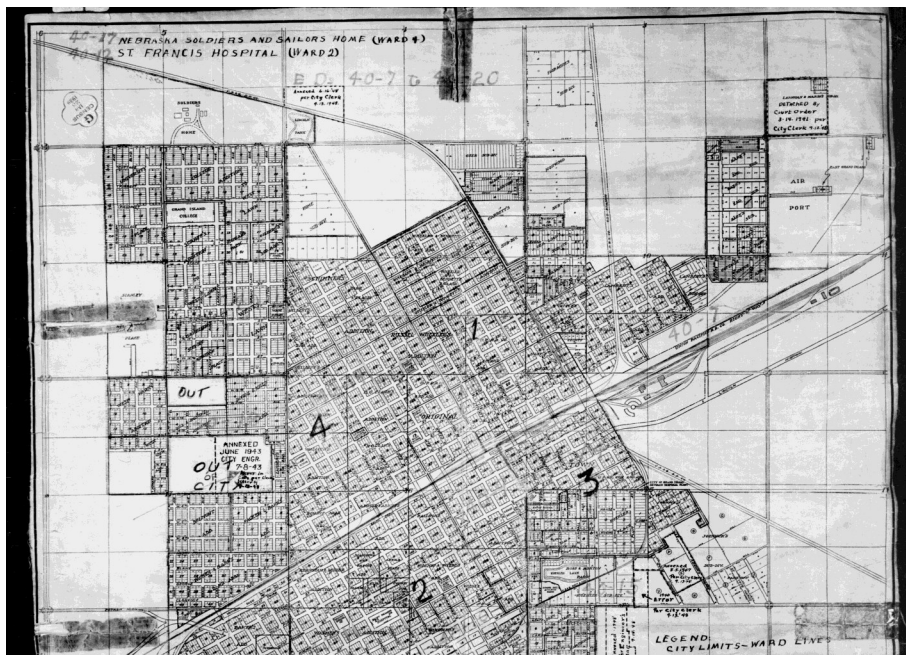
Chapter 3 Population

The people of Grand Island are the heart and soul of the community. Long-term residents provide strength and resiliency. New residents provide new ideas which help the community adapt and thrive into the future.

Careful analysis of population trends provides a basis for Grand Island's decision-makers to better understand where the city has been, where it is currently, and where it appears to be going.

Population trends impact all major elements of the city including housing, economic development, facilities and infrastructure, and fiscal stability. Population projections also provide an estimate for the city to base future land use and development decisions. The trends examined in this chapter compare Grand Island to the Tri-Cities region as well as the State of Nebraska.

It should be kept in mind, however, most population statistics are based on sample surveys with margins of error. As well, population projections are only informed estimates and unforeseen factors may affect projections significantly. A population trend line provides general guidance which should be viewed with a critical eye.



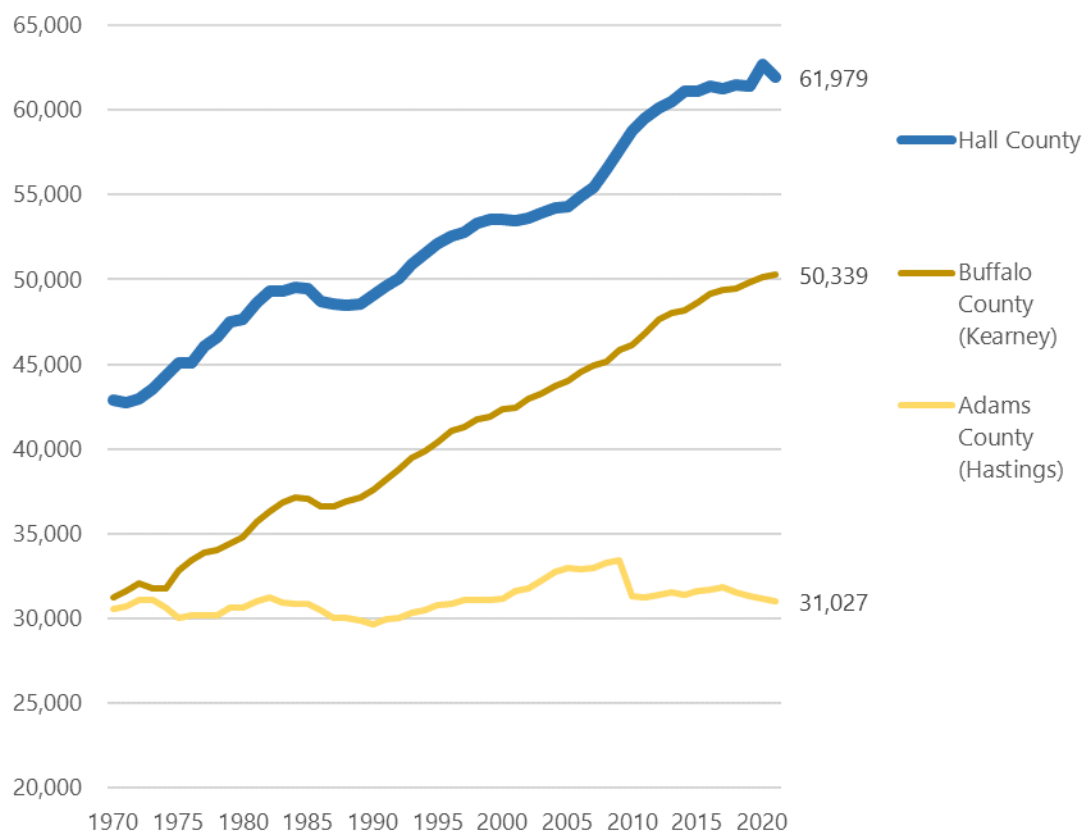
1940 Census Enumeration District Maps—Grand Island
Source: US National Archives

Table 3.1: Population Trends in Grand Island and the Tri-Cities, 1880-2020

Decade	Grand Island	Change	% Change	Hastings	Change	% Change	Kearney	Change	% Change
1880	2,963	-	-	2,817	-	-	1,782	-	-
1890	7,536	4,573	154.3%	13,584	10,767	382.2%	8,074	6,292	353.1%
1900	7,554	18	0.2%	7,188	-6,396	-47.1%	5,634	-2,440	-30.2%
1910	10,326	2,772	36.7%	9,338	2,150	29.9%	6,202	568	10.1%
1920	13,947	3,621	35.1%	11,647	2,309	24.7%	7,702	1,500	24.2%
1930	18,041	4,094	29.4%	15,490	3,843	33.0%	8,575	873	11.3%
1940	19,130	1,089	6.0%	15,145	-345	-2.2%	9,643	1,068	12.5%
1950	22,682	3,552	18.6%	20,211	5,066	33.4%	12,115	2,472	25.6%
1960	25,742	3,060	13.5%	21,412	1,201	5.9%	14,210	2,095	17.3%
1970	32,358	6,616	25.7%	23,580	2,168	10.1%	19,181	4,971	35.0%
1980	33,180	822	2.5%	23,045	-535	-2.3%	21,158	1,977	10.3%
1990	39,386	6,206	18.7%	22,837	-208	-0.9%	24,396	3,238	15.3%
2000	42,940	3,554	9.0%	24,064	1,227	5.4%	27,431	3,035	12.4%
2010	48,520	5,580	13.0%	24,907	843	3.5%	30,787	3,356	12.2%
2020	53,131	4,611	9.5%	25,152	245	1.0%	33,790	3,003	9.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1880 - 2020.

Figure 3.1: Regional Population Trends, 1970-2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970 - 2021.

The United States Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) is the primary data source for this plan. The ACS provides a 5-year rolling average of survey data. Although some one-year survey results are available for Grand Island and Hall County; the five-year averages are typically more reliable. Data is also provided by ESRI, a geographic information system (GIS) provider which develops forecasts using a combination of public and proprietary sources. There may be instances where US Census Bureau's Decennial Census, ACS, and ESRI data conflict, which are noted as necessary.

This chapter will present an analysis of population trends, components of population change, and population projections.

TRENDS ANALYSIS

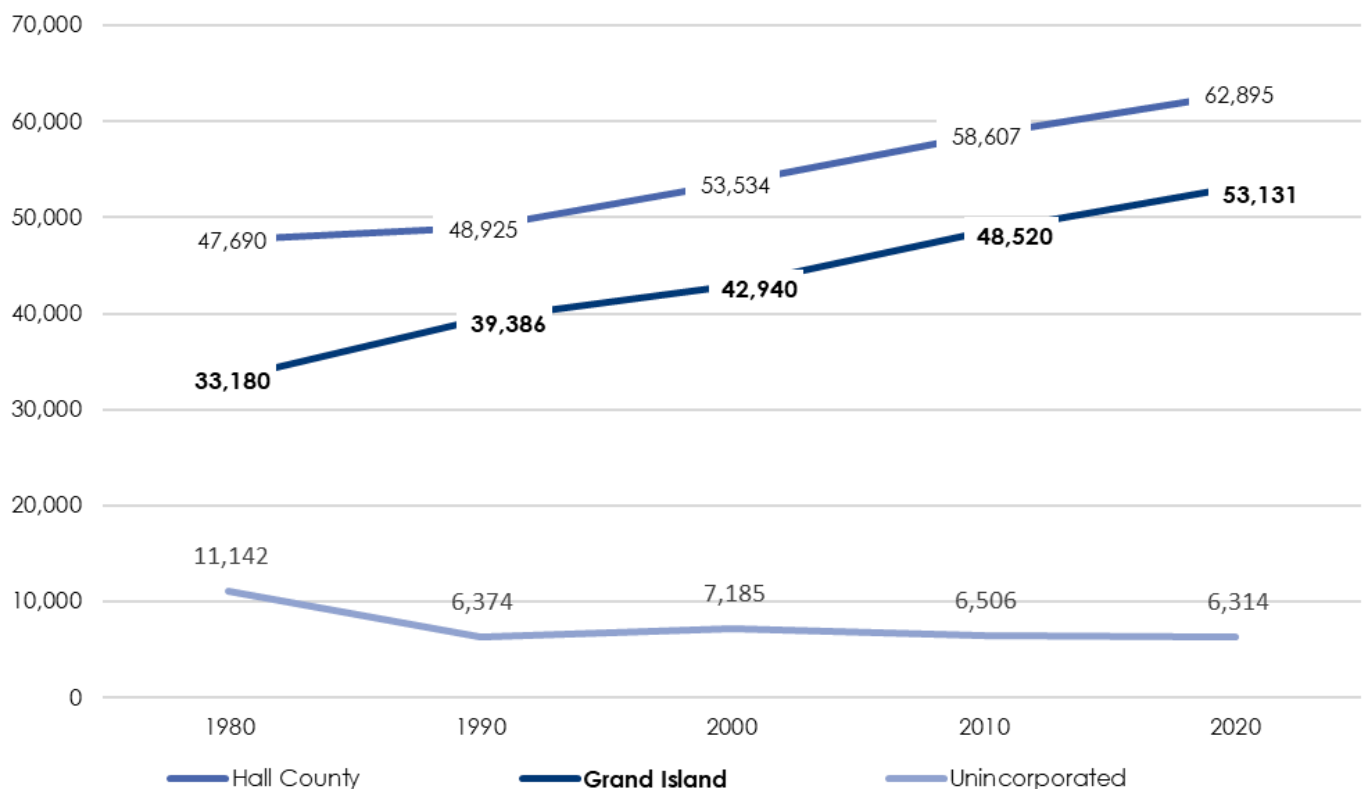
Grand Island's population has grown every decade since 1880, from a low rate of 0.2% from 1890 to 1900 to a high rate of 36.7% the next decade from 1900 to 1910. Table 3.1 presents the historic population of Grand Island and the Tri-Cities including Hastings and Kearney. The long-term population data provide a picture of the city's growth in comparison to the region.

Among the Tri-Cities, Grand Island has the largest

population. However, this was not always the case; Hastings had a higher population than Grand Island before 1900, and was comparable in size to Grand Island until 1970. Kearney's population caught up to Hastings in 1990, and has grown at a similar rate to Grand Island since that time. Since 1970, Hall County (Grand Island) and Buffalo County (Kearney) have consistently grown in parallel, while Adams County (Hastings) has stayed relatively unchanged (Figure 3.1).

The Grand Island MSA had a population of 77,038 in 2020. The 2020 Decennial Census counted Grand Island's population at 53,131, an increase of 4,611 people for a 9.5% growth rate. This was slightly slower than the

Figure 3.2: Population Trends for Hall County and Grand Island, 1980-2020

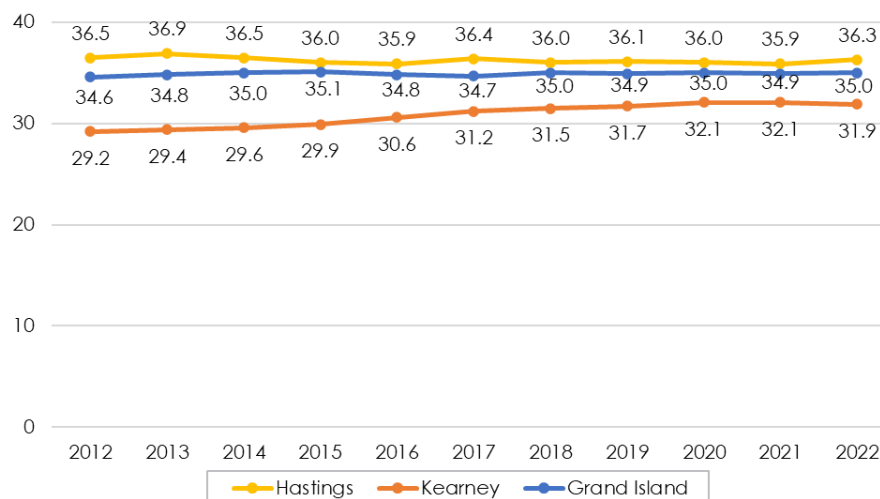


Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1980 - 2020.

13.0% rate from 2000 to 2010, yet more than the 9.0% from 1990 to 2000. Grand Island's population growth has also boosted Hall County's population from 47,690 in 1980 to 62,895 in 2020 (Figure 3.2). The population of the unincorporated area dropped over the same time period from 11,142 to 6,314 (largely due to annexations).

The US Census Bureau has estimated Grand Island's population has fallen slightly, to 52,513 as of July 1, 2022, Hall County's population also has fallen slightly, to 62,097, and the Grand Island MSA's population has fallen slightly as well to 76,333 as of 2022. The City should watch the annual US Census estimates for any changes to the trend over time.

Figure 3.3: Median Age, Grand Island and the Tri-Cities, 2012-2022



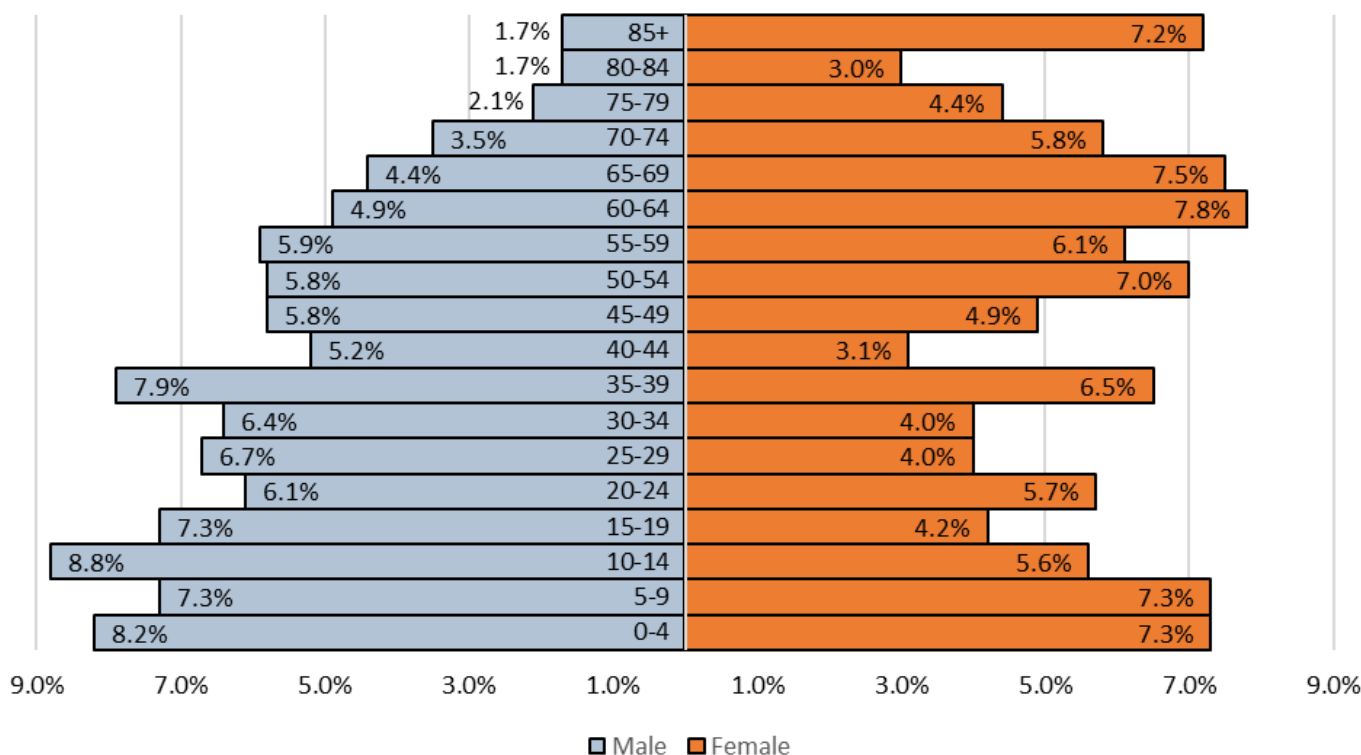
Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 through 2018-2022.

AGE PROFILE

The median age for Grand Island increased by 0.4 years over the period from 2012 to 2022, from 34.6 to 35.0 years of age (Figure

3.3). Hasting's median age decreased from 36.5 to 36.3. Kearney's median age increased from 29.2 to 31.9. In the other Tri-Cities, the presence of the University of Nebraska-Kearney in

Figure 3.4: Population Pyramid, Grand Island, 2022



Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022.

Dependency Ratio

This ratio examines the portion of a community's earnings that is spent supporting age groups typically and historically dependent on the incomes of others.

< 1: 1 Independent resident is able to support more than 1 Dependent resident

=1: 1 Independent resident able to support 1 Dependent resident

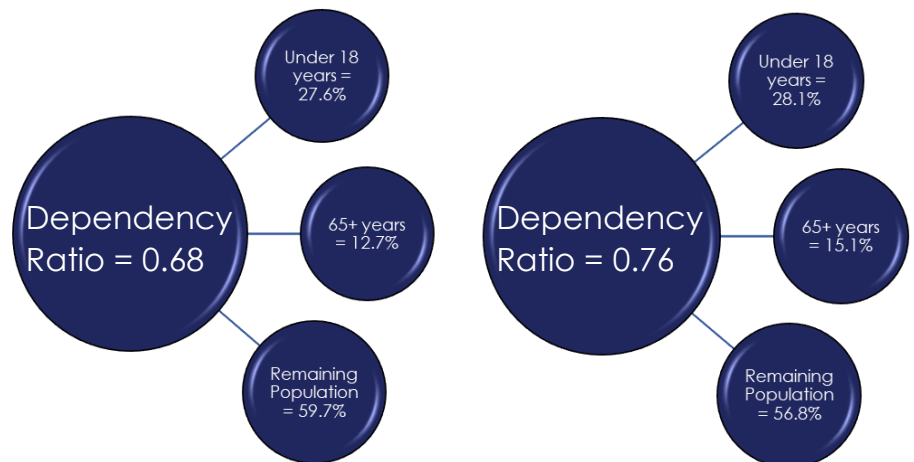
>1: 1 Independent resident able to support less than 1 Dependent resident (%18 years and younger + %65 years and older) Divided by % of remaining population.

Kearney likely led the median age lower in Kearney. However, Hastings still has the highest median age of the Tri-Cities even with the presence of Hastings College.

Figure 3.4 is a population pyramid of the current age structure of Grand Island, as reported by the American Community Survey (ACS) for 2018-2022. The largest cohort of men (8.8%) were boys age 10-14 years, and of women (7.8%) were women age 60-64 years. The large number of children indicates a healthy demand for education, as well as the potential for growth in the local labor force if young people can be retained in Grand Island.

There were also many more women (7.2%) than men (1.7%) age 85 and over, and a greater share of women than men in each age cohort age 50 and

Figure 3.5: Dependency Ratio 2012 and 2022



Sources: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

over. Service providers for senior citizens should take this gender discrepancy into account during program planning.

Among the working age population ages 20-64, the smallest cohort among women were age 40-44 (3.1%) and among men were age 40-44 (5.2%). Across the country, there are smaller numbers of people in "Generation X", which often affects the supply of experienced workers across industries. The relatively larger numbers of younger people are prime candidates for workforce training in Grand Island.

DEPENDENCY RATIO

Dependency ratios examine the portion of the city's population supporting the age groups historically dependent upon others, including those under 18 years and those 65 years and older. (See the box on the previous page for details on calculating the ratio.) This ratio highlights the proportion of employed persons who support

themselves as well as older and younger dependent populations.

Figure 3.5 presents the dependency ratios for 2012 and 2022 in Grand Island. The share of persons less than 18 years of age and those aged 65 years and older both increased over the time period.

In 2012, Grand Island had a Dependency Ratio of 0.68 (40.3%/59.7%); however, by 2022 the Ratio had increased to 0.76 (43.2%/56.8%). While there were a increasing number of residents in the city, the working age population grew at a slower rate as the historically dependent age groups. However, the 0.76 Dependency Ratio is still lower than in many communities across Nebraska.

Table 3.2: Race and Ethnicity - Grand Island 2012-2022

Race	2012*		2022*		2012-2022	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total	Net Change	% change
Estimated Population	48,548	-	52,822	-	4,274	8.8%
White Alone	44,120	90.9%	36,365	68.8%	-7,755	-17.6%
Black Alone	1,118	2.3%	2,105	4.0%	987	88.3%
American Indian Alone	465	1.0%	517	1.0%	52	11.2%
Asian Alone	544	1.1%	713	1.3%	169	31.1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	-	173	0.3%	173	100.0%
Some Other Race Alone	1,605	3.3%	8,597	16.3%	6,992	435.6%
Two or More Races	696	1.4%	4,352	8.2%	3,656	525.3%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	12,702	26.2%	17,957	34.0%	5,255	41.4%

Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022. *ACS Estimate

Nebraska residents identified as Hispanic in 2022. The largest group identified their origin as Mexico (19.0%). Approximately 42% of those who identify as Hispanic or Latino reported they are immigrants to the United States.

VETERANS

Among Grand Island residents 18 years and over, 6.1% are veterans, compared to 7.5% of Nebraskans overall. Approximately 12% of veterans are women.

ETHNICITY

Race and ethnicity are self-identification terms in which residents choose how they identify themselves.

According to the ACS as reported in Table 3.2, 68.6% of Grand Island residents identified as White Alone, compared to 81.8% in Nebraska statewide in 2022. About one-quarter of residents identify their ancestry as German.

Over 8,500 city residents identified as Some Other Race Alone, 16.3% of all residents, and over 4,000 (8.2%) identified as Two or More Races. There were 2,105 residents (3.8%) who identified as Black Alone. Those who identified as Asian Alone increased by 31.9% to 713, with the largest group being Vietnamese. The number of residents who identify as American Indian Alone increased to 517 (1.0%). The largest group was the Cherokee tribe.

Interestingly, the ACS reported 173 residents identify as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander over the 2018-2022 survey period, when none were present in the 2008-2012 survey. The ACS reported 162 people identified as Chamorro, the indigenous people of the Mariana Islands, which are part of the territory of Guam and Micronesia.

The number of Hispanic or Latino residents of any race grew by 41.4% from 2012 to 2022. Among all residents, 34.0% identified as Hispanic. Statewide, 11.8% of all



Veterans Monument, Hall County Courthouse Grounds

Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

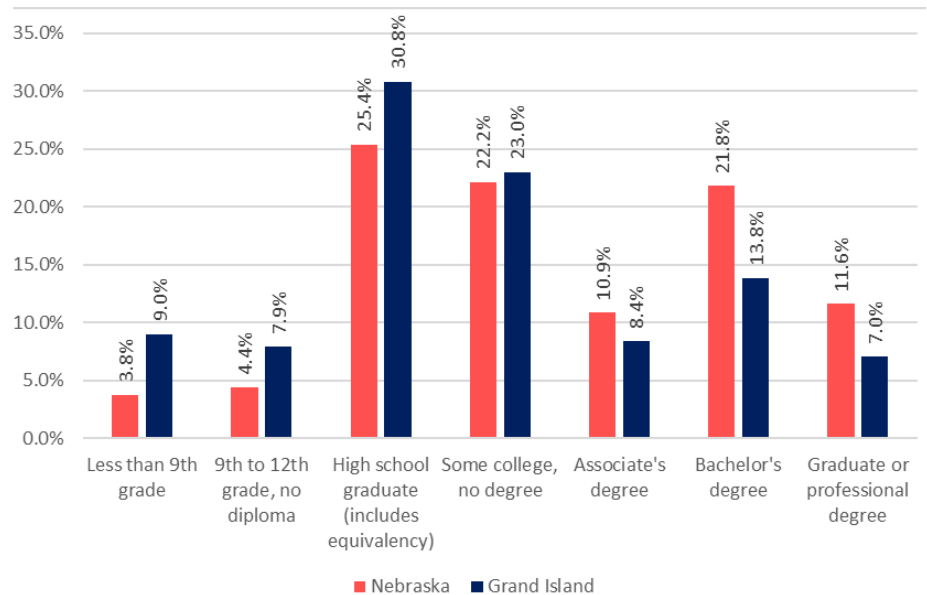
Over half of all veterans are age 65 years and over. The largest group (32.2%) served during the Vietnam era, with 16.9% serving in the Gulf pre-9/11 and 17.4% serving in the Gulf since 9/11. Among veterans, 35.6% have a disability, compared to about 16.9% of the city's population overall.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The greatest number of Grand Island residents are high school graduates, or have some college with no degree (Figure 3.6). Among Grand Island residents 25 years and over, 20.9% had a Bachelor's Degree or higher in 2022. This compares to 33.5% of all Nebraskans. There were 83.1% of Grand Island residents the same age who were High school graduate or higher, compared to 91.9% statewide.

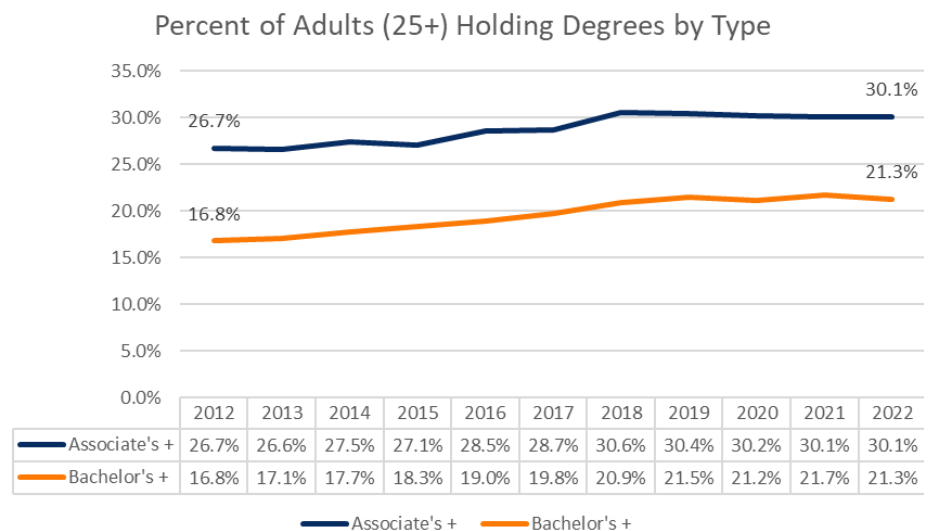
Income and higher education attainment tend to be highly correlated. Over recent years, the share of Hall County residents holding either Associates or Bachelors degrees has risen gradually, but steadily, from 2010 to 2022 (Figure 3.7). Not all higher paying jobs require college degrees, and quality vocational and on-the-job training in this job environment can translate well into steady living wages. That said, continuing the increase in educational attainment will be beneficial to the community and economy.

Figure 3.6: Educational Attainment, 2022



Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022.

Figure 3.7: Hall County Higher Education Attainment Trend



Source: US Census, American Community Surveys 2008-2012 to 2018-2022.

COMPONENTS OF CHANGE

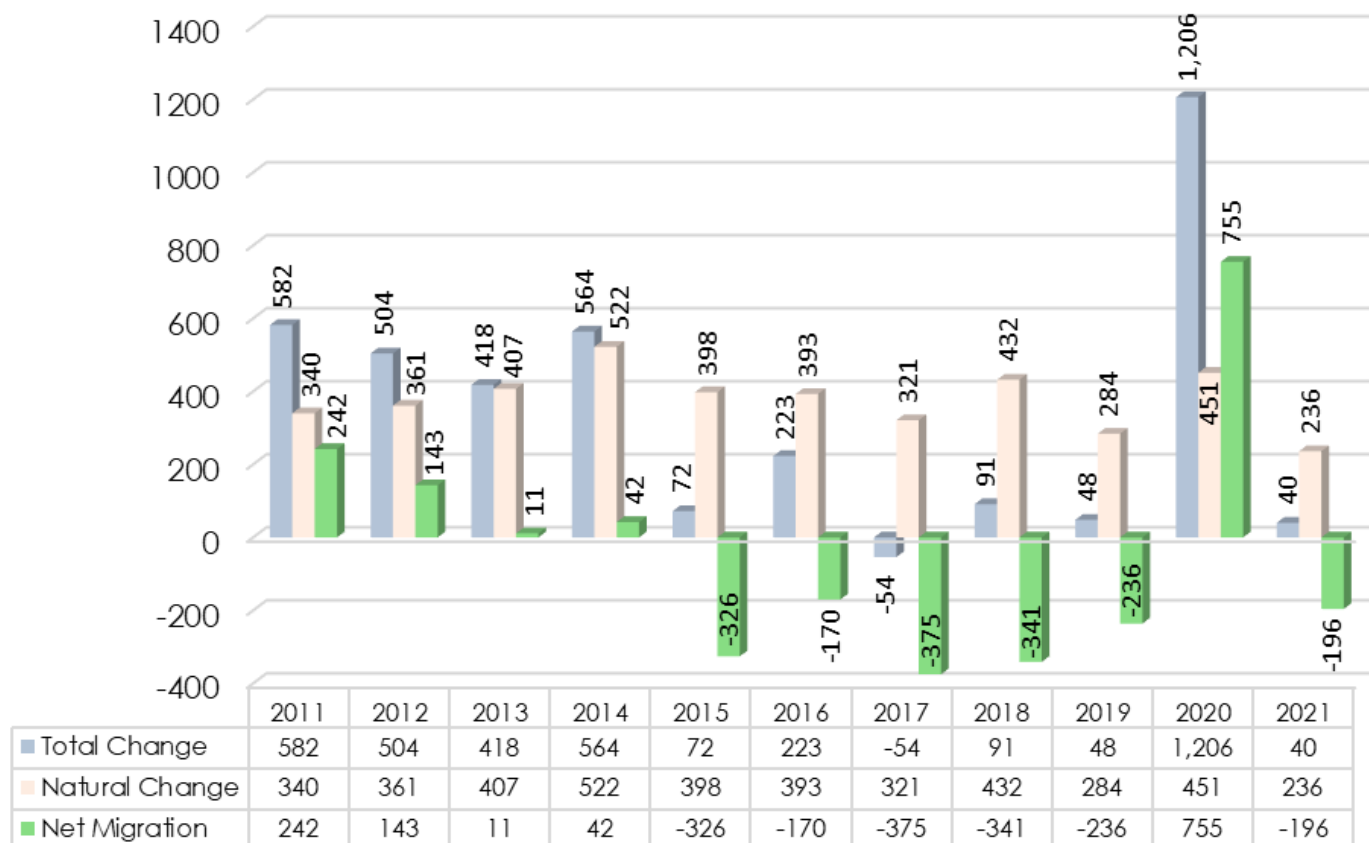
Population change includes both natural increase or decline (the difference between births and deaths) and migration (the difference between people moving in and out of a community). For example, many communities experience natural increase (more births than deaths) yet face a declining population due to out-migration.

Table 3.3: Age Characteristics, 2012-2022

Populations Cohorts					
Age 2012	Population 2012*	Age 2022	Population 2022*	Cohort Change	% Change
		0-4	4,101	-	-
		5-9	3,721	-	-
0-4	3,932	10-14	4,568	636	16.2%
5-9	3,787	15-19	3,754	-33	-0.9%
10-14	3,641	20-24	3,257	-384	-10.5%
15-19	3,301	25-29	3,533	232	7.0%
20-24	3,059	30-34	3,472	413	13.5%
25-29	3,495	35-39	3,848	353	10.1%
30-34	3,301	40-44	2,974	-327	-9.9%
35-44	6,069	45-54	5,957	-112	-1.8%
45-54	6,505	55-64	5,682	-823	-12.7%
55-64	5,292	65-74	4,504	-788	-14.9%
65-74	2,913	75-84	2,182	-731	-25.1%
75 & older	3,253	85 & over	1,269	-1,984	-61.0%
Total	48,548		52,822	4,274	8.8%

Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022. *ACS Estimate

Figure 3.8: Grand Island Population Components of Change 2011-2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Nebraska Dept. of Health and Human Services

AGE STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

Age structure is an important component of population analysis, and a key dynamic affecting population growth or decline of a community's population. Each age group affects the population in different ways; for example, relatively more residents who are themselves having children can translate to a greater ability to sustain future population growth.

Table 3.3 presents the age group structure for Grand Island in 2012 and 2022. Age structure helps understand shifts among population cohorts, in particular which age groups are moving in and out of the community. Positive changes in a group indicate in-migration or births. Negative changes in a group indicate a combination of out-migration and deaths.

Grand Island saw growth in most younger age groups from 2012 to 2022. The 5-9 age group lost 33 people in becoming the 15-19

age group over that time, most likely due to outmigration. Age 30-34 lost -327 residents in becoming the 40-44 age group—as noted previously, this “Generation X” age group is the smallest cohort in Grand Island and likely lost population due to out-migration.

Overall, Grand Island had a positive population pattern occur during the past decade, with approximately 7% to 9% population growth (depending on statistical source) when accounting for births as well as in-migration, out-migration, and deaths.

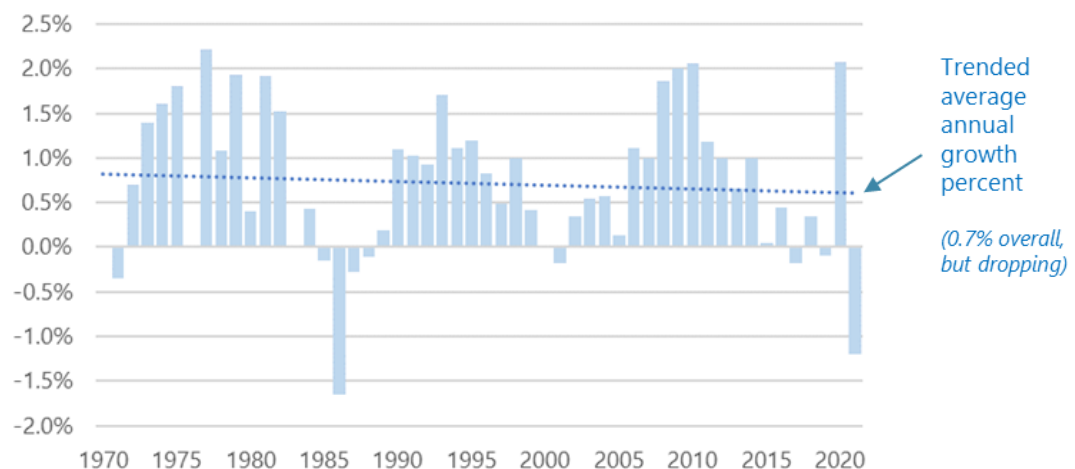
NATURAL CHANGE AND NET MIGRATION

The US Census Bureau provides annual estimates of population change, aside from the ACS rolling averages. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services also tracks the number of births and deaths in larger communities such as

Grand Island. The difference between the annual population estimates and natural change (births minus deaths) provides an estimate of net migration (people moving in and out of a community) for the city.

The components of change for Grand Island are shown in Figure 3.8. Grand Island experienced more births than deaths each year from 2011 to 2021. The US Census estimates Hall County began experiencing net negative migration in 2015, peaking at 810 more people moving out than moving in from 2019 to 2020. Comparing Census and State data, it appears the City has experienced net negative migration since 2015, with the exception of 2020.

Figure 3.9: Hall County Added Annual Population, 1970-2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1970 - 2021.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections are future estimates based upon past and present circumstances. There are different methods commonly used to project future population, with advantages and disadvantages for smaller and larger communities. Several factors (demographics, economics, social, etc.) also affect the relationship between projections and ultimate population levels, positively or negatively.

Since 1970, Hall County's growth has varied. Year-over-year growth ranged from over 2.0% to almost 2.0% contraction, but at an overall dropping rate (Figure 3.9). These cycles of contraction and growth make it difficult to project future rates of growth.

TREND SCENARIOS

Hall County

The University of Nebraska-Omaha Center for Public Affairs Research (the State Data Center) develops official population projections for Nebraska counties, based on trends with both natural change and migration rates. The most recent report, composed after the release of the US Census 2020 complete count, projects Hall County's population will continue to increase by an annual rate of approximately 0.4% or 4.1% per decade, to:

- 66,348 by 2030,
- 68,881 by 2040,
- 70,904 by 2050.

Over the past 50 years, Hall County population growth has been cyclical, with peak periods spaced roughly 15 years apart. Covid-19 and related factors over 2020 and 2021 introduced some extra volatility into this pattern. For the past 20 years, growth averaged 0.7% annually, but the trended average is gradually dropping. Historical growth more closely resembles a "straight-line" trajectory, averaging 375 new residents annually over time. This appears more reasonable than a zero or negative growth assumption to carry forward over the comprehensive planning horizon.

Near-term projected growth in Hall County is driven by the Boomer and Millennial population bulges. Nearly 500 residents will likely be added in the 75-79 age group alone over the next five years, creating additional need for senior-friendly housing.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Trends

The City of Grand Island also undertook an update to the City's *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* while this comprehensive planning process was underway, as previously noted. The plan includes an extensive Demographics and Trends Analysis. This analysis relies on US Census Decennial Census data and updates from ESRI's extensive demographics resources.

Draft results from this plan have been incorporated here as a representative growth scenario.

The Parks and Recreation analysis projects the city's population to continue a steady rate of growth, if relatively slower than the US average. The population is projected to reach 55,572 in 2033 (a 0.83% growth rate), 57,426 by 2040 (0.67% growth rate) and 60,075 by 2050 (0.92% growth rate).

The Parks and Recreation analysis also goes into detail with projections of age segmentation, among other demographic indicators important for the plan. While Grand Island's population is relatively young and family-oriented, there is also an aging trend (as across much of Nebraska) with a larger share of the community over the age of 55 going forward. This is likely to result in a rising median age for the city.

Trend Line Analysis

Trend Line Analysis is a process of projecting future populations based upon changes during a specified period of time. For this analysis, several different population trend lines were reviewed, including 1970 to 2020, 1990 to 2020, 2000 to 2020, and 2010 to 2020. Results for Grand Island are shown in the side bar on the following page.

Grand Island Trend Line Analysis Population Projections

Year	Ten Year Trend
2020	53,151 persons
2030	57,092 persons
2040	61,325 persons
2050	65,872 persons
Year	Twenty Year Trend
2020	53,151 persons
2030	59,134 persons
2040	65,790 persons
2050	73,196 persons
Year	Thirty Year Trend
2020	53,151 persons
2030	58,736 persons
2040	64,907 persons
2050	71,727 persons
Year	Fifty Year Trend
2020	53,151 persons
2030	58,697 persons
2040	64,822 persons
2050	71,586 persons

GROWTH SCENARIOS

For the purposes of this plan, three population projections were selected to illustrate possible growth scenarios (Figure 3.10 following).

LOW: The State Data Center projection was selected for the Low Series and may be considered a worst-case scenario. This estimate applies the projected countywide growth rate of 0.4% to the city's population, assuming the city maintains a constant share of the county's population. This serves as a baseline for planning purposes. If the City is prepared for a stable population, they will be prepared for more moderate population change.

MEDIUM: The *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* trend serves as the Medium Series. While this series is lowest over the next decades, it results in a population projected at 60,075 by 2050.

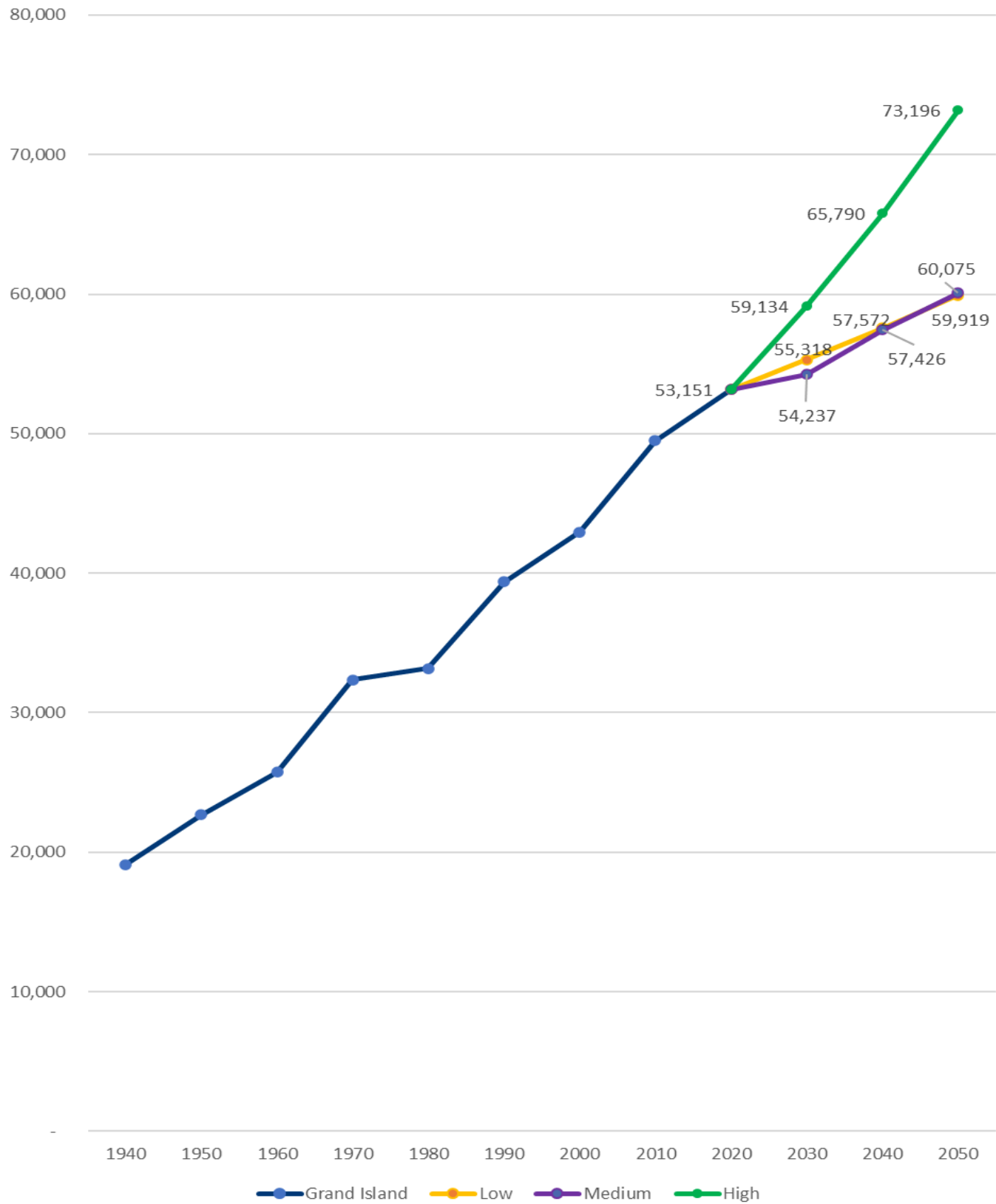
HIGH: The 20-year trend was selected as the High Series, with an approximate 1.1% annual growth resulting in a projected population of 73,196 by 2050. This is an optimistic scenario which can also serve as a goal as Grand Island builds a great place to live.



Stuhr Museum
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



Figure 3.10: Population and Projections for Grand Island



Sources: Nebraska State Data Center, Center for Public Affairs Research, University of Nebraska at Omaha; U.S. Census Bureau 1970 - 2020, Marvin Planning Consultants.



Chapter 4 Housing

Housing is an essential need for all residents of a community. Housing preferences also vary widely, between people and between those in different stages of their life times. Young families have different needs and preferences than senior citizens, and preferences change constantly over time.

This housing profile examines the existing and projected housing market conditions for Grand Island, with a focus on affordable and “missing middle” housing and needs of at risk households. Data used in this element comes from a variety of sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Hall County



Assessor, third-party vendors, and qualitative information from focus group participants.

Projecting future housing needs requires consideration of multiple factors including population change, household income, housing vacancy rates, employment rates, land use patterns, and residents' preferences. This chapter incorporates findings of the *Grand Island Affordable Housing Plan*, and presents information on the household character of Grand Island's residents, describes the existing

housing stock and housing conditions, and considers future needs for housing.

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTER

Overall, Grand Island has seen robust growth over the past two decades, both in population and households. As Table 4.1 illustrates, the number of households in Grand Island grew

Table 4.1: Grand Island Households 2012-2022

	2012	2022	Change 2012-2022
Total Households	18,312	20,263	10.7%
Average Household Size	2.60	2.56	-1.5%
Married-couple household	8,635	9,107	5.5%
Householder living alone	5,405	6,116	13.2%
Households with one or more under 18 years	6,822	7,330	7.4%
Households with one or more 65 years and over	4,157	5,487	32.0%
Householder living alone, 65 years and over	1,881	2,604	38.4%

Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

by about 10% from 2012 to 2022, slightly outpacing the 9.5% rate of growth from 2010 to 2020. In comparison, the number of households in Hall County grew from 22,106 in 2012 to 24,026 in 2022, a smaller increase of 8.7%.

HOUSEHOLDS

In 2022, the number of persons in Grand Island living in households grew by over 4,000, while there was 1 fewer person living in group quarters in than in 2012 (Figure 4.1). Group quarters include such places as residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, or group homes, among other places.

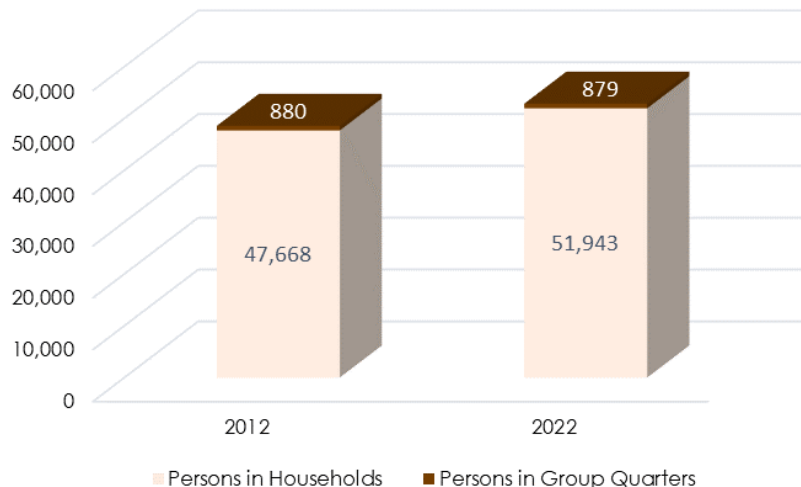
ESRI, a geographic information system (GIS) and data provider, estimates Grand Island's population and number of households will continue to increase over the short-term, while projections in the previous chapter estimate the population will also continue to increase over the next several decades.

While these projections anticipate growth rates less than historical averages, there is currently significant building permit activity which indicates the number of housing units will continue to grow at, or in excess of, historical trend rates. Any significant changes to the economic base of Grand Island and the Tri-Cities over the next five years will likely have an impact on population and household growth, and ultimately housing demand.

Household Size

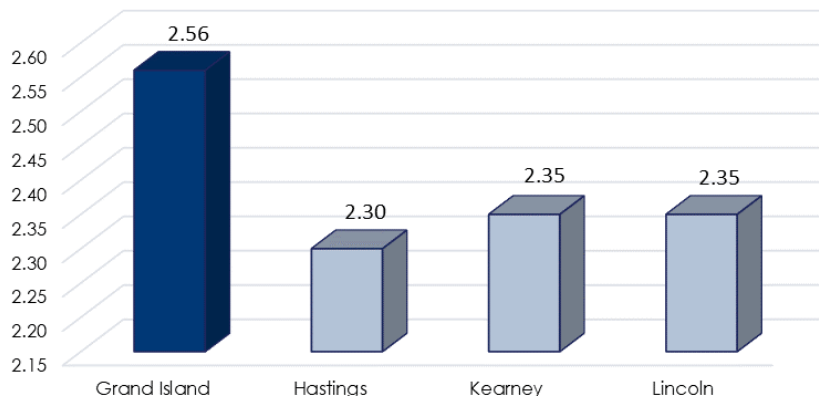
As seen in Figure 4.2, the average household size in Grand Island in 2022 was 2.56 persons

Figure 4.1: Household Populations 2012-2022



Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2012-2022.

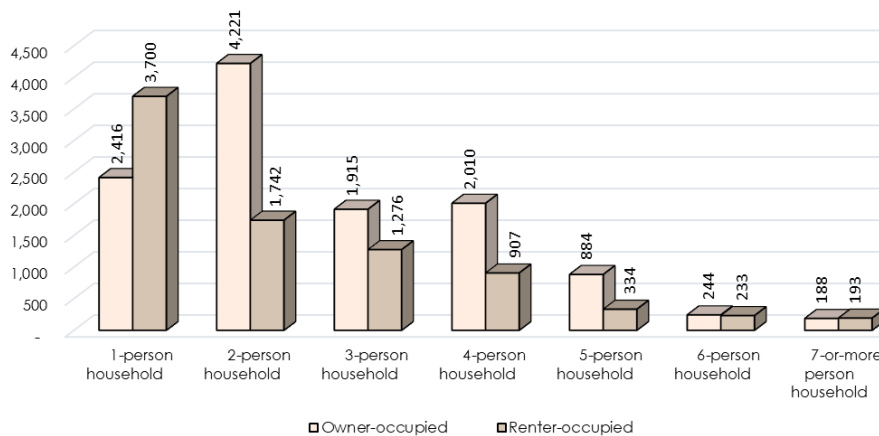
Figure 4.2: Average Household Size 2022



Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

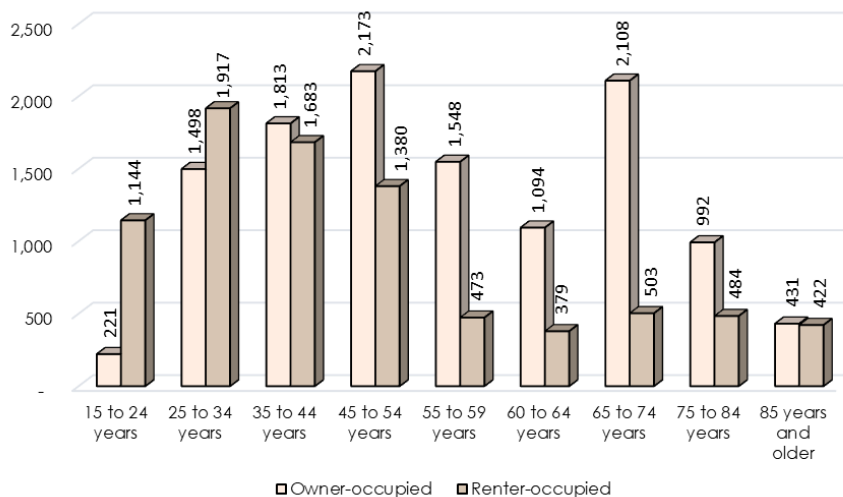


Figure 4.3: Persons By Household Type 2022



Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

Figure 4.4: Householder Age By Household Type 2022



Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

per household. The trend nationally has been towards a declining household size. Hastings had a much lower average household size of 2.30 persons, while Kearney (2.35) and Lincoln (2.35) were also lower.

Two-person households were the largest group of owner-occupied housing in Grand Island in 2022, with 4,221 housing units (Figure 4.3). By comparison, the largest household size for rentals was one-person households with 3,700 housing units.

In 2022, the largest home ownership age cohort (Figure 4.4) were those 45 to 54 years old (2,173 or 18.3%). The largest renter-occupied age cohort were those 25 to 34 years (1,917 or 22.9%). While home-ownership does tend to skew towards older demographics, there is a demand for rental housing among residents of all ages.

HOUSING STOCK

While the housing stock in Grand Island continues to age, the share of older units is less than the state overall. However, as each year passes the housing stock ages, and approximately 1% of existing housing units (on average) are removed from the housing stock, through fires, demolition, or other means. If new units are not placed in service or existing units are not maintained or renovated, neighborhoods can deteriorate, leading to disinvestment and dissatisfaction.



Residence, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

HOUSING UNITS

The number of housing units counted in the US Census Bureau's decennial Census in Hall County overall increased by 6.8% from 23,549 to 25,159 (Table 4.2). Grand Island accounted for 21,068 of these housing units, an increase of 8.5% from 2010.

It should be noted the ACS surveys report an average over a five-year survey period. The ACS survey figures report a smaller number of housing units than the statistics reported in either decennial Census, and may represent an under-estimate in the ACS.

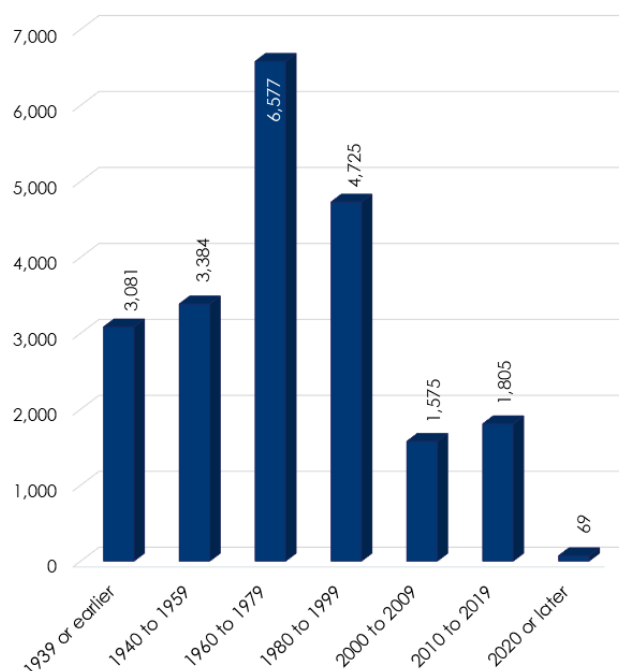
Age of Housing Units

Grand Island's housing stock was primarily built in the 1960s and 1970s. Figure 4.5 shows 6,577 housing units—almost 30% of all housing units in the community—were constructed from 1960 to 1979.

Approximately 14.5% were built prior to 1940.

These statistics represent older well-kept homes as well as

Figure 4.5: Age of Existing Housing Stock 2022



Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022.

homes likely in need of repair and rehabilitation. Approximately 16% of all homes have been constructed since 2000. The median year built is 1973 in both Grand Island and Nebraska statewide.

Housing Market

Market demand for new residential homes has been unusually strong across the nation in recent years, driven by exceptionally high multifamily absorption. The residential market, both in the Grand Island area and throughout the United States, is characterized by high demand and insufficient supply production. This dynamic resulted in low vacancies and rising home prices and rents.

Figure 4.6 shows building permit activity data for Hall County. Figure 4.7 shows the same data, but with the height of each

circle representing the average valuation per unit of the homes constructed in that year (with no adjustment for inflation). The size of the circle and label indicate the exact count of units and the color indicates single-family versus multifamily (2+ units in a building).

Figure 4.8 shows the movement in median listing prices for single family home resales in comparison to Lancaster County (Lincoln), Nebraska. Based on national trends, Grand Island remains a comparative bargain when compared to housing in comparison to much larger urban areas just a ninety minute drive away.

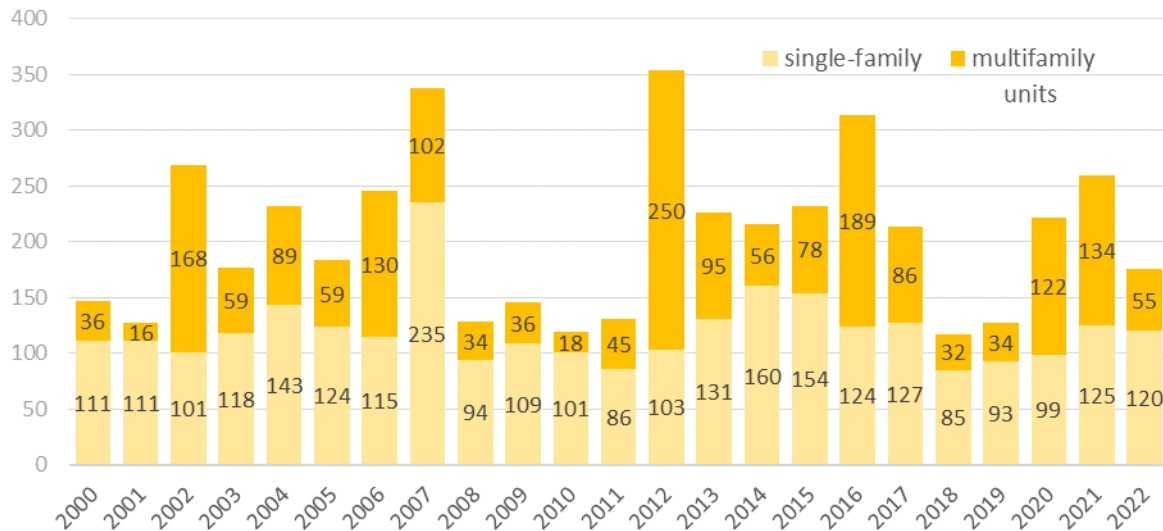
The locations of 261 recently-constructed (post-2015) single-family homes sold within the past three years are shown in Figure 4.9. As illustrated, the vast majority of new home

Table 4.2: Hall County Housing Units 2010-2020

	2010	2020	Change 2010-2020
Hall County	23,549	25,159	6.8%
Alda	253	257	1.6%
Cairo	337	354	5.0%
Doniphan	362	368	1.7%
Grand Island	19,426	21,068	8.5%
Wood River	495	493	-0.4%

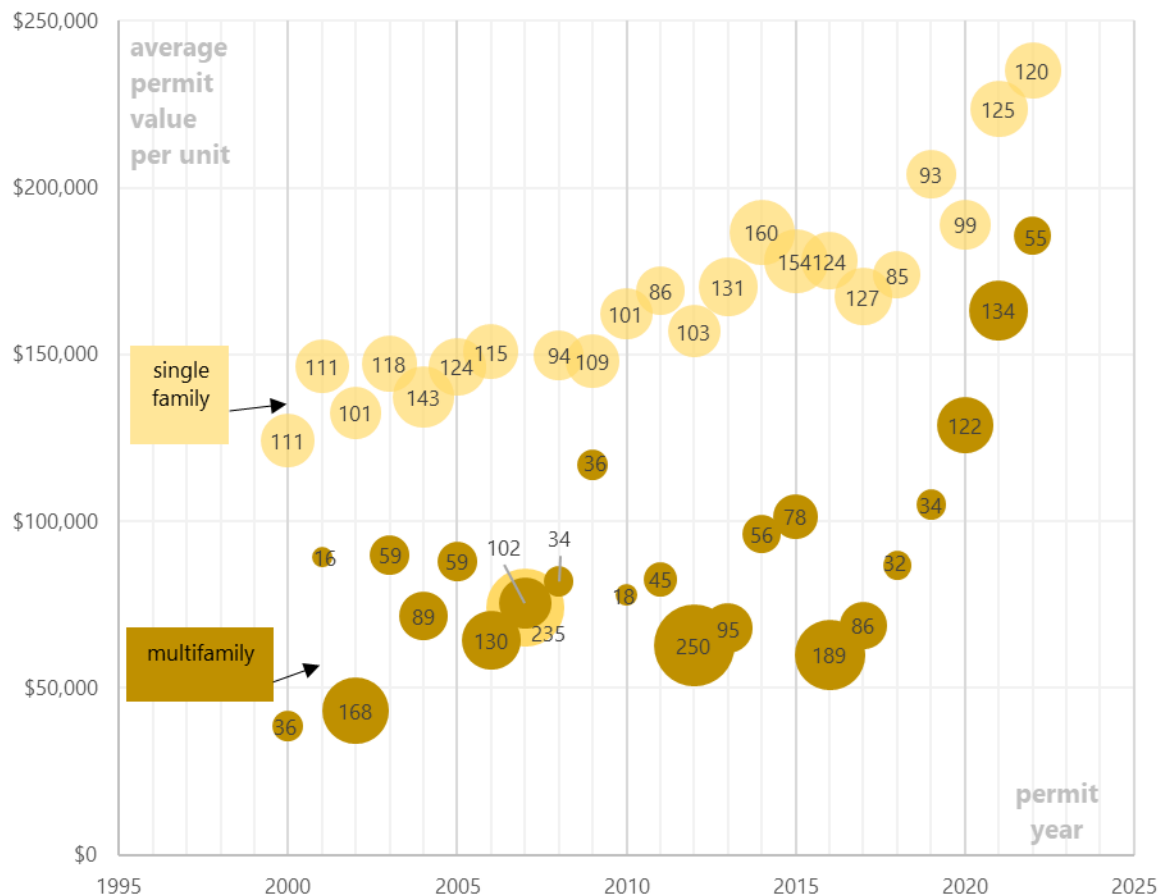
Source: US Census Bureau Redistricting File, 2010 & 2020.

Figure 4.6: Hall County Building Permits by Type, 2000-2022



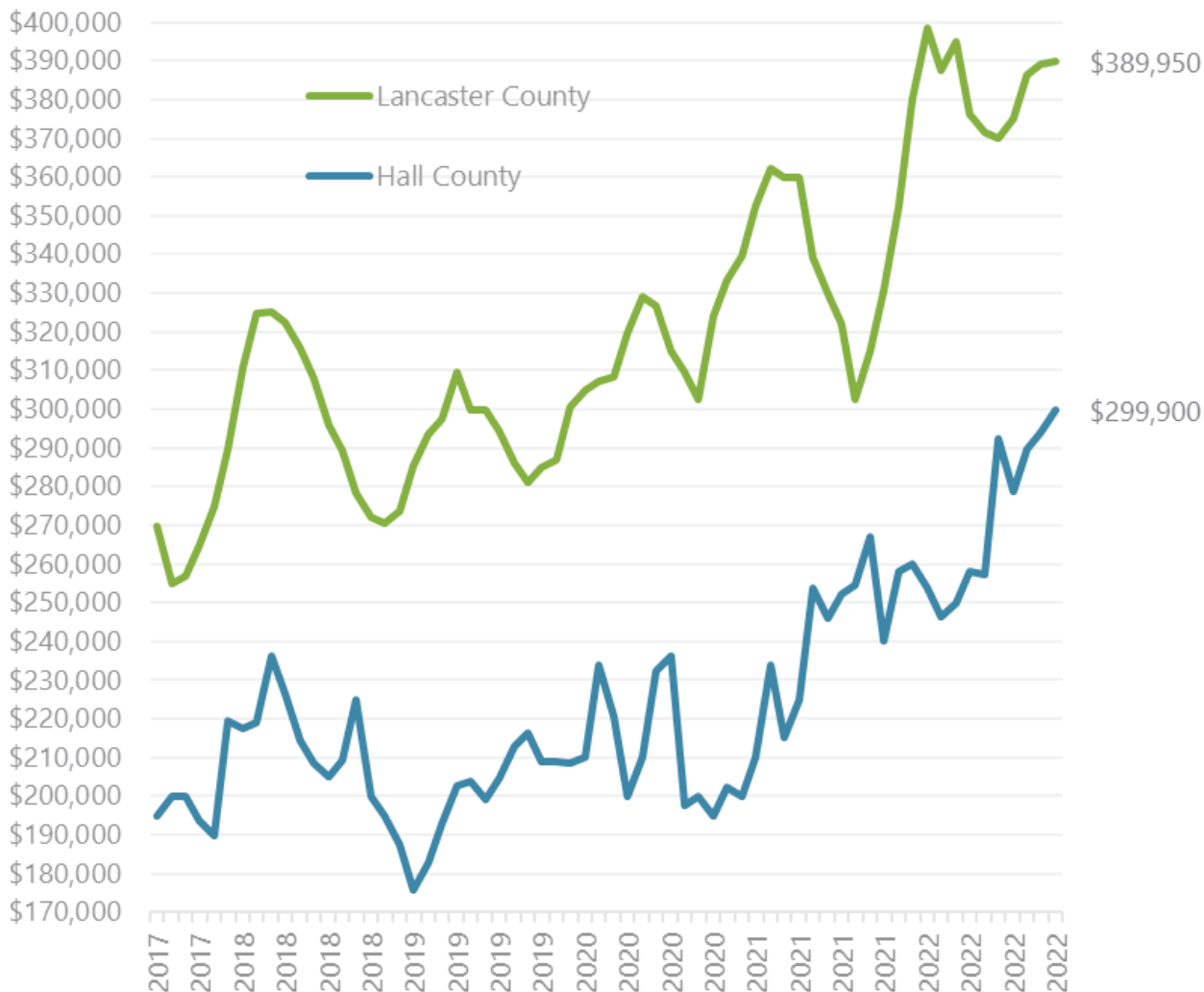
Source: U.S. Census Building Permit Surveys

Figure 4.7: Hall County Building Permits and Value by Type, 2000-2022



Source: U.S. Census Building Permit Surveys

Figure 4.8: Median List Price for Home Resales 2017-2022



Source: Leland Consulting Group

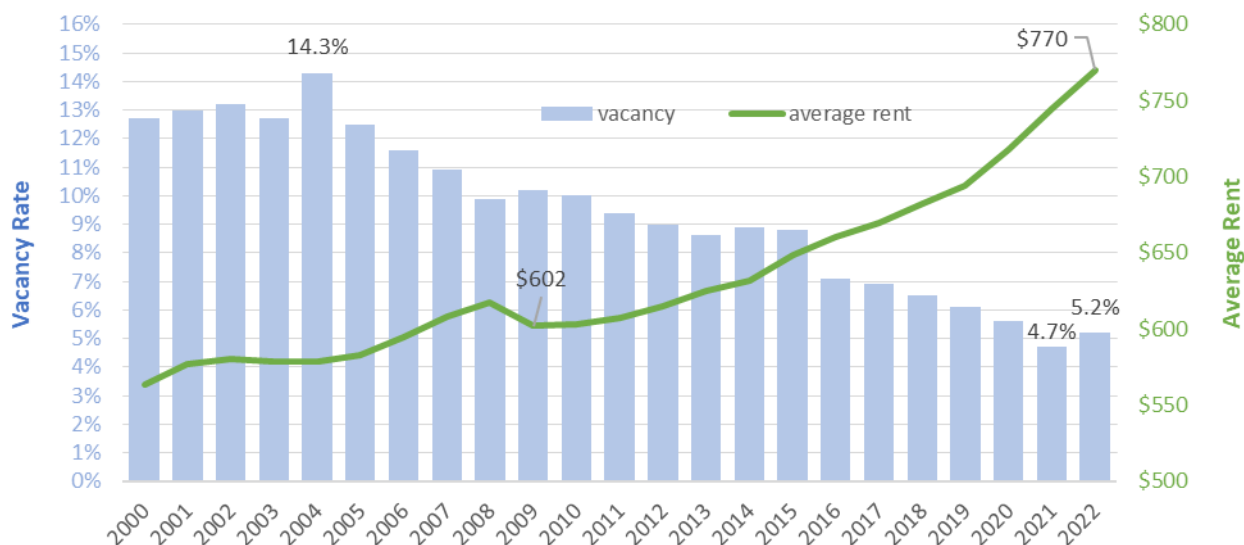
development and sales activity has occurred on the west side of town, between Engleman Road and Highway 281.

While the west side has a mix of pricing represented, most of that diversity is actually within the Copper Creek project, which has done a good job of adding a variety of entry-level and move-up price points across their plan. Other active westside subdivisions have tended to be more homogeneous in product and price offering.



Residence, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Figure 4.10: Average Multifamily Vacancy and Asking Rents, Hall County 2010-2022



Source: CoStar and Leland Consulting Group, January 2023

Housing Type

A diverse variety of housing types within a community enables residents to more easily find housing which fits the current needs of their household. Grand Island has a more diverse

housing stock compared to the overall State of Nebraska. As shown in Table 4.3, 64% of Grand Island's housing is single-family detached units, compared to 72% in the overall state.

Choices in number of bedrooms is important to ensure the housing stock is appropriate for the size of a community's families and households. The mix of bedroom diversity in Grand Island is similar to the state overall as illustrated in Table 4.4.



Old Walnut Apartments redevelopment, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Special Housing Types

Special housing types have historically been used to meet the needs of people living outside the typical family household. However, modern zoning regulations often do provide for—or actively disallow—housing types other than single family or apartment dwelling units. These include, for example:

- Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing
- Congregate housing
- Group home
- Share housing
- Manufactured home on a leased lot
- Cooperative housing

Table 4.3: Existing Housing Types 2022

Dwelling Type	Grand Island		Nebraska	
	Units	% of total	Units	% of total
Single-Family, detached	13,305	62.7%	608,411	71.7%
Single-Family, attached	1,120	5.3%	34,170	4.0%
Duplex (2 units)	752	3.5%	16,345	1.9%
Tri- or Quadplex (3 or 4 units)	1,499	7.1%	21,097	2.5%
5 to 9 units	1,051	5.0%	34,531	4.1%
10 to 19 units	812	3.8%	41,777	4.9%
20 or more units	1,707	8.0%	65,053	7.7%
Mobile Home	970	4.6%	26,453	3.1%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0%	186	0.0%
Total:	21,216	-	848,023	-

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022.

Table 4.4: Number of Bedrooms 2022

Number of Bedrooms	Grand Island		Nebraska	
	Units	% of total	Units	% of total
0	686	3.2%	18,767	2.2%
1	2,686	12.7%	91,377	10.8%
2	5,835	27.5%	213,808	25.2%
3	6,988	32.9%	305,827	36.1%
4	3,565	16.8%	160,962	19.0%
5+	1,456	6.9%	57,282	6.8%
Total:	21,216	-	848,023	-

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022.

In addition to basic building code protections, housing quality standards can be adopted to assure adequate health and safety protections including sanitary facilities, space and security provisions. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides model standards for special housing types.

Missing Middle Housing

"Missing middle" units are also better represented in Grand Island compared to the overall state. These house-scale buildings fit seamlessly into existing residential neighborhoods and support walkability, locally-serving retail, and public transportation options.

As Daniel Parolek notes in his book *Missing Middle Housing*

(2020), "These [housing] types have historically delivered attainable housing choices to middle-income families without subsidies and continue to play a role in providing homes to the 'middle income' market segment that typically straddles 60% to 110% average median household income, in new construction, for-sale housing."

Approximately 15% of Grand Island's housing meets the definition of Missing Middle Housing (townhouse, duplex, triplex), compared to just under 9% within the entire state.

Vacancy Rates

A housing market is considered healthy when the effective vacancy rates are between 5% to 7%. This ensures an adequate product for new housing moving into a community and for existing residents to move into housing which better supports their household needs. A constrained housing market leads to price escalation, potential difficulties in attracting workers to a region, exasperating a tight labor market and hampering economic growth. The lack of available housing may also cause frustration from existing residents who may not find the desired product for their current lifestyle and may choose to leave the community in search of housing fitting their needs.

Conversely, a housing market with high vacancy rates can be problematic for a community. High vacancy rates may place downward pressure on for-sale and rental housing. While lower-cost housing is advantageous for renters and home buyers; it can result in less operating income for

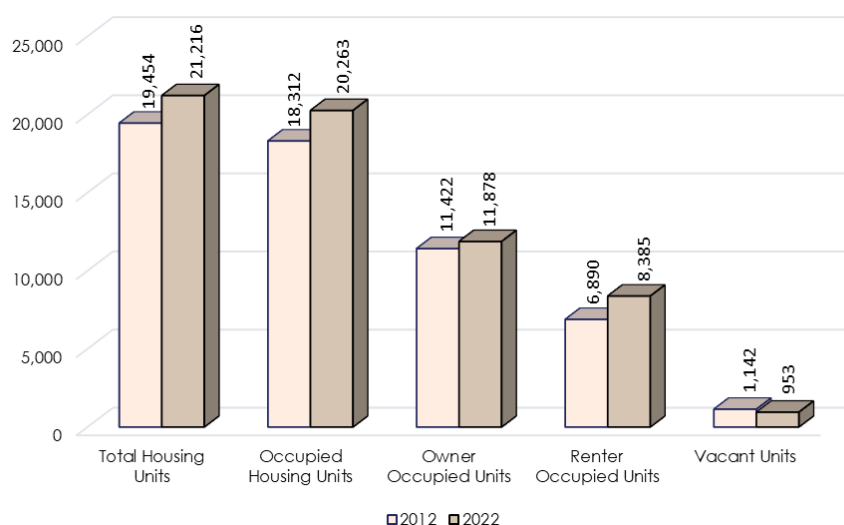


Missing Middle Housing
Source: Opticos Design, Creative Commons License

rental housing and less ability to borrow against a home's equity, leading to deferred maintenance and improvements.

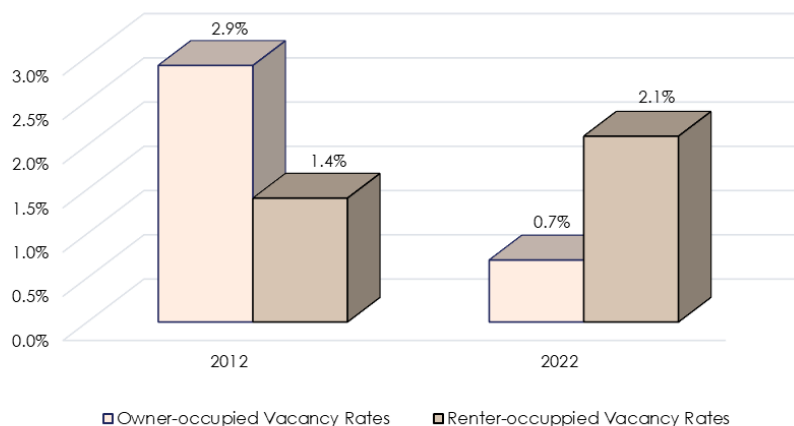
The ACS-estimated number of occupied housing units in Grand Island grew from 2012 to 2022, while the number of vacant units was effectively stable. The number of owner-occupied units increased slightly to 11,878 while the number of renter-occupied

Figure 4.11: Occupied vs. Vacant Housing Units 2012-2022



Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

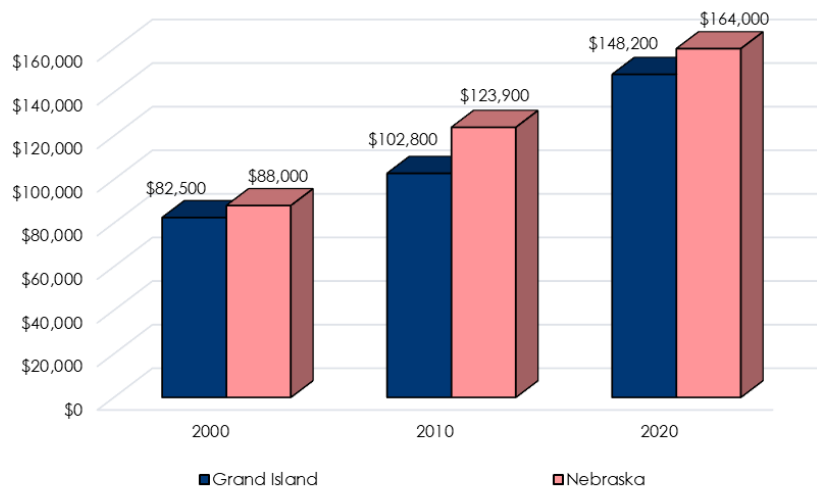
Figure 4.12: Vacancy Rates by Type of Unit 2012-2022



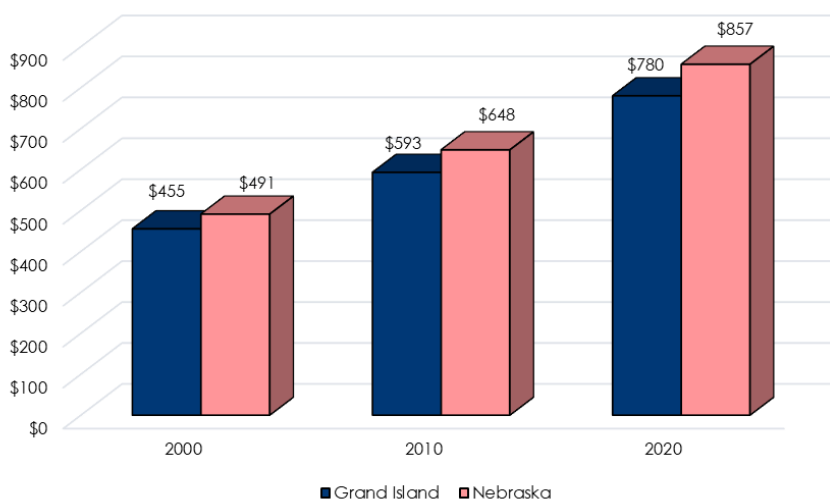
Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

Missing Middle Housing

LB 866 - the Municipal Density and Missing Middle Housing Act (Nebraska Statute 19-5501 to 19-5506) requires cities with populations of 50,000 or more adopt an affordable housing action plan. The Act defines "Middle Housing" as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters, and townhouses — dwelling sizes between single-family homes and apartments.

Figure 4.13: Median Value Owner-Occupied Units 2000-2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, American Community Survey 2006-2010 & 2016-2020.

Figure 4.14: Median Gross Rent 2000-2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, American Community Survey 2006-2010 & 2016-2020.

units increased more significantly to 8,385 (Figure 4.11). The vacancy rate for owner-occupied units fell from 2.9% to 0.7%, while the vacancy rate for renter-occupied units increased from 1.4% to 2.1% (Figure 4.12). In comparison, across the Midwest the Q3 2022 average for-sale vacancy rate was 0.9% and the rental vacancy rate states was 7.1%.

Value and Gross Rent

The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Grand Island increased from \$82,500 in 2000 to \$148,200 in 2020 (Figure 4.13). This compares to the \$299,900 Median List Price for Hall County in 2022 (Figure 4.8).

Over the same time period, the State's median value had increased from \$88,000 to \$164,000. While the median

value in Grand Island grew by 80% over the last 20 years, the median value statewide grew by 86%.

Grand Island and the state of Nebraska have both seen significant growth in median gross rent since 2000. Median gross rent in Grand Island increased by 71% to \$780 in 2020 (Figure 4.14). This compares to the \$770 Median Asking Rent for Hall County in 2022 (Figure 4.9)

Median gross rent in Nebraska increased by 75% to \$857 in 2020. Rent in the city and state both grew faster than the Consumer Price Index, which only increased at a rate of 50.5% during the same period.

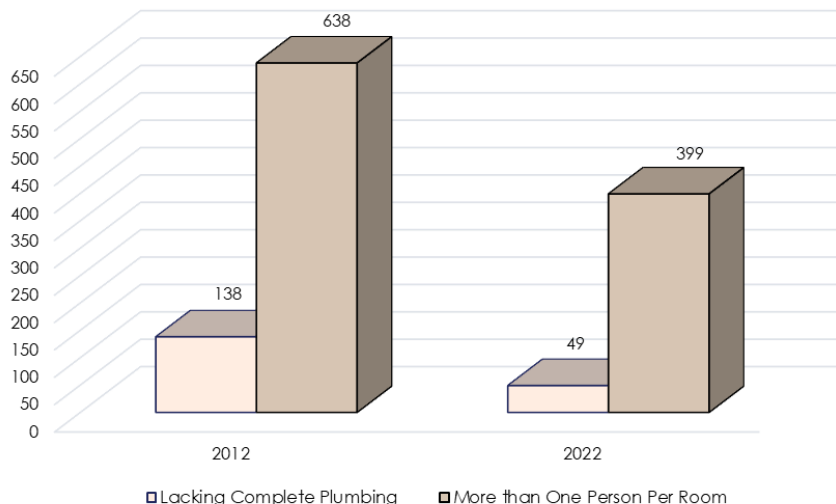
HOUSING CONDITIONS

Despite an aging housing stock, Grand Island housing appears to be well maintained. According to data provided by the Hall County Assessor's Office, approximately 8.1% of residential structures are considered below average condition. This accounts for approximately 1,200 structures.

If properties are allowed to fail into disrepair either because the owner does not have the resources to maintain the structure or simply through neglect, properties can become highly dilapidated. At some point, if there is no intervention, it may cost more to rehabilitate the structure than is economically feasible and in many of those cases, these properties become abandoned.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Figure 4.15: Substandard Housing Conditions 2012-2022



Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

guidelines, housing units lacking complete plumbing or are overcrowded are considered substandard housing units. HUD defines a complete plumbing facility as hot and cold-piped water, a bathtub or shower, and a flush toilet; overcrowding is more than one person per room. In addition, anytime there is more than 1.0 persons per room, the housing unit is considered overcrowded, thus substandard.

When applied to Grand Island, 776 units were considered substandard in 2012 and 448 units were substandard in 2022 (Figure 4.15). Some housing units may have met both criterion and were effectively counted twice. Even so, the City should not assume the number of substandard housing units are overestimated. Housing units containing major defects requiring rehabilitation or upgrades to meet building, electrical, or plumbing codes

should also be included in an analysis of substandard housing.

AT-RISK HOUSEHOLDS

A key factor to examine is households at risk of entering into a housing crisis, becoming

homeless, or due to income constraints not able to maintain their housing.

POVERTY

The poverty rate estimate by the ACS in 2022 is higher for Grand Island (13.7%) than the overall poverty rate in Nebraska (10.4%). Grand Island also had a larger share of families below the poverty level (10.7%) than in the state of Nebraska (6.7%) overall (Table 4.5). Those households tend to be the highest risk for homelessness because they are living on the financial edge and may have issues of income, food and housing insecurity.

DISABILITIES

Many residents with disabilities have challenges finding appropriate housing. An estimated 13.1% of Grand Island residents have a disability (Table 4.5). The disability may be mobility, sensory, or cognitive. Others have ambulatory, self-care, or independent-living difficulties.



Residence, Grand Island
Source: Google.com

As the population ages, the number of households with a person having a disability will likely continue to grow. There will likely be increased demand for additional in-home care and there will be a need to construct or renovate existing housing to be fully accessible or visitable.

A visitable home is one which can be lived in or visited by people who have trouble with steps or who use wheelchairs or walkers. A house is considered visitable when it meets three basic requirements:

1. One zero-step entrance
2. Doors with 32 inches of clear passage space
3. One bathroom on the main floor accessible by wheelchair.

Efforts should be made to ensure new home construction and publicly funded renovation programs work toward increasing the number of visitable homes in Grand Island. The additional cost to make these improvements is small, but will pay large dividends by extending the time a person

can age in place and allow mobility-challenged individuals to visit friends and family.

LONG-TERM CARE

As residents age, long-term living options and varying levels of care help residents stay in their communities. Typical options include:

- Independent Living Apartments
- Adult Homes
- Enriched Housing
- Family-Type care homes
- Assisted Living Programs
- Continuing Care Retirement Communities
- Skilled Nursing Facility (Nursing home)

The unique combinations of housing and medical care may require updates to zoning regulations to assure a variety of options for all community members. (See also Chapter Six Facilities.)

Source: www.urmc.rochester.edu/senior-health/long-term-care.aspx

HOMELESSNESS

It can be difficult to live without safe and stable shelter in Nebraska's sweltering summers and freezing winters. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, on a given night in Nebraska in 2022, the number of people experiencing homelessness is about 2,246, down about 36% over the previous 15 years.

Nationally, the rising cost of housing has had a great impact on homelessness. As the state's third-largest metropolitan area, Hall County consistently has the greatest emergency shelter need in the state outside of Omaha and Lincoln.

The Nebraska Commission on Housing and Homelessness has been working on strategies to rehouse people across the state. This includes chronic homelessness, when people are homeless for a year or more. Addressing the situation requires affordable housing, but also supportive services including public safety and public health (addressed later in this plan).

In Grand Island, Hope Harbor provides services to families experiencing homelessness, including safe shelter, meals, and supportive case management with a goal of obtaining permanent housing and becoming self-sufficient. Hope Harbor operates two shelter programs at 610 W. Division Street for women and families. The Emergency Shelter is a short-term respite. The Transitional Shelter provides safe and long-term housing for up to nine months.

Table 4.5: At Risk Households 2022

	Grand Island		Nebraska	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total
Families Below Poverty Level	1,384	10.7%	32,866	6.7%
Population with a Disability	6,819	13.1%	231,213	12.0%
Hearing Difficulty	2,272	4.4%	74,733	3.9%
Vision Difficulty	1,255	2.4%	39,262	2.0%
Cognitive Difficulty	2,997	6.2%	84,357	4.7%
Ambulatory Difficulty	3,303	6.9%	103,566	5.7%
Self-Care Difficulty	1,402	2.9%	35,024	1.9%
Independent Living Difficulty	2,373	6.4%	70,229	4.8%

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022.

The Salvation Army operates a Community Center at 818 West 3rd Street in downtown Grand Island. The facility focuses on feeding the community, with a hot meal program serving lunch (noon) and dinner (5pm) Monday through Friday. On Sundays, the Center partners with Project Hunger for an evening meal. Salvation Army also assists families with nutritional needs through an Emergency Food Pantry, offering canned and packaged staples. An emergency overnight shelter program was previously provided. Assistance is offered to help qualified working families with rent or utilities.

Crossroads Mission Avenue was established in 1983 with a vision to serve the hungry and needy. The facility in Grand Island is located at 1910 W. 9th Street, off Broadwell Ave. Services include safe shelter, hot meals, life skills classes, and case management. The organization also operates a thrift shop at 2846 Old Fair Road in Grand Island.

COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines cost burdened households as those spending more than 30% of their household income on housing costs. Severely cost burdened households are those spending 50% or more of their household income on housing costs. Housing costs include mortgage or rent, and utilities.

Table 4.6: Cost Burdened Households 2019

	Owner Occupied		Renter-Occupied		Total	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total	Number	% of total
Greater than 30% but less	1,050	9.2%	1,550	19.5%	2,600	13.5%
Greater than 50%	480	4.2%	1,560	19.6%	2,040	10.6%
Not Cost Burdened	9,735	86.0%	4,720	59.5%	14,455	75.1%
No Income	45	0.0%	105	1.3%	150	0.8%
Total	11,310	100.0%	7,935	100.0%	19,245	100.0%

Source: 2015-2019 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS).

As Table 4.6 illustrates, over 13.5% of Grand Island's households are considered cost-burdened and an estimated 10.6% are severely cost-burdened.

Affordable Housing

An affordable housing crisis is generally acknowledged across the US over recent years. Yet "affordable housing" means different things to different people and in different places. "Affordable Housing" is a proper noun (with capital 'A' and capital 'H') term of art referring to housing subject to restrictions in rent and/or income, typically subsidized in some fashion. Yet "affordable housing" lower case also means, in plain English, any housing for which the occupants can afford to live without undue burden on household finances or quality of life.

Communities can have a mismatch, or gap, between the number of units with affordable rents, versus the number of households who can afford those rents without becoming cost burdened. Similarly to renters, homeowners may be living in homes above or below

what they can afford for their household income.

The *Grand Island Affordable Housing Plan* (2022) reported on the estimated number of households living in units which are affordable to their respective household income cohort, compared to the number of units available. Approximately 994 occupied rental units were considered affordable to households earning less than 30% AML, out of 7,923 total occupied units. An estimated 4,824 owner-occupied housing units were considered affordable to household earning less than 50% AML, out of 11,312 occupied units.

These statistics indicate there is likely a need for rental and owner-occupied housing. There is also likely pent-up demand for step-up housing which is newer, and with more modern amenities.

Grand Island, in short, has a need for Affordable Housing and affordable housing. There will be a continued need for public housing and housing voucher programs. There will also be a large continued need for Low-

Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)-based housing development and zoning reform to make new housing more affordable for all residents of the city.

FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

As noted in the Introduction, early in this comprehensive planning process, consultants Community Planning Insights worked with the City of Grand Island to supplement and update *Grand Island Affordable Housing Plan* (November 2022). In 2024, the City engaged RDG Design to complete a new Grand Island Housing Study, for presentation to City Council early in 2025. The housing study compared conditions in Grand Island and Hall County to benchmarks in Salina, Kansas; and Greeley, Colorado.

The Housing Study considers similar statistics as presented in this chapter, as well as median

household income presented in the next chapter (Economic Development). Population projections used in the study fell in a range between the high and low population projections in Chapter Two of this plan (Table 4.7).

The city's housing need can be distributed across household income groupings and typical owning versus renting behavior, assuming relatively steady resident incomes and household sizes (consistent with the past decade). Although the large Millennial age cohort are entering what would normally be prime family-formation years, this is not translating into the amount of upward momentum on home ownership as historically expected. This dynamic is due in part to delayed family formation and for-sale housing affordability problems. As such, it is likely the share of renters will remain constant over the projection horizon.

These calculations result in estimated new demand of about 1,200 rental units and 1,800 ownership units over the coming decade, due to added households and replacement of lost units. This demand should be considered above and beyond any "pent-up" housing demand already existing in the market due to lack of affordability. That demand is discussed in more detail in Grand Island's Affordable Housing Strategy. It should be expected, due to general shifts towards urban growth at the expense of rural population loss in the rural Midwest, the City of Grand Island should capture most of countywide demand over the next decade.

HOUSING RESOURCES

HALL COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Hall County Housing Authority (HCHA) manages and operates federally subsidized Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs to provide residents affordable housing. The Public Housing Program includes 394 one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments as well as scattered site homes. Rent is generally based upon 30 percent of the family's adjusted income (restrictions apply). For the HCV program, qualifying families pay a portion of rent based on income (restrictions apply) to a private landlord for a home of their choosing that passes a Housing Quality Standards inspection.

Table 4.7: Grand Island Estimated Housing Demand

	2025	2030	2035	Total
Assumed Population	56,036	59,100	59,100	
Household Population	51,972	57,812	60,973	
Average Persons per Household	2.56	2.55	2.55	
Household Demand	21,454	22,671	23,911	
Projected Vacancy Rate	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	22,621	23,905	25,212	
Replacement Need (total units lost)		90	75	165
Cumulative Need During Period		1,617	1,382	2,999
Average Annual Construction		270	276	273

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology cited in *Grand Island Housing Study*.

Source: www.hcha.net

NEBRASKA INVESTMENT FINANCE AUTHORITY

The Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) is an instrumentality of the State of Nebraska, created by the Nebraska Legislature in 1983, focused on the mission of "Growing Nebraska communities through affordable housing and agribusiness". NIFA collaborates with public, private, and non-profit partners across the State to support housing and community growth with innovative solutions, as well as providing financing at reduced interest rates to low- and moderate-income Nebraskans acquiring their first homes, first-time Nebraska farmers and ranchers, and developers or business entities financing multifamily housing, manufacturing and industrial enterprises, health care facilities, and certain nonprofit-owned facilities.

Source: www.nifa.org

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Single-family zoning is a hurdle to construction of new, affordable and attainable housing as demanded by local residents. Overly-restrictive residential zoning prevents the natural, incremental change of neighborhoods to meet the changing needs of the housing market. As analyst M. Nolan Gray writes in his book *Arbitrary Lines* (2022), "Before zoning, this process of incremental housing growth played out over and over again in every American city."

One way to address this concern is adding Accessory Dwelling



Source: AARP Livable Communities.

Units (ADUs). An ADU is a separate, complete housekeeping unit with a separate entrance, kitchen, sleeping area, and full bathroom facilities, which is an attached or detached extension to an existing single-family structure

An ADU allows for incremental growth of residential units such as basement apartments or "granny-flats" over a garage. Some places have allowed Tiny Homes to be used as ADUs, when they meet requirements of Appendix Q of the International Residential Code. ADUs can aid in making housing more affordable. ADUs are places for young adults to spread their wings close to home, or for grandparents to maintain independence while also staying close to family.

MANUFACTURED AND MODULAR HOMES

Across the U.S., manufactured housing makes up about nine percent of new single-family homes, down from 25% in 1996, according to the US Census Bureau. Prefabricated or manufactured homes are built off-site, typically in an enclosed factory, and transported as single or multiple units to the home site. Previously called "mobile homes", manufactured homes built since 1976 must meet strict health and safety standards of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD Code). Modular homes meet the same building codes as a site-built home.



Example of Modular/Manufactured Housing
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Prefabricated housing is often more affordable, with construction costs between 1/3 and 3/4 of a comparable site-built home. Factory conditions may result in higher-quality as construction is sheltered from bad weather. New HUD Code homes are also energy-efficient, and environmentally friendly as waste can be better managed in the manufacturing process. Some modular homes are built from component systems, making shipping and assembly easier and more flexible.

About half of manufactured home households own both their home and the land it sits on, according to US Federal Reserve reports. One-quarter rent manufactured homes and one-quarter own their home with a land-lease. Residents of land-lease communities may be particularly vulnerable to price shocks from rising rents, deferred infrastructure and utility costs, or sale/conversion of older manufactured home parks. In many places, residents have formed cooperatives to purchase parks as resident-

owned communities. Another alternative is purchase by mission-driven public or nonprofit organizations.

Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae now allow for traditional mortgage financing if homes are affixed to permanent foundations and classified as real property. Manufactured and modular homes are often placed on a basement or permanent foundation, and should be treated similarly to standard site-built construction in zoning and subdivision regulations, in conformance with the Fair Housing Act.

Sources: www.hud.gov/OMHP, fedcommunities.org and www.manufacturedhousing.org

GRAND ISLAND AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN

The City of Grand Island's 2020 *Community Housing Study with Strategies for Affordable Housing* provided statistical and narrative data identifying a housing profile and demand

analysis for the city. The *Grand Island Affordable Housing Plan* (November 2022) provided a supplement and update to address the requirements of LB 866 - the Municipal Density and Missing Middle Housing Act (NRS 19-5501 to 19-5506). This chapter draws heavily on that update.

The City initiated an update to the Affordable Housing Plan concurrently with this Comprehensive Plan (2024). The project includes more detailed data analysis and continued public outreach. More specific goals, policies, and action items, will be brought forward as a result of that planning process.

Sources: www.grand-island.com/departments/community-development/housing-studies

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT STUDIES

In 2012, the City of Grand Island worked with consultants to complete the *Downtown Housing & Development Study*. This project looked at the potential for upper-level housing as a catalyst for creating a more vibrant downtown Grand Island. Specific multi-story structures were identified and evaluated, with recommendations for incentives and funding to encourage re-development.

HOUSING GOALS AND POLICIES

The Housing Goals in this chapter are informed by the Goals and Strategies of the *Grand Island Affordable Housing Plan (2022)*. Policies and action items provide a toolkit for implementation as discussed in Chapter 16.

HOUSING GOAL 4.1

Increase the number and types of housing units to meet the needs of Grand Island's current and future residents.

Policies

- 4.1.1 Prioritize public funding for projects which incorporate affordable, missing middle, and/or workforce housing.

Actions

- 4.1.2 Explore creating a Community Land Trust.
- 4.1.3 Explore Shared Risk Loan Pools for higher-risk workforce and affordable housing projects.
- 4.1.4 Revise zoning regulations to encourage housing variety and affordability, including ADUs.
- 4.1.5 Update and implement the Downtown Housing & Development Study.

HOUSING GOAL 4.2

Improve and preserve existing affordable housing.

Actions

- 4.2.1 Target redevelopment strategies toward vacant and abandoned properties.
- 4.2.2 Target CDBG funds toward property improvement for low and moderate income residents.
- 4.2.3 Develop programs to promote the private renovation of vacant homes. Encourage the promotion of existing programs such as FHA 203K loans.

HOUSING GOAL 4.3

Reduce development costs where possible.

Policies

- 4.3.1 Proactively extend public utilities to reduce the costs of development and encourage development in appropriate areas.

Actions

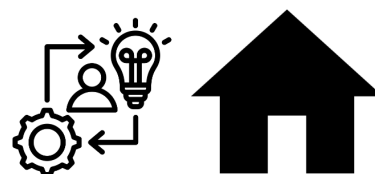
- 4.3.2 Explore partnerships with the Nebraska Manufactured Housing Association to work with local housing manufactures to develop a palette of neighborhood context sensitive home plans that can be constructed on infill lots.

HOUSING GOAL 4.4

Improve household stability.

Actions

- 4.4.1 Work with existing subsidized housing owners to ensure their properties are well maintained and the affordable units are preserved.
- 4.4.2 Work with affordable housing developers to create additional rental housing for very-low income families.



Housing Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
4.1.1	Prioritize public funding for projects which incorporate affordable, missing middle, and/or workforce housing.	1,2,3,4,5, 6,7	1,2,3,4,5, 6						
4.1.2	Explore creating a Community Land Trust.	1,2,12	1,4,5						
4.1.3	Explore Shared Risk Loan Pools for higher-risk workforce and affordable housing projects.	1,8,9	3,4,5						
4.1.4	Revise zoning regulations to encourage housing variety and affordability.	1,2,10	1						
4.1.5	Update and implement the Downtown Housing & Development Study.	1,3,5,10	1,4,5						
4.2.1	Target redevelopment strategies toward vacant and abandoned properties.	1,9	1,2,4,5						
4.2.2	Target CDBG funds toward property improvement for low and moderate income residents.	1,5,7	1,4						
4.2.3	Develop programs to promote the private renovation of vacant homes. Encourage the promotion of existing programs such as FHA 203K loans.	1,8,12	5						
4.3.1	Proactively extend public utilities to reduce the costs of development and encourage development in appropriate areas.	1,4,5,7,10	1,2,3,4,6	X					
4.3.2	Explore partnerships with the Nebraska Manufactured Housing Association to work with local housing manufactures to develop a palette of neighborhood context sensitive home plans that can be constructed on infill lots.	1,3,9,12	1,4,5						
4.4.1	Work with existing subsidized housing owners to ensure their properties are well maintained and the affordable units are preserved.	1,2,3,4,8, 9,12	3,4,5						
4.4.2	Work with affordable housing developers to create additional rental housing for very-low income families.	1,3,6,7,8, 9	1,3,4,5						

Organization:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. City of Grand Island | 8. Private Businesses |
| 2. Hall County | 9. Developers |
| 3. GIAEDC | 10. Consultants |
| 4. Grand Island CRA | 11. Nebraska DOT |
| 5. NEDED | 12. Local Organizations |
| 6. NIFA | 13. Schools |
| 7. South Central EDD | |

Funding Sources:

- General Funds
- Bonding
- TIF
- Grants
- Private Funds
- Sales Tax



Missing Middle Housing, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



Chapter 5 Economic Development

ECONOMIC PROFILE

Economic development is a process of investment to increase the well-being of a community. The creation of new enterprises and the retention and expansion of existing businesses enables the creation of jobs for current and new residents, and provides new sources of income.

A diversified economic base enables a community to respond to changing economic conditions, increase local income, create job opportunities, and improve the quality of life of a community. As Edward Hill of The Ohio State University wrote in *Economic Development Quarterly* (2023): "Economic development

introduces new goods and services into a region's portfolio of traded products or expands the productive capabilities of existing members of a region's economic base."

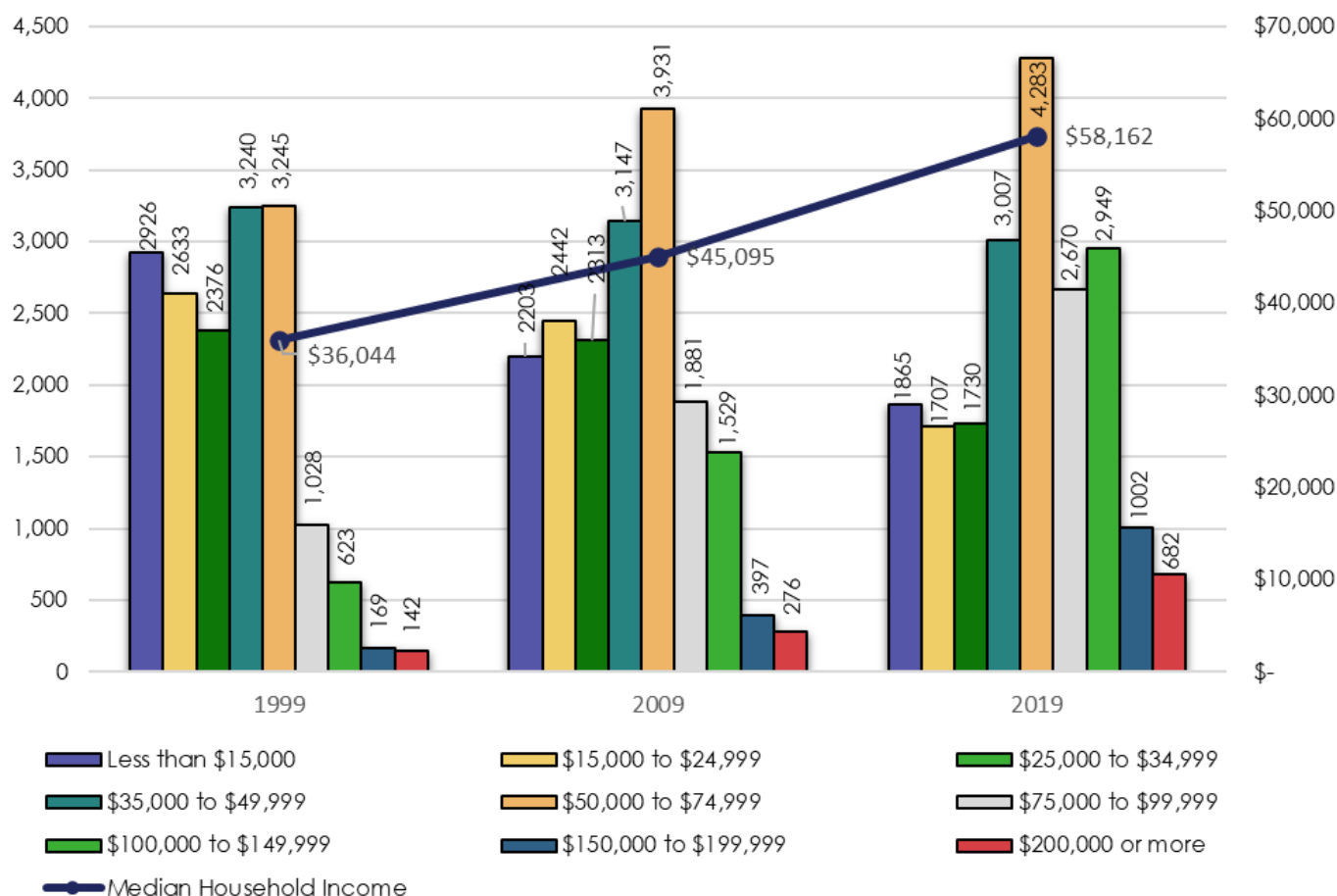
In this section, income and employment data and trends are presented and analyzed for Grand Island, Hall County, and the state of Nebraska. Given Grand Island's influence in the regional economy, market data and trends for the Tri-Cities including Kearney and Hastings are also included in the analysis. This section also contains a more detailed analysis of commercial real estate trends.

Many economic data sources only cover counties, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), and states. City-specific data is considered when available.



The "Challenger." Grand Island, Nebraska, by Dorothea Lang, 1939
Source: Library of Congress

Figure 5.1: Grand Island Household Income 1999 to 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, American Community Survey 2006-2010 & 2016-2020.



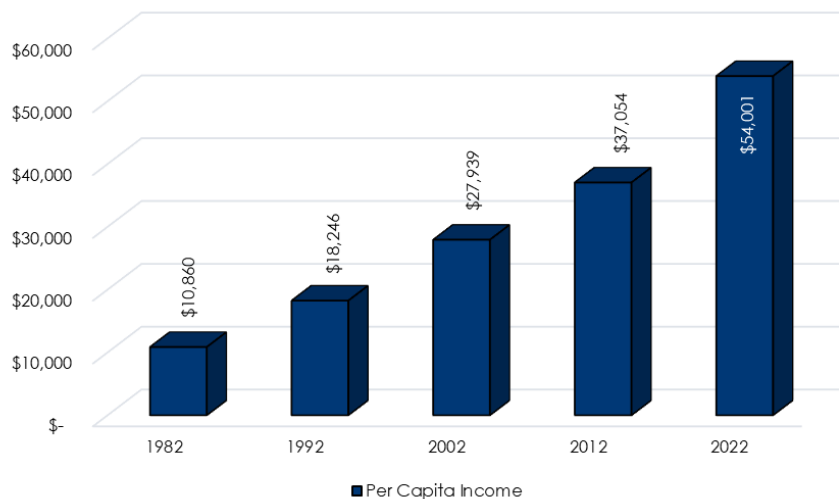
JBS Beef Plant, Stuhr Road, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

INCOME

Income statistics illustrate the earning power of area residents. These data show personal and household income levels for Grand Island and Hall County in comparison to the state.

Household income in Grand Island has grown over time. In 1999, the largest groups of households earned between \$35,000 to \$49,999 and \$50,000 to \$74,999, with a Median Household Income of \$36,044 (Figure 5.1). In 2009 and 2019, the largest groups earned \$50,000 to \$74,999, with the Median Household Income increasing from \$45,095 in 2009 to \$58,162 in

Figure 5.2: Hall County Per Capita Income

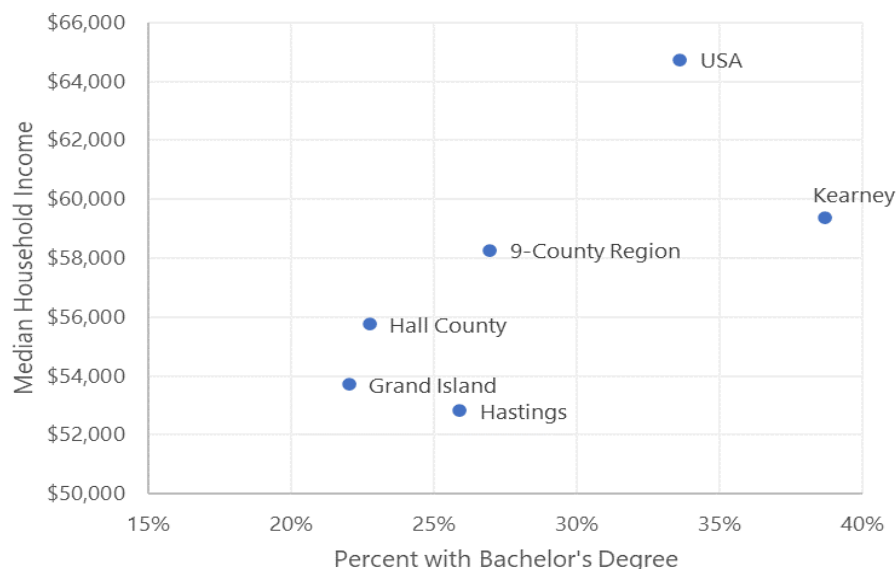


Source: BEA Regional Economic Accounts, 1982 - 2022

Hall County's Per Capita Income (PCI) increased from \$10,860 in 1982 to \$54,001 in 2022 (Figure 5.2). PCI increased by 397.2% over 40 years, a slower rate of increase than the 452.0% increase for Nebraska statewide, although both outpaced the increase of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 203.3% over the same forty years. This indicates local income growth has outpaced inflation.

Transfer payments make up an increasing share of income. From 1982 to 2022, transfer payments increased from 12.4% of Hall County's Total Personal Income to 19.5%.

Figure 5.3: Income by Educational Attainment



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Transfer payments include items such as:

- Retirement and disability insurance benefits, including Social Security
- Medical benefits, including Medicare
- Income maintenance benefits, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Unemployment insurance compensation
- Veterans' benefits
- Education and training assistance

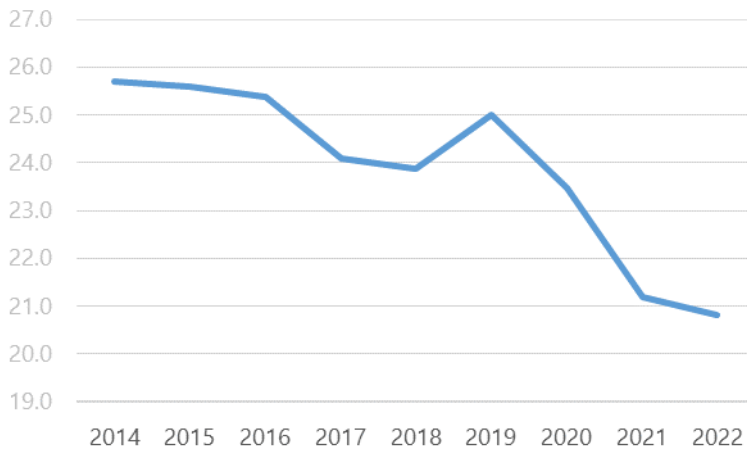
2019. Median Household Income increased by approximately 61% from 1999 to 2019, a slightly greater rate than in Nebraska statewide, and exceed inflation as measured by the increase of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 53% over the same twenty years.

Personal income has grown in parallel to household income. According to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Hall County's Total Personal Income increased from \$535,896 million in 1982 to \$3.35 billion in 2022, a change of 525.7% over 40 years. Non-Farm Income accounted for 98.9% of Total Personal Income in 2022.

Income and Education

With occasional exceptions, income and higher educational attainment tend to be highly correlated. Figure 5.3 plots Grand Island and comparison geographies based on median household income and percent of adults (age 25+) with bachelor's degrees or higher. Note that not all higher paying jobs require college degrees.

Figure 5.4: Hall County Households with Low Credit



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Positive Income Indicators

There are signs that financial health may be improving in Grand Island and Hall County. Creditworthiness, a function of both household incomes and consumer debt, is one objective indicator of residents' financial

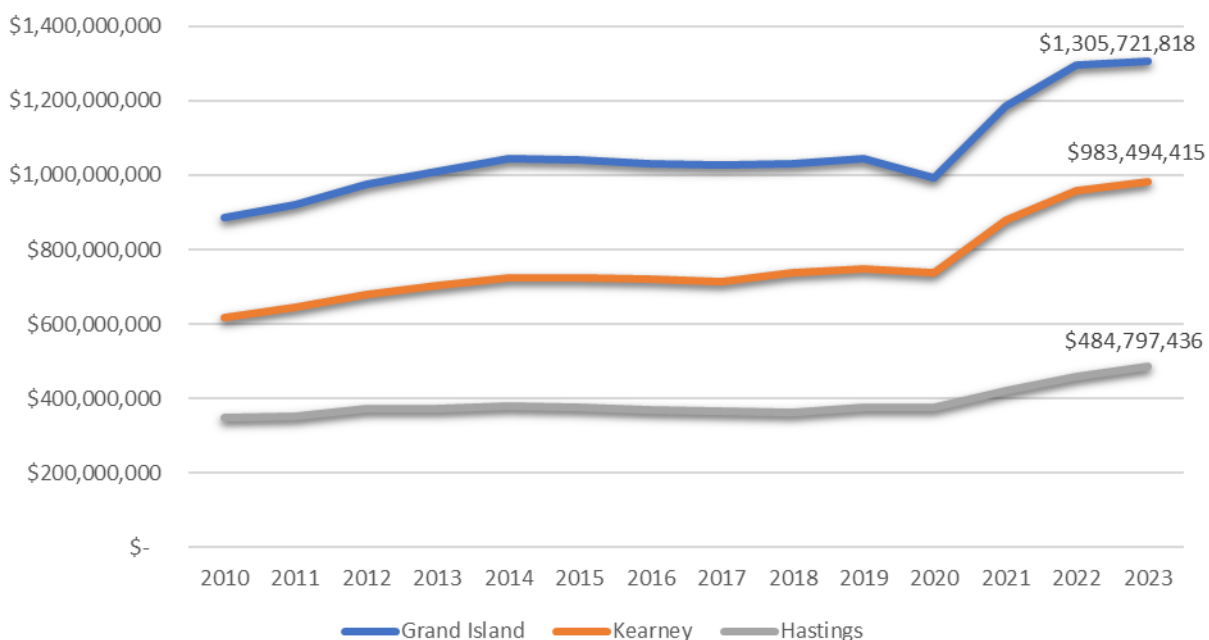
well-being – and one that has improved significantly over the past 8 years of available data. The share of Hall County households considered by Equifax to have subprime credit has fallen from nearly 26 percent in 2014 to below 21 percent in 2022 (Figure 5.4).

Sales Tax

Increasing income tends to result in increasing retail sales, providing a base for employment and income for local residents. Retail sales also drive local sales and use tax receipts for municipalities and the State of Nebraska. The City of Grand Island has adopted a local rate of 2.0% in addition to the State rate for a total rate of 7.5%. The City of Kearney and the City of Hastings have adopted local rates of 1.5%.

According to the Nebraska Department of Revenue, Net Taxable Sales in Grand Island have grown from \$1,009 million in 2013 to about \$1,306 million in 2023, an increase of 30% (Figure 5.5). While Kearney realized a lower level of sales--\$983 million in 2023 the ten-year trend was up 40%. Hastings' sales were \$485 million in 2023, a ten-year increase of 30%.

Figure 5.5: Net Taxable Sales, 2010-2023



Source: Nebraska Dept. of Revenue, Non-Motor Vehicle Sales Tax Collections

However, it should be noted that Net Taxable Sales took a large hit across the board during the COVID pandemic in 2020. Grand Island's sales dropped by 5.1% year-on-year, only to rebound by 19.4% in 2021. The overall impacts of the pandemic, along with shifts towards online sales, will continue to bear watching.

With the passage of LB284 in 2019, short-term rental platforms, such as AirBnB and VRBO, are

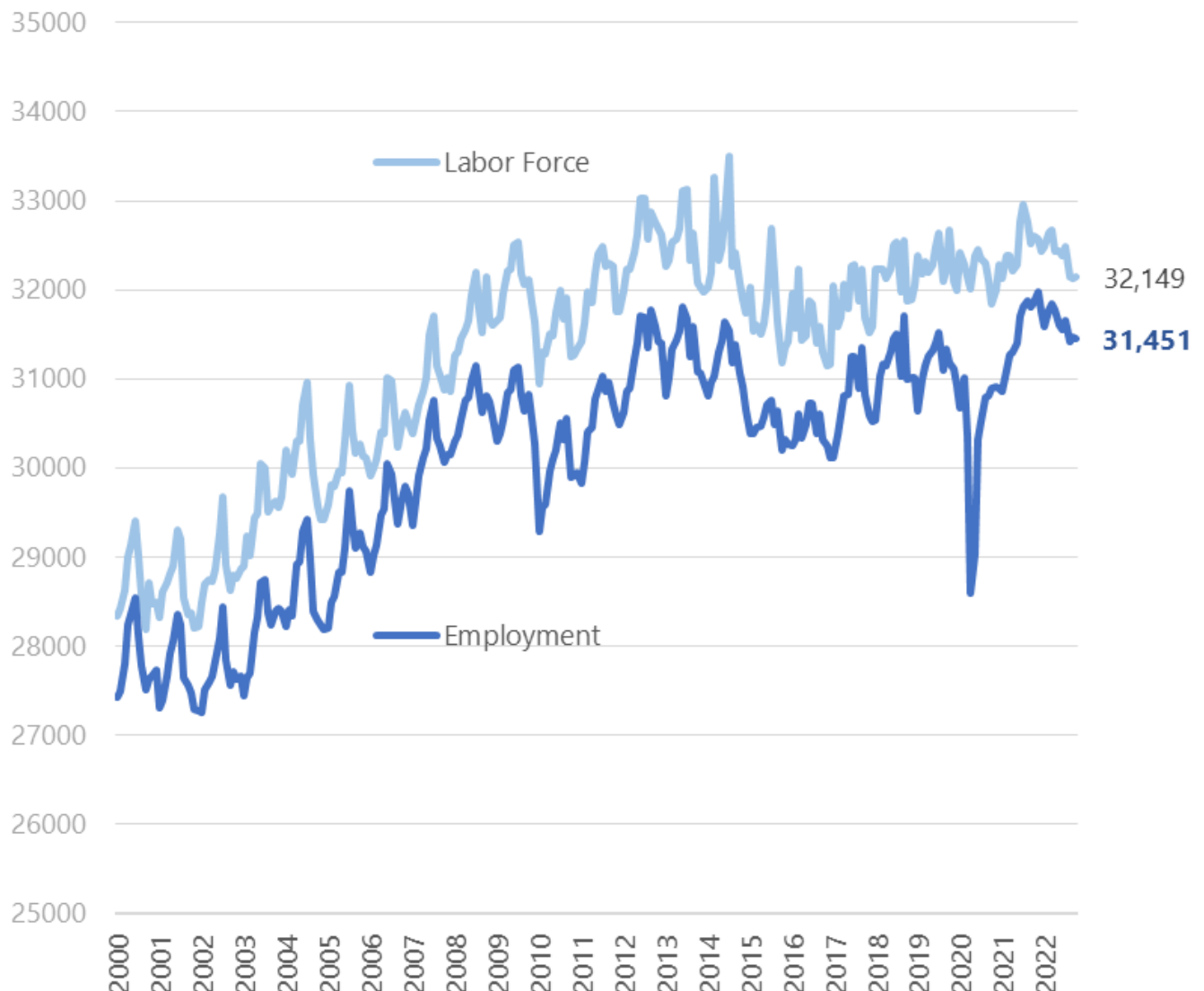
responsible for collection and filing of sales tax and lodging tax collections in Nebraska. Tourist home owners are required to collect and remit sales and lodging taxes for clients that book directly.

LABOR FORCE

The Hall County labor force has grown, with substantial seasonal variability in labor force participation and job

availability, although fluctuations have moderated more recently. Hall County's seasonal labor force and employment grew fairly steadily from 2000 to 2010, with a contraction following the Great Recession, then remaining fairly stable until the COVID recession in 2020 (Figure 5.6). Notice the dip in employed workers during the strictest lockdown period of mid-2020 (while the labor force remained unchanged), and the relatively

Figure 5.6: Hall County Seasonal Labor Force and Employment



Source: Leland Consulting Group

quick rebound from that unusual dip.

Hall County's *annual average* labor force grew from 32,587 in 2012 to 32,993 in 2022, an increase of 1.2% (Table 5.1). In comparison, the Buffalo County (Kearney) labor force is smaller than Hall County, yet increased at a rate of 4.5%, about the same as the statewide growth rate of 4.6%. Adams County (Hastings) also grew faster than Hall County at 2.8%.

Hall County has experienced a higher unemployment rate than

the rest of the Tri-Cities or statewide. Hall County's unemployment rate was 2.4% in 2022 (Table 5.2). Adams County was 2.2% and Buffalo County was 2.0%, both under the Nebraska unemployment rate of 2.3% in 2022.

Industry Employment

Employment by industry data assists in understanding the key generators of income. The BEA

tracks employment by county. The total annual average number of jobs in Hall County grew from 43,609 in 2012 to 45,341 in 2022, a 3.8% growth rate (Table 5.3). This includes people who live elsewhere and commute into Hall County. While there were impacts from the pandemic in 2021, total employment in Nebraska grew by 7.9% in the same decade.

Table 5.3: Hall County Employment 2012-2022

Industry	2012	2022	Change 2012-2022
Total Employment by Place of Work	43,609	45,341	3.8%
Farm Employment	673	691	2.6%
Non-Farm Employment	42,936	44,650	3.8%
Forestry and Fishing	(D)	(D)	-
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	95	(D)	-
Utilities	(D)	33	-
Construction	2,328	2,754	15.5%
Manufacturing	7,251	8,020	9.6%
Wholesale Trade	1,644	1,644	0.0%
Retail Trade	5,792	5,304	-9.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	1,882	2,519	25.3%
Information	354	258	-37.2%
Finance and Insurance	2,046	2,546	19.6%
Real Estate	1,118	1,666	32.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,099	1,217	9.7%
Management of Companies	450	542	17.0%
Administrative/Support/Waste Management	2,279	2,151	-6.0%
Educational Services	265	354	25.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,732	4,412	-7.3%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	643	612	-5.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	2,948	3,133	5.9%
Other Services (except Government)	2,253	2,252	0.0%
Government	5,222	4,854	-7.6%

(D) Not Disclosed, n/a– Not Available
Source: BEA Regional Economic Accounts, 2011- 2021

Table 5.1: Labor Force, 2012-2022

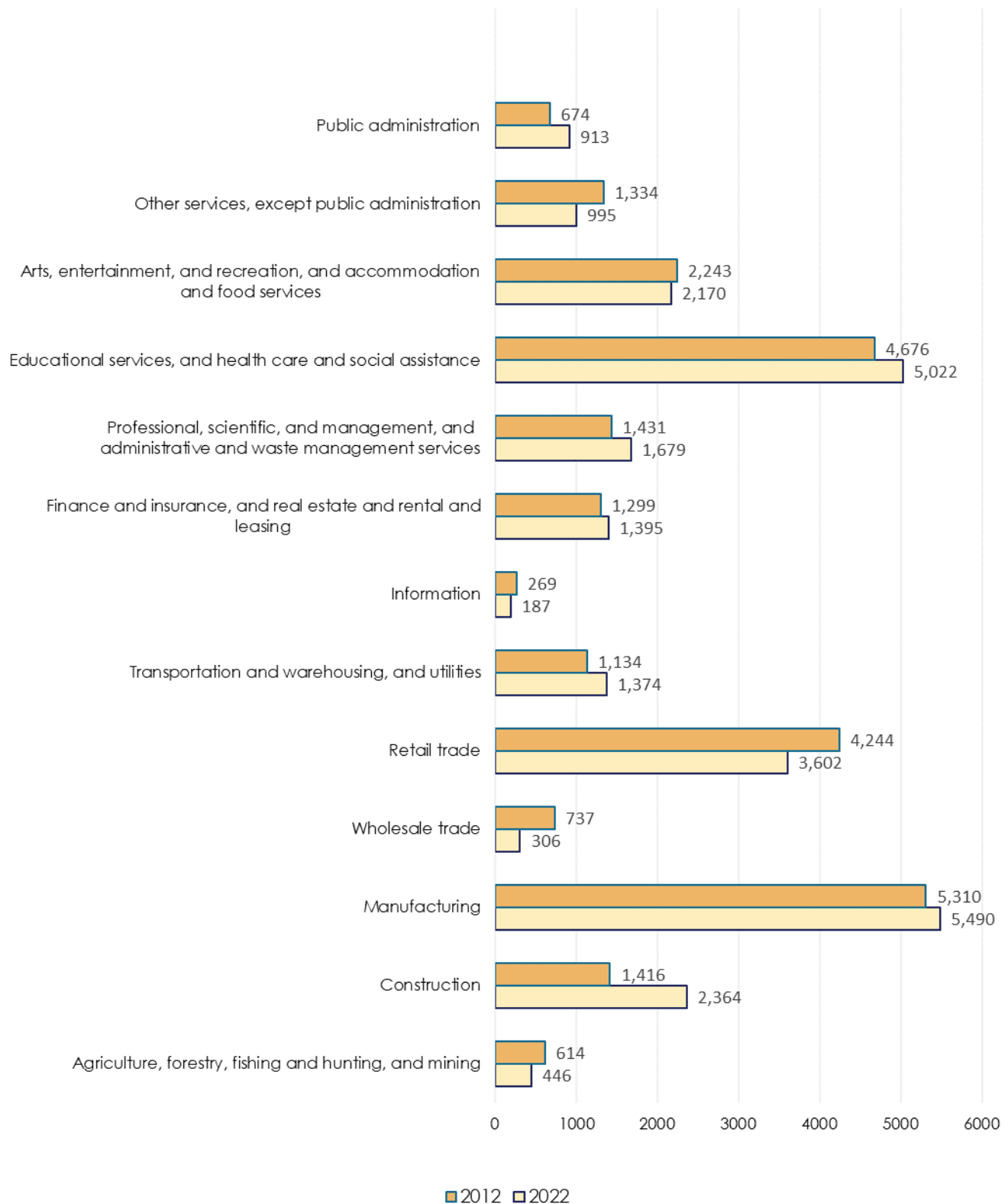
	2012	2022
Hall County	32,587	32,993
Hamilton County	4,834	4,948
Howard County	3,416	3,507
Merrick County	4,224	4,214
Adams County	16,851	17,316
Buffalo County	27,253	28,488
Nebraska	1,012,810	1,058,934

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Table 5.2: Unemployment Rates 2012-2022

	2012	2022
Hall County	3.9%	2.4%
Hamilton County	3.2%	2.1%
Howard County	3.5%	2.1%
Merrick County	3.6%	2.0%
Adams County	3.7%	2.2%
Buffalo County	3.2%	2.0%
Nebraska	4.0%	2.3%

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Figure 5.7: Grand Island Residents' Employment by Industry 2012-2022

Source: American Community Survey 2008-2012 & 2018-2022.

Manufacturing had the largest number of jobs in 2022, at 8,020, up 9.6% since 2012. Retail trade contracted by -9.2% to 5,304 in 2022, yet still had the second largest number of jobs by industry.

Health Care is the largest employment sector in Nebraska statewide. In Hall County, Health Care ranked behind Manufacturing, Retail, and Government sectors. Real Estate was the fastest growing industry, locally and statewide from 2012 to 2022, up 32.9% in Hall County and up 59.1% in Nebraska.

Location Quotient

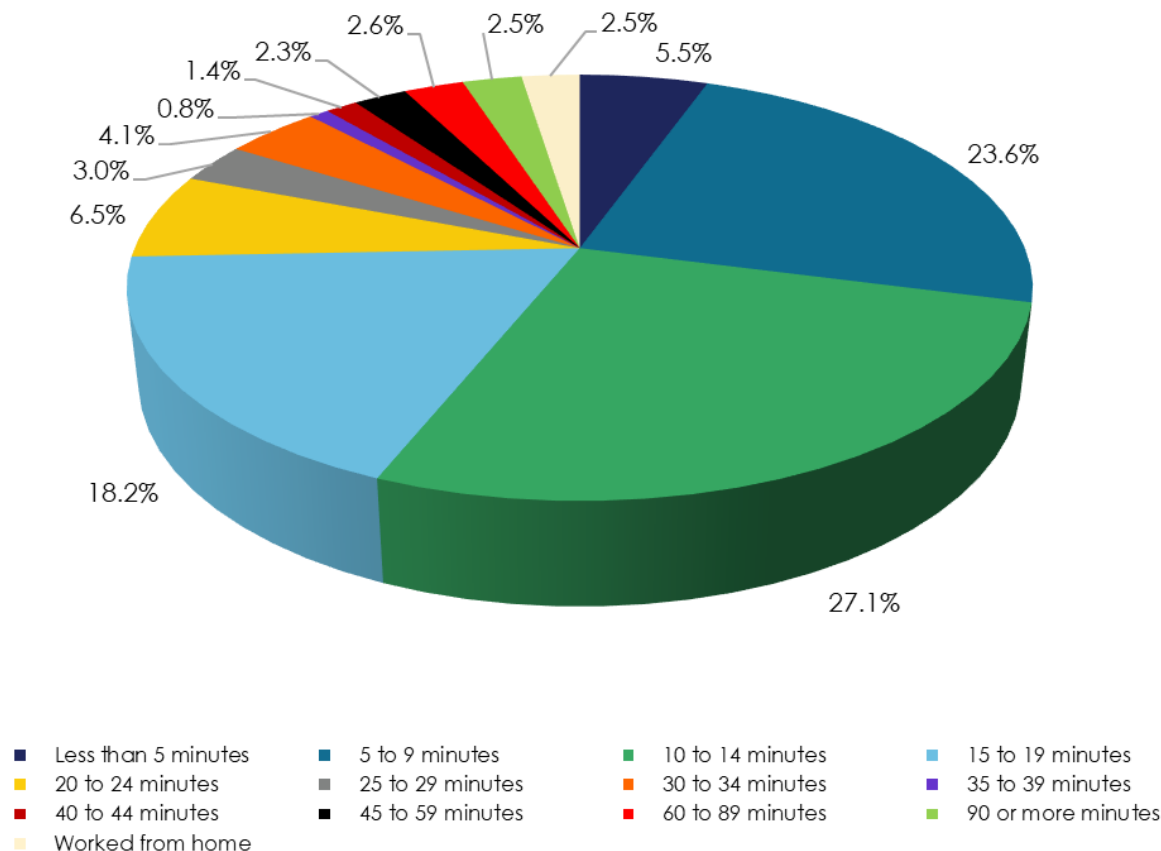
The BEA defines a location quotient (LQ) as an analytical statistic that measures a region's industrial specialization relative to a larger geographic unit. Compared to the state of Nebraska, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Construction, and Accommodation and Food Services industries had an LQ greater than 1.0. This means Hall County had relatively more local employment, than their share of statewide employment. Accommodation and Food Services had the greatest local growth compared to statewide

employment, shifting their share of local employment higher.

Employment by Place of Residence

The ACS estimates employment statistics for the people who live in an area. In Grand Island, 5,490 residents reported they worked in the Manufacturing industry in 2022 (Figure 5.7). Educational services and health care grew to 5,022, while retail trade contracted to 3,602. These represent people who live in the city of Grand Island, whether they work in the city or commute outside the city. If more people are employed in an industry, it may indicate opportunities for local job creation.

Figure 5.8: Grand Island Travel Time to Work 2022



Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022.

Major Employers

According to Grand Island Area Economic Development Corp. (see later in this chapter), major employers in Grand Island are concentrated in manufacturing, as might be expected, along with large-format retail, services, and public-sector employers. These employers include:

- JBS
- Grand Island Public Schools
- CHI Health St. Francis
- Hornady Manufacturing
- CNH Industrial (Case)
- Walmart
- Chief Industries
- McCain Foods
- City of Grand Island
- Principal Financial

Commuter Trends

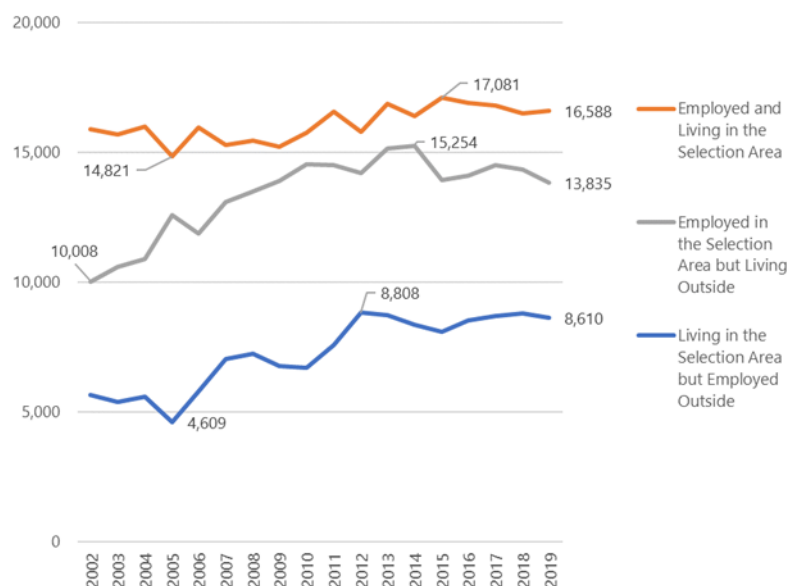
Grand Island is part of a regional job market, with some local residents leaving the city to commute to work elsewhere while others commute into Grand Island from their homes in Hall County or further away. The ACS estimates that in 2022, 17.0% of Grand Island residents left the city to work each day, and 8.8% left Hall County to work.

Travel time to work affects quality of life. If commute time becomes excessive, people may seek work closer to home or leave the community to move closer to their workplace. The mean travel time to work for Grand Island residents in 2022 was 17.6 minutes, compared to 19.1 minutes statewide. About 31.5% of commuters traveled 10 minutes or less to work, including the 2.5% who worked from home (Figure 5.8). About 23.2% commute 20 or more minutes to work, including 7.4% who commute 45 minutes or more to work.

Workplaces in the Grand Island became increasingly dependent on workers commuting in from outside the city between 2002 and 2014, adding over 5,000 in-commuters over that period (Figure 5.9). The high mark of 15,254 in-

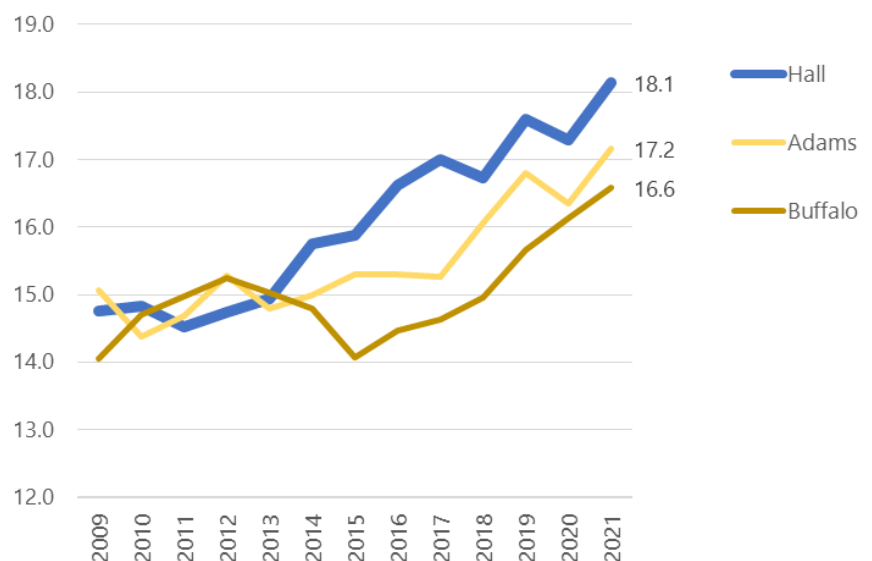
commuters was still lower than the number of people able to both live and work in Grand Island but coincided with a similar increase in out-commuters. Reliance on daily commuting is generally undesirable as it detracts from

Figure 5.9: Grand Island Commuting Patterns



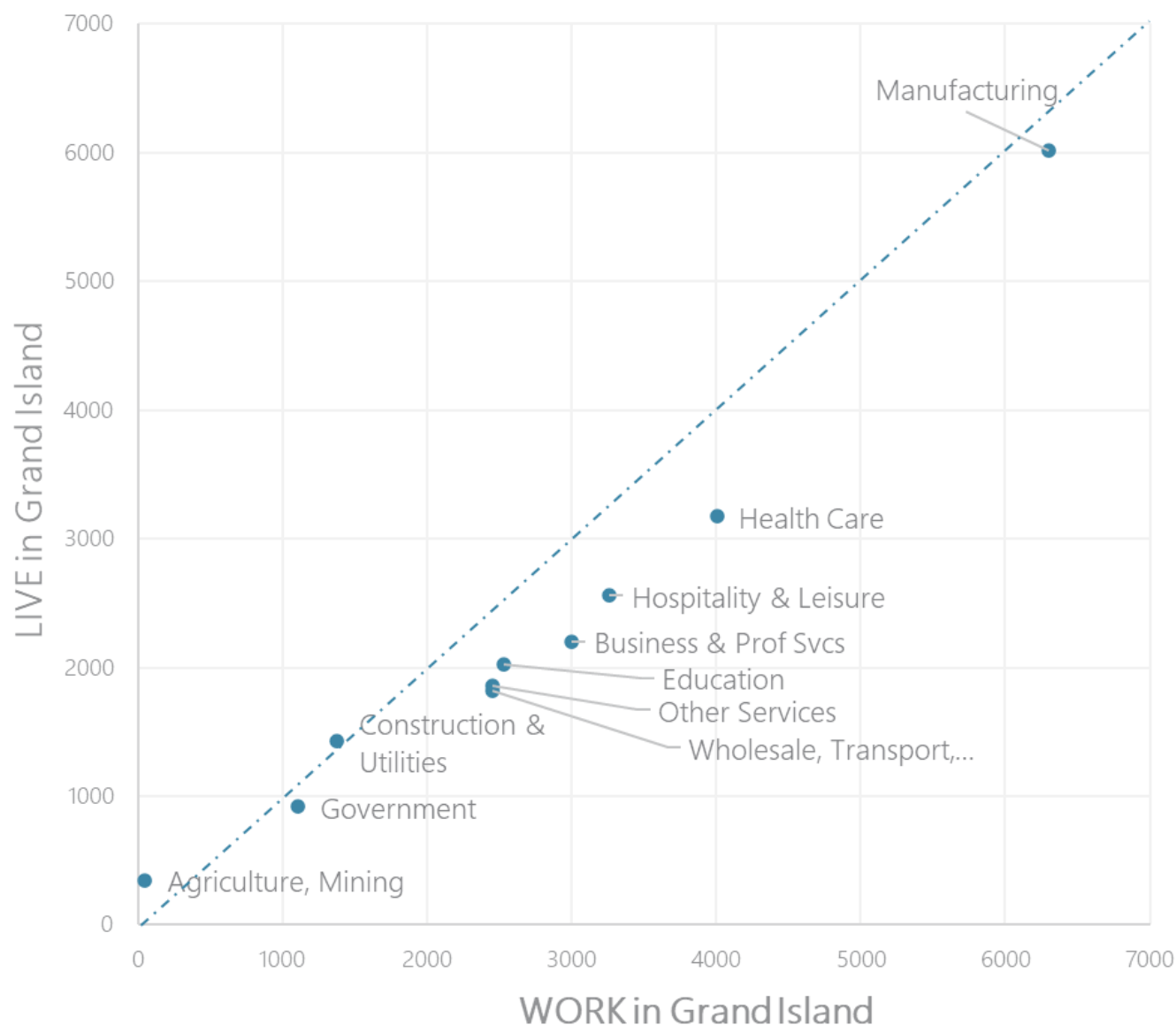
Source: Leland Consulting Group

Figure 5.10: Mean Commute Time (minutes)



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Figure 5.11: Workers by Industry Group, 2019



Source: Leland Consulting Group

the quality of life for workers having to commute long distances, reduces the sense of civic ownership that comes from having a workforce made up largely of local residents, and adds to traffic congestion. Fortunately, in-commuting declined somewhat.

Figure 5.10 shows the increase in average one-way commute times for Hall, Adams, and Buffalo County workers since 2009. Note that the three main urbanized counties in the area all had commute times in the 14 to 15 minute range in 2009, and all have seen commute times increase since then. However,

Hall County's has increased the most.

Reliance on out-commuting is particularly high in the construction, manufacturing, logistics and professional services (primarily engineering-related) industries (Figure 5.11). Conversely, but to a lesser extent, Grand Island houses more

healthcare, retail, and education workers than its local firms employ – fueling net out-commuting in those industries.

To the extent that Grand Island can attract more workers willing to both live and work in the city (primarily through quality-of-life and transportation improvements), both in-commuting and out-commuting impacts can be reduced over time. Encouraging a housing mix that is better tailored to those workers and providing civic amenities with broad appeal can help in that regard. It is also possible that persistently higher gasoline prices may increase demand for housing located closer to places of work in general.

Occupations

Industry is the type of activity at a person's place of work. Occupation is the kind of work a person does to earn a living. The following data examine five occupational areas established by the U.S. Census Bureau to evaluate trends in employment and the area economy.

The five occupational categories used in the analysis are:

- Managerial business, science, and arts occupations;
- Service occupations;
- Sales and office occupations;
- Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations, and;
- Production, transportation, and material moving occupations

In 2022, the ACS reported that the largest number of Grand Island residents, 27.6%, worked in Management, business, science, and arts (Table 5.4). The largest number of Hall County residents, 28.7%, worked in Management, business, science, and arts occupations, which is also the largest statewide category (39.8%).

Economic Base

A community's economic base is built on the production of goods and services sold

primarily outside the local area. The revenues of base industries are returned to the local area in the form of wages to employees and payments to local suppliers. Non-Basic employment relies on business activity providing goods and services primarily within the local area, and the revenues of such sales re-circulate within the community in the form of wages and expenditures by local citizens.

Table 5.4 compares occupation categories for the Tri-Cities and Tri-County areas with the state of

Basic employment

Basic employment is business activity providing goods and services primarily outside the area, the revenues of which are directed to the local area in the form of wages and payments to local suppliers.

Non-Basic employment is business activity providing goods and services primarily within the local area, and the revenues of such sales re-circulate within the community in the form of wages and expenditures by local citizens.

Table 5.4: Basic/Non-Basic Employment By Occupation, 2022

Location	Management, business, science, and arts occupations	Service occupations	Sales and office occupations	Natural Resources, construction and maintenance occupations	Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	Base Multiplier
Grand Island	27.6%	16.1%	19.5%	10.4%	26.4%	7.7
Hastings	29.1%	23.9%	16.5%	10.3%	20.2%	6.9
Kearney	35.0%	18.5%	24.5%	7.4%	14.6%	13.5
Tri-Cities	30.6%	19.5%	20.2%	9.4%	20.4%	10.0
Hall County	28.7%	15.6%	20.1%	10.9%	24.7%	8.8
Adams County	31.4%	21.1%	17.5%	10.7%	19.3%	8.9
Buffalo County	35.3%	17.3%	23.1%	9.3%	15.1%	18.9
Tri-Counties	31.8%	18.0%	20.2%	10.3%	19.7%	12.8
Nebraska	39.8%	15.6%	20.3%	10.0%	14.3%	n/a

Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022.

Nebraska overall. Where the share of local residents in a certain occupation exceeds the state's share, those jobs are considered "basic" employment with exports of goods or services bringing new income into that area.

Table 5.4 indicates that Grand Island exports goods and services produced in three occupational categories:

- Service occupations
- Natural Resources, construction, and maintenance
- Production, transportation, and material moving

The same table presents the Base Multiplier for each area compared to the state of Nebraska. The base multiplier is a number which represents how many non-basic jobs are supported by each basic job. The Base Multiplier for Grand Island is 7.7 and for Hall County is 8.8. For every job considered to be basic, 7.5 – 8.7 other local jobs are supported and/or impacted. Economic development programs typically focus on "basic" sector industries and occupations, to leverage the Base Multiplier factor.

AGRICULTURAL PROFILE

The USDA Census of Agriculture takes place every five years, covering each county in the United States. Tables 5.5 and 5.6 examine the agricultural profile of Hall County. Table 5.5 presents the number of farms and their high-level characteristics for these farms for 2002 through 2022.



The Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant is a 12,042-acre site west of Grand Island. The US Army built the plant in 1942 to produce munitions and provide support functions during World War II. The plant area includes five major production areas where munitions were loaded, assembled and packed; a fertilizer manufacturer; two major storage facilities; sanitary landfills; and burning grounds where materials contaminated with explosives were ignited. Improper disposal of contaminated wastewater and other plant operations resulted in groundwater contamination on and off the site. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) had conducted ongoing cleanup at the site.

Today the historic Ammunition Plant is being reused for large-scale economic development. For example, Cathcart Rail, a leading freight rail services and transportation company, operates a rail car repair shop and transloading facility, as the site is served by both the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Union Pacific (UP) railroads by way of a short line connection.

The Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation (GIAEC—see later in this chapter) is developing 260 acres as the Cornhusker Industrial Park. Hornaday Manufacturing has located a facility on the site as well. Since residential housing is restricted, there is less risk of conflicts between industrial and residential uses.

The area is home to the City of Grand Island's Heartland Public Shooting Park and the Cornhusker State Wildlife Management Area. Each fall, the site also hosts Husker Harvest Days, which draws visitors from across the region..

Table 5.5: Hall County Farms and Land in Farms 2002 - 2022

Agricultural Characteristics	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022	% Change 2002-2022
Number of farms	595	608	593	582	552	-7.2%
Land in Farms (acres)	315,787	328,294	329,668	328,229	273,923	-13.3%
Average size of farms (acres)	531	540	556	564	496	-6.6%
Total area of county (acres)	349,632	349,632	349,632	349,632	349,632	-
Percentage of land in farms	90.3%	93.9%	94.3%	93.9%	78.3%	-13.3%
Total cropland (acres)	233,971	247,081	245,395	272,034	234,815	0.4%
Harvested cropland (acres)	214,439	229,141	240,452	264,556	227,685	6.2%
Estimated Market Value of Land & Bldg (avg./farm)	\$806,081	\$1,104,247	\$2,484,955	\$2,866,675	\$2,938,994	264.6%
Estimated Market Value of Land & Bldg (avg./acre)	\$1,661	\$2,045	\$4,470	\$5,083	\$5,923	256.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ; USDA Census of Agriculture, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022

Note: this data is self reported, and may reflect operations in more than one county.

Table 5.5 shows the number of farms within Hall County decreased from 2002 to 2022. A falling number of farms has been normal throughout the Great Plains region. The total number of farms went from 595 in 2002 down to 552 in 2022.

Each farm may have multiple owners, and multiple “producers” who are involved in making decisions for the farm operation. Of the 552 farms in Hall County in 2022, 259 were operated by a full owner, 199 by a part-owner, and 94 by a tenant farmer (see Table 45 in Census of Agriculture). There were 923 producers reported in the Census of Agriculture, including 286 farms with one producer and 200 with two. There were 490 producers who reported that farming was their primary occupation. There were 489 producers who reported that they worked off-farm during the year.

Total land in farms in Hall County fell from 315,787 acres in 2002 to 273,923 in 2022. (Table 5.5). This resulted in a 20-year decrease of

Table 5.6: Hall County Number of Farms by Size

Farm Size (acres)	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022	% Change 2002-2022
1 to 9	33	50	54	67	31	-6.1%
10 to 49	80	90	120	101	119	48.8%
50 to 179	110	144	114	112	150	36.4%
180 to 499	153	120	102	101	97	-36.6%
500 to 999	126	103	98	93	74	-41.3%
1,000 or more	93	101	105	108	81	-12.9%

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022

Note: this data is self reported, and may reflect operations in more than one county.

-13.3%. The average size of farms decreased from 531 acres in 2002 to 496 acres in 2022. A trend of increasing average size has been the norm across Nebraska and the United States for the last several decades, however 2022 represented a shift in that trend in Hall County.

In 2002, the largest number of farms (153) were 180 to 499 acres in size (Table 5.6). By 2022, the largest category was 50 to 179 acres (150 farms), while the number of farms 1 to 9 acres decreased by 6.1% and the number of farms 1,000 or more acres decreased by 12.9%.

Agriculture has historically been a major part of the Grand Island area and Nebraska economy. Future regional land use policies will have impacts on animal and crop agriculture. Also, regional and national trends in agricultural production will continue to affect wholesale and value-added ag processing into the foreseeable future.

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE TRENDS

The economic geography of Grand Island has changed over time, from a free-standing railroad town to a regional manufacturing and market center. As part of the comprehensive planning process, Leland Consulting Group performed a Market Analysis to inform selection of planning policies. The report is included as an Appendix of this plan.

Almost one-half of multifamily development in the Tri-County area is concentrated in Hall County, and has clustered in similar areas of Grand Island as retail space. Hall County has about one-half of all major leasable retail property in the Tri-County area tracked by CoStar, Inc. (Table 5.7). Retail real estate has traditionally been concentrated downtown and on Locust Street, and has been

Table 5.7: Major Leasable Property, 2023

Type	Hall County	Adams County	Buffalo County	Tri-County Total	Hall County Share of Tri-County
Retail	4,715,359*	2,021,781*	2,593,247*	9,330,387*	51%
Multi-Family	3,155,973	1,452,456	1,767,284	6,375,713	49%
Industrial	2,006,807	1,263,517	2,538,781	5,809,105	35%
Hospitality	1,226,875	650,562	1,160,702	3,038,139	40%
Office	961,940	375,657	995,717	2,333,314	41%
Health Care	501,059	190,035	1,807,667	2,498,761	20%
Flex	157,570	179,902	93,569	431,041	37%

Source: CoStar and Leland Consulting Group. *square feet

moving to the northwest side of town along US 281. Over half (54%) of respondents to the Citywide Survey disagree or strongly disagree with locating new business along the highway instead of downtown.

Most of the 2.1 million square feet of industrial space tracked by CoStar in Hall County can be found in or around the perimeter of Grand Island. This accounts for approximately 35% of leasable industrial property in the Tri-County area. It is

estimated that an additional million square feet of industrial space is untracked in specialized owner-occupied facilities. Hall County has just under 1.0 million square feet of office development, mostly along Highway 281, Locust Street, or downtown, accounting for 41% of Tri-County office space. Grand Island also has over 2,000 hotel rooms—Hall County accounts for about 40% of Tri-County hospitality property.

Retail Supply Conditions

Nationally, retail development momentum has appeared to stall since 2020. Meanwhile, consumer retail sales, investor property transactions, and retail rents have been at or near historic highs. In the long term, “brick and mortar” retailers in Nebraska and across the country are adapting to the ongoing threat of internet retailers. This trend is particularly relevant to walkable commercial districts and historic main streets that offer a clear experiential alternative. This can yield important quality of life benefits for local residents and employees while increasing retail resilience against internet competition.



Postcard circa 1940

Source: Collection of Steven R. Shook

Grand Island's retail inventory is highly concentrated on the northwest side of the city, along US 281. Approximately 3.0 million square feet of Hall County's 4.8 million square feet of retail space, including much of the newer big box inventory, is now located between Potash and Capital along US 281. Additional concentrations of generally older and smaller properties are found along Locust Street and through the downtown area, primarily on 3rd St., but with an increasingly popular presence, especially of dining, along 4th Street. While the downtown properties are mostly of older construction, there has been considerable redevelopment and rehab activity, keeping the tenant mix of restaurants, bars, and specialty stores fresh and lively.

The retail vacancy rate peaked in Hall County in 2014, with rent peaking in 2019 as vacancies were filled (Figure 5.12). In 2007, a new 83,000 square foot Hy-Vee opened in Grand Island and a 187,000 square foot Menards in Hastings. While new retail space was constructed in 2016-2018, little new inventory has been added since then (Figure 5.13).

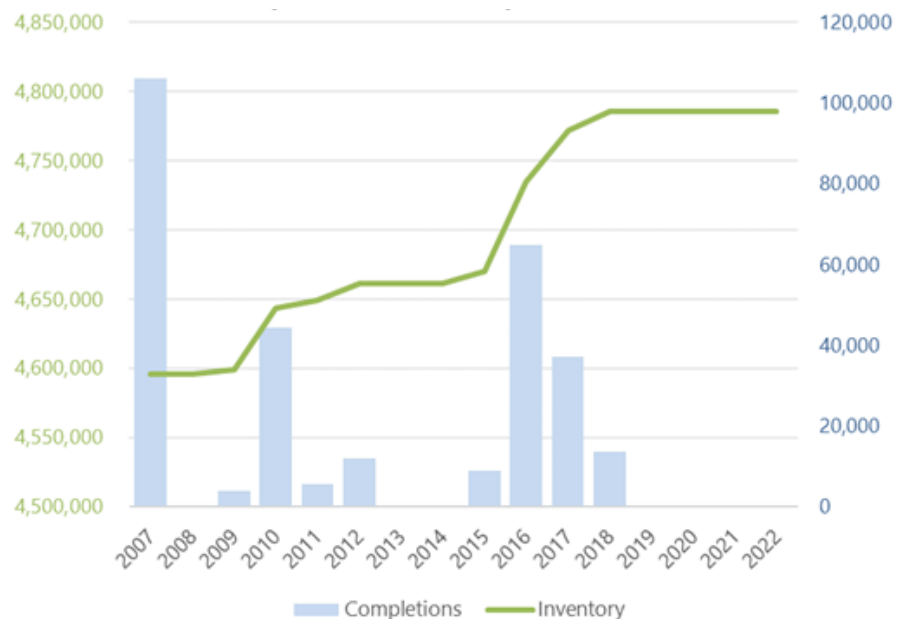
Looking at the larger Grand Island MSA (Hall, Hamilton, Howard, and Merrick counties), Buffalo County (Kearney), and Adams County (Hastings), there are more retail sales than household spending potential would expect. The "pull factor" indicates the region is drawing retail spending from outside the area. Looking then at the city of Grand Island, this pull factor increases as the gap between sales and purchasing power grows.

Figure 5.12: Hall County Retail Vacancy and Rent



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Figure 5.13: Hall County Retail Inventory and Construction



Source: Leland Consulting Group

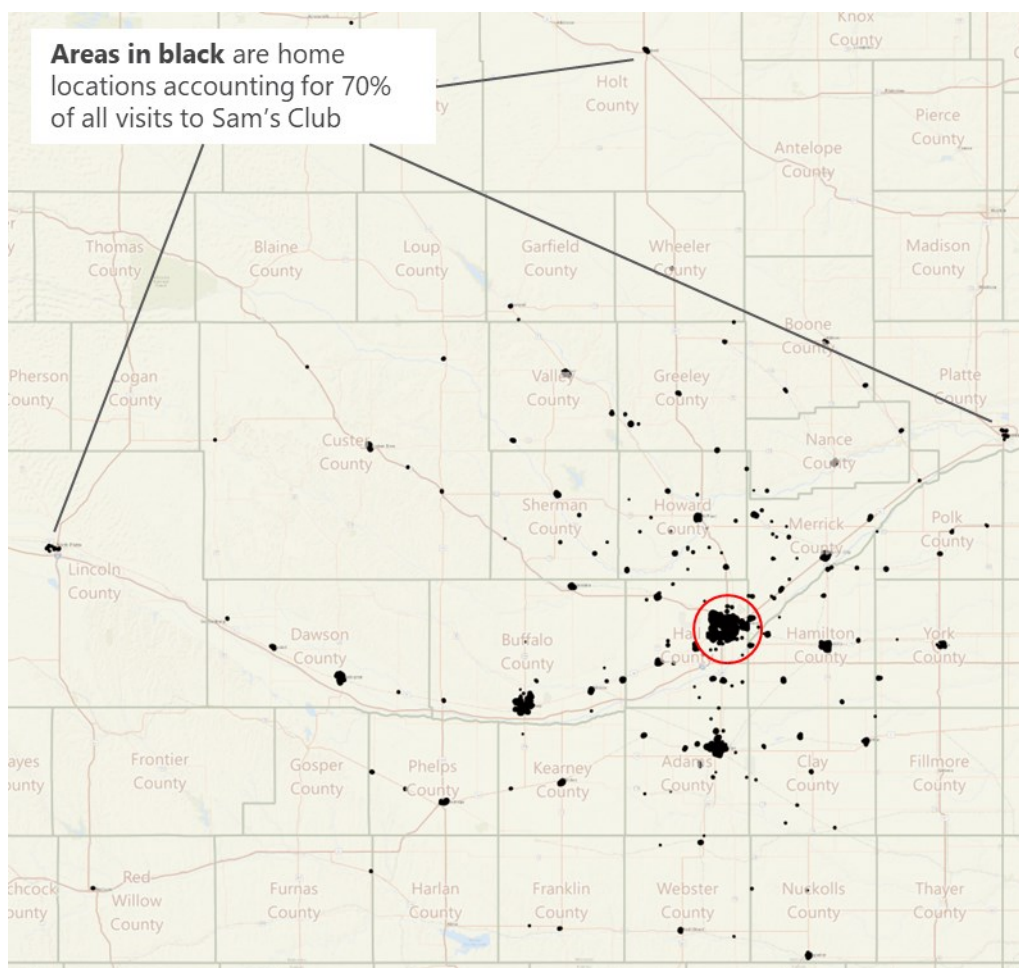
This is not a surprise, since Grand Island itself is known to draw retail customers from across central and western Nebraska. Those outside customers also make up in part for “leakage” of retail purchases by local residents who shop elsewhere—in Lincoln or Omaha or online. A city such as Grand Island with a large and varied supply of retail outlets within a region that has relatively few shopping alternatives, will logically become a shopping destination with a positive pull factor – drawing shopping dollars in from smaller outside communities.

The Market Analysis studied visitation patterns to Grand Island stores that are unique within central and western Nebraska. (This study used proprietary data from the Placer database service, based on anonymous cell phone tracking data.) Figure 5.14 illustrates visitation to the Grand Island Sam's Club. The dark clusters on the map represent approximate home locations accounting for 70 percent of all visits to the Grand Island Sam's Club in 2022. This trade area extends 130 miles west and over 100 miles north.

The old Conestoga Mall served a similar draw area, though its visitor volume contracted over recent years. With current redevelopment, it is expected visitor volume will return and exceed previous levels.

Shopping centers like Eagle Run, with more regional competition, draw from a tighter geography (Figure 5.15) However, the trade area still draws from much of Hastings and Kearney. Grocery-anchored neighborhood centers like Grand Corners draw from a more localized area, no longer including Kearney or Hastings (Figure 5.16).

Figure 5.14: Sam's Club Trade Area, 2022

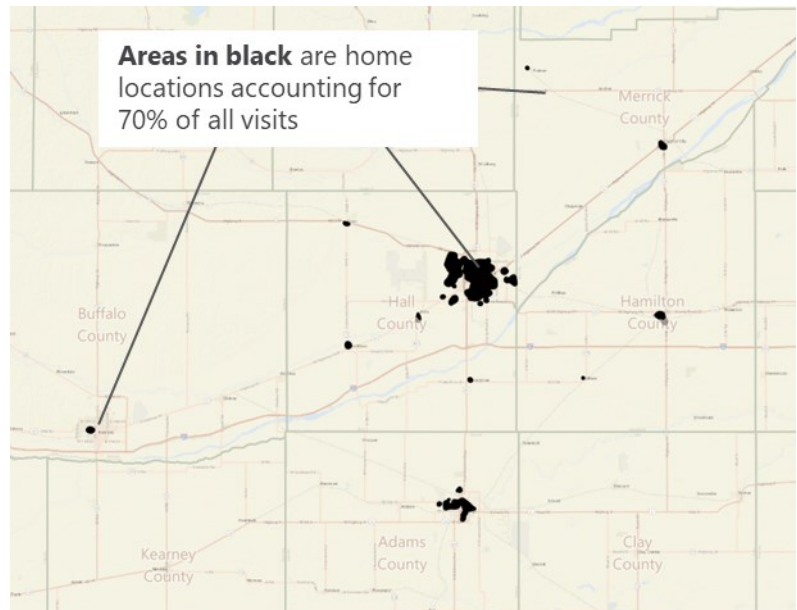


Source: Leland Consulting Group

As the larger Grand Island MSA, Kearney, and Hastings area continues to grow, Grand Island and Hall County should be able to absorb between 150,000 and 200,000 square feet of retail space over the next two decades. In addition, Grand Island is positioned to capture a larger share of existing retail spending with the planned redevelopment of the Conestoga Mall.

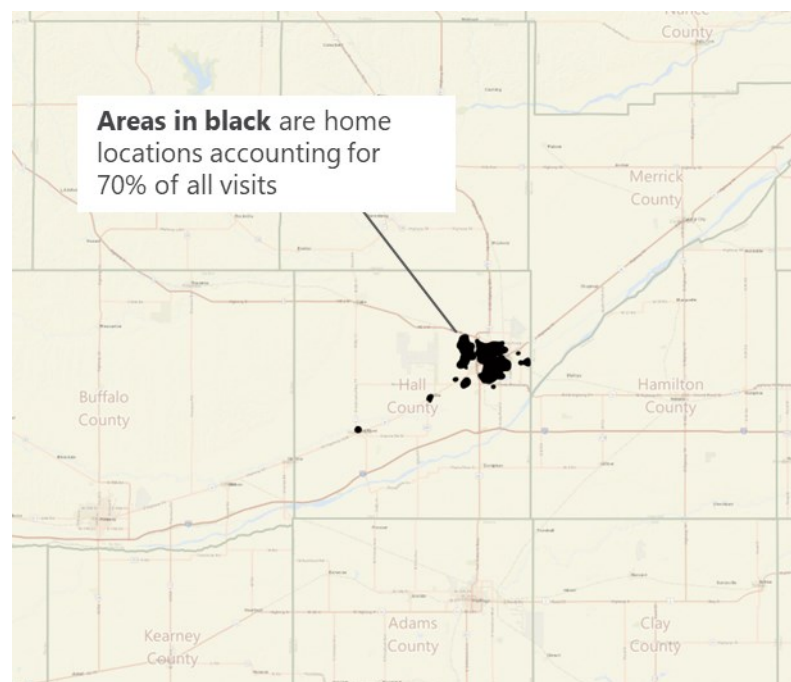
Fostering continued growth and quality of the shopping and dining environment along 3rd and 4th Streets downtown will also help shape visitor preferences in favor of Grand Island, provided needed options for local workers and their families -- even if not requiring dramatic shifts in retail space. The growing share of online delivery-based retail jumped during COVID-19 shutdowns and online sales continue to create risk for brick-and-mortar retailers everywhere. Dining, specialty shops, and other retail categories where direct physical/sensory experiences are important appear to be most resistant to online competition, meaning that retail/dining districts like Main Street in Grand Island may have an advantage over big box-dominated centers -- but that advantage needs to be leveraged with design and amenity investments like streetscaping, creative merchandising, outdoor seating, and other placemaking enhancements that accentuate the experience.

Figure 5.15: Eagle Run Shopping Center Trade Area, 2022



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Figure 5.16: Grand Corners Shopping Center Trade Area, 2022



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Office Market

The national market for office space has changed considerably in recent years, even before the COVID pandemic. Office space in Hall County is more evenly distributed than retail or industrial space in Grand Island. Approximately one-quarter of office space is located in downtown Grand Island. Hall County has about 40% of office space in the Tri-County area and the only Class A office space in the region.

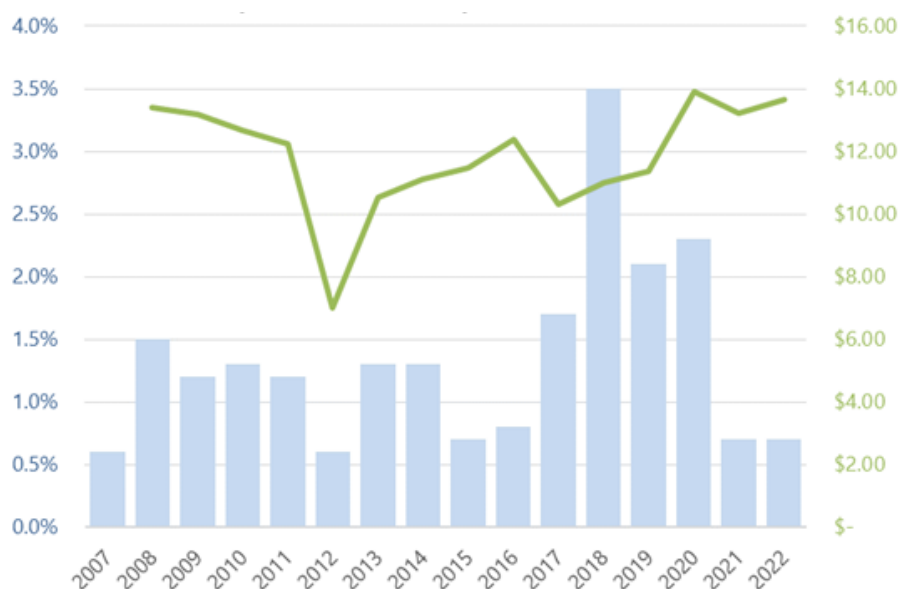
The Hall County Office market is considered "tight" by national standards". Vacancy rates have fallen since 2018 and rents have risen (Figure 5.17). While there has been little new construction since 2007, office inventory remains high (Figure 5.18).

Demand for new office space in the area is expected over the coming decade, particularly in the form of medical office and professional clinic space. There may also be opportunities to convert older office space, especially historic structures in the downtown core, to multifamily housing units and flex-work space.

Industrial Market

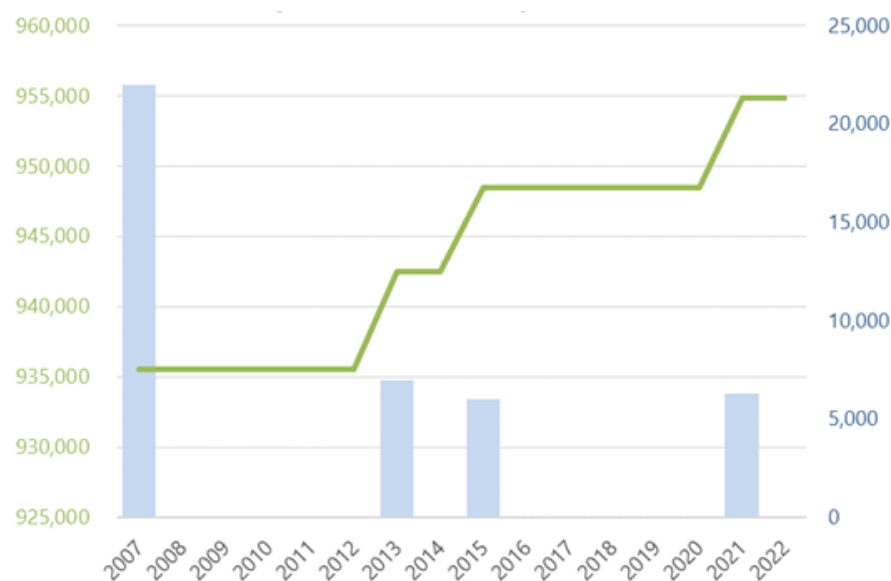
Grand Island's industrial activity is driven by the dominant manufacturing sector, with several large, specialized facilities which are not located in any particular section of the city. Most of the industrial space tracked by CoStar in Hall County is located on or around the perimeter of Grand Island. Several industrial sites have been developed at the former Cornhusker Army Ammunition

Figure 5.17: Hall County Office Vacancy and Rent



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Figure 5.18: Hall County Office Inventory and Construction



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Plant west of Grand Island and north of Alda.

Grand Island has seen robust growth in its manufacturing sector over the past decade, even as other parts of the nation have seen declines. As noted earlier in the chapter, many of the largest employers in Hall County are manufacturing operations, including beef processing, small arms, construction materials, machinery, and foodstuffs.

Logistics services are also an integral part of the manufacturing supply chain. Grand Island has competitive advantages across multiple subcategories within the broader umbrella of logistics, including transloading.

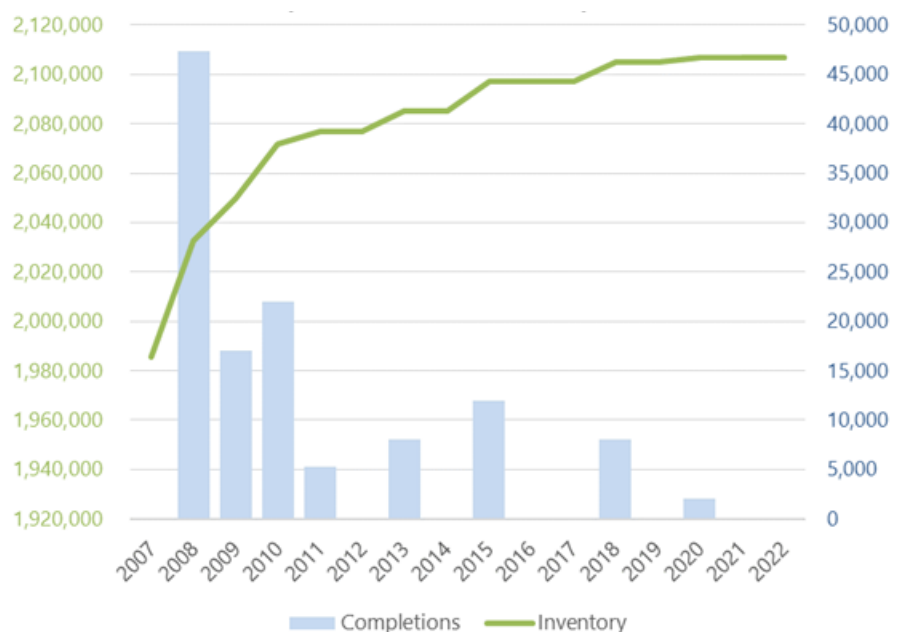
Industrial demand is notoriously difficult to predict over the long term due to the influence of national, and even international, trends. The Hall County Industrial real estate market has seen variable vacancy rates, with rents peaking at the pandemic. Statistics tracked by CoStar since 2013 typically omit custom space, but track leasable space available for multi-tenant occupancy (Figure 5.19). Industrial construction peaked in 2008-2010, although inventory has remained high (Figure 5.20).

Figure 5.19: Hall County Industrial Vacancy and Rent



Source: Leland Consulting Group

Figure 5.20: Hall County Industrial Inventory and Construction



Source: Leland Consulting Group

ORGANIZATIONS AND INITIATIVES

Economic development is a team sport and affects everybody in the county. Starting a new business is difficult—over half of respondents to the citywide survey (58%) agree or strongly agree that it is too hard for small businesses to survive in the city. There are many ways Grand Island can support new startups, and retention and expansion of existing businesses.

GRAND ISLAND AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (GIAEDC)

The Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation (GIAEDC) focuses on new business attraction and local business expansion and efficiency. The GIAEDC concentrates on wealth-producing business opportunities and has the ability to offer job incentive funds.

Dedicated and experienced leadership is essential to attracting business and industry, and maintaining a business-friendly environment that fosters future growth. The GIAEDC implements their efforts through their Board Members, Elected Trustees, and Advisory Members. These professionals have Grand Island, Nebraska's best interests in mind with every decision they make, and welcome recommendations and public input on ways to further improve local business and industry.

Source: www.grandisland.org

GRAND ISLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Grand Island Area Chamber of Commerce is a working partnership of businesspeople who know the wisdom of coordinating their efforts under effective leadership for the advancement and development of the Grand Island area. The Chamber seeks to unite all the business, agricultural, professional, industrial, and civic interests for the purpose of developing and promoting the Grand Island area as a center for a broad range of activities.

Partnership in the Grand Island Chamber of Commerce is open to all businesses, organizations, and individuals interested in maximizing their business performance and enhancing the growth and development of Grand Island. The Chamber is a bridge between Grand Island businesses, lawmakers at all levels, community leaders and citizens.

Source: www.gichamber.com

GRAND ISLAND CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU (CVB)

The Hall County/Grand Island Convention & Visitor Bureau (CVB) is a nonprofit organization that brings together businesses, attractions, and organizations that rely on tourism. It was founded in 1982 and operates under the authority of the Hall County Board. In Grand Island,

the current lodging tax is 6%, a third of which funds the entire budget of the CVB.

The CVB's mission is to define Grand Island as a destination & grow the tourism economy. It does this through sales, services, and marketing.

Source: www.gichamber.com

CITY OF GRAND ISLAND Community Development

Community Development is a division of the Regional Planning Department. The Community Development Division coordinates grant management for local, state, and federal grants, including Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The Division performs grant administration and technical assistance, and prepares the Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding as required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City of Grand Island became an Entitlement Community in 2016. In a typical year the City generally received about \$350,000 and has an open application period for projects supporting the goals of the Consolidated Plan.

City of Grand Island Economic Development Program

The purpose of Grand Island's Economic Development Program is to retain and create new, diverse jobs in our city while leveraging existing resources and State of Nebraska legislation. The economic development

program is a community tool that encourages and stimulates the growth of quality jobs, attracts permanent investment, broadens the tax base, and diversifies the region's economic base that will lead to new opportunities and options for all citizens, ultimately improving the quality of life for all taxpayers in Grand Island and the surrounding region.

The City of Grand Island annually appropriates funding for economic development as permitted by Nebraska's Municipal Economic Development Act, for implementation of programs administered by the GIAEDC. Eligible activities include a revolving loan fund, public works improvements and/or purchase of fixed assets, technical assistance, job training, tourism promotion, and other financial assistance. Implementation of workforce housing plans is also included in the economic development program.

City of Grand Island Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA)

The Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA) for the City of Grand Island was established by the Grand Island City Council on June 27, 1994. The Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA) consists of a five-member board appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. Members of the board are all volunteers. The CRA is charged with taking action in specified areas of the community to remove, prevent or inhibit physical deterioration (blighted and substandard conditions) that will result in lower property values

and create disincentives to private investment.

The purpose of the CRA is to study and designate certain areas of the city in need of improvement and development, with approval from the Grand Island City Council. City Council must make the blighted and substandard declaration prior to the CRA accepting redevelopment proposals or taking other action in an area. Once an area has been declared blighted and substandard the CRA has the authority to take actions to encourage redevelopment or development in those areas. Blighted and substandard is a legal term defined in Nebraska State Statutes. Statutes allow the City Council to declare up to 35% of the area in the municipal limits as blighted and substandard. Provisions are in place for Formerly Used Defense Sites, to allow a first class city to approve areas outside of the municipal boundary for redevelopment.

The CRA has the authority to: borrow money, issue bonds, conduct public hearings, undertake investigations, surveys, appraisals, and ask for a levy of taxes. The City of Grand Island CRA has the ability to levy a tax of up to \$0.026 per \$100 of property valuation to all properties within the municipal limits. These funds can be spent to further the mission of the CRA on any activities the CRA is allowed to pursue according to statutes.

To encourage development within the community, the CRA has established funding for development through Tax Increment Financing (TIF), the Façade Improvement Program, and Life/Safety/Infrastructure Program. The CRA is administered by the Regional Planning Department.

Business Improvement Districts (BID)

The City of Grand Island has established several Business Improvement Districts as



Plaza, Downtown
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

provided by Chapter 19, Article 40, Revised Statutes of Nebraska, 1943. These include Railside (focused on 3rd Street downtown), Fonner Park, South Locust, and a new district focused on 4th Street north of the Union Pacific railroad tracks.

A BID is established through majority support of property owners in the district. Property within the BID is subject to a special assessment, which funds public improvements and activities in the district. An appointed board representing those paying assessments manages the BID funds.

Railside BID

The Railside Business Improvement District (BID) is a public/private partnership in which property owners elect to make a collective contribution to the maintenance, development, and promotion of their commercial district. It is dedicated to improving and reinforcing existing assets within the district while also encouraging new and exciting investment by developing a stronger sense of place within both the local and regional community.

Railside focuses on:

- Business Development
- Cultural Development
- Cleanliness
- Community Safety
- Connections and Communications

The District provides a range of services, such as landscaping and snow removal, marketing and promotion, and maintenance of public areas. Recent BID projects have



Railside parking lot, Downtown
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

included: Railside totems to assist pedestrians with wayfinding, completion of Railside Plaza, bike racks, and upper-level housing assistance.

Source: arriverrailside.com

4th Street BID

The 4th Street Business Improvement District (BID) is designed for general maintenance and infrastructure improvement, but also the continued beautification of an already vibrant 4th Street business scene in the heart of Grand Island, Nebraska.

On September 12, 2023, Ordinance # 9941 was approved by the Grand Island City Council to establish the 4th Street Business Improvement District pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §19-4015.

Source: www.grand-island.com/page/4th-street-bid

MainStreet

Downtown Grand Island's Railside BID participates in the Main Street America program, a movement committed to

strengthening communities through historic preservation-based economic development. Nebraska communities meeting program requirements are awarded Main Street designation. Designated Main Street communities are also provided an opportunity to receive National Accreditation from the National Main Street Center based upon a set of organizational standards.

Source: nebraskamainstreet.org/who-we-are/participating-communities

GROW GRAND ISLAND AREA PARTNERSHIP

Grow Grand Island is a collaborative effort of the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation, Convention & Visitors Bureau, City of Grand Island and Hall County. The mission of Grow Grand Island is to cultivate bold ideas that create business and quality of life opportunities in the region through planning, partnering, and doing.

Source: growgrandisland.com

SOUTH CENTRAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD) was established in 2004 and serves 13 counties in South Central Nebraska, focusing on community, housing, and business development. They are also active in rural broadband and digital equity planning. The SCEDD offices are in Holdrege, Nebraska.

SCEDD works with the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) to develop a regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a continuous regional economic development planning process for the region. The CEDS was most recently updated in 2021, with priorities in industry growth and innovation, workforce development, housing development, and community development.

Source: www.scedd.us

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Since 1967, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) has been focused on growing and diversifying the state's economic base, bringing new dollars, new businesses, and new people into the state.

DED functions to:

- Support communities with development efforts.
- Assist with starting, retaining, and expanding businesses.

- Promote the state for business locations and expansions.

DED efforts supporting community development include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCFF), Economic Development Certified Community (EDCC), Leadership Certified Community (LCC), Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB840), Nebraska Capital Projects fund, Nebraska Rural Projects fund, Site and Building Development fund, and others. DED also provides resources for grant management and technical assistance with Enterprise Zones and Opportunity Zones.

Source: opportunity.nebraska.gov

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

BROWNFIELDS

A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties increases local tax bases, facilitates job growth, utilizes existing infrastructure, takes development pressures off of undeveloped, open land, and both improves and protects the environment.

EPA's Brownfields and Land Revitalization Program grants are one source of support for revitalization efforts by funding environmental assessment, cleanup, and job training activities.

Source: www.epa.gov/brownfields/overview-epas-brownfields-program

SMALL-SCALE MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing and exported services provide primary sector jobs and create new wealth in a community. As the "maker" economy takes off across the nation, small-scale manufacturing, light industry, and professional services, businesses that operate with a small number of employees and utilize local materials, strengthen the local supply chain and reinvests in the community. This includes many different types of artisan and small-batch production enterprises working with textiles, hardware, woodworking, metalworking, and 3D-printing. It also includes prototyping and product design for local, national, or international clients; and local food production and packaging.

Small-scale manufacturers and exported services in creative industries can also be ideally suited for and add to redevelopment efforts, bringing existing buildings back to life—and back onto tax roles. Most small-scale manufacturers fit well into existing commercial neighborhoods since they typically look, sound, and smell like any other storefront. It is important to review regulations and economic development

programs to be sure the Village is not unintentionally putting undue barriers on small-scale manufacturing facilities in commercial as well as industrial zones. Regulations should also be reviewed to manage these as accessory uses in a residential context when possible.

Source: www.sba.gov/about-sba/organization/sba-initiatives/support-manufacturing-businesses

CREATIVE DISTRICTS

Grand Island participates in the Nebraska Creative District Program, which utilizes the arts as an economic driver to support

communities by telling their stories and elevating the value of the arts. Spanning across the unique and diverse Railside and 4th Street districts, Grand Island Creative District is a one-of-a-kind destination representing the vibrancy of our hometown

Creative Districts are designated cultural and economic areas where innovation flourishes and neighborhoods come together in the name of art. They provide significant economic impact by creating purposeful spaces like art galleries, theatres, and music venues, attracting employees

and businesses. These are all assets and attributes Grand Island is effectively harnessing as it seeks to reinvigorate its economy.

Source: www.artscouncil.nebraska.gov/explore/creative-districts

GOOD LIFE DISTRICTS

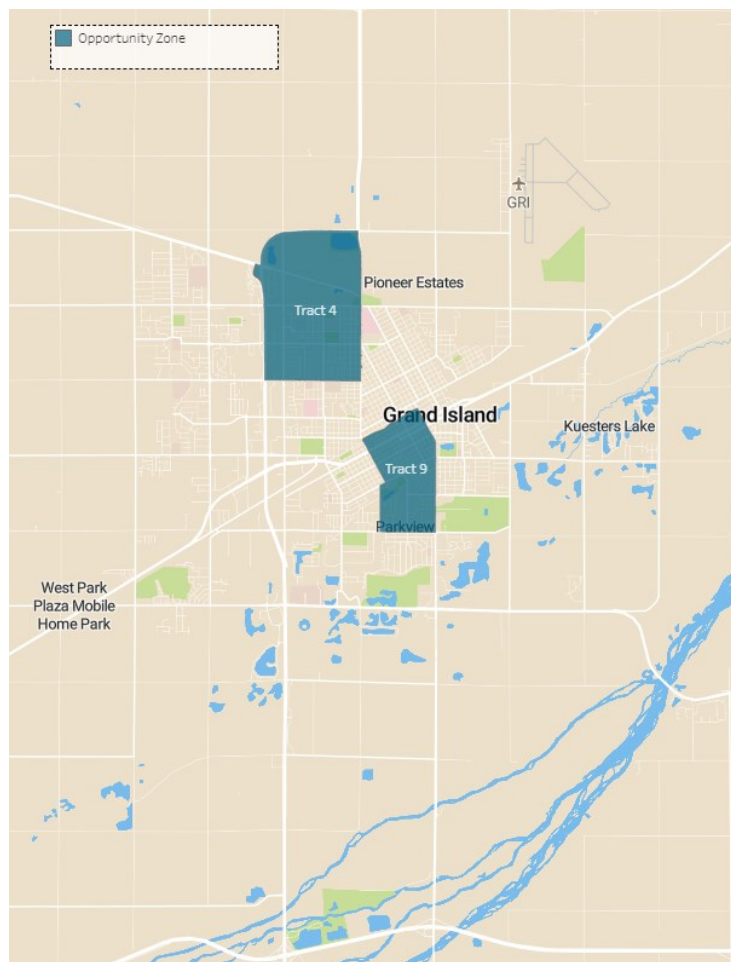
In 2023, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB692, the Good Life Transformational Project Act. The purpose of the Act was to promote and develop the general and economic welfare of this state and its communities by providing support for unique Nebraska projects that will

Figure 5.22: Downtown Grand Island



Source: GoogleEarth

Figure 5.21: Opportunity Zones



Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development

attract new industries and employment opportunities and further grow and strengthen Nebraska's retail, entertainment, and tourism industries.

A project is eligible to apply for a Good Life District designation if it:

- Generates new economic activity, as well as additional state and local taxes from persons residing within and outside the state,
- Creates new economic opportunities and jobs for residents,
- Promotes new-to-market retail, entertainment, and dining attractions.

Project eligibility differs by size of the municipality and county. For a city of Grand Island's population:

1. Total new development costs of the Project will exceed \$100 million.
2. Directly or indirectly result in the creation of 50 new jobs.
3. Upon completion of the Project, at least twenty percent (20%) of sales within the boundaries of the District will be made to persons residing outside the State

Designated Good Life Districts will receive a reduction in state sales tax from 5.5% to 2.75% for sales made within the district. In

2024, voters in Grand Island approved creation of a Good Life District Economic Development Program for a district along N. US Highway 281 and Nebraska Highway 2.

Source: opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/recovery/good-life-transformational-projects-act

OPPORTUNITY ZONE

In 2018, the US Department of the Treasury designated 44 Opportunity Zones (OZs) in Nebraska. This economic development program provides tax advantages for certain types of private investment in economically distressed areas. The Opportunity Zone designation is set to extend for a minimum of 10 years.

Each Opportunity Zone covers one Census Tract. Investments made through certified investment vehicles created as "Opportunity Funds" are used to spur economic growth in designated Zones—for example, by supporting new businesses or real estate development. An Opportunity Fund may be organized as a corporation or partnership whose assets comprise at least 90% qualified Opportunity Zone assets, representing an investment in Opportunity Zones. The Nebraska Department of Economic Development offers support to facilitate investment in qualified Opportunity Funds.

In Grand Island, Hall County Census Tract 4 and Census Tract 9 are designated Opportunity Zones.

Source: opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/business/opportunity-zones

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT STUDIES

As noted in Chapter Four, in 2012 City of Grand Island worked with consultants to complete the *Downtown Housing & Development Study*. In 2013, the City assembled a similar team to complete the *Grand Island Downtown Redevelopment Study*.

This study discussed context of downtown development and identified opportunities based on the community's vision for the area. Specific opportunities were presented from other projects (such as the earlier Housing study) and several physical and strategic catalyst projects presented. The document wraps up with a detailed Implementation section.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

ECONDEV GOAL 5.1

The City recognizes the importance of dynamic economic development programs to support entrepreneurship, business retention and expansion, and industrial recruitment.

Policies

- 5.1.1 Continue staffing and program funding for Grand Island Community Development, Economic Development, CRA, and BIDs to support local economic development.
- 5.1.2 Work closely with Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation (GIAEDC), Chamber of Commerce, CVB, and other organizations to support regional economic development.

Actions

- 5.1.3 Inform the community of accomplishments prior to elections to renew the LB840 tax for economic development purposes.
- 5.1.4 Support a business retention & expansion program to survey needs of local employers.

- 5.1.5 Continue to use and improve the City website to provide public access to development information, regulations and permit forms.

- 5.1.6 Leverage the Nebraska Creative Districts program for arts-led and innovation-based entrepreneurship.

ECONDEV GOAL 5.2

Agricultural enterprise—from research and development to production to processing and marketing—remains a vital and growing part of the City and County economy.

Policies

- 5.2.1 Recognize production agriculture as the highest and best use of land in agricultural districts.

Actions

- 5.2.2 Continue support of start-up and retention & expansion of ag-based businesses.
- 5.2.3 Encourage development of local foods and value-added agricultural processing.

ECONDEV GOAL 5.3

A diverse economic base with strong primary-sector employment provides a foundation for long-term growth and community development.

Policies

- 5.3.1 Commercial and Industrial sites are available at sizes and locations necessary to accommodate new development and re-development.
- 5.3.2 Provide a clear and consistent development review process to ensure timely permit review.
- 5.3.3 Re-development is encouraged within the Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant (CAAP).

Actions

- 5.3.4 Work closely with South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD) to access EDA and other funding sources for local economic development.
- 5.3.5 Aid development or redevelopment through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) where appropriate.
- 5.3.6 Proactively extend public utilities to reduce the costs of development and encourage development in appropriate areas.

- 5.3.7 Leverage the Opportunity Zones for enhanced economic development.
- 5.3.8 Implement the Good Life District program.
- 5.3.9 Update and implement the Downtown Housing & Development Study.
- 5.3.10 Support Complete Streets improvements of the 4th Street Concept Studies.

ECONDEV GOAL 5.4

There is an accessible system in-place for workforce development.

Actions

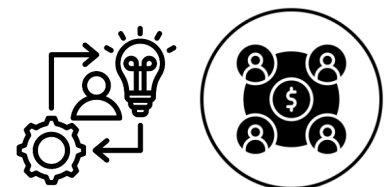
- 5.4.1 Continue support of K-12 education to include skills-based training and creative partnerships with local businesses.
- 5.4.2 Encourage local residents and employers to work with the community college on workforce training.
- 5.4.3 Continue to recruit new workers and provide jobs for workers at all skill levels and provide quality of life opportunities for all residents.

ECONDEV GOAL 5.5

Residents have options for remote work, including access to broadband.

Actions

- 5.5.1 Promote and support the development, expansion, and accessibility of broadband and voice communication networks.



Economic Development Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
5.1.1	Continue staffing and program funding for Grand Island Community Development, Economic Development, CRA, and BIDs to support local economic development.	1,2,4,8	1,3,4,6						
5.1.2	Work closely with Grand Island Area Economic Development Corporation (GIAEDC), Chamber of Commerce, CVB, and other organizations to support regional economic development.	1,2,3,5,7	1,5						
5.1.3	Inform the community of accomplishments prior to elections to renew the LB840 tax for economic development purposes.	3,12	1,5						
5.1.4	Support a business retention & expansion program to survey needs of local employers.	1,2,3,7,8	1,4,5						
5.1.5	Continue to use and improve the City website to provide public access to development information, regulations and permit forms.	1	1						
5.1.6	Leverage the Nebraska Creative Districts program for arts-led and innovation-based entrepreneurship.	1,3,12	1,4,5						
5.2.1	Recognize production agriculture as the highest and best use of land in agricultural districts.	1	-						
5.2.2	Continue support of start-up and retention & expansion of ag-based businesses.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1,3,4,5,6						
5.2.3	Encourage development of local foods and value-added agricultural processing.	1,2,3,4,5,7	1,3,4,5,6						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

Economic Development Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
5.3.1	Commercial and Industrial sites are available at sizes and locations necessary to accommodate new development and re-development.	1,3,9	1,5						
5.3.2	Provide a clear and consistent development review process to ensure timely permit review.	1	1						
5.3.3	Re-development is encouraged within the Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant (CAAP).	1,2,3,5,,7 9	1,4,5	X					
5.3.4	Work closely with South Central Economic Development District (SCEDD) to access EDA and other funding sources for local economic development.	1,2,3,7	1						
5.3.5	Aid development or redevelopment through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) where appropriate.	1,4	1,3,4	X					
5.3.6	Proactively extend public utilities to reduce the costs of development and encourage development in appropriate areas.	1,5,9	1,2,4,5,6	X					
5.3.7	Leverage the Opportunity Zones for enhanced economic development.	1,3	1,5,6						
5.3.8	Implement the Good Life District program.	1	1,6						
5.3.9	Update and implement the Downtown Housing & Development Study. (See also Actions 4.1.5 and 13.10.8)	1,3,5,10	1,4,5						
5.3.10	Support Complete Streets improvements of the 4th Street Concept Studies.	1	1,3,4,5						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

Economic Development Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
5.4.1	Continue support of K-12 education to include skills-based training and creative partnerships with local businesses.	1,3,13	1,5						
5.4.2	Encourage local residents and employers to work with the community college on workforce training.	1,3,13	1,5						
5.4.3	Continue to recruit new workers and provide jobs for workers at all skill levels and provide quality of life opportunities for all residents.	1,3,8	1,4						
5.5.1	Promote and support the development, expansion, and accessibility of broadband and voice communication network.	1,2,3,7,8,12	1,4,5						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax



Chapter 6 Community Facilities

Local government provides services to residents through public facilities. It is important for all levels of government—local, state, and federal—to anticipate future demand for their services if they are to remain strong and vital.

This chapter reviews facilities plans, historic sites and places, and educational facilities. While

many of these are not under the jurisdiction of this plan, they are all essential to the city's success. In some instances, public services are provided by non-governmental, private or non-profit organizations for the community as a whole. These are important service providers and are an integral part of the community.

FACILITIES PLAN

This element of the comprehensive plan, in conjunction with other chapters, is intended to meet the requirements of Nebraska statutes to address community facilities, including schools, libraries, and other public buildings. Chapter Seven following includes the element of parks and recreation facilities.

This chapter groups these into the following categories:

- Public buildings and facilities;
- Historic sites and places; and
- Education



Grand Island City Hall
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

There are several buildings and facilities serving the public in Grand Island.

City of Grand Island

The City of Grand Island operates under a mayor and city council form of government. The Mayor is the Chief Executive officer and the City Administrator serves as the Chief Administrative officer. As of 2022, the City had 570 employees.

Grand Island City Hall

The Grand Island City Hall is located at 100 East First Street downtown. The 48,000 square foot facility was completed for a cost of \$5.2 million in 1993. The building is situated on one city block with a courtyard, lawn, off-street parking, and a drive-up window for payment of utility bills.

The City Council meets regularly in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Most of the City's administrative offices are located at City Hall.

See Chapter Seven for more information on parks and recreation in Grand Island. See Chapter Eight Public Safety for more information on police, fire, and emergency management services in Grand Island.

Grand Island Public Works Department

The Grand Island Public Works Department is responsible for engineering, fleet services, solid waste, stormwater, streets, and transit. The Public Works Director serves as the City Engineer.

Figure 6.1: Grand Island City Hall and Hall County Courthouse



The Public Works Department is responsible for city-owned surface parking lots, including several downtown. The Department also manages city-owned stormwater facilities.

See Chapter 10 for more information on utilities in Grand Island.

Grand Island Utilities

The Grand Island Utilities Department manages municipal electric production and distribution, and domestic water service. The Utilities Department Customer Service Center is located at 1306 W 3rd Street.

The C.W. Burdick generating station on south Cherry and

Bisheld streets went into service in 1957. The Platte Generating Station between the city and the Platte River was placed in service in 1981. See Chapter 10 for more information on utilities and energy in Grand Island.

Public Library

The Edith Abbott Memorial Library is located at 211 North Washington on the north side of West 2nd Street, on the west side of downtown Grand Island.

The public library first opened in 1884, housed in H.E. Clifford's law office on the second floor of the First National Bank Building downtown. In July 1890, the library moved into the second floor of the new Grand Island city hall. In 1903, President Theodore



Edith Abbott Memorial Library
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Roosevelt broke the sod at the groundbreaking for a new Carnegie Library at West 2nd and Walnut streets. The building was then dedicated in 1907, by Presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska.

In 1972, a bond issue election was successful for construction of a new library. In recognition of Edith Abbott's service to the community, and gift of \$350,000, the new library was named in her honor and dedicated in 1974. The Abbott Library received an award from the Nebraska chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

The library was expanded and renovated in 2007. In 2018, the library undertook a renovation to increase safety, improve community gathering space, and enhance educational opportunities through improved teen spaces and hands-on STEM-based makerspaces, supported by the Library Foundation. Cooperative programming with local schools continues to be an important part of the library's mission. The library grounds host an outdoors learning center with

a rain garden, also known as a bio-infiltration garden. This project received a Community Conservation Award from the Central Platte Natural Resources District.

As of 2022, the library has 33,201 registered patrons (cardholders) and had 95,863 patron visits for the year. The library holdings include 97,945 print books and 44,107 electronic books. Hall County residents have access to the Grand Island library through an interlocal agreement.

Library services were affected by the COVID pandemic, and staff has continued to adjust with a focus on partnerships for underserved and diverse users. The library seeks to provide materials in four main languages—English, Spanish, Somali, and Arabic. Future services may include book kiosks at remote locations, or potentially a renewed bookmobile.

Source: www.gilibrary.org



The Abbott Sisters

Members of the Abbott family have a long tradition of community service in Grand Island. This began with Othman Abbott, Nebraska's first lieutenant governor of Nebraska, and his wife Elizabeth Abbott. Edith was one of the first library board members and served a total of 48 years. She influenced the Women's Suffrage Society to give its treasury balance to the library for book purchases.

The Abbott legacy continued with her daughters Edith Abbott (1876-1957) and Grace Abbott (1878-1939). Edith was a professional economist, author, and pioneer in American social work education. Grace was a social worker involved in improving rights of immigrants and advancing child welfare.

Edith and Grace became part of Jane Addams' Hull House in Chicago while pursuing higher education. Edith earned her doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1905. In 1909, Grace received a Ph.M. from the University of Chicago. Edith retired to Grand Island and left the bulk of her estate to the library.

Image by University of Chicago Library.



The Beaux Arts-style Hall County Courthouse
Source: Carol Highsmith, Library of Congress

Hall County

Hall County is governed by an elected board of 7 members in the Commissioners model of Nebraska county government.

County Courthouse

The Hall County Courthouse is located at 111 West 1st Street in downtown Grand Island. The historic structure was designed by architect Thomas Rogers Kimball and completed in 1904. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Additional buildings are used by the County in close proximity downtown, including the County Administration Offices (Annex) located at 121 S. Pine Street, and

the Hall County Annex in the former Sheriff's Office at 131 S Locust St. The Hall County Attorney is located at 231 S Locust St, south of the courthouse.

The Hall County Board of Commissioners has been exploring options to provide additional space for courts. At time of adoption of this plan, the County is developing an addition to the rear of the historic Courthouse, with possibly closing Pine Street from 1st Street to Court Street. The City of Grand Island vacated this section of Pine Street in 2024.

County Public Works Department

The office of the Public Works Director and County Highway Superintendent is located at the Hall County Highway yard at 2900 West 2nd Street, south of the UP railroad and US 30, near US 281 on the west side of Grand Island.

County Corrections Facility

The Hall County Sheriff is an elected office with a four-year term. The Sheriff's Offices are located at 111 Public Safety Drive, off of US 30 on the east side of Grand Island. The City of Grand Island Police Department office is also at this location.

See Chapter Eight Public Safety for more information on police, fire, and emergency management services in Grand Island.

Hall County Senior Services

Hall County Senior Services, operate Senior Centers and public transportation within Hall County Senior Centers are currently located in Grand Island, Doniphan, Cairo, and Wood River.

See Chapter 15 for more information on rural transit.

US Postal Service

The Grand Island Post Office is located at 3835 W. Old Potash Highway off US 30, west of US 281. As of Spring 2023, this facility is open 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday and 9 am to Noon on Saturday.

There is also a Post Office at Webb Plaza, 2418 N. Webb Road, on the northwest side of Grand Island. This site is open 8:30



Railroad Town boardwalk, Stuhr Museum
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

am to 5pm Monday through Friday and 8am to 10am Saturday.

There are also nearby Post Office locations in the communities of Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, and Wood River.

Public Cemeteries

Grand Island Cemetery

The Grand Island Cemetery is located in southwest Grand Island, Nebraska at 3168 W. Stolley Park Road. Records indicate the Cemetery was started in the late 1860's. The City of Grand Island Parks and Recreation Division maintains the Grand Island Cemetery.

Hall County Poor Farm Cemetery

This historic cemetery is located at the southwest corner of W. Abbott Road and US 281, north of Grand Island. The Poor Farm closed in 1919.

Nebraska Soldiers and Sailors Cemetery

The Nebraska Soldiers and Sailors Cemetery is located at the

northeast corner of N. Webb Road and W. Capital Avenue. The site was part of the former Nebraska Veterans Home. It will become a State of Nebraska Veterans Cemetery, expanding to 30 acres with new entries set further back from the intersection of Webb Road and Capital Avenue.

HISTORIC SITES AND PLACES

As noted in the Introduction to this plan, Grand Island and Hall County have a rich history dating back to the emigrant trails across America. Of respondents to the Citywide Survey, most half (48%) agree and 1/3 (36%) strongly agree Grand Island's history and architecture should be preserved.

The first settlers arrived from the east in the 1850s. When the railroads followed, the townsites moved from the Platte River to the rail station and expanded over the years. In the last century, the railroads were

eclipsed by the highways and the city grew to meet the Interstate.

STUHR MUSEUM

The Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer is known for providing immersive historical, educational, and cultural experiences. The facility is located on 200 acres on the west side of Grand Island. The museum is named after Leo Stuhr, a local farmer and politician whose family were among the area's pioneer settlers. He donated land, money, and numerous artifacts that served as the foundation of the museum.

The main museum building was designed by architect Edward Durrell Stone in the International Style, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (See *later in this chapter.*) Fonner Rotunda also houses displays. The old-time Railroad Town occupies much of the site, with living historians in season who share their stories. Almost all of these buildings were moved to the site and restored to save them from destruction.

The STEAM Learning Center features interactive stations rooted in principles of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math, demonstrated by exhibits of antique farm machinery.

The museum has several connections to the movie business, including hosting the house where actor Henry Fonda was born in 1905. The museum has also hosted filming for historical movies such as *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (1991) and *My Antonia* (1995).

The museum is served by a strong community of volunteers. The museum has an Operating Board of Directors, supported by memberships and by the nonprofit Stuhr Museum Foundation. The Stuhr Museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

Source: stuhrmuseum.org

HALL COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Hall County Historical Society is a volunteer organization founded in 1922. In the 1960s, the organization donated its collection of artifacts to help launch the Stuhr Museum.

The Historical Society has acquired several sites since that time, each of which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- In 1997, the Historical Society purchased the Townsley-Murdock Site near Alda, with preserved Mormon Trail and Oregon Trail wheel ruts.
- In 1999, the Historical Society purchased one of Nebraska's last Burlington depots, at Sixth and Plum Streets in downtown Grand Island.
- In 2002, after renovation by the Society and the City of Grand Island, the historic William Stolley House in Stolley Park was opened to the public.

The Historical Society has placed markers at historical sites throughout the county. The first were six markers of the Old California Overland Trail, traveled by immigrants to California in 1849 and pioneers of Grand Island in 1857. These markers



Grand Island Historic District Downtown
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

were dedicated on July 4, 1923. Thirty-seven historical markers have been placed in Hall County.

Source: www.hallnehistory.com

NATIONAL REGISTER

Inclusion on the National Register may enable income-producing properties to qualify for tax credits for eligible rehabilitation costs. Occasionally, organizations such as History Nebraska provide challenge grants for physical improvements to property listed on the National Register. National Register listing also recognizes the status of public buildings and the importance community members place on protecting historic resources.

Grand Island Downtown Historic District

The Grand Island Downtown Historic District is locally significant for its association with

commercial development in Grand Island, in particular along 3rd Street. The period of significance begins with the construction of the earliest extant building in c.1870 and ends in 1960 with the construction of the most recent contributing building. The District was listed in 2017.

4th Street Commercial Historic District

The 4th Street Commercial Historic District is listed for its association with the history and development of the city of Grand Island in the areas of Commerce and Industry. The district's buildings reflect the commercial and industrial vitality of the North Side neighborhood during the first half of the twentieth century.

Fourth Street began to serve as the main commercial street of the neighborhood in the 1910s, while warehousing, shipping, and industrial activities were located



St. Mary's Cathedral
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Cathedral of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

St. Mary's Cathedral in downtown Grand Island is one of the finest Late Gothic Revival churches in the state, constructed in 1926-28 to the designs of architects Henry W. Brinkman and J. Stanley Hagan of Emporia, Kansas. The interior of the large sandstone church seats 900 and features a Gothic detailed main altar of white Italian marble.

Evangelische Lutherische Dreienigkeit Kirche

Plans for the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church on the east end of downtown Grand Island were adopted in 1890, but construction did not begin until 1894. Brothers William and Jacob Scheffel, members of the congregation, were the primary builders. Born in Sulzfeld, Germany, the brothers learned the trade of masonry and stonecutting there. The church, the key building in the complex, is an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style and is one of Nebraska's outstanding examples of small town stone church architecture. Trinity Church reflects subtle influences of German church architecture,

on the cross streets, close to the railroad tracks and its spur lines. The 1920s saw a wave of new construction that added commercial buildings to the neighborhood, enhanced warehousing and shipping facilities, and provided automotive enterprises for the increasing number of motorized vehicles. The period of significance begins circa 1895 and continues to 1969. The District was listed in 2019.

H.J. Bartenbach House

Located in downtown Grand Island, this house is a distinct and significant example of a Nebraska dwelling designed in the Moderne style of the 1930s, a style never widely popular in the state. The original house, a one-story Victorian dwelling constructed in 1893 for H. J. Bartenbach, was redesigned by local architect Gordon Shattuck in 1937-38 for Mrs. Bartenbach, giving the house its present appearance. Distinctive interior spaces include the open stairway and landing area, which features a newel post and

balustrade of Modernistic design utilizing chromed rods and railings.

Burlington Railroad Depot

The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad station at 603 N. Plum Street was constructed in the Prairie Style in 1911. It was likely designed by Walter T. Krausch, who designed many CB&Q depots, however the documentation of the depot was lost in a 1922 fire. Passenger service ended in 1969. The building is owned by the Hall County Historical Society and is available to rent for public events.



Historic Burlington Railroad Depot
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

primarily evident in its form, the cross shape, a favorite style among Germans. The complex also includes a frame school and parsonage. As of 2024, the building houses a Hispanic ministry of the Evangelical LCMS.

Heinrich Giese House

Located near Stolley State Park, the Giese House had several stages of construction from 1863 to 1877. This gabled-ell residence is a T-shaped, one-and-one-half-story log, adobe, and frame structure with a cross-gabled roof. The Heinrich Giese House is significant as an artifact of Nebraska's settlement era.



Evangelische Lutherische Dreienigkeit Kirche, now Criso Cordero de Dios
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Glade-Donald House

The Glade-Donald House is a distinctive example of the Shingle style. The house is completely sheathed with wooden shingles, and incorporates many bay and oriel windows, including two prominent bow windows on the front facade. The house was built about 1905, by Henry Glade and remodeled by Lawrence Donald in 1918, and by John Donald in 1934. Russell Rohrer of Hastings

was the decorator in the 1934 remodeling and created a very formalized and rich interior, with velvets, elaborate wallpapers, chandeliers, and other imported goods.

All three owners were prominent businessmen in Grand Island. Glade was the founder of the Henry Glade Milling Company, and brothers Lawrence and John Donald established the

Donald Company, a leading dry goods and grocery firm that served Nebraska and surrounding states for over fifty years. The property also includes a garage/servants' residence built in 1923, which originally provided quarters for the butler and his wife.

Carnegie Library

In February 1902, the library board and the city council of Grand Island proposed a new public library. In April of that year, a \$20,000 grant was obtained from Andrew Carnegie. Designed by the architectural firm of Tyler and Son of Lincoln, Nebraska, the library is a notable example of the Neo-Classical Revival style.

Grand Island FCC Monitoring Station

Located west of Grand Island on the site of the Cornhusker Army Ammunition Depot, this was the first monitoring station constructed for the exclusive use of the Federal Radio Commission (later Federal Communications



Grand Island Carnegie Library
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



United States Post Office and Courthouse building
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Commission), authorized in an act approved February 23, 1927. The main station building was constructed from plans and specifications prepared by the U. S. Navy.

Grand Island US Post Office

The Grand Island United States Post Office and Courthouse building is located on 2nd Street in downtown Grand Island. Also known as the Federal Building, this structure was designed by Supervising Architect of the Treasury James Knox Taylor, opening in 1910. The building is an example of the Neoclassical architectural style, exhibiting design components derived from Greek, Roman, and Renaissance traditions.

Local architect Charles W. Steinbaugh designed an addition to the building, which opened in 1935. In 1968, the US Postal Service vacated the building. The US General Services Administration now manages the building as office space for federal agencies.

Grand Island Senior High School

The old Grand Island Senior High School, also known as the Walnut School, is located at 500 Walnut Street. The building is a three-story Gothic Revival Style brick building, designed by Oscar R. Kirschke and Arthur D. Baker.

Replacing a 1908 high school at Walnut and Tenth Streets, this building was constructed in 1924-25 as a senior high school, serving that purpose until the fall of 1955 when it became Walnut Junior High. The building has recently been redeveloped as apartment housing.

Grand Island VA Hospital

The Grand Island Veterans Administration Hospital is significant at the statewide level for its association with the VA nationwide hospital construction program following World War II and that program's impact on healthcare. It is an important – and intact – example of the kind of facility

the Veterans Administration's collaboration with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made possible.

The Grand Island VA Hospital is also significant at the statewide level for architecture. Not only is the hospital campus is representative of George Maguolo's architectural work, but it also is an embodiment of what features made a new hospital modern during the third generation program of hospital design undertaken by the Veterans Administration. The period of significance for the property is 1950 to 1958, from when the facility first opened to the end of the Third Generation Veterans Hospitals program. The veterans' hospital remains in service today. (See also Chapter Nine Public Health & Livability.)

Hall County Courthouse

As noted earlier in this chapter, the Hall County Courthouse is located in downtown Grand Island. Designed by architect Thomas Rogers Kimball, it is an outstanding example of the Beaux-Arts style, one of the few examples of the style in Nebraska. The building has served county government in Hall County since its completion in 1904. The grounds also host a veterans' memorial.

Hamilton-Donald House

The house was constructed by Henry Falldorf in 1905, for Ellsworth D. Hamilton, cashier of the Commercial State Bank of Grand Island. In 1908, Hamilton sold the property to John Donald, one of the two brothers who established the Donald Company (see Glade-Donald House). The house is an

outstanding example of the Neo-Classical Revival style and incorporates a full height portico in its design.

Andrew M. Hargis House

Built in 1898, the Andrew M. Hargis House is a fine example of the Queen Anne style and also incorporates Neo-Classical Revival detailing in its design. Hargis founded the Grand Island Business and Normal College in 1885. The house has been owned by the Grand Island Woman's Club since 1953.

The Hotel Yancey

Named for its proprietor, William L. Yancey, the hotel was begun in April 1917, financed by the Bankers Realty Investment Company of Omaha, Nebraska, for the North American Hotel Company. The company was building a chain of hotels in Nebraska, Iowa, and Kansas towns, accessible to the railroad depots and business districts. This "chain concept" permitted a standardization of service, bulk purchase of supplies, quantity discounts, and lower costs to the consumer.

From its opening in 1923, the Yancey was the center of social and political activity for Grand Island. An early twentieth century high-rise structure, the Yancey illustrates the Renaissance Revival style. Due to the development of motels, a decline in railroad trade, and the building of shopping malls away from the downtown business district, the hotel closed in December 1982.



Liederkranz Hall
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Lee Huff Apartment Complex

Located in downtown Grand Island, the Lee Huff Apartment Complex is an excellent example of a multiple-dwelling complex that incorporates both an apartment building (constructed in 1928) and two flats (constructed in 1920-21). Apartment buildings and flats were popular forms of multi-family housing during the early twentieth century. These apartments/flats were ubiquitous property types in large urban centers such as Omaha but rare for a community the size of Grand Island in the 1920s.

Liederkranz Hall

In 1870, German settlers met to organize a German singing society or "Liederkranz" to provide musical and social entertainment and to cultivate the members' musical talents. The brick building, constructed in 1911-12, was designed by architect Oscar Kirche, a Liederkranz member, and reflects influences of the Neo-Classical Revival style. The hall, located in downtown Grand Island, has long been a

community meeting place, an auditorium for civic activities, and a polling place. This organization is the only known Liederkranz in Nebraska.

Lincoln Highway-Grand Island Seedling Mile

By 1913, the route of the Lincoln Highway had been chosen and dedicated nationwide by the newly formed Lincoln Highway Association. The association's main goal was to develop a paved, toll-free, transcontinental highway from New York City to San Francisco. To help meet this goal, the association conceived the Seedling Mile program. Seedling Miles would be the "seeds" from which paved roads would extend across the nation.

The Seedling Mile on the Lincoln Highway was completed November 3, 1915. Grand Island was the second city in the United States to build such an example of concrete roadway. The original Seedling Mile extended from the corner of Willow Street one mile east, ending near the Seedling Mile School.



The Seedling Mile historic marker
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Nine Bridges Bridge

Early in 1911 citizens of Doniphan Township (south of Grand Island) pledged \$1,000 toward construction of a new bridge over the Platte River to replace an existing timber bridge that linked the area with Grand Island. In response, the county Board authorized the Nine Bridges Road north of Doniphan to serve the proposed crossing.

The County Board decided to constrict the river's channel width by some 340 feet and erect a three-span pony truss. Completed in 1913, the Nine Bridges Bridge carried mainline traffic until construction of a parallel span over the Platte on U.S. Highway 281/34. Sold to the adjacent landowner in the mid-1960s, the bridge is no longer open to traffic, but is maintained in essentially unaltered condition. It is historically significant as an important crossing of a major watercourse and technologically significant as the best example in the state of this structural type.

Oscar Roeser House

The Oscar Roeser House was built in 1908, by Henry H. Falldorf following the plans of architect Thomas Rogers Kimball. It is a unique example of German-American architecture executed in the Neo-Classical Revival style. Roeser was a prominent Grand Island businessman and civic leader.

Shady Bend Gas Station, Grocery, and Diner

The Shady Bend Gas Station, Grocery, and Diner, at 3609 E. Hwy 30 on the east side of Grand Island, the old Lincoln Highway. The structure was built in 1931, by H. O. "Doc" Woodward as the main building of a cabin camp, based on plans by the Chicago Lumber Company Plan Service Department. Shady Bend includes representative elements of the functions and services for travelers once offered by the larger and more elaborate privately-owned and operated roadside stops.

Soldiers and Sailors Home

First known as the Nebraska Soldiers and Sailors Home, the Grand Island Veterans Home was opened in 1887. The first home was a four-story Victorian building situated on 640 acres. Between 1910 and 1965, a new campus was constructed consisting of eight primary buildings and a veterans' cemetery. A veterans cemetery



Shady Bend and Lincoln Highway marker
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

was also located west of the home, and is currently being expanded.

The original Victorian building was torn down in 1931. In January 2019, a new Veterans Home was opened in Kearney and this campus was vacated. The site was listed in 2021, and is currently under redevelopment.

Stolley Homestead Site

William Stolley was one of a small band of German immigrants who came to the central Platte Valley of Nebraska Territory in 1857. Stolley filed the first squatter's claim in the county. He helped organize School District 1 in Hall County and served as director for many years. He also helped organize the State Grange and promoted tree planting. In 1927, the Nebraska Legislature designated the farmstead as Stolley State Park. The homestead includes the William Stolley house, an one and a half story log dwelling constructed in 1858-59; the frame school building erected in 1869-70; and a reconstructed log house. The property also includes the site of Fort Independence, a fortification erected by citizens during the Indian war of 1864.

Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer

As noted earlier, the main building of the Stuhr Museum complex was designed by modernist architect Edward Durrell Stone in 1963, his only existing building in Nebraska. The International Style building features hard right angles and tall columns on an island surrounded by water like the island city it represents.



Stolley Homestead
Source: Wikipedia

In 2015, the museum underwent a comprehensive restoration project, following the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, after which the building was listed on the National Register. The project won a 2017 National Historic Preservation Award.

Source: history.nebraska.gov

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

The Certified Local Government (CLG) program is an initiative of the National Park Service, managed at the state level by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), intended to support local historic preservation activities. Currently, there are eight communities in Nebraska participating in the CLG program. This may be an opportunity for Grand Island to consider to provide support for property owners investing in historic structures.

Source: history.nebraska.gov/historic-preservation/certified-local-governments-clg

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Education is an important contributor to a community's quality of life. Three-quarters of the respondents to the citywide survey chose public schools for their children's education. Education and health care are also the largest employment sectors for survey participants.

GRAND ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grand Island Public Schools serve approximately 9,829 students and employs 870 staff including 685 teachers. District campuses include an early childhood education center, fourteen elementary schools, three middle schools, one high school, and an alternative high school.

Elementary Schools

- Dodge Elementary School , 641 South Oak Street
- Engleman Elementary School, 1812 Mansfield Road
- Gates Elementary School, 2700 West Louise Street



Grand Island High School
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

- Howard Elementary School, 502 West 9th Street
- Jefferson Elementary School, 1314 West 7th Street
- Knickrehm Elementary School, 2013 North Oak Street
- Lincoln Elementary School, 805 North Beal Street
- Newell Elementary School, 2700 West 13th Street
- Seedling Mile Elementary School, 3208 East Seedling Mile Road
- Shoemaker Elementary School, 4160 Old Potash Highway
- Starr Elementary School, 1800 South Adams Street
- Stoley Park Elementary School, 1700 West Stolley Park Road
- Wasmer Elementary School, 318 South Clark Street

- West Lawn Elementary School, 3022 West College Street

Middle/High Schools

- Barr Middle School, 602 West Stolley Park Road
- Walnut Middle School, 1600 North Custer Street
- Westridge Middle School, 4111 West 13th Street
- Grand Island Senior High School, 2124 North Lafayette Avenue.

Other

- Career Pathways Institute, 1215 S. Adams Street (Focus)
- Kneel Administration Building, 123 South Webb Road
- O'Connor Early Learning Center, 2208 North Webb Road (Preschool)

- Indra House: The program at Indra House supports students 18 to 21 years of age in an actual home setting. The home was built by the GIPS Construction students and is located across the street from GIPS.
- Success Academy, 6th-12th grade Alternative Education Program located at 1912 North Lafayette Avenue.
- Wyandotte Learning Center, 315 Wyandotte Street (Focus)

Grand Island Public Schools is a growing school district serving a diverse student population. In the 2021-2022 school year, 70 percent of students were eligible for free and reduced priced meals and student population is comprised of several racial and ethnic groups, including 60 percent Hispanic.

Source: www.gips.org

NORTHWEST PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Northwest Public School is a Class B school district serving students around the city of Grand Island in Hall County, with approximately 1,450 students in grades PreK-12.



Northwest High School
Source: GoogleMaps

The Northwest District serves students in five school centers:

- Lockwood Preschool, 750 Lockwood Road, northeast of Grand Island off of US 30
- 1-R (K-8) at 3301 West One-R Road, at Webb Road a mile west of US 281, north of Grand Island
- Cedar Hollow (K-8) at 4900 South Engleman Road at Wildwood Drive, between Alda and Grand Island
- St. Libory (K-8) at 435 St. Paul Road, St. Libory on US 281 north of Grand Island
- Northwest High School (9-12) at 2710 N. North Road, between West Capital Avenue and Highway 2, a mile west of US 281 in Grand Island.

Along with students who live in the district a number of students from outside of the district take advantage of the opportunities available in the Northwest schools through option enrollment.

Source: www.gnorthwest.org

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Central Catholic School

Grand Island Central Catholic School is a private, faith-based school, located at 1200 Ruby Avenue, in Grand Island. It has about 290 students in grades 6-12.

Source: www.gicentralcatholic.org

Heartland Lutheran High School

Heartland Lutheran High School is a private, faith-based school, located at 3900 West Husker Highway, in Grand Island. It is operated by the Lutheran High



School Association of Central Nebraska. The school has about 56 students in grades 9-12.

Source: www.heartlandlutheran.org

OTHER PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Doniphan-Trumbull

The Doniphan-Trumbull Public School District serves the area generally south of the Platte River. Many of the 450 students live in the country, but a significant number have parents working in the neighboring cities of Grand Island and Hastings. The school building is located in downtown Doniphan. Students compete in NSAA Class C.

Source: www.dtcatholics.org

Wood River Rural Schools

Wood River Rural Schools serves Alda, including a portion of Grand Island's two-mile planning area. Enrollment is about 500 students. The Elementary School and Class C1

Middle/High School are located in Wood River.

Source: www.woodrivereagles.org

CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Central Community College, Grand Island Campus, is located at 3134 W. Highway 34, and provides higher education and vocational opportunities. A master's level education is available on-site offered by the Bellevue University program.

Source: www.cccneb.edu

COLLEGE PARK

College Park, located at 3180 W. Highway 34 in Grand Island, is a unique facility which provides bachelor and master degree programs from Doane University; continuing education, training, and development courses from Central Community College; research-based information in agriculture and natural resources, consumer and family

economics, community and economic development and 4-H / youth development from the Hall County extension office; classes from the Central Nebraska Area Health Education Center; and is the home of the Grand Island Little Theater.

Source: www.collegeparkgi.com

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The Grand Island Children's Museum is a 501c3 nonprofit organization looking to provide STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math)-based activities for children of all ages that creates excitement for learning. This mission has recently been reimagined since completing a steering committee's task to determine the viability of this type of establishment in Grand Island. GICM is working to develop the Grand Island Armory Building on Old Potash Hwy next to Ryder Park due to its centralized location and ease of accessibility by the community.

Source: gichildrensmuseum.org

Table 6.1: Hall County Early Childhood Capacity, 2024

	Facilities	Capacity
Child Care Center	15	1,797
Family Child Care Home I	54	534
Family Child Care Home II	5	58
Preschool	2	95

Source: Nebraska Dept. of Health and Human Services, October 2024.

CHILD CARE

There are a number of child day care providers located throughout Grand Island and Hall County. In Nebraska, anyone who provides child care to four or more children from different families must be licensed as a child care provider, by the Department of Health and Human Services.

There are five license types:

- **Family Child Care Home I:** This type of program is in the home of the provider. The maximum capacity is eight children of mixed ages and two additional school age children during non-school hours.
- **Family Child Care Home II:** This type of program is in the home of the provider or at another site. The maximum capacity is twelve children with two providers.
- **Child Care Center:** This type of program is licensed for 13 or more children while following the staff to child ratio per the state regulations.
- **School Age Only Center:** This type of program is licensed for 13 or more children who are attending or have attended school.
- **Preschool:** This type of program provides educational services where children do not nap and are fed a meal.
- **License Exempt:** Home care provided outside the client's home to a maximum of six children from one family or three or fewer children from more than one family.

The need for quality child care was brought up repeatedly at Town Hall meetings and in the community surveys. The Central District Health Department (CDHD) is also active in advancing early childhood development in the Grand Island metropolitan area (see *Chapter Nine Public Health*).

Source: dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Types-of-Child-Care-in-Nebraska.aspx

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS AND POLICIES

FACILITIES GOAL 6.1

The City provides accessible public buildings and facilities to provide public services to residents.

Policies

- 6.1.1 Development projects shall mitigate impacts on public facilities.
- 6.1.2 Public arts and history will play an important role in the life of the city.

Actions

- 6.1.3 Continue maintenance and repair of public structures and sites, including public gathering spaces.
- 6.1.4 Support arts and culture in public places.
- 6.1.5 Prioritize capital improvements to ensure adequate public facilities.
- 6.1.6 Coordinate facility needs with municipalities and look for opportunities for shared cost-savings.



Hall County Veterans Memorial Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

FACILITIES GOAL 6.2

Historic sites and places are protected and maintained.

Policies

- 6.2.1 Development projects shall mitigate impacts on historic sites.

Actions

- 6.2.2 Support efforts to designate and preserve historic buildings.
- 6.2.3 Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings rather than demolition.
- 6.2.4 Consider participation in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program.

FACILITIES GOAL 6.3

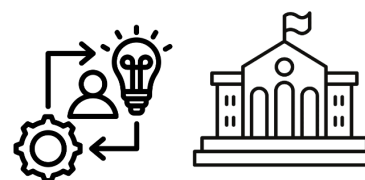
Residents have access to a modern, efficient education system.

Policies

- 6.3.1 Include public school districts in review of large development projects.

Actions

- 6.3.2 Continue support of K-12 education and coordination with public and parochial schools.
- 6.3.3 Encourage joint use of school sites and parks.
- 6.3.4 Continue support of Central Community College and College Park.



Community Facilities Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
6.1.1	Development projects shall mitigate impacts on public facilities.	1,8,9	5						
6.1.2	Public arts and history will play an important role in the life of the city.	1,2,8,12,13	1						
6.1.3	Continue maintenance and repair of public structures and sites, including public gathering spaces.	1,2	1,2,4,5						
6.1.4	Support arts and culture in public places.	1,2,8,12	1,4,5						
6.1.5	Prioritize capital improvements to ensure adequate public facilities.	1	1,2,4,5,6	X					
6.1.6	Coordinate facility needs with municipalities and look for opportunities for shared cost-savings.	1,2,13	1,2,4,5,6	X					
6.2.1	Development projects shall mitigate impacts on historic sites.	1,8,9	5						
6.2.2	Support efforts to designate and preserve historic buildings.	1	1,3,4,5						
6.2.3	Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings rather than demolition.	1	1,4,5						
6.2.4	Consider participation in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program.	1	1						
6.3.1	Include public school districts in review of large development projects.	1,9,13	1						
6.3.2	Continue support of K-12 education and coordination with public and parochial schools.	1,12	1						
6.3.3	Encourage joint use of school sites and parks.	1,13	1						
6.3.4	Continue support of Central Community College and College Park.	1,13	1						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

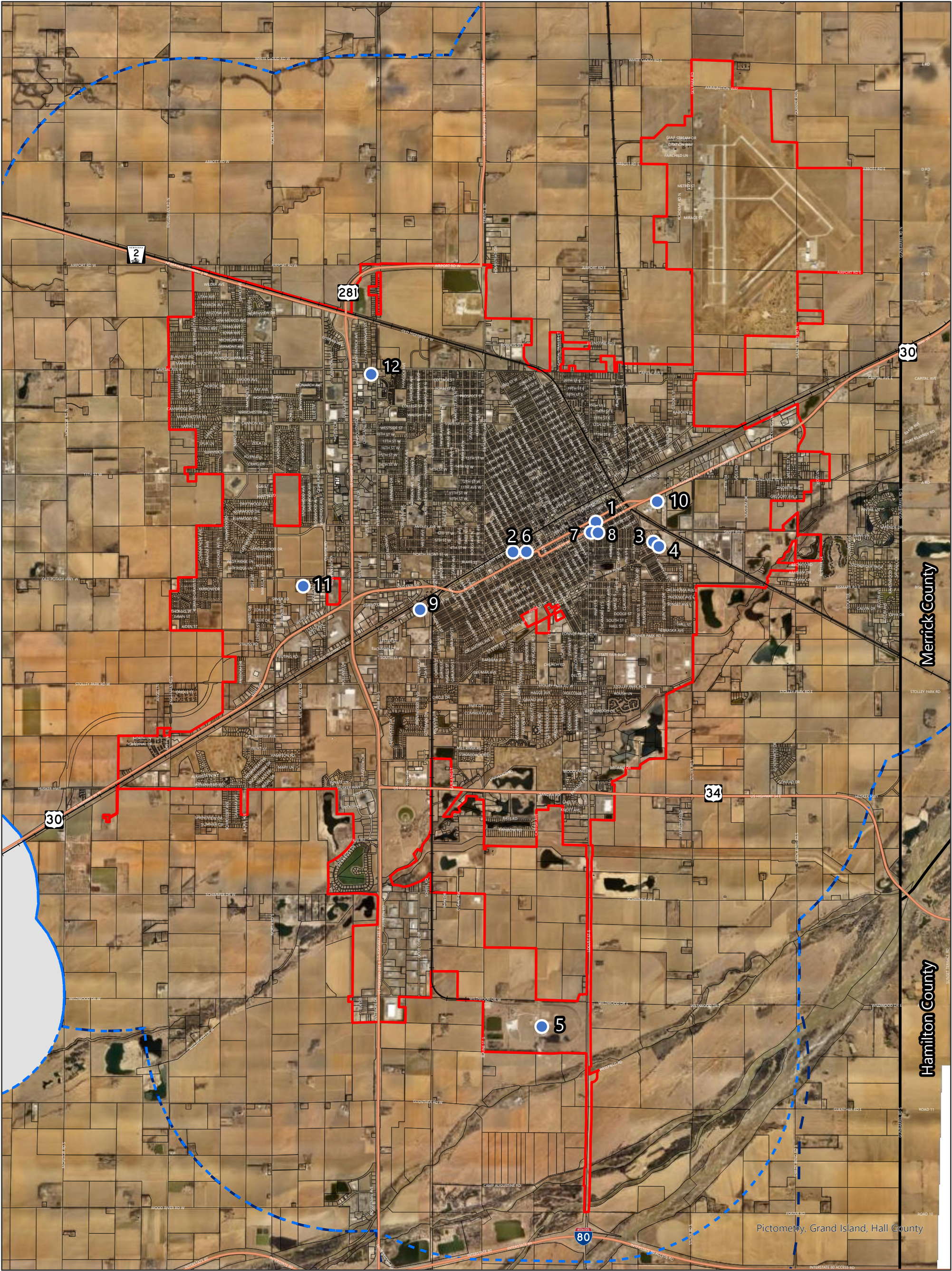
8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax



Public Art, Grand Island Public Library
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



LEGEND

- Public Buildings and Facilities
- Highways
- Railroads
- Grand Island Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Alda Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- City Limits
- County Boundaries
- Parcels

Public Facilities

- 1: City Hall
- 2: Utilities Department Customer Service Center
- 3: Utilities Department
- 4: C.W. Burdick Generating Station
- 5: Platte Generating Station
- 6: Public Library
- 7: County Courthouse
- 8: County Annex
- 9: County Public Works Department
- 10: County Sheriff's Department/City Police Department
- 11: US Post Office
- 12: US Post Office

GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

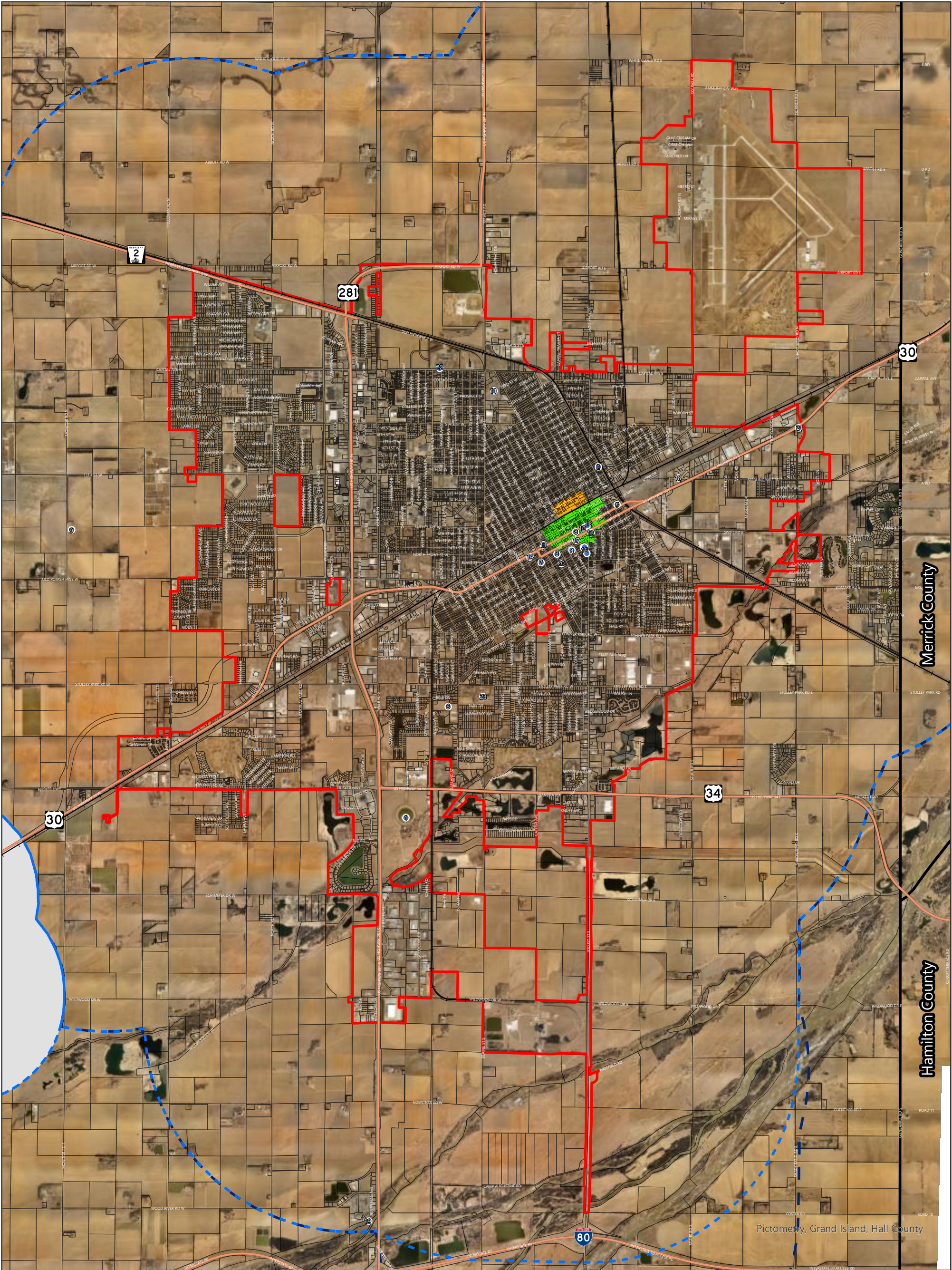
FIG 6.2: PUBLIC FACILITIES



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25

0 0.38 0.75 1.5 Miles

N



LEGEND

- Historic Sites and Places
- 4th Street Commercial Historic District
- Grand Island Downtown Historic District
- Highways
- Railroads
- Grand Island Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Alda Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Grand Island 2-Mile Planning Area
- City Limits
- County Boundaries
- Parcels

Historic Sites

- 1: Stuhr Museum
- 2: Hall County Historical Society/Burlington Railroad Depot
- 3: H.J. Bartenbach House
- 4: St. Mary's Cathedral
- 5: Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
- 6: Heinrich Giese House
- 7: Glade-Donald House
- 8: Carnegie Library
- 9: FCC Monitoring Station
- 10: Federal Building
- 11: Grand Island VA Hospital
- 12: Hall County Courthouse
- 13: Hamilton-Donald House
- 14: Andrew M. Hargis House
- 15: The Hotel Yancey
- 16: Lee Huff Apartment Complex
- 17: Liederkranz Hall
- 18: Seedling Mile Historical Marker
- 19: Nine Bridges Bridge
- 20: Oscar Roeser House
- 21: Shady Bend Gas Station, Grocery, and Diner
- 22: Soldiers and Sailors Home Marker
- 23: Stolley Homestead Site

GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

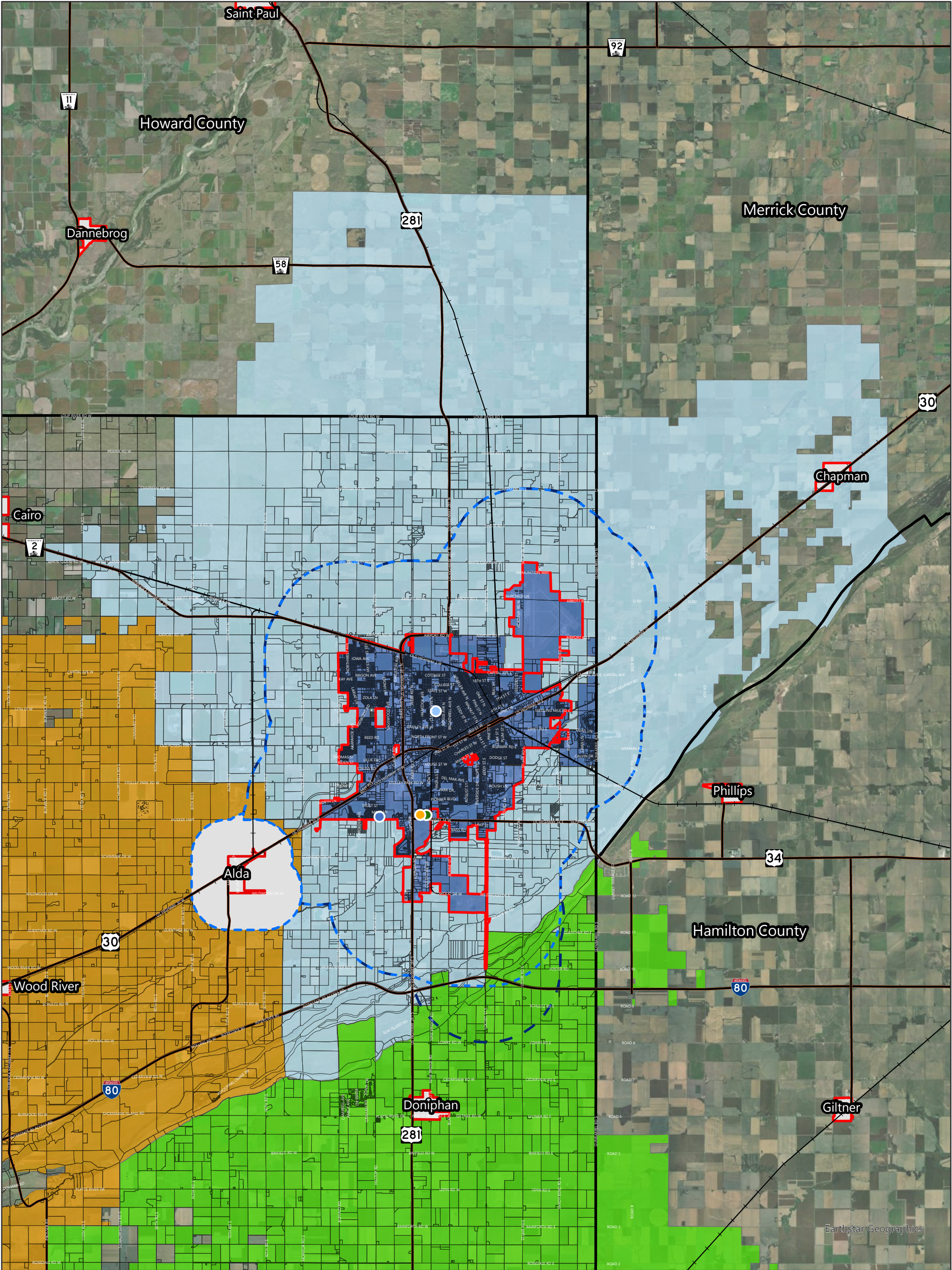
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 6.3: HISTORIC SITES



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25

0 0.38 0.75 1.5 Miles



- LEGEND**

 - Central Catholic School
 - Central Community College
 - College Park
 - Heartland Lutheran High School
 - Grand Island Public Schools
 - Northwest Public Schools
 - Doniphan-Trumbull Public Schools
 - Wood River Rural Schools
- Highways
 - Railroads
 - Grand Island Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
 - Alda Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
 - Grand Island 2-Mile Planning Area
 - City Limits
 - County Boundaries
 - Parcels

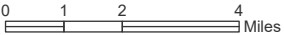
GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 6.4: EDUCATION



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25



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Chapter 7 Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreation are a tangible reflection of the quality of life in a community. They provide economic value to their neighborhoods as well as health and environmental benefits to the community overall. Parks also have social importance and often provide a focus for community and neighborhood identity.

While parks are typically a municipal facility, many city parks also serve the needs of county residents residing outside of city limits. This chapter covers city parks and recreation, trails, regional recreation, recreational organizations, and area attractions. The chapter also looks at resources and standards for parks and recreation facilities.



CITY PARKS

The City of Grand Island Parks & Recreation Department provides diverse, wholesome, and safe recreational activities and facilities that enrich the quality of life of the city.

The Department has five divisions:

- Parks Division
- Recreation Division
- Grand Island Cemetery
- Golf
- Shooting Sports

Source: www.giparks.com

PARKS DIVISION

The Parks Division maintains outdoor and recreational facilities within and around Grand Island. These facilities include 34 parks which contain 22 ball fields, 39 acres of soccer, 21 playgrounds, 16 tennis courts, 16 miles of off-street trails, and

three lakes. The Greenhouse facility also is maintained by the Parks Division. City parks contribute significantly to the built environment of Grand Island.

Mini-Parks/Detention Areas

The Parks Division of Grand Island maintains several self-described “Mini Parks” which are smaller than the typical urban neighborhood park. Some are also used as stormwater detention areas.

These parks are variable in size. There are few facilities in these parks, and some are completely open greenspace. Most of these parks are named for the intersection they are closest to and present an interesting opportunity for neighborhoods bordering them to develop a greater sense of identity through renaming parks they live nearby. This way the neighborhood will be more properly represented

through the facilities surrounding it. The names of these parks and where they are located are as follows:

- Capital and Webb Detention Area- 2425 N. Webb Road
- Church Cell—East Stolley Park & St. Joe Trail
- Custer and Tenth Detention Area- 904 N. Custer Ave
- Custer and Fifteenth Minipark - 1450 N. Custer Ave
- Custer and Eighteenth Minipark- 1716 N. Custer Ave
- Custer and Faidley Minipark- 2515 W. Faidley Ave
- Custer and George Minipark- 215 N. Custer Ave
- Custer and Forrest Detention Area- 2311 N. Custer Ave
- Husker Hwy & North Road Detention Area
- O'Neill Minipark- 1414 Hope Street (Hope & Hedde St.)
- Piper and Eighteenth Minipark- 1725 Piper Street
- White and Faidley Minipark- 2010 W. Faidley Ave
- Schuff Mini-Park, NW corner of E. Bismarck Road and S. Cherry Street.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are popular community assets which primarily serve local neighborhoods. They typically provide passive landscaped areas and small activity areas such as playgrounds and picnic tables. The optimum size is five to ten acres, although many have a more compact area.

Augustine Park

Augustine Park is located at 500 S. Blaine Street and is made up of a 2-acre field with picnic and park benches located around the vicinity of the park. Due to the sunken middle section of this



Broadwell Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

park, the Grand Island Parks division describes it as, "a great place to take the smaller kids sledding on those days when everyone needs to get some fresh air." Street parking is available at this location.

Broadwell Park

Broadwell Park is located at 2003 W. 6th Street, southwest of W. Faidley Avenue and N. Broadwell Avenue. This block-size park provides a large grass area and playground equipment. There are picnic tables across the park with portable restrooms being offered in the summer months. The park is 2.1 acres with curbside parking available.

Buechler Park

Buechler Park is located at 2500 W. Division Street, south of US 30, and offers playground equipment, tennis courts, and a small stage which is used for plays and concerts during the summer months. There are picnic areas and water available for the public. The

park's total size is 3.9 acres with curbside parking.

Capital Heights

Capital Heights, located at 4254 Vermont Ave, was previously managed as a mini-park.

Cedar Hills Park

Cedar Hills Park is located at 2909 S. North Road in a developing area of southwestern Grand Island. The park offers playground equipment, hardscaped basketball hoop, and walking trail around the perimeter of the park. There are two covered picnic shelters and other shaded tables to eat around. Portable restrooms are brought in during the summer months. This park is 6 acres and has two lots with around 30 parking spaces in total.

Grace Abbott Park

Grace Abbott Park is located at 601 W. State Street and offers playground equipment, baseball fields, tennis courts, and a wading pool for recreation. There is a larger outdoor stage here for



Eagle Scout Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

plays and concerts scheduled during the summer months. Permanent restrooms are available next to the wading pool. Picnic tables are located around the park with larger trees providing shade to eat under. In total the park is 5.4 acres with curbside parking available.

Lions Club Park

Lions Club Park is located at 511 N. Sycamore Street, offering playground equipment, a basketball court, and a hardscaped soccer court for choice of recreation. The park's total size is 2.3 acres with curbside parking.

Memorial Park

Located at 2000 3rd Street W., a block north of US 30, Memorial Park offers playground equipment for recreation. Despite the name of this park the war memorial has been removed leaving a grass field in its place. The park has playground equipment and a covered picnic area. The total

size of the park is 4.5 acres with curbside parking.

North Side Fun Park-

North Side Fun Park, located at 2405 N. Lafayette Ave., was previously managed as a mini-park.

Sothman Park

Located at 2315 Brentwood Blvd, Sothman Park has playground equipment and a tennis/basketball court. The park also has a sidewalk from the hardscaped court connecting to the St. Joe Trail which continues south to the Stuhr Museum or north to the John Brownell/ Beltline Trail. All to say, this park is very well connected to Grand Island's trail network and should be noted as such. There are picnic benches and a covered shelter for gatherings held here. In total the park is 4.4 acres and curbside parking is available.

Sterling Park

Sterling Park is a 6.8 acre park located in Sterling Estates

Subdivision in the northwest park of Grand Island. The City purchased land for the park in 2008.

School Parks

Some public school playgrounds are open to after-hours use by neighborhood residents.

Community Parks

Community parks are larger facilities which offer both competitive sports and passive recreation facilities. They are typically 20 to 40 acres in size, and usually need off-street parking as they attract people from a larger area.

Amur Plaza

Amur Plaza is located on a section of the Wheeler Avenue right-of-way, between Front and 3rd streets, dedicated in 2023, and maintained by the Railside Business Improvement District. Amur Plaza is the heart of the historic Railside District and is provided as a site for outdoor concerts, festivals, and celebrations.

Eagle Scout Park

Eagle Scout Park is located at 3050 N. Broadwell Avenue and contains playground equipment and a lake trail. This park is outside of city limits but is maintained by the Parks Division due to the number of Grand Islanders frequenting the area. Eagle Scout Lake within the park allows both gas and electric motors on boats. This lake is stocked for fishing. There are three picnic shelters and other tables to eat around in the park. Portable restrooms are brought in during the summer months to service north and south of the

lake. The park is 6 acres and has two parking lots with a total parking capacity of around 99 vehicles.

George Park

George Park is located at 2221 Independence Ave on the west side of the city, south of W. Capital Avenue. The park has playground equipment, four baseball fields, and a basketball/tennis court for recreation. This park also has a concession stand for the baseball games taking place here in the summer months. Covered picnic shelters provide residents with a place to enjoy the outdoors while still being in the shade. There are grills available to the public at this location.

The park is 32.8 acres, with a parking area which can accommodate 30+ vehicles.

Lincoln Park

Lincoln Park is located at 715 Beal Street and offers playground equipment, an open-air pool, and a wading pool. The open-air pool charges for admission and has a bath house attached, a water slide, and diving boards. This provides the community with an option in the summer months to cool off while still enjoying the sunshine. Swimming lessons are taught at the pool and are a good option for parents looking to make sure their children are taught water safety. There are permanent restrooms by both the wading pool and the open-air pool for the public to use. Concessions are also sold at the pool when it is in operation. There is one covered picnic area and several other shaded areas with picnic tables to enjoy throughout the park.



Pier Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

The park is 8.6 acres. There are three parking lots available with a capacity of about 76 vehicles.

Pier Park

Pier Park is located at 500 S. Oak Street and offers playground equipment, 2 lighted baseball fields with bleachers attached, tennis courts, a wading pool, and a skate park. Pier Park contains the only skating facility within Grand Island, a facility for the entire community. The metal skate ramps are becoming worn and need to be updated.

The park also contains Pier Lake, which offers fishing and opportunities to feed the ducks. The John Brownell/Beltline and On Street Trails run through the park connecting to the St. Joe Trail to the south and Uptown to the north. Concessions are available during the summer months by the baseball fields when league games are in play. There are 4 covered picnic areas with more tables available in shaded areas around the park. Restrooms are available seasonally, being

located next to the wading pool and baseball fields.

The area of this park is 30.9 acres. There are parking lots at the corner of E. Bismark Road and S. Oak Street, the park entrance along S. Oak Street, and the park entrance along S. Pine Street, with a combined capacity of approximately 108 vehicles.

Pioneer Park

Pioneer Park is located at 615 W. 2nd Street downtown, between the one-way pair of West 1st and 2nd streets. This "town square" style park contains a historic fountain in the middle of the park as well as plaques about local history. The fountain in the center of the park dates to 1907 with the Women's Club of Grand Island facilitating its construction. It was recently revamped to its former glory as in the mid-2010s the fountain was deteriorating and was not visually appealing. Unlike the other parks in the community distinction Pioneer Park is included for its historical



Pier Lake
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

significance and proximity to downtown.

As the closest greenspace to the downtown district, as well as the history of the fountain, make the park attractive to visitors as well as residents from all parts of the city. The park encompasses a 2.1-acre city block with curbside parking available.

Suck's Lake/ Arboretum

Suck's Lake is located at 1707 W. Oklahoma Ave. The site offers playground equipment and ice skating for recreation. It is important to note ice skating is not allowed on Suck's Lake itself, but the Parks Department floods a detention cell next to the lake for skaters in the winter months. This lake is also stocked with fish for those with fishing licenses to enjoy.

The Grand Island Arboretum is also part of this park, with the City maintaining 40 different species of trees. The trees are dispersed around the field next to the lake and provide much

needed biodiversity in these parks.

There are two covered picnic shelters and other tables to eat around. Portable restrooms are brought in during the summer months. The John Brownell/ Beltline Trail runs through the park which leads to St. Joe trail to the south and Pier Park to the north.

This park is 13.1 acres in size, and has a lot with 40+ parking spaces.

Regional Parks

A regional park is typically a much larger facility—40 acres or larger—serving the entire metropolitan area.

Ashley Park

Ashley Park is located at 220 W Capital Ave and has playground equipment, a baseball field, basketball court, and remote radio car track. This track hosts NESCAR (Nebraska Scale Auto Racers) events which are races of small,

motorized cars on a dirt loop to see who will win. There are several covered picnic areas as well as shaded tables dispersed throughout. There are permanent restrooms by the playground equipment open year-round.

The park is 19.6 acres in size. There is a large parking lot off Capital Ave and several smaller areas along the park drive, with parking capacity of approximately 88 vehicles.

L.E. Ray Park

L.E. Ray Park is located at 3405 S Blaine Street at West Husker Highway (US 34). The park is adjacent to Riverside Golf Club, one-half mile east of College Park and the Stuhr Museum facilities.

L.E. Ray Park contains L.E. Ray Lake with fishing and electric motor boating. This is an important facility for the city as it is the only public body of water within the city allowing boating in any capacity. There is a boat ramp for these needs east of the playground.

The park also offers playground equipment and disc golf for recreation. There is a covered picnic shelter and other shaded areas for people to enjoy. Permanent restrooms are in the center of the park available year-round.

In total the park is 73.4 acres and has gravel parking west of the restroom.

Ryder Park

Ryder Park is located at 202 N Custer Ave, between W. North Front Street and Old Potash Hwy, north of the US 30 viaduct. The

park offers playground equipment, 5 softball fields, a baseball field, and 4 lighted tennis courts. Recently, and an all-inclusive playground was installed. The Bob Sorenson Softball Complex is named for former a former city councilman who passed away in 2012.

This park has three covered picnic areas with many other noncovered spots around the park. Permanent restrooms are located around the park and are open year-round. Concessions are available during the summer months with one stand near the baseball field and another close to the softball fields.

The park is also the site of Tornado Hill, a 40-foot-tall mound on the west side of Ryder Park made up of debris from the tornado outbreak that struck Grand Island on June 3, 1980. On that night seven tornadoes struck the area around Grand Island with one of them being F4 intensity with two being recorded at F3. There were 200 lives lost and over \$200 million in damages. This hill stands as a reminder of those events but also to create something positive out of a tragedy. Today the hill is used for sledding in the winter months and uphill running.

Ryder Park is 45.5 acres in size. The park offers parking lots off N Custer Ave, W North Front St, and Piper St. The total parking capacity is 80+ vehicles.

Stolley Park

Stolley Park is located at 2103 W. Stolley Park Road at S. Blaine Street. The park offers playground equipment, a baseball/softball field, pickleball



Veteran's Sports Complex
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

courts, basketball courts, a wading pool, soccer fields, disc golf course, and the Stolley Park Railroad. The Stolley Railroad offers train rides along the southeast end of the park in season for a nominal fee.

Kids Kingdom is part of the playground infrastructure of the park and is an important facility for the community. This playground was designed by children in Grand Island and was built by volunteers in the early 2000s. It contains 28,000 square feet of entertainment for children. The playground contains a castle, pirate ship, slides, swings, rock wall and obstacle course.

The park is named after William Stolley a German immigrant who filed the first squatters claim in Hall County where the park is today. His house is located inside the park and serves as a reminder of how the people of Grand Island got to where they are today. There are covered picnic areas and other shaded tables for people to eat at.

There are permanent restrooms by the wading pool open year-round. Concessions are sold seasonally next to the Stolley Park Railroad.

A group of volunteers has been working with City Parks staff and the Grand Island Community Foundation on long-range plans to add play features and enhancements to the railroad, in the interior space where the old zoo was located. This long-range project will add activity space, improve safety, and revitalize this gem for all ages.

The park is 33.9 acres in size. It has several parking areas with a total parking capacity of 110+ vehicles.

Veteran's Sports Complex

The Veteran's Sports Complex is located south of Eagle Scout Park on N. Broadwell Avenue. The youth baseball/softball complex hosts 10 ball diamonds. There are also extensive soccer fields, along with concessions, restrooms, and a playground with splash pad. Phase One

construction was completed in 2010, with Phase Two completed for the 2019 season.

This park has extensive paved parking near the ball diamonds, and an accessory parking area for Eagle Scout Lake..

Future Parks

The City has acquired a parcel near Westview Middle School that may serve as a future parks and recreation site serving the growing west side of the city.

RECREATION DIVISION

The City Recreation Division provides a wide variety of leisure time activities for the citizens of Grand Island. Activities include athletic leagues, recreational activities and special events year round. People are increasingly requesting new specialized facilities, such as pickleball, or ball complexes.

Community Fieldhouse

The Grand Island Community Fieldhouse is located in the northwest corner of Fonner Park (see *following*).. The 70,000 sq ft recreational space is open during winter months for exercise, protected from the elements. The facility contains batting cages, turf fields, basketball courts, volleyball courts, pickleball courts, and a playground. There are also three meeting rooms available to rent for events of up to 60 people with kitchen facilities available. Youth and adult sports leagues for a myriad of sports are offered through this facility.

Island Oasis Water Park

Island Oasis Water Park is a city-owned and operated water park

close by Fonner Park in the southeast corner of town located at 321 E. Fonner Park Road. The water park opened in 1993, is over 6 acres, and contains many different water attractions for guests to enjoy. The park includes water basketball, 60-foot-tall slides, kids slide, 350,000-gallon wave pool, sand volleyball, lazy river, log walk, and four 150-foot-long slides.

This park is popular with families as the cost of admission is relatively low. Concessions are available by the main entrance. Lifejackets and innertubes are available to rent for both youth safety and enjoyment of the lazy river. Island Oasis also offers locker rentals if guests want their things to stay dry while they enjoy the pool. The park is open during the summer months with modified hours starting August 10th. Swimming lessons are taught at the park and are a good option for parents looking to make sure their children are taught water safety.

Public expectations of aquatics facilities progress rapidly. Attendance at Island Oasis peaked in 2002 at about 120,000 users, and the Recreation Division has identified needed and desired improvements to keep families coming back.

Sports

The Recreation Division sponsors a wide range of sports leagues, camps, and clinics for both youth and adults at the Grand Island Community Fieldhouse. Soccer, flag football, volleyball, basketball, softball, baseball, kickball,

archery, and more. The Grand Island Parks and Recreation Department teams up each February with the GI YMCA to host the Winter Rally Adult Women's and Coed Volleyball Tournament. The Winter Rally is one of Nebraska's largest adult tournaments.

Outdoor sports opportunities include the Nebraska Youth Track and Field Meet, and Adult Flag Football League.

Events

Grand Island Games is an adult team Olympic style event! The goal of this weekend event is to allow participants a chance to experience a wide variety of recreational activities, meet new people, build company pride, promote community unity, and have some good old fashion fun! Activities include sand volleyball, tug of war, obstacle courses, bowling, trivia, table tennis, and more.

Central Nebraska Youth Track & Field is a program for boy and girls ages 8 to 13. The program promotes basic running, jumping and throwing skills to the youth participants. First through forth place finishers of the Grand Island local meet automatically qualify for the State meet held in either Grand Island, Kearney, York, North Platte, or Hastings. This state meet will rotate each year.

Shooting Sports

The Heartland Public Shooting Park is located west of the city at 6788 W. Husker Hwy, rural Alda. The facility, located next to the Cornhusker State Wildlife Management Area, northwest of US 30, is owned by the Grand

Island Parks and Recreation Department and managed by local company Hornady.

The Shooting Park is the largest, most complete public shooting facility in the Midwest with many recreational and competitive activities including

- Virgil Eihusen Skeet Fields
- Sporting Clays Range
- Trap Range
- Five Stand Range
- Olympic Bunker Trap
- Rifle Ranges Up to 600 Yards
- Handgun Ranges
- Archery Range
- Retriever Training Area
- Catch and Release Fishing Lake
- Competitive and Recreational Events
- Educational Instruction and Shooting Clinics
- Eye and ear protection available on site

An Activity Center, centrally located in the park, provides a climate controlled working hub. The Activity Center includes the customer counter for registration, an a roomy, Health Department-approved caterer's kitchen.

The Shooting Park also has an RV Park with full power and water hookups. There are 8 cement pads 16'x60', and one cement pad 16' x 120'. Each pad has 20, 30, and 50-amp service. No sewer service or dump station is available.

TRAILS

The City of Grand Island and Hall County, along with the aid of private donations, have built and maintain an extensive system of hiking and biking trails across the city and nearby areas of Hall



John Brownell Trail
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

County. The City clears snow from certain trails as staffing allows. Of those responding to the Citywide Survey, over half (52%) agreed or strongly agreed The community has a quality trails system, although they were more evenly split about how adequately trails are connected.

See more information on transportation aspect of trails and multi-modal accessibility in Chapter 15 Transportation.

CITY TRAILS

On Street Trails

The On Street Trails are an 8.25-mile trail network connecting Grand Island neighborhoods by using safer streets for people walking in all parts of the city. This trail network uses a selection of sidewalks across Grand Island. To the west the trail follows Oak Street south from 17th Street with options to turn onto 6th or Charles Street. The trail then reaches Fonner Park Road where it heads west

turning south on Sylvan Street and then continues west on Stolley Park Road. Once the trail reaches Blaine Street it heads north until Blaine becomes Custer Ave with turn offs available on Charles Street and Faidley Ave (turns into 6th). The trail heads east on State Street until it becomes 17th.

Some notable destinations alongside this trail system include:

- Pier Park
- Island Oasis Water Park
- Stolley Park
- Fonner Park
- R.J. Barr Middle School
- Starr Elementary School
- Stolley Park Elementary School
- Augustine Park
- Ryder Park
- Medical Office Corridor along Custer Ave from 10th St south to Faidley Ave
- Central Catholic Middle and High School
- Walnut Middle School
- Memorial Stadium (GISH)
- Super Saver- 710 W State St
- Grace Abbot Park



Eagle Scout Park Trail
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

- American Red Cross
- Hall County Senior Services
- Wasmer Elementary
- Lions Club Park

John Brownell/Beltline Trail

The John Brownell/ Beltline Trail is 2.72 miles and runs from the old St. Joe Railroad near the intersection of South Avenue and Ada Street, east to S. Cherry Street. The trail starts heading east before crossing over Blaine Street, then turns northeast until it reaches Suck's Lake where it dips south slightly to connect to the loop around the lake. The trail continues northeast having to cross the four lane Locust Street, entering another residential area. At Pine Street the trail follows the sidewalk north before heading northeast again through Pier Park. The trail enters the park then turns directly north before officially ending at Cherry Street.

This trail connects to the East Lakes Trail to the east at Cherry Street and the St. Joe Trail on the west end of the trail. The trail takes users through a number of

different landscapes and environments, and non-variable elevation make it a favorite among those looking to bike or walk for recreation in the city.

Destinations accessible from the John Brownell/ Beltline Trail include:

- Suck's Lake
- Platt-Duetsche- 1315 W. Anna Street
- Pier Park
- Oak St Baseball Field- 401 S. Oak Street
- Gates Elementary School- 2700 W. Louise Street
- Dodge Elementary School- 641 S. Oak Street
- Calvary Tabernacle- 515 S. Oak Street
- Tacos Las Palmas- 645 S. Locust Street
- First Presbyterian Church- 2103 W. Anna Street

East Lakes Trail

The East Lakes Trail begins at the John Brownell/Beltline Trail at Cherry Street and goes east, under the BNSF railroad overpass. The trail continues by

the Law Enforcement Center and connects to the JBS plant site. Future plans will extend this trail further east.

Riverway Trail

The Riverway Trail is a 4.3-mile multiuse path leading from the edge of Hall County Park to a field where the Platte River and US-34 cross paths. This trail is concrete from Hall County Park up until it reaches S. Locust Street to the east, at which point it becomes gravel and grass. The trail is suitable for biking, running, and walking with minimal elevation change with farmland and fields to view. Once the gravel section of the trail is reached it is important to note tall grass is very common in the fields one would be biking or walking through, so plan accordingly. This trail connects directly with several other trails creating a network of destinations bikers and people walking can access. The St. Joe Trail links into the start of the Riverside Trail to the west. Along S. Locust Street to the north there is the Walmart Trail which is a half mile sidewalk leading people walking and biking to the Walmart Supercenter on US-34. This trail offers views of the Platte River and is an option for offroad biking or walking.

State Street Trail

The State Street Trail is a 0.8-mile trail running along State Street from Overland Drive to the east traveling to North Road N. before it ends. The start of the trail is in the commercial corridor lining US -281 with retailers and large parking lots shaping the environment. Moving west from US-281 single family homes and retirement homes become the

prominent landscape. Vehicle traffic is lower along this section of State Street due to this residential character. The entire trail is paved and separated from the street by grass. The commercial properties around US-281 mean the trail is well connected to useful facilities people will need and can access without a car. These developments are based around the car still with large parking lots and a large highway carrying most of the north/south traffic in the city which presents a danger to people walking when accessing these facilities on foot. The 2018 *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* offers solutions on how to make intersections around the commercial zone safer to cross. The trail connects to one path directly after a series of crosswalks on North Road, the Shoemaker Trail.

Some of the destinations available from the State Street Trail include:

- Centris Federal Credit Union- 3406 W. State Street
- Northwest Crossing Shopping Center- 2112 Lawrence Lane
- Scooters' Coffee- 3418 W. State Street
- Wendy's- 3503 W. State Street
- Taco Bell- 1911 Diers Ave
- Phillips 66- 1904 Diers Ave
- Menards- 3620 W. State Street
- Comfort Inn- 3535 W. State Street
- North Point Center- 1932 Aspen Cir
- The Heritage at Sagewood- 1920 Sagewood Ave

Shoemaker Trail

The Shoemaker Trail is a 1.9-mile trail running from the intersection of North Road and State Street

southwest to Shoemaker Elementary School. The trail heads south along North Road until it turns west backing several residential lots, crossing Mansfield Road then continuing south. The trail then follows Shanna Street to the west before crossing it directly before Independence Ave. The trail moves in a straight line south until it reaches the parking lot of Shoemaker Elementary then veers west stopping at Cherokee Ave.

The trail's environment is made up of suburban neighborhoods, open fields, schools, and churches. This trail connects many different learning facilities to residential areas with only small stretches of the trail following arterial roads. This means in addition to being a great place for recreation, this trail can provide children with the ability to walk to and from school safely, giving them more autonomy in a secure environment. The Shoemaker Trail is connected to the State Street Trail at North Road.

Destinations this trail is connected to include:

- Peace Lutheran Church- 1710 North Road
- Engleman Elementary School- 1812 Mansfield Road
- Third City Christian Church- 4100 W. 13th Street
- Westridge Middle School- 4111 W. 13th Street
- Shoemaker Elementary School- 4160 W. Old Potash Highway

St. Joe Trail

The St. Joe Trail is a 2.91-mile path leading from Hall County Park and the old St. Joseph and

Grand Island (SJ&GI) Railroad north to the railroad crossing closest to South Ave and Ada Street. This trail starts at the railroad to the north by Ada Street and follows it directly south until US-34. The trail heads west entering the Central Community College campus then heading south across US-34. The trail enters the grounds of the Stuhr Museum and hugs the western edge of the lot until it crosses the Wood River into Hall County Park. The trail continues northeast until it meets back up with the railroad where the trail ends.

This trail is entirely paved and provides great views of the Stuhr Museum and well as connectivity between the recreational facilities of Hall County Park and the neighborhoods to the north. Connection between the community college and the neighborhoods to its north via the entire trail network provides an easy way for college students who may not have the money for a car the choice to commute by bike.

Some notable destinations along the St Joe Trail include:

- Stuhr Museum- 3133 US-34
- Hall County Park- 2447 W. Schimmer Drive
- Central Community College- Grand Island- 3134 US-34
- Sothman Park
- Pedgo Electric Bikes- 3020 W. Stolley Park Road
- Grand Island Little Theatre- 3180 US-34

Eagle Scout Park Trail

A trail is being planned to connect Eagle Scout Park with the developed area of the city. The trail route would also provide a connection between the State



Hall County Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Street Trail and a planned trail along the Burlington railway to downtown. The portion along Capital Avenue West has been put in place.

REGIONAL RECREATION

HALL COUNTY PARK

George H. Clayton Hall County Park is located at 2247 W. Schimmer Drive, east of US 281 and south of the Stuhr Museum. Originally known as Schimmer's Sand Krog, the site featured an octagon-shaped ballroom—in the early years, Schimmer's was the hub of the local German community. In 1968, the property was given to Hall County and in 1981, the park was dedicated as George H. Clayton County Park.

Today the park is a forested area boasting a unique landscape for visitors and locals alike with a trail highlighting the best aspects of the park. RV campers frequent the park as an alternative to Mormon Island State Recreation

area. Hall County Park has 19 spaces for RVs. Camping season runs from mid-May through mid-October.

Hall County Park Trail

Hall County Park Trail is a one-mile trail wrapping around the exterior of Hall County Park, south of the Stuhr Museum site. Located completely within the park's confines, this paved route takes people walking and biking through a forested environment passing campsites and RV parks along the way. This type of dense tree cover is not common in Grand Island and is a facility commonly used by nature lovers around the area. Pedestrians and cyclists can access this facility from the St Joe Trail.

CRANE TRUST NATURE CENTER

The Crane Trust Nature Center is the visitors center for the Crane Trust nonprofit manages over 10,000 acres of land in Hall County. This land is extremely

important for the Sandhill Cranes habitat during their migration. The nature center is a must stop for tourists during the migratory season due to the views of the Sandhill Cranes and Whooping Cranes at their facilities. The Nature Center is located at 9325 Alda Road S., Wood River.

Source: cranetrust.org

DERR HOUSE PRAIRIE

Derr House Prairie is a native Nebraskan prairie habitat protected by The Nature Conservancy, a nonprofit protecting important natural sites across the globe. In Hall County, this accounts for 4,609 acres of owned land with easements on 2,866 more acres. This area is significant not only for its restored prairie but also as it is a hotspot for Sandhill Crane activity. This facility is located at 13650 S. Platte River Drive, Wood River.

Source: www.nature.org/en-us/

CHEYENNE STATE RECREATIONAL AREA

Cheyenne State Recreation Area, operated by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, is located on Nebraska Highway 11 just South of Wood River. This small site has a 15-acre pond and offers fishing, boating, camping, and picnicking. There are no designated campsites, though tent campers are welcome.

Source: outdoornebraska.gov/location/cheyenne

MORMON ISLAND STATE RECREATION AREA

Mormon Island State Recreation Area, operated by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, is located just north of Exit 312 off of I-80. In 1847, Brigham Young and the first pioneer company of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints crossed eastern Nebraska on their way west. This park is named in memory of their journey, and those who followed on the pioneer trails.

Many travelers stay at this recreation area due to its proximity to the interstate and bountiful amenities. During Sandhill Crane season this park becomes a destination as this is the easternmost spot at which the cranes stop. Multiple lakes are part of the park offering swimming, fishing, and boating to visitors.

In early 2023, the Nebraska Department of Transportation transferred 145 acres to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to be included as an addition to Mormon Island State Recreation Area.

Source: outdoornebraska.gov/location/mormon-island

Mormon Island Trail

A trail is in planning stage to connect Mormon Island State Recreation Area with the city of Grand Island along S. Locust Street.



Mormon Island State Recreation Area
Source: Nebraska Game and Parks

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

There are several Wildlife Management Areas in Hall County, including:

- Cattail WMA
- Cornhusker Farm WMA
- Loch Linda WMA
- Martin WMA
- Wood River West WMA

GOLF COURSES

There are four golf courses in Grand Island, each with distinct character accommodating all types of golfers. These courses are all open during the summer months but are weather dependent in the winter months.

Fonner View

Fonner View is a 9-hole public golf course located at 2224 S. Stuhr Road allowing golfers of all skill levels an enjoyable course. There are many trees surrounding the green with several elevation changes

making the scenery very pleasant. Their highlight hole is the 5th which features a creek to the left and dark green trees along the raised green.

Source: www.jackrabbitgolf.com

Riverside

Riverside is an 18-hole private golf course located at 2820 Riverside Drive, priding itself on their private amenities and prestigious course. The golf course is said to challenge both amateur and professional players and hosts the Tom Dinsdale Automotive Amateur Golf Classic in mid-June each year. There is a golf-oriented store near the course selling equipment to the club's members. Riverside also has a clubhouse, dining options, practice facility, and pool within its confines.

Jackrabbit Run

Jackrabbit Run is a public 18-hole golf course located at 2800 N. Shady Bend Road professionally run and accessible for golfers of any skill. The course offers long

holes with well-groomed fairways and great scenery. This course repurposed a landfill so there is unique elevation throughout the course to challenge golfers. The course puts on the Mayor's Cup Amateur Tournament every year in late July and prides itself on the quality events it hosts. Driving range, golf lessons, and dining options are available at Jackrabbit Run.

Indianhead

Indianhead is a public 18-hole course located at 4100 W. Husker Highway with 180 acres of challenging yet scenic golf to enjoy. The course has younger trees and average sized greens to complement each other. The signature hole here is their 14th, which requires a tee shot onto an island surrounded by a lake. Equipment rentals, golf shop, driving range, and bar & grill are available at Indianhead as well.

ORGANIZATIONS

There are many different community-minded organizations in Grand Island that are dedicated to improving the recreational quality of life of citizens.

LIEDERKRANZ GERMAN SOCIETY

The Liederkrantz Klub was founded in 1870, organized to promote singing, music, drama, art, and literature. The German name means "Song Wreath" or "Circle of Song". This society supports the Liederkrantz Hall in downtown Grand Island and in tandem a celebration of German culture and heritage. One does not have to be

German in descent to join the club, but the German food and cultural experiences offered here are unique.. Membership supports events at the venue and building maintenance for one of Grand Islands most historic buildings. See also *Chapter Six Community Facilities*.

Source: gilliederkrantz.org

BOY SCOUTS

Grand Island has hosted the regional headquarters for the Boy Scouts Overland Trails Council, which was the council for central Nebraska. This council served 44 counties covering 42,132 square miles of Nebraska's land area. Local Troop 119 in Grand Island, for example, volunteer in the community while working to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout. Some of their most recent good deeds include planting American flags at Soldiers and Sailors Cemetery for Memorial Day, and constructing a gaga ball pit for an elementary school. The Council merged with Mid-America Council in August 2024.

Source: mac-bsa.org

Camp Augustine

Before 2023, Camp Augustine was the Overland Trails Council main outdoor education center. In June 2023, the City of Grand Island agreed to purchase the land from the Boy Scouts as a means of preserving the land while making it available to the public.

The City plans to connect this piece of land to Mormon Island Recreation area, creating a

recreation network to the south of Grand Island benefiting residents and visitors alike.

GIRL SCOUTS

There are several girl scout troops in the Grand Island area helping to develop the character and confidence of their youth through service and learning. The Girl Scout experience is self-described from their website as, "A collection of activities and experiences you'll have as you earn badges, sell cookies, go on exciting trips, explore the outdoors, create Take Action projects that make a difference and more."

Camp Cosmo

The Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska, the local council, maintains a camp site near Grand Island named Camp Cosmo, which scouts from around the state camp at. This property borders the Platte River and is noted for having great viewing of the Sandhill Cranes during their season. Non-Girl Scouts can also rent this camp and may be an option for a unique crane viewing experience while supporting this organization.

Source: www.girlscoutsnebraska.org

STUHR MUSEUM FOUNDATION

The Stuhr Museum Foundations mission is to continue the programs and experience of the Stuhr Museum through fundraising, special projects, and endowment funds. Through their backing of the museum, the Foundation is able to stay at the forefront of the arts, history, and education in Grand Island. The

foundation holds a donation drive each year and offers donation plans either monthly, quarterly, or annually for the public to contribute. The group offers scholarships for a plurality of causes including class field trips, summer camp classes, and college scholarships for former museum volunteers. The Stuhr Museum Foundations support of history and preservation inside the museum has a positive outcome on the quality of life of the community at large.

GREATER GRAND ISLAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Greater Grand Island Community Foundation is a nonprofit serving the entire Grand Island area by gathering funding then distributing it to whichever cause people want. Having a unifying organization streamlines the charity process is a great thing for contributors and nonprofits as it takes less searching for individuals to have their money make an impact. There are multiple different ways to give with donors having the option to set up their own combination of charities or select one of the premade groupings by the foundation. These funds are separated by unmet community need, arts/culture/health/education, leadership, and grant creation. This foundation can also contribute to groups outside of the Grand Island area if a donor chooses and seeks to manage donations, so they are dispersed effectively to maximize their impact. The foundation also offers scholarships to incoming



Fonner park
Source: Nebraska State Fair

college students to support them financially.

Source: www.gicf.org

AREA ATTRACTIONS

As the fourth largest city in Nebraska, Grand Island offers many attractions and draws to its borders. Its proximity to I-80 and centralized location in the state mean visitors frequent the city from many different areas.

FONNER PARK

Located east of S. Locust Road and north of Stolley Park Road, Fonner Park is an entertainment hot spot for central Nebraska. The facility is open year-round hosting a myriad of shows and events, most notably the Nebraska State Fair. This event takes place from late August to early September with 2022's event welcoming over 287,000 people to Fonner Park. The park's main use though is horse racing with a season from February to May bringing along recreational shows, family activities, giveaways, and special races. Many from around the Midwest come to see races here in the springtime to bet on

who they think the victor will be. This facility is one of the largest horse racing operations in Nebraska and can maintain this status due to the expansive campus which hosts events funding the horses.

In addition to betting on the race, Keno is offered inside the Grandstand which is located near the center of Fonner Park. Shared with the Keno lounge is Finish Line Restaurant offering a full menu and bar is open from 11am to 1am each day for dining needs all year. The Grandstand is the main building hosting spectators for the horse races and is completely indoors with an excellent view of the park. For greater exclusivity or group events the Grandstand offers suites accommodating up to 20 people with pristine views overlooking the track. There is also outdoor seating available at various picnic tables and benches.

To the west of the Grandstand inside Fonner Park Five Points Bank Arena was built for the Nebraska State Fair but is now used for several different purposes. This building hosts livestock shows and continues to be an integral building for the state fairs

Figure 7.1: Raising Nebraska Outdoors



Source: Raising Nebraska.net

operations when it is in town. The building can seat 2,200 and is equipped with a 34 by 12-foot video screen to handle most livestock events. This area has a dirt floor which means its purpose for showing off livestock is very linear, but due to Grand Island's western identity and Fonner Park's numerous other venues this is not an issue for the structure. Attached to this facility are a cattle barn and sheep barn holding livestock before an event inside the area.

The Tom Dinsdale Automotive Cattle Barn is attached to Five Points Bank Arena's south side and has rock bottom tie stalls for up to 1,350 head of cattle. Wash racks are offered inside the cattle barn as well as a milking parlor for the showman's convenience. The Sheep Barn is attached to Five Points Bank Arena's north side and has stalls for 1,600+ small animals which can host more types of animals besides sheep. During the Nebraska State Fair specifically, this facility holds draft horses, sheep, goats, poultry, and

rabbits. The barn has wash racks, ventilation, and a 2,000+ sq ft birthing pavilion for those who have animals' satisfaction. Since these barns are connected to the arena the animals do not have to be moved outside and can stay enclosed their entire stay, which is a huge benefit over similar performance venues.

The Aurora Cooperative Pavilion & Barn, located to the south of the Tom Dinsdale Automotive Cattle Barn, is another facility on the campus used for a multitude of different events. Its main use is during the state fair showing off swine and alpaca to the public. During non-state fair months, the venue is said by the Grand Island Livestock Complex Authority to host wedding receptions, fundraisers, cattle sales, large implement training, liquidation sales, teen dances, and craft shows. The facility has 750 pens which can host upwards of 1,500+ animals with wash racks also available.

The US Foods Outdoor Arena and Thompson Foods Horse Arena are located on the east side the grounds and hosts the Fonner Park 4-H show which is the state level horse competition. 4-H is the most notable event at the venues, but the state fair and other regular events also take place here. Thompson Foods Horse Area includes horse barns for 1,200 horses and a dirt floor for them to exhibit upon. The seating inside the venue consists of 1,200 permanent bleachers. US Foods Outdoor Arena shares the same barns with the indoor area but also includes holding pens, bucking, and roping chutes, as well as a livestock shade structure.

Heartland Events Center

The Heartland Events Center is in the middle of Fonner Park and is Grand Island's main venue for concerts, conferences, banquets, and entertainment. The center opened in 2006 and contains 180,000 sq ft of multipurpose space. The facilities within the event center provide unique services to the public.

Eihusen Area

The Eihusen Area is a 30,000 square foot arena seating 6,000 people with potential to expand to 7,500 if the floor is used. The venue has suites above the normal seats for small group events. The venue can be configured for different types of events. Examples listed on the Heartland Events Center's website include concerts, indoor football, volleyball, and graduation. There is a four-sided scoreboard at the top of the venue as well

as four screens in the corner so everyone can see the scores. There are five different concession stands inside the arena where event goers can obtain food. For sporting events there are four team locker rooms and two coach locker rooms inside the facility.

Grand Island Casino Resort

The newest addition to the Fonner Park campus, Grand Island Casino Resort is currently located within the event center. This is a temporary measure as soon this casino will be getting its own building directly next to the Grandstand with a walkway being built to connect the properties. The current facility contains 300 slot machines and electronic table games. Live table games are not offered at this facility at the time of writing. The completed hotel and casino is expected to be open by 2025.

Pinnacle Bank Expo Center

Pinnacle Bank Expo Center is located to the west of the Heartland Events Center and north of the Five Points Bank Arena and is an exhibition venue built for conventions and banquets. The center has 100,000 square feet of space for a variety of different needs. Common yearly events at the center according to Grand Island Livestock Complex Authority include Home and Builders Show, Tri City Street Rods, AKC Dog Show, Nebraska Muzzleloading Gun Show, Nebraska State Fair School, and the Aurora Cooperative Annual Meeting. The open floor plan makes this space incredibly versatile, hence the diversity of events held here. Chairs and tables, and in-house

catering, are available for conferences or conventions.

Nebraska Building

The Nebraska Building was constructed in 2013 to the south of the Fieldhouse and holds the exhibits of Raising Nebraska as well as the second floor containing the offices for the Nebraska State Fair. Having the offices of the state fair at the location where the event is located is a major benefactor for staff. If they need to check the specifics on a venue or details about the land, it is at their doorstep.

Raising Nebraska

Raising Nebraska is a space for young children and families to learn about agriculture in Nebraska with many different exhibits. The total space is 25,000 square feet and includes exhibits on agriculture, geography, and ecology. This learning experience is great for children as it allows hands on learning to take place using real

world examples. For example, kids can climb inside the cab of a combine to learn about the harvesting of crops while feeling like they are driving farm equipment. There is also an exhibit to emulate what a cow feels when it is being milked. This is paired with an informative video of the logistics of milk production which is an integral part of most Nebraskans' diet. Parents taking their children for the interactive aspects of this attraction can learn new things as well as there are displays on innovations in corn and soybean usage, livestock production, and UNL history. There is also an outside portion to the attraction which represents Nebraska with the sidewalks being the state's major rivers. This area has kiosks around it about various agricultural topics educating the public about gardening, conservation, and biofuels.

A new initiative is underway, currently called The Elevator, to construct a space within the



Husker Harvest Days
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Raising Nebraska space. This 1,400 square foot facility will be designed to be flexible to accommodate a range of uses, from seminars to hands-on activities and meetings. The improvements will be privately funded.

Source: raisingnebraska.net

HUSKER HARVEST DAYS

Husker Harvest Days is a farm show that showcases irrigation and agriculture in the western Corn Belt. It is held annually, on the old Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant site west of Grand Island. Husker Harvest Days has a provided world-class space where farmers and ranchers gain priceless insights for their operations while networking with industry leaders from around the globe. The event is known as the world's largest irrigated working farm show.

Source: www.huskerharvestdays.com

BOSSELMAN CONFERENCE CENTER

Located at 1607 S. Locust Street the Bosselman Conference Center is specifically designed for business and professional settings and can be configured either as one large room or five smaller rooms. In total this space is 8,000 square feet with state-of-the-art video and audio equipment for any event. The center has a capacity of 450 people with all the rooms combined with smaller rooms being able to only fit 70 people. Event runners can provide participants with catering from the facility.



Source: National Parks and Recreation Association,

RESOURCES

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The *Grand Island Parks and Recreation Master Plan* was completed in 1996. The National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA) notes that local parks agencies are having to take on more than traditional parks facilities, and incorporate public health, wildfire, social equity, and economic development concerns.

The Parks & Recreation Department has completed an aquatics plan for swimming facilities, a walkability plan, and a cemetery plan. The City initiated an update to the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* concurrently with this Comprehensive Plan (2024). More specific goals, policies, and action items, will be brought forward as a result of that planning process.

PARKS AND RECREATION STANDARDS

There are several different metrics for the recommended area of parks and recreation facilities that a city should provide to residents (Table 7.1). There is not one "standard" that could possibly encompass the uniqueness in every community. For example, as the community ages, there will be more demand for senior-oriented recreation activities. However, benchmarks provide a measure to evaluate how well a community is serving the public.

The National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA) performance metrics have found a median of 10.8 acres of parks and recreation area per 1,000 residents (2023). The median grows to 11.2-11.3 for communities between 20,000 and 100,000 population. Jurisdictions of 20,000 to 50,000 have an average of 8 miles of trails, while those from 50,000 to 100,000 have an average of 19 miles of trails.

Nebraska Game and Parks has used a standard of 14 to 25 acres per 1,000 residents, while the Small Community Park & Recreation Standards suggest at

Table 7.1: Recreation Standards

	Standard	Acreage Needed
NPRA	11 ac/1,000 residents	578
NGPC	14-25 ac/1,000	735-1,312
SCPRS	14 ac/1,000	735

Source: National Parks and Recreation Association, Nebraska Game and Parks, Small Community Park & Recreation Standards

Table 7.2: NRPA Park Standards

Type of Park	Optimum Size	Service Area	Uses
Mini Parks	.2 to 1 acre	Residential neighborhoods within ¼ mile radius	A walk-to facility providing play and passive recreation for the immediate vicinity: • Playground equipment • Picnic tables and shelters • Open turf • Natural areas
Neighborhood Parks	5 to 10 acres	Residential areas within ½ mile radius	A walk-to facility with amenities which are predominately neighborhood-oriented (not competitive sports): • Play areas • Tennis courts • Basketball courts • Open field for casual and multi-use play
Community Parks	20 to 40 acres	½ mile to 3 miles	A drive-to facility serving multiple neighborhoods and includes both competitive sports and passive recreation facilities which are typically not provided in neighborhood parks: • Active sports facilities grouped for efficiency where possible (three to four tennis courts, two or three basketball courts, etc.) • Lighted sports fields with bleachers • Small passive areas for neighborhood park functions • Community center for indoor recreation including kitchen, meeting rooms and large open exercise area • Natural area with trail
District / Regional Parks	40 to 150 acres	5 mile radius	A city-wide drive-to resource primarily for nature-oriented activities and/or major sports facilities: • Large children's playground (with theme) • Lighted active sports facilities (tennis, baseball, soccer, etc.) grouped in complexes for efficiency • Significant dedicated natural areas with trails and passive park uses • Community center
Natural Resource Area	based on resource	Entire community	Lands set aside to preserve unique natural resources: • Remnant landscapes • Open space • Visual/aesthetics buffering
Greenway (trails and linear parks)	25 ft. width minimum; 200 ft. or more optimal	Based on resource availability and opportunities	Ties park system components together to form a continuous park environment
School – Park	10 to 15 acres minimum	Based on school district's school distribution policies	Combines parks with school spaces
Sports Complex	40 acres or more	Entire community	Consolidates heavily-programmed athletic fields to larger and fewer sites
Special Use	Variable	Variable	Covers a broad range of park and recreation facilities oriented toward a single-purpose use

Source: National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA)

least 14 acres of park and recreation area be provided for residents (Table 7.1).

Table 7.2 presents NRPA Park Standards for size, service area, and use by type of facility. These range from the neighborhood and community parks to special use facilities described earlier in this section.

PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS AND POLICIES

PARKS GOAL 7.1

Residents have access to parks and recreation facilities close to home.

Policies

- 7.1.1 Development projects are encouraged to provide parks and recreation amenities.

Actions

- 7.1.2 Plan for long-term capital needs for parks and recreation.
- 7.1.3 Continue to maintain and make incremental improvements at parks.
- 7.1.4 Incorporate accessible playground and recreation equipment meeting ADA standards into all park improvement plans.
- 7.1.5 Integrate Camp Augustine with Mormon Island State Recreation Area.
- 7.1.6 Promote multiple uses for drainage to create greenscapes.



Dog park at L.E. Ray Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

PARKS GOAL 7.2

Grand Island has a multiple-use network of sidewalks and trails suitable for users of all ages.

Actions

- 7.2.1 Extend sidewalks and trails to connect public facilities, schools, and parks.
- 7.2.2 Ensure sidewalks and trails meet all ADA requirements.

PARKS GOAL 7.3

Fonner Park remains a state-wide attraction and resource for the people of Nebraska.

Actions

- 7.3.1 Continue support for State investment in and maintenance of Fonner Park.



Parks and Recreation Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
7.1.1	Development projects are encouraged to provide parks and recreation amenities.	1,8,9	5						
7.1.2	Plan for long-term capital needs for parks and recreation.	1	1,4,5	X					
7.1.3	Continue to maintain and make incremental improvements at parks.	1,12	1						
7.1.4	Incorporate accessible playground and recreation equipment meeting ADA standards into all park improvement plans.	1,12,13	1						
7.1.5	Integrate Camp Augustine with Mormon Island State Recreation Area.	1,12	1,4,5	X					
7.1.6	Promote multiple uses for drainage to create greenscapes.	1	1,4						
7.2.1	Extend sidewalks and trails to connect public facilities, schools, and parks	1,8,9,11	1,4,5	X					
7.2.2	Ensure sidewalks and trails meet all ADA requirements.	1,8,9	1,5	X					
7.3.1	Continue support for State investment in and maintenance of Fonner Park.	1	1,3,4						

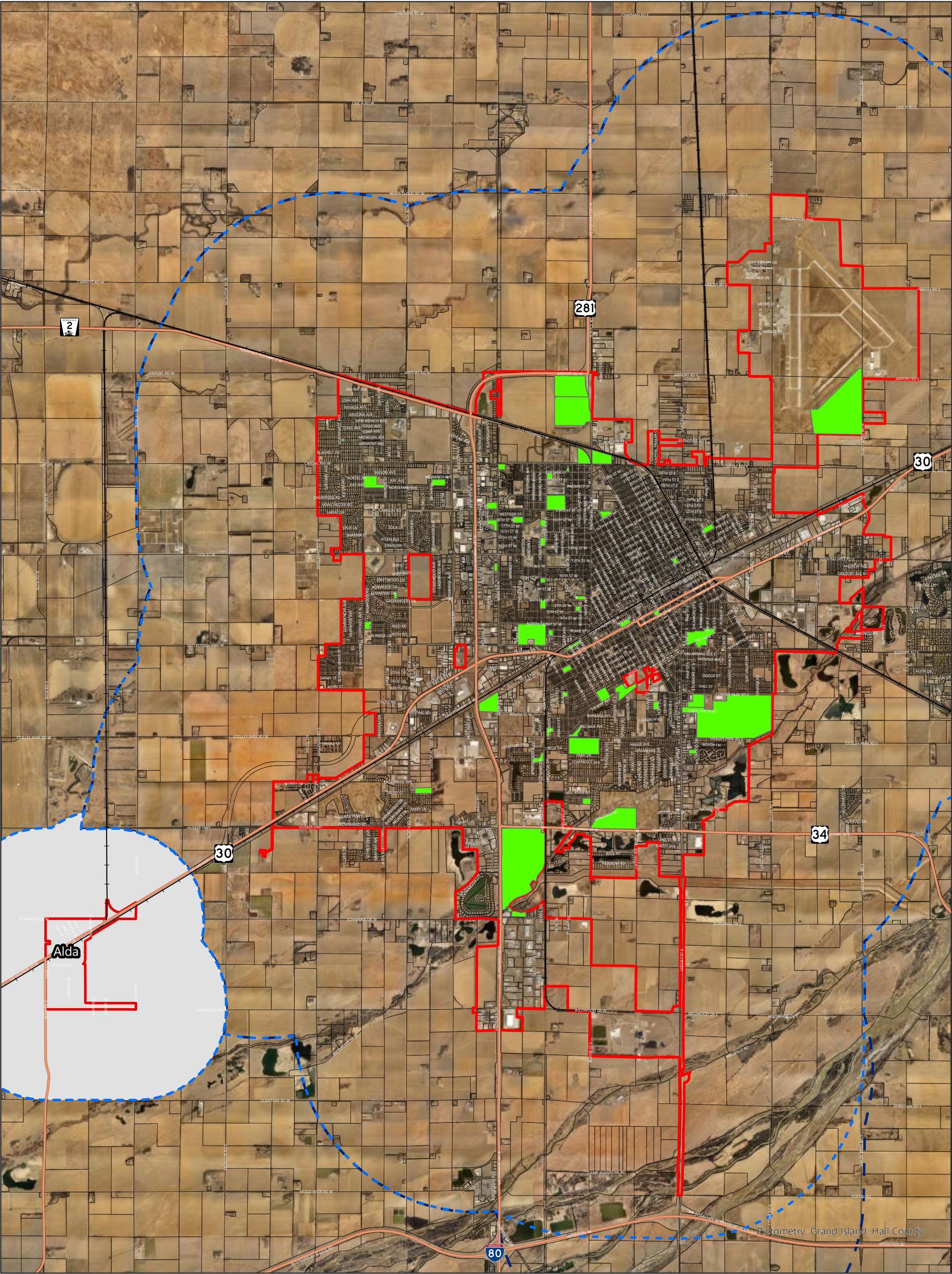
Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax



LEGEND

- Highways
- Railroads
- Grand Island Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Alda Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Grand Island 2-Mile Planning Area
- City Limits
- County Boundaries
- Parcels
- Park
- Cemetery

GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 7.2: PARKS AND RECREATION,



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25

0 0.42 0.85 1.7 Miles

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Chapter 8 Public Safety

Public safety is a core responsibility of government. Public safety relates to first responders' ability to prepare for and respond to incidents, but also to how elements of urban design give people a sense of safety essential to a high quality of life. Members of the Regional Planning Commission rated all areas of public safety of high importance for this plan.

This chapter provides a summary of law enforcement, fire department, emergency medical services, and emergency management, provided to the citizens of Grand Island, as well as resources for public safety.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Grand Island Police Department and Hall County Sheriff's Department both provide law enforcement services in the city.

GRAND ISLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Grand Island Police Department is located at 111 Public Safety Drive off of US 30, sharing a building with the Hall County Sheriff's Office. The department manages three divisions, the Patrol Division, the Criminal Division, and the Administrative Division.

Patrol Division

The Patrol Division is responsible for uniform patrol duties in the City. The City is divided into North and South geographical teams with sergeants and officers assigned to each area covering all hours of the day. Team officers use marked patrol cars, unmarked cars, bicycles, and foot patrol to perform their duties. The Patrol Division officers have the most daily contact with people in the city and respond to most crimes, citizen

calls for services and accidents. The Patrol Division has a team of Special Operations Sergeants who are responsible for the development and implementation of strategies to address crime and traffic problems in the city. The Special Operations Sergeants have the resources of the Crime Prevention Unit, the Housing Authority Officer, and the Code Enforcement Unit in addition to the patrol teams to implement strategies and attack problems.

Criminal Investigation Division (CID)

The Criminal Investigation Division, known as CID, consists of several components, some of which work in offsite locations.

As of 2023, the division had two Sergeants,



11 Investigators, two Civilian Evidence Technicians. The Division is responsible for the investigation of major crimes and follow ups that require extensive or specialized work. Contained within the Division are the General Investigations Unit, Officers and Supervisors of the Tri-Cities Drug Enforcement Team, Child Abuse Investigators, Evidence Section, Pawn and 2nd Hand Goods Investigations, and Crime Stoppers. CID also serves as the contact point and liaison with outside agencies.

Administrative Division

The Administrative Division is responsible for the administration and support of police functions; or those things that keep the Police Department running behind the officers. Budget preparation and management and grants are part of the administrative duties. The Records Unit and Service Desk are in the Division and are necessary to process all the paperwork that keeps the police side of the criminal justice process moving. The Training Unit and Personnel Supervisor are charged with training, hiring,

Table 8.1: Sworn Officers, 2020-2022

Agency	2020		2021		2022	
	Sworn Officers	Per 1,000	Sworn Officers	Per 1,000	Sworn Officers	Per 1,000
Grand Island PD	84	1.6	79	1.5	75	1.4
Hall Co. Sheriff	29	2.9	30	3.0	33	3.1
Hastings PD	39	1.6	38	1.5	31	1.3
Adams Co. Sheriff	18	2.7	18	2.7	16	2.4
Kearney PD	57	1.7	58	1.7	62	1.3
Buffalo Co. Sheriff	28	1.9	28	1.9	34	2.2
Howard Co. Sheriff	5	1.2	6	1.5	11	1.7
State Average		2.0		3.6		3.6

Source: Nebraska Crime Commission, Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

retention, and recruiting in this division. Victim / Witness services, and Custodial and Building Maintenance are part of the Division. Fleet services and equipment are the responsibility of this division as well as the supervision of the Community Service Officers.

Source: www.gipolice.org

Trends in Community Policing

The Grand Island Police Department is working toward continual improvements. Short-term priorities have included

staffing and communications. For example, a crime map and public portal is available online, and emerging technology should make it easier to improve the user interface and add hot-spot mapping.

Over the long-term, the department is shifting towards community-oriented policing, and long-term case management as staffing levels allow. An example would be additional parks and bike patrols and BID patrols, which would allow officers to get out of their vehicles and relate more one-on-one with residents. There are also identified needs in animal control and nuisance abatement. The existing staffing study is outdated and should be updated. While the city is growing to the west, the department should likely be able to provide police coverage from the current facilities for the foreseeable future.

HALL COUNTY SHERIFF

The Hall County Sheriff's Department is located at 111 Public Safety Drive in Grand Island, co-located with the Grand Island Police Department.



Hall County Corrections Facility
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



Grand Island Fire Station #1
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Grand Island Fire Department (GIFD) is staffed by over 70 professional fire fighters dedicated to making the community safe for residents and visitors. The department has four fire stations, one in each quadrant of the city. GIFD provides fire, emergency medical, hazardous materials, ARFF, technical rescue, and other emergency and nonemergency services to Grand Island and through mutual aid to surrounding areas of Hall County. GIFD's area of service is bound by the municipality; however, the department also provides service to city facilities outside the city limits.

In 2022, GIFD responded to 1,672 fire calls for service, a 17.5% year-on-year increase. Average travel time as 3:51. The department has five fire engines, two ladder trucks, seven staff/light vehicles, three support vehicles, and a rescue boat.

GIFD also provides public education, fire prevention, and preparedness services. GIFD was the first department in Nebraska to be rated Class 1 by Insurance Services Office (ISO). Out of approximately 46,000 departments evaluated in the United States, only 241 achieved this prestigious rating. This puts the GIFD in the top 1 percent nationally in terms of providing effective fire protection for the community.

The GIFD Administration is moving from City Hall to Fire Station #1, while the Fire Prevention Division remains co-located with the City Building Inspection Department.

The Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement for Hall County and the city of Grand Island. The department is headed by the Sheriff with three captains administering both the support and patrol staff which consist of five sergeants, 22 deputies, 10 office employees, and two civilian office employees. The goal of the organization is to maintain a safe environment in Grand Island through service to the people by enforcement of law fairly and efficiently.

Hall County Corrections

Hall County Department of Corrections manages a facility at 110 Public Safety Drive which acts as the county jail for Hall County. The jail is committed to providing protection to the public through detention of those who break the law in a humane setting securely. The corrections department strives to be recognized as a progressive agency, operating a facility which respects the rights of inmates, laws, and courts. As of

July 2023, the facility housed 247 inmates with a capacity of 321. The jail receives offenders from Grand Island and from other municipalities in the county.

NEBRASKA LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CENTER

The Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center (NLEC)—Nebraska's police academy—is dedicated to educate, train, and evaluate law enforcement officers; as well as regulate statewide training academies and mandated programs, to ensure all meet state certification requirements as established by the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice through the Police Standards Advisory Council. The Training Center facility is located at 3600 North Academy Rd, near the airport.

Source: ncc.nebraska.gov/nletc

GIFD's Fire Stations are located:

1. 409 E. Fonner Park Road, built in 2007
2. 1720 N. Broadwell Ave., built in 1957
3. 2310 S. Webb Road, built in 1987
4. 1130 N. North Road, built in 2020

A training facility is also located at Fire Station #1, next to Fonner Park. In 2022, department staff logged almost 5,200 hours of fire training time.

It is anticipated with future growth of the city to the south and west that a fifth fire station will be necessary between the current city limits and I-80. In early 2024, a project was announced to take down and rebuilt Fire Station No. 3, at a cost of approximately \$4.5 million. Plans are to add an ambulance crew at that location.

Source: www.grand-island.com/departments/fire-department

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Grand Island Fire Department Emergency Medical Service (EMS) responds to requests encompassing an area of approximately 670 square miles. This area includes the City of Grand Island, the majority of Hall County and western areas of Merrick County.

Two staffed Advanced Life Support ambulances respond to approximately 5,000 calls annually. Each ambulance is staffed with a Firefighter/EMT and a Firefighter/Paramedic. The Grand Island Fire Department requires all employees to

maintain a National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician certification and all Paramedics to be cross trained as Firefighters.

In 2022, GIFD responded to 5,996 EMS calls for service, a 13.8% year-on-year increase, and 4,782 patients transported. There were 2,400 occurrences of two ambulances called out on simultaneous calls. The department has seven ambulances, including the two frontline units and five backup/reserve units.

Source: www.grand-island.com/departments/fire-department/emergency-medical-services



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Emergency management involves the coordination and integration of activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capabilities to prepare for, respond to, recover from, or mitigate against threatened or actual disasters or emergencies, regardless of cause. This includes man-made and natural disasters.

Emergency management is integrated at the local, state, and federal levels. All disasters start at the local level. When a local disaster declaration is made because local resources have been overwhelmed, a request may be made for assistance from the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). When state

resources become overwhelmed, a state disaster may be declared and the governor can request assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Emergency response operates within the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command Systems (ICS).

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Hall County/City of Grand Island Emergency Management and Communications Department covers both the county and the county seat, through an interlocal agreement. The City provides primary IT support which is essential for smooth operations. The Department has two divisions.

911 Communications Division

The 911 Communications Division receives and dispatches emergency calls for 20 area public-safety and public-service agencies and departments. The division also administers the city-county voice communication systems. Emergency communications are still on analog systems, although most responder radios are multi-band capable.

Emergency Management Division

The Emergency Management Division administers the emergency preparedness program for all of Hall County. This includes the local emergency operations plan,



public warning system, emergency public information and resources. The Emergency Management Division also coordinates the emergency response of all County public safety agencies with State and Federal agencies as needed.

Both divisions operate from the new City/County Emergency Operating Center (EOC) at 1210 N. North Road, located next to Fire Station #4. The EOC is maintained in a state of readiness at all times to respond to emergencies and disasters.

Community volunteers are essential for preparedness and response. The department supports the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) with the Hall County Citizen Corps Council. The CERT team has been active, for example, during flood events. The department also offers NIMS training locally.

Source: www.grand-island.com/departments/emergency-management

For more information on the mitigation element of emergency management, see Chapter 11 Hazard Mitigation.

RESOURCES

CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) are tools of a comprehensive crime prevention strategy. CPTED is a multi-disciplinary approach of crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the management of built and natural environments. CPTED strategies aim to reduce victimization, deter offender decisions that precede criminal acts, and build a sense of community among inhabitants so they can gain territorial control of areas, reduce crime, and minimize fear of crime.

Because CPTED emphasizes the systematic analysis of crime in a particular location, it directly supports community policing by providing crime prevention strategies tailored to solve specific problems. Police involvement within neighborhoods can include both foot patrol and working with community groups to strengthen citizens' sense of security and solve neighborhood problems that contribute to crime and fear of crime. Residents can work together to improve neighborhood appearance and deter criminals, and government can use building codes and inspection power to increase environmental security and discourage criminal activities.

Source: www.cpted.net

PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS AND POLICIES

SAFETY GOAL 8.1

Law Enforcement services are provided to the community.

Policies

- 8.1.1 Development projects shall mitigate impacts on public safety.

Actions

- 8.1.2 Continue to support and maintain a quality Police Department.
- 8.1.3 Continue close working relationship and cooperation for law enforcement between the City of Grand Island and Hall County.
- 8.1.4 Continue to regulate and mitigate nuisance and code enforcement cases.

SAFETY GOAL 8.2

Fire Protection services are provided to the community.

Actions

- 8.2.1 Continue to support and maintain a quality Fire Department.
- 8.2.2 Continue close working relationships between all local fire departments.

SAFETY GOAL 8.3

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are provided to the community.

Actions

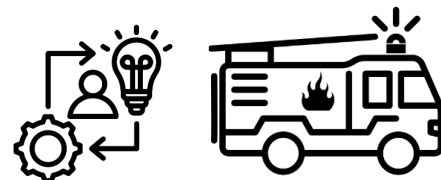
- 8.3.1 Continue support for Emergency Medical Services.

SAFETY GOAL 8.4

Emergency Management services are provided to the community.

Actions

- 8.4.1 Continue to participate in emergency management programs and exercises.



Public Safety Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
8.1.1	Development projects shall mitigate impacts on public safety.	1,8,9	1,5						
8.1.2	Continue to support and maintain a quality Police Department.	1	1						
8.1.3	Continue close working relationship and cooperation for law enforcement between the City of Grand Island and Hall County.	1,2	1						
8.1.4	Continue to regulate and mitigate nuisance and code enforcement cases.	1	1						
8.2.1	Continue to support and maintain a quality Fire Department.	1	1						
8.2.2	Continue close working relationships between all local fire departments.	1,2,12	1						
8.3.1	Continue support for Emergency Medical Services.	1,2	1						
8.4.1	Continue to participate in emergency management programs and exercises.	1,2	1,4						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

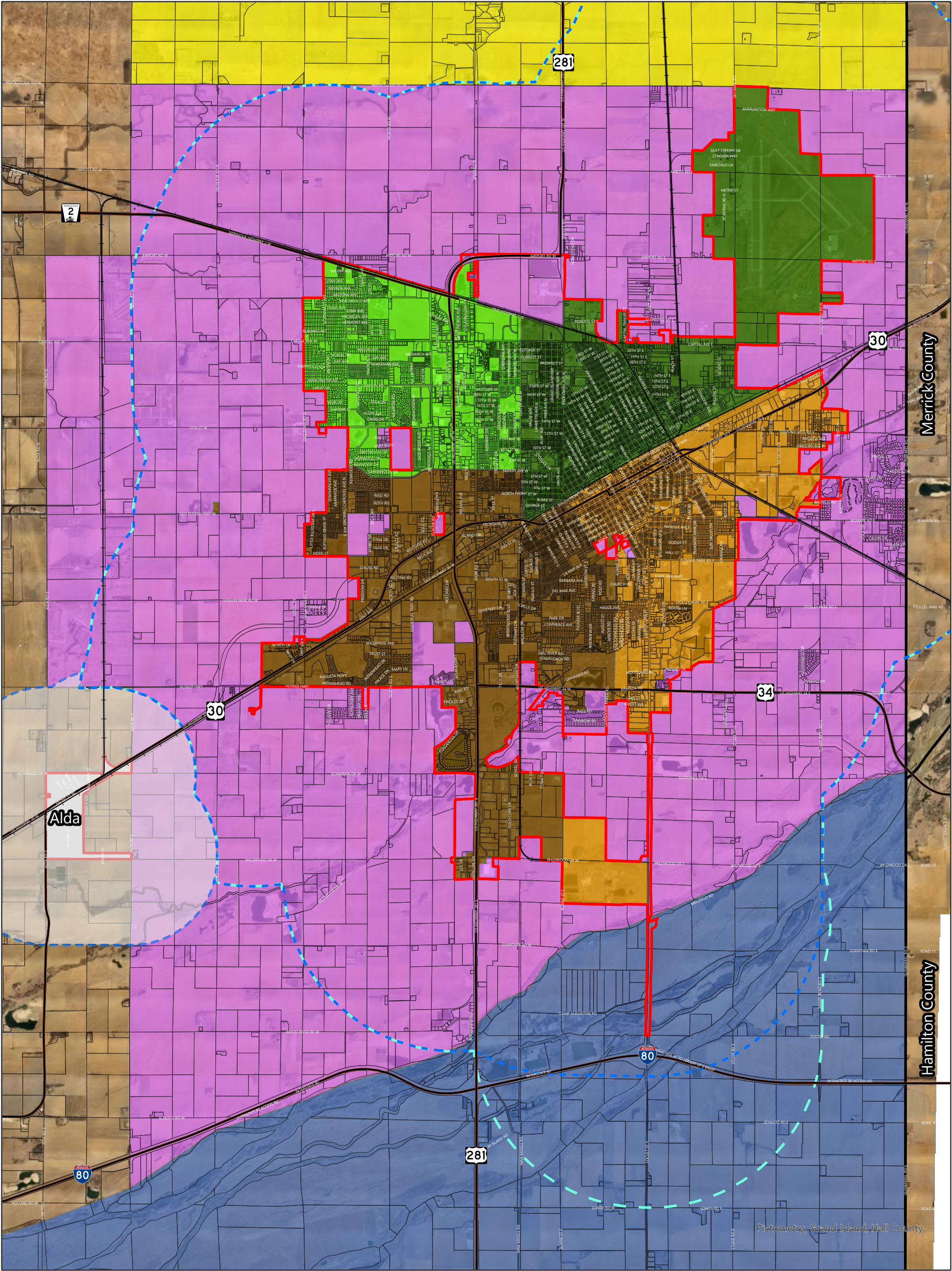
8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax



Warriors Memorial , Hall County Veterans Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



LEGEND

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Doniphan Rural Fire Department | Grand Island Rural FD | Alda Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction |
| Grand Island FD1 | St. Libory FD | Grand Island 2-Mile Planning Area |
| Grand Island FD2 | Highways | City Limits |
| Grand Island FD3 | Railroads | County Boundaries |
| Grand Island FD4 | Grand Island Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction | Parcels |

GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

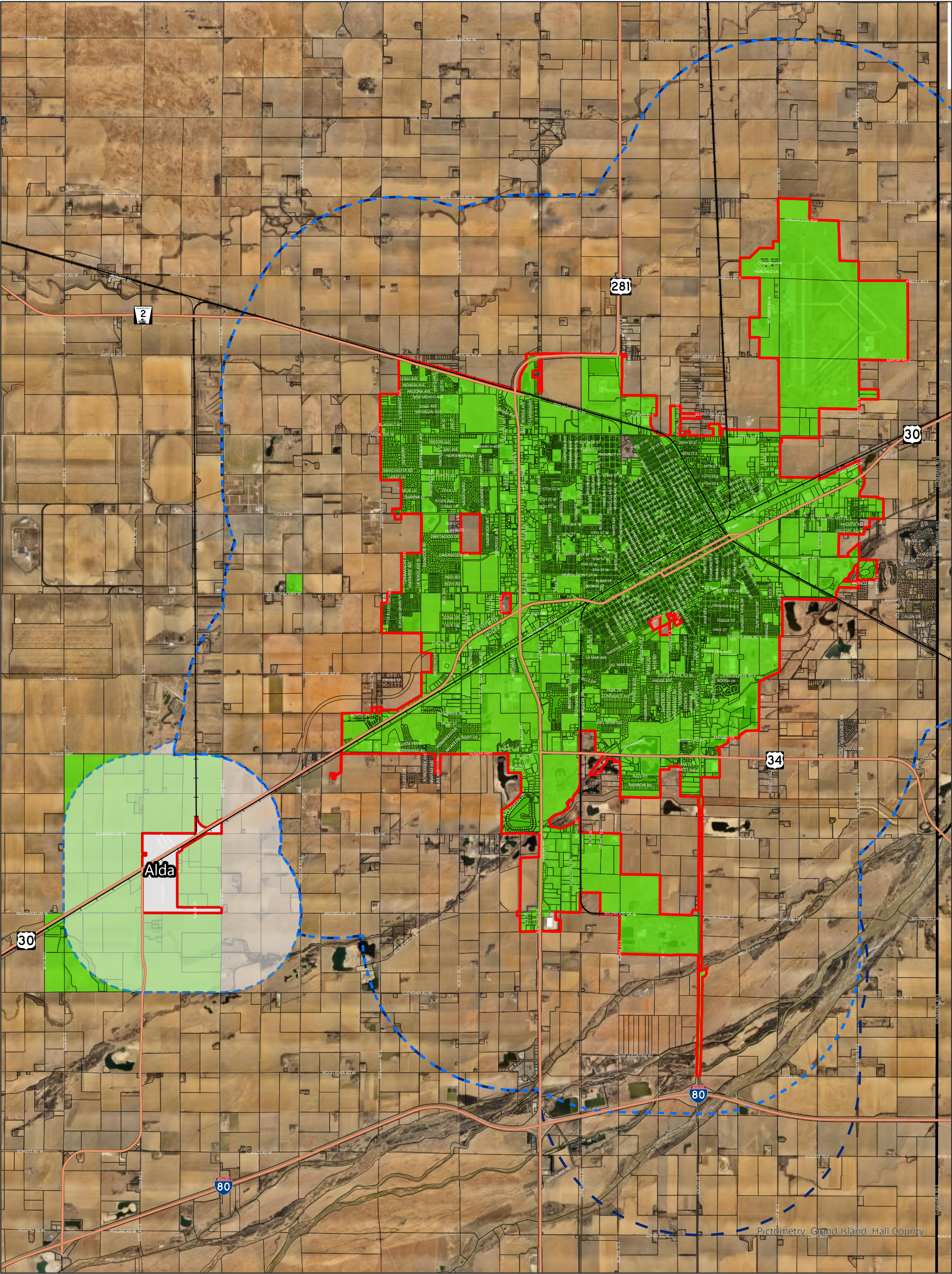
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 8.1: FIRE DISTRICTS



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25

0 0.45 0.9 1.8
Miles



LEGEND

- Grand Island Fire Department EMS
- Highways
- Railroads
- Grand Island Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Alda Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Grand Island 2-Mile Planning Area
- City Limits
- County Boundaries
- Parcels

GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 8.2: EMS DISTRICTS



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25





Chapter 9

Public Health & Livability

PLANNING and PUBLIC HEALTH

Comprehensive planning in the United States originated in the public health movement at the turn of the 20th century. As noted earlier, Hall County's own Edith and Grace Abbot worked with Jane Addams' Hull House in Chicago, becoming foundational leaders in public health, as well as social welfare, in the early 20th century.

Planning for public health in Grand Island in the 21st century involves supporting facilities and systems which protect public and environmental health, helps residents avoid illness and injury, and mitigates other negative health outcomes while encouraging families and individuals to improve and maintain personal health. Public planning is rooted in the need to improve public health by improving responsible

development, reducing congestion, and providing equitable access to recreation for all people.

Cities and counties play a critical role in promoting and protecting the health of people and the communities in which they live, learn, work, and play. The City of Grand Island should seek to complement and reinforce, rather than duplicate, public health contributions of existing institutions and the private sector.

This chapter describes high-level medical care facilities in Grand Island,, programs of the health district, public health indicators, levers of change, and indicators of livability.

Public Health

Public health is the promotion and protection of the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work, and play.

MEDICAL CARE

HOSPITALS

CHI Health St. Francis

CHI Saint Francis, a Level III trauma center located at 2620 West Faidley Avenue, is Grand Island's original hospital. The facility is a major employer in the region, with approximately 1,000 employees including over 100 doctors. It offers a full range of care, including emergency and trauma, general surgery, behavioral care, heart care, imaging, home care, and diabetes education. Its cancer care unit, the CHI Regional Cancer Center, has a special emphasis on breast cancer diagnosis and treatment. Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) is a national nonprofit health system with



headquarters in Englewood, Colorado.

Source: www.chihealth.com/st-francis.html

Grand Island Regional Medical Center

Grand Island Regional Medical Center (GIRMC) is a new, 64-bed, acute care hospital, located at the southwest corner of US 281 and West Husker Highway, west of the Stuhr Museum. The facility offers a wide range of clinical and surgical services, with approximately 240 employees. The hospital was founded by a local non-profit organization largely made up of former CHI Saint Francis physicians, and opened its doors in 2020, operated by Bryan Health. GIRMC was designated a Level IV Basic Level Trauma Center by the State of Nebraska in 2023.

Source: www.bryanhealth.com/locations/hospitals/girmc

Veterans Administration (VA)

The Grand Island VA Medical Center is located at 2201 North Broadwell Avenue. The VA Medical Center provides primary care and specialty health services, including mental health care, extended care and rehabilitation, recreation and creative arts therapy, laboratory and pathology services, and other health services. The Medical Center includes a Community Living Center, Residential Substance Abuse Unit, and a Community-Based Outpatient Clinic.

Source: www.va.gov/nebraska-western-iowa-health-care/locations/grand-island-va-medical-center

Heartland Health Center

Heartland Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center providing medical, dental, and behavioral health services at 2116 W. Faidley Ave, with a Quick Care Clinic at 423 W. 4th Street, in Grand Island. Heartland Health Center is able to serve patients who do not have insurance by utilizing a sliding fee discount scale.

Outreach representatives also assist patients with health program enrollment. Heartland Health Center has been awarded the Nebraska Total Care Physician's Summit Award for quality excellence.

Source: www.heartlandhealthcenter.org/



CHI St. Francis, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



Grand Island Regional Medical Center
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

SENIOR CARE

There are several major senior care facilities in Grand Island, three of which are facilities offering a range of care options ranging from independent living to assisted living, memory care, and nursing care, including:

- Azria Health's Wedgewood Care Center, 800 Stoeger Drive (76 licensed beds)
- Bickford of Grand Island, 3285 Woodridge Blvd (44 licensed beds)
- Good Samaritan Society—Grand Island Village assisted living, 4075 Timberline Street
- The Heritage at Sagewood, 1920 Sagewood Avenue (62 licensed beds)
- Primrose Retirement Community, 3990 W. Capital Avenue (42 licensed beds)
- Tabitha at Prairie Commons assisted living, 3490 Ewoldt Street

REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH

CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Central District Health Department (CDHD) includes Hall, Merrick, and Hamilton counties, and serves as the primary public agency resource of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services in this region. The Board of Health is the governing body for the organization.

CDHD's stated purpose is to advance a "healthy people, healthy communities" mission across the three-county region. The CDHD, based at 1137 S. Locust Street in Grand Island,

employs approximately 41 staff members managing activities across five divisions. Public health program areas include health projects, community health, environmental health, infectious disease, early childhood development, and WIC (Women, Infants, and Children). For example, under environmental health the department conducts food safety inspections, well water testing for nitrates and coliform bacteria, and evaluations of individual wells and onsite wastewater treatment (septic) systems. Most—if not all—public health concerns cut across other elements of the comprehensive plan, from safe housing to education and childcare; transportation, exercise, and access to safe and healthy food and water.

CDHD acts as the region's public sector leader for health care planning and preparedness. This role includes administering a Community Health Assessment (CHA) study and developing an official Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The department reviews and updates these reports every three years in alignment with the needs of local health care providers.

The most recent update was completed in 2021 and covers a comprehensive list of metrics for individual and family wellness in the area, tracking risk factors, awareness, current incidence levels, and outcomes for all major health topics. Some of the key public health metrics included here for Grand Island and Hall County are taken from

those documents. Secondary data sources such as the Behavioral Risk Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), County Health Rankings, American Community Survey/US Census Bureau, Centers for Disease Control, and the Nebraska Department of Education. That data is supplemented with custom surveys of the area's local health departments, including hospitals, clinics, and other health facilities.

CHA

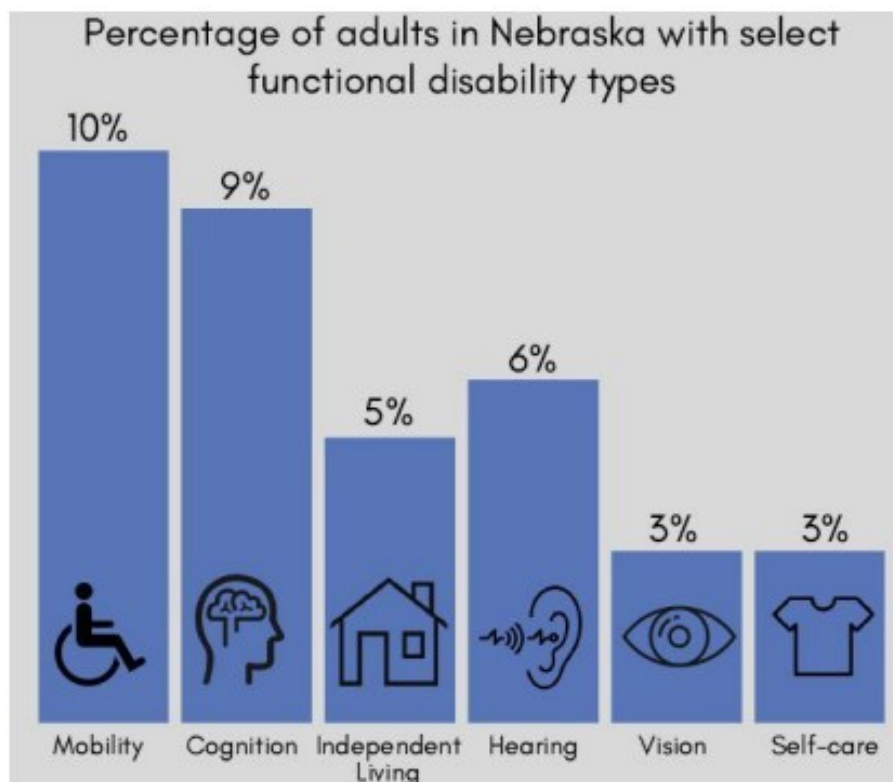
The 2021 Community Health Assessment (CHA) identifies several barriers in Hall County and the region which may impede area residents from achieving their full health potential:

- **Literacy and Language**

Barriers: It is estimated that only 1 in 10 American adults have the skills needed to understand basic health information, and language barriers for the area's multiple populations whose second language is English pose an additional challenge. In the CHCD area, nearly 1 in 2 adults reported that written health information and information shared by medical professionals is not easy to understand.

- **Disability:** In Hall County, 8.7% of adults under age 65 reported having a disability.
- **Age:** 1 in 6 adults in Hall County aged 65 and older, comparable to the state and U.S. population (16%). Nationally, this number is expected to grow over the next 40 years to 25%.

Figure 9.1: Disability types among adults in Nebraska



Source: Central Nebraska Health Department, 2021.

- **Race and Ethnicity:** A growing body of research shows that racial and ethnic minority groups experience higher rates of illness and death due to disproportionate exposure to non-health related conditions, such as insufficient housing or poverty (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Hall County is home to a slightly smaller proportion of racially diverse residents (7.1%) compared to the state, but a much higher proportion of Hispanic population (29%, versus 11% for the state).
- **Socially Vulnerable Populations:** Hall County has the highest vulnerability of the counties in the CDHD area, scoring a 0.67 on a 0.0 to 1.0 scale, where 1.0 signifies the highest vulnerability on the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index. The index accounts for factors that can influence personal health risk of disease, illness, and exposure to emergencies (such as natural disasters and pandemics), including gender, age, housing conditions, limited English proficiency, disability, limited transportation, and income and education levels.

The CHA identifies the following health outcomes for Hall County:

- The leading causes of death in Hall County—heart disease and cancer—are the same for the state and nation. Most of the adult population within the CDCHD reported their general health was good or better between 2011-2019 (83%).
- Hall County rates for death due to Alzheimer's Disease is twice the state rate, and its death rate due to chronic lung disease and stroke were slightly higher than the state.
- As in the state and nation, most leading causes of death in Hall County are chronic diseases: cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, chronic lung disease, and cerebrovascular disease. As noted in the CHA, "most of these leading types of chronic disease are generally preventable through a healthy lifestyle that includes healthy eating and active living, not smoking and limiting alcohol consumption rooted in the social and economic factors by which an individual lives."
- Physical Activity and Nutrition: In the CDHD region, nearly 40% of adults reported consuming fruits less than 1 time per day and about 25% of adults consumed vegetables less than 1 time per day. Though most area residents have access to safe places to walk in their neighborhoods, about 1 in 3 adults reported no leisure-time physical activity in the past 30 days, and nearly half of residents did not meet the aerobic physical activity recommendations (at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 70 minutes of vigorous physical activity per week).

- Substance Abuse: the county reports rates of binge drinking similar to state (21% versus 24%) and national rates. As in the state and nation, smoking rates have been declining among adults in the region yet is currently higher (12%) than the Healthy People 2030 target of 5%. Also, e-cigarette usage is growing among adults—used by 20% adults in the region—and by 35.3% of 12th graders.
- Deaths by injury are the 6th leading cause of death in Hall County, nearly double the state rate (57 deaths, versus 30 per 100,000 population). The leading cause of injury-related death in the state is motor vehicle crashes, followed by suicide, falls and unintentional poisoning. Risky driving behaviors such as not wearing a seatbelt and cell phone use were comparable across the region and state, and 24% of driving-related deaths in the county involved alcohol-impaired driving compared to 33% for the state.
- One in five Nebraskans reported any mental illness (similar the U.S. rate of 18%), and nearly 1 in 10 CDHD adults reported they experience frequent mental distress. Suicide is the 9th leading cause of death in the state, and the second leading cause of death for ages 10-34. Hall County has a higher risk for youth suicide ideation and attempts.

A community survey undertaken for the CHA revealed the following top health concerns (of

10 choices), which had a different third concern among ethnic/racial minorities:

1. Cancer (all respondents)
2. Diabetes (all respondents)
3. Getting enough exercise (overall respondents); Challenges getting healthy and affordable food (Hispanic and non-White respondents)

The CHA also assessed health care access and utilization.

- The CHA reports a higher proportion of CDHD residents are uninsured (20%) than the state (16%) and a higher proportion of residents who needed to see a doctor but could not due to cost in the past year (14% versus 12%) Hispanics have the highest uninsured rates of any racial or ethnic group across the state (57.7%) and nation.
- Hall County is one of five counties in the state (out of 93) with the federal designation of Medically Underserved Population—meaning there are sub-groups of people with a shortage of primary health care services and/or who face economic, cultural or linguistic barriers to access to health care.
- Hall County has a lower provider per population ratio for primary care physicians compared to the state and other counties in the CDHD area. Across the state, nearly 1 in 2 Hispanics and 65% of Native Americans reported not having a personal doctor or health care provider.

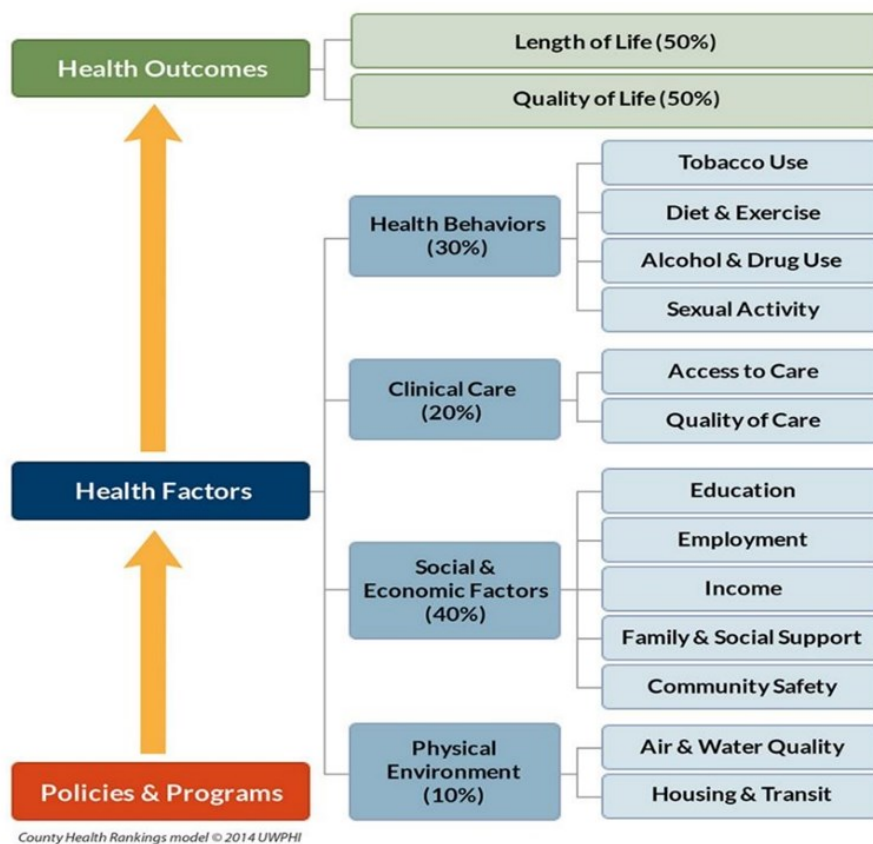
- Though Hall County has a higher mental health provider per population ratio than the state and other counties in the CDHD area, it is a state-designated shortage area for psychiatry and mental health, and responses to a survey of area health partners for the CHA noted concerns about long waitlists for in person appointments for area residents with severe mental health problems.
- Though Hall County has a higher dentist per population ratio than the state and other counties in the CDHD area, responses to the CHA health partner survey noted that Medicaid is not accepted at all providers.
- Nearly 40% of adults in the CDHD district did not receive a routine checkup in the past year, and while most adults in the recommended age groups across the CDHD district received recommended preventative screenings—the trend over the past seven years has been downward.

CHIP

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for the Central District area identified the following priority areas to focus on for its plan development, based on needs identified in the CHA and outreach to the community and CDCD partners:

- **Access to Care:** including activities that address concerns such as cost of care, un/underinsurance, lack of providers and bilingual providers, and

Figure 9.2: County Health Rankings Model



Source: <https://cdhd.ne.gov/>

COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS

Public health addresses both maintaining health of residents and provision of health care. According to research sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Hall County ranks #73 (of 79 counties evaluated) in Nebraska for Health Factors, in the fourth quartile, and #49 for Health Outcomes, in the third quartile.

Source: www.countyhealthrankings.org

Health Factors

These public health rankings consider health factors based on physical environment (air and water quality, housing and transit), social and economic factors (community safety, family and social support, income, employment, education), clinical

care (access to care, quality of care), and health behaviors (alcohol and drug use, sexual activity, diet and exercise, tobacco use).

In 2023, Hall County ranked in Nebraska:

- #68 for Physical Environment
- #75 for Social and Economic Factors
- #39 for Clinical Care
- #70 for Health Behaviors

Physical Environment

These county-level public health rankings take a number of publicly-available measurements into account. Much of this data is not available below the county level, even in smaller metropolitan areas like Grand Island-Hall County.

The physical environment impacts both our physical and mental health. For the physical environment, traffic, homeownership, and broadband access provide a snapshot of local, state, and national conditions. Hall County has much lower traffic volume compared to Nebraska or the United States overall. Homeownership is slightly less than the state or nation, while "Severe Housing Cost Burden" is lower. Broadband access rates are similar to the state and nation.

Social and Economic Factors

Soc-economic factors have wide-ranging effects on public health. This category contains 20 different metrics, ranging from high school graduation rates (Hall County meets the national

average) to Census Participation (Hall County exceeds the national average). Schools are better funded per capita than statewide or national averages, although there is also a much larger share (60%) of children in Hall County eligible for free or reduced lunch compared to the state (46%) or nation (53%). There are a greater number of juvenile arrests in Hall County than the state or national averages. There are fewer firearm fatalities, while average motor vehicle crash deaths are the same for the county, state, and nation.

Clinical Care

Clinical care includes health care services such as examination, diagnosis, and treatment. It is important for the overall health of communities that individuals have access (physical, financial, and temporal) to preventative care.

This category measures the rate of uninsured residents, and presence of primary care providers. At 18%, a larger share of Hall County residents are uninsured than the state (11%) or United States (12%), for the period reported in the rankings. At 7%, the number of uninsured children in Hall County is also larger than Nebraska or the United States overall. There are a greater number of primary care providers in Hall County than average for Nebraska, but less than average for the United States.

Health Behaviors

Health behaviors are actions that directly impact health outcomes. Generally speaking, healthy behaviors improve overall health, while unhealthy behaviors

increase the risk of conditions and negative health outcomes such as premature death.

For health behaviors metrics, food insecurity in Hall County is higher than Nebraska statewide, but lower than the United States nationwide. However, there is a lower rate of drug overdose deaths than statewide or nationwide. The standard reports count more limited access to healthy food; however, these statistics are often less reliable for smaller cities.

Health Outcomes

Health outcomes are measured by length of life and quality of life indicators, such as share of population reporting poor or fair health, number of sick days in a 30-day period, and share of low-birthweight newborns. Premature death was calculated based on years of potential life lost before age 75 per capita.

Within Nebraska in 2023, Hall County ranked:

- #58 for Length of Life
- #62 for Quality of Life

Hall County ranks below average among Nebraska counties for length of life, with life expectancy of 77.9 years compared to 79.0 statewide and 78.5 across the United States. Infant and child mortality is also above the state and national averages. Among quality-of-life indicators, physical distress and diabetes in Hall County are both slightly higher than average.

LEVERS of CHANGE

SMART GROWTH for PUBLIC HEALTH

The post-World War II suburban development pattern is starkly different than how cities are built. When Grand Island, Alda, Cairo, Doniphan, and Wood River were platted along with the railroads, narrow lots were laid out on a grid of streets and alleys, close enough to downtown goods and services that many (if not most) people walked where they needed to go. As the nation shifted to automobiles, houses and shopping centers sprawled across farm fields, and it was not longer easy, if not impossible, to choose the option of walking or biking.

“Smart Growth” is a simple term but a complex idea. It refers to a set of development principles outlined since the mid-1990s, to support walkable neighborhoods, a range of housing choices, a mix of land uses, participatory planning, and revitalization of neighborhoods. These ideas apply across the entire of the comprehensive plan—this section emphasizes the relationship of Smart Growth principles for public health.

Design for Health

On a local scale, Smart Growth advocates for higher density. More people can afford homes when local leaders allow a mix of housing types and size, facilitate conservation development, or direct growth away from prime farmland and environmentally sensitive lands to developed cities and villages with municipal services. While the official state

building code is the State Legislature's domain, implementation and enforcement of building codes has a significant impact on public health.

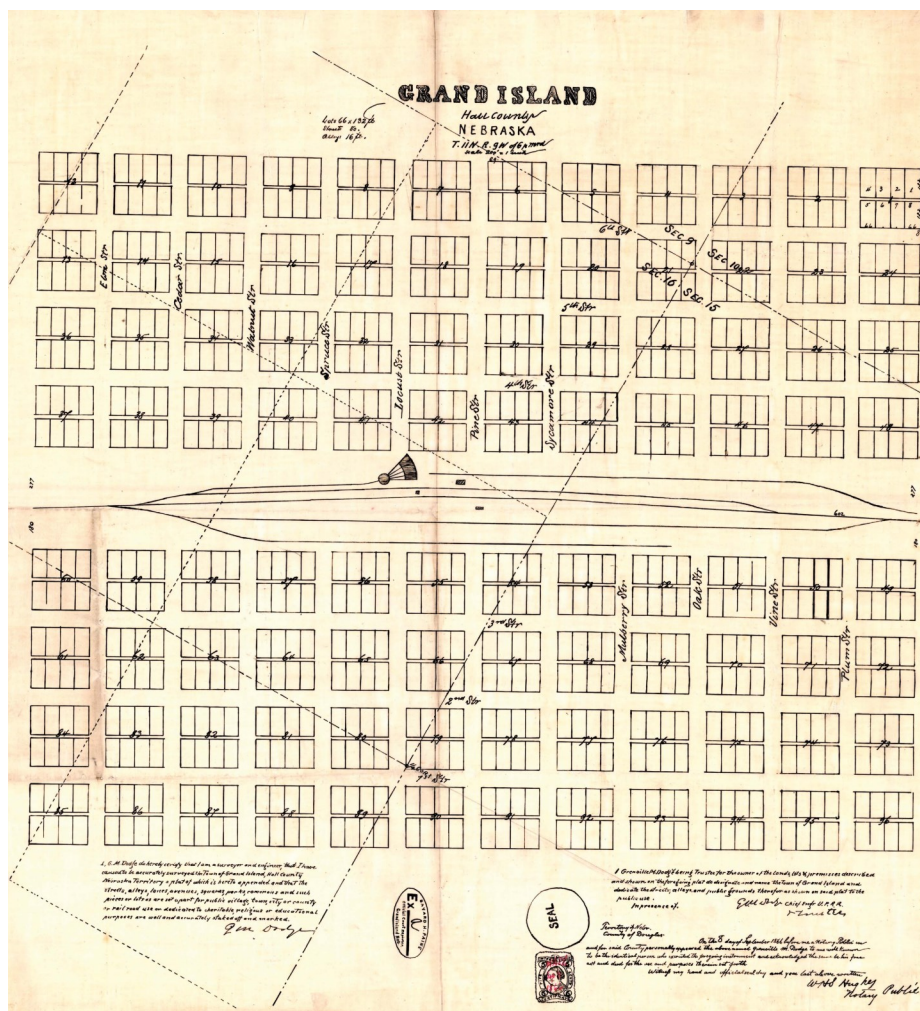
In addition to affordability, a more diverse mix of lot sizes and a more connected grid street and block network make it easier to construct a complete sidewalk system, increasing walkability. Connectivity also improves bicycling and public transit. (See *Chapter 14 Transportation for more discussion of multimodal networks.*)

Traditional Neighborhood Development Pattern

Zoning regulations have an impact on existing and new development, from an individual building site to the overall functionality of the community. Zoning began in the 1910s and 1920s as an effort to protect public health, safety, and welfare. While zoning separates noxious uses, poorly written regulations would also make it impossible to build the downtowns and close-knit neighborhoods the pioneers platted on the Nebraska plains.

The Original Town site of Grand Island was platted in 1866 by Grenville Dodge and the Union Pacific Railroad. They laid out a regular pattern of lots and blocks. There were four lots, 66 feet by 132 feet on either side of a 16 foot-wide alley. The lots faced on 80 foot-wide street rights-of-way running from the southwest to the northeast, parallel to each side of the railroad in tiers four deep. Division Street was the south edge of the

Figure 9.3: Grand Island Original Town Plat, 1866



Source: Hall County

townsite which extended to 7th Street north of the tracks.

Traditional plats set straight streets and avenues at right angles to accommodate horse and buggy traffic as well as real estate development. They had mostly square blocks with rectangular lots to ease sales and surveys. The Original Town blocks in Grand Island are rectangular at 264 feet wide by 280 feet deep with the alley. Subsequent additions kept similar dimensions, although some used smaller 55 foot-wide by 100 foot-deep lots, and reset streets and blocks to a standard

east-west and north-south orientation. Periodically changing the street grid also provides lots with a terminal vista, which may be suitable sites for important civic buildings and destinations.

Land use regulations—zoning and subdivision codes—should be carefully evaluated and modernized to allow traditional neighborhood development patterns. Narrower lots on a grid of streets, alleys, and sidewalks should be a default choice for new development. Traditional as well as innovative mixed-use development should be an

option, especially as property developed in the 1950s and on becomes ready for redevelopment. Modern regulations should be related to the past development practices found in Grand Island.

Land Conservation

Farmland, forests, and wildlife areas serve many important purposes, from watershed and species protection to enhancing the long-term future of production agriculture. Directing growth into existing urban areas allows these conservation lands to continue adding value to the county. Also, new areas will be needed for parks and recreation along with new growth. (See more information in Chapter Seven Parks and recreation, and in Chapter 11 Natural Resources.)

Infrastructure and Financing

Smart Growth encourages a shift in policy for infrastructure and public finance. Investments should focus on existing built up areas, rather than subsidizing sprawl. Aging streets, water and sewer lines, and sidewalks, should have priority for capital improvements as well as regular maintenance. At the same time, increased traffic on gravel roads, and further spread of individual wells and onsite wastewater treatment (septic) systems, should not be encouraged. Shifting policy in this manner helps not only protect public health, but encourage healthy living for all residents.

Transportation Policy

Multimodal transportation looks at all aspects of moving people and goods. This includes walking and biking, as well as roads, rail, and air travel, through more

compact development, creating complete streets, and easing healthier forms of travel. City leadership may also want to consider promoting less-polluting motor vehicles. The Grand Island Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) conducts long-term regional transportation planning and is instrumental in understanding state and federal transportation policy. (See also Chapter 14 Transportation.)

Source: *Integrating Planning and Public Health: Tools and Strategies to Create Healthy Places*, APA PAS 539/540, 2006; Frumkin, Frank, Jackson, *Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning, and Building for Healthy Communities*, Island Press, 2004, and www.epa.gov/smartgrowth.

ACTIVE LIVING

Active living is about incorporating physical activity and movement into everyday activities. For example, taking the stairs instead of the elevator or biking to work are part of an active lifestyle. Increasing daily physical activity can prevent

obesity and promote health for people of all ages.

Careful planning for transportation and infrastructure promotes active lifestyles and create vibrant and attractive communities. Active living is about making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Recreation

As the National Recreation and Park Association notes, "The nation's public parks and recreation are leaders in improving the overall health and wellness of the nation. They are essential partners in combating some of the most complicated challenges our country faces – poor nutrition, hunger, obesity, and physical inactivity. Park and recreation agencies effectively improve health outcomes and thus should be supported through national and community level funding and policies that enable them to continue to expand their efforts in making a positive change in the health and wellness of our nation."



Farmers Markets offer fresh, nutritious locally-grown foods in season.
Source: Bing (CC)

Public health is intricately tied to Parks and Recreation planning presented in Chapter Seven.

Source: www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/role-of-parks-and-recreation-on-health-and-wellness

Walkability

Americans are putting an increasing value on walkability. In 2023, the National Association of Realtors released a survey revealing Americans living in walkable communities report a higher quality of life. Sidewalks and multi-use trails not only help residents improve quality of life but also help improve quality of public health.

Walk Score data is a tool to measure walkability of a community. As is typical for rural communities, Hall County has a “zero” Walk Score due to the extensive areas without sidewalks or trails. Hall County earns a 25 Bike Score—a similar measure of bike infrastructure. The City of Grand Island, overall, earns a Walk Score of 39 out of 100 and a Bike Score of 49 out of 100.

Complete Streets policies, a robust sidewalk program, enhancements to development requirements, shared use agreements for school recreation facilities, and support for transit programs all can add incentives for making the healthy choice the easy choice.

Public health is intricately tied to Transportation planning presented in Chapter 15.

Source: www.walkscore.com



LOCAL FOOD

Developing and promoting sustainable local food systems builds on long-standing Public Health nutrition goals and programs. Food systems comprise the processes involved in getting food from farm to table to disposal, including production, processing, distributing, preparing, marketing, accessing, consuming, and disposing. Food systems also involve people, farms, businesses, communities, public health interventions, and public policies.

Although large, discount supermarkets may offer food and retail goods at lower prices, consolidation may also lead to reduced physical access to healthy food, especially in low-income and minority neighborhoods. It may be more difficult for older adults to drive across town and navigate a large parking lot, than to visit the smaller neighborhood grocery. Too often, the only neighborhood shopping options become dollar stores, drug stores, or convenience stores. Extending support for small, corner-type stores and farmers markets can give consumers

expanded choices for grocery shopping.

Food Deserts

Food deserts are geographic areas where residents have few or no convenient options to secure affordable and healthy foods—especially fresh fruits and vegetables. Everyday hurdles can make it harder for children, families, and communities to grow healthy and strong. In general, food deserts are more common in areas where residents have lower income levels and higher rates of unemployment.

The USDA Economic Research Service has studied areas with low income and low access to supermarkets, supercenters, grocery stores, and other sources of healthy and affordable food. Several Census tracts in the city of Grand Island are considered Low Income with Low Access to healthy and affordable food (2019 data set). Census Tract 31079000200 (north of the UP railroad and east of Sycamore Street N/Broadwell Ave N.) is mapped as a low-income census tract where a significant number or share of residents is more than one mile from the nearest supermarket. Much of this area is relatively undeveloped. Census

Tract 31079001100 (south of the BNSF railroad/Bismark Rd E., east of Locust Street), also relatively undeveloped, is also mapped in this category, even with the Walmart location at South Locust and US 34.

Source: www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/

Direct-to-consumer Food

Direct-to-consumer marketing, including farmers' markets and community-supported agriculture, is growing rapidly in the United States.

Farmers Markets

Farmers markets are great places to discover fresh, nutritious, locally grown foods — and for connecting with the people who grow them. The USDA defines a farmers market as, “a multi-stall market at which farmer-producers sell agricultural products directly to the general public at a central or fixed location, particularly fresh fruits and vegetables. Today, there is a growing interest in “local” foods, as a healthy option but also to know where one's food comes from and support the neighbors who produce fresh foods.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture lists two recurring Farmers Market and Produce Vendor locations in Hall County:

- Grand Island Farmers Market, at Ace Hardware, 1704 W. 3rd Street, operating July-October, seven days a week.
- Cairo Local Farmers Market, located at Alexandria Street and East Medina Street, operating May-October, Fridays and Saturdays.

The Grand Island Area Farmers Market is newly established in 2024. This farmers market will be located at the Bosselman's Corporate office at 1607 S. Locust Street, on the north side of the parking lot.

The City of Grand Island allows most farmers market activities with underlying zoning for commercial activity on private property. Use of streets and other public space is generally allowed for limited duration with proper City permits. Zoning and other local regulations should be regularly reviewed to assure that Farmers Markets and farms stands can operate, while protecting public health and safety.

Source: www.fns.usda.gov/farmersmarket and Nebraska Farmers Market Handbook

Community-supported agriculture (CSAs)

Community-supported agriculture (CSA) is a farming model that connects consumers with producers. CSA is a way for consumers to invest in a farm by purchasing produce shares at the beginning of the year. In return, typically consumers receive a weekly box of produce during the season.

The CSA model is built on fairness and transparency for both the farmer and the consumer. The model allows smaller farms to support themselves without directly competing with large-scale crop cultivation. Many CSA farms prioritize organic produce and do not use large-scale agricultural machinery or pesticides and herbicides.

A CSA provides financial security for the farmer, as well as mutual support between growers and consumers. Farmers can also connect with consumers looking to support environmentally-friendly practices, or particularly interested in supporting their local community.

Source: www.nal.usda.gov/farms-and-agricultural-production-systems/community-supported-agriculture

Cottage Foods

In 2019, Nebraska passed LB 304 allowing individuals to sell homemade foods already authorized for sale at farmers' markets directly to consumers at the producer's home, fairs, festivals, other public events or online for pick-up or delivery—all within the state of Nebraska. While this expansion to the cottage food law does not allow indirect sales (wholesale, retail stores, etc.), combined with changes in 2024, Nebraska producers can now sell more types of food outside of the farmers' market season direct to consumers.

Source: foodsystems.unl.edu/cottage-food-law

TELEHEALTH

New innovations in health care have the potential to improve and save lives. Telehealth is one such innovation that has grown over the last few years. It is essential to improve access to quality health care and services, especially in rural communities and especially for individuals with limited mobility. Telehealth practices can enhance efficiency and convenience while reducing travel times for both patients and practitioners.

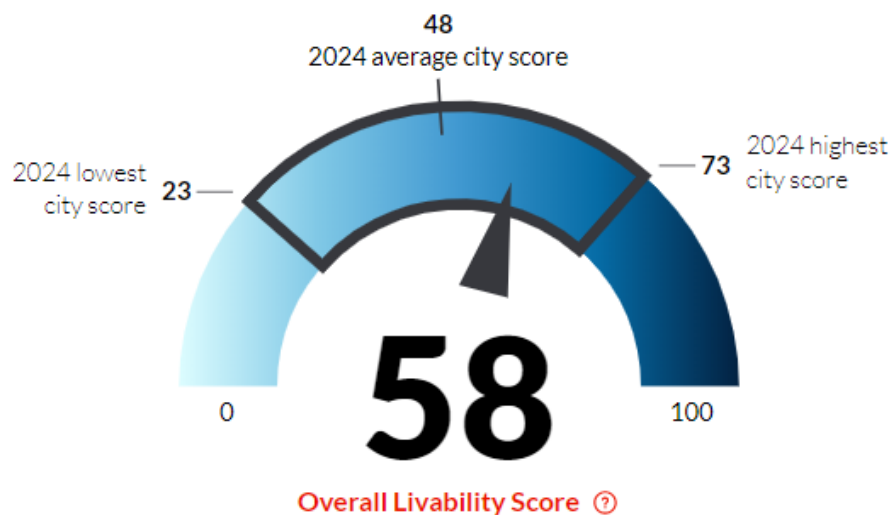
Telehealth also builds on a seamless health care experience, allowing doctors to monitor patient progress remotely. And this is without consideration of cost reductions that are emerging in the sector.

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Where people live, work, and play can directly and indirectly influence behaviors, individual health, and collectively, community health. In fact, the planning profession is deeply rooted in public health; planning was initially established to limit the spread of disease and increase sanitation in urban areas by creating standards for development and separating land uses. The 20th century marked a divergence between these fields, but the 21st century witnessed a renewed focus on uniting the two professions.

The International Association for Impact Assessment defines HIA as “a systematic process that uses an array of data sources and analytic methods and considers input from stakeholders to determine the potential effects of a proposed policy, plan, program, or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population”. HIA is a tool that brings together scientific data, health expertise, and public input to understand how a proposed plan, policy, program, project, or action could affect the public’s health.

Figure 9.4: Grand Island Livability Index Score



Source: AARP Livability Index, 2024

The HIA process typically follows five basic steps:

1. Screening: Identify projects or policies for which an HIA would be useful.
2. Scoping: Identify which health impacts should be included.
3. Risk Assessment: Identify how many and which people may be affected and how they may be affected.
4. Report Results: Create a report for decision makers.
5. Evaluate: Track impacts on actual decision processes.

According to research by the American Planning Association, planning HIAs typically make up one-third of the HIAs completed in the United States each year. Most planning HIAs address plans such as comprehensive plans, corridor plans, and functional plans. About 20% address policies such as zoning and development regulations. Others address development of new community facilities. Overall, HIAs and planning

share best practices, and illustrate connections between public health and community planning.

Source: www.iaia.org and www.planning.org/nationalcenters/health/planninghia

LIVABILITY

Livable communities are welcoming for people of all ages. A livable community provides safe, walkable streets, age-friendly housing, access to services, and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life. The AARP Livable Communities initiative supports the efforts of neighborhoods, towns, cities and rural areas to be great places for people of all ages.

LIVABILITY INDEX

Grand Island earns a 58 out of 100 points on AARP’s Overall Livability Score (Figure 9.4). The AARP Livability Index draws on multiple, interconnected points to capture the complexity of

what produces a high quality of life for a diverse population across many ages. Metric values and policy points are scored for each of the seven livability categories, with trends measured over the last decade.

Elements of Livability

Housing: 61

Housing affordability and access indicators range from the availability of multi-family housing, which has improved in Grand Island, to housing costs and housing cost burdens, which are about average for the US. AARP recommends several State and local policies to promote housing.

Neighborhood: 50

There are several indicators of neighborhood proximity and security. Grand Island scores well for its library, but not so well for access to jobs by transit. The city's age-friendly policies support this score.

Transportation: 60

Safety and convenience of transportation scores fairly well in Grand Island, even though AARP did not credit the City's Complete Streets policies. (See *Chapter 15 Transportation*.)

Environment: 62

Grand Island scores highest for clean air and water, and receives credit for participating in the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for environmental resilience. (See *Chapter 11 Hazard Mitigation*.)

Health: 55

Health prevention, access, and quality earns an above-average score for Grand Island. The city

does rank lower than average for obesity prevalence, indicating a need for more active living options.

Engagement: 57

Grand Island also scores well on civic and social involvement. The City scores above average in broadband cost and speed and social involvement. AARP suggests the need for laws supporting voter participation.

Opportunity: 62

Grand Island also scores high in inclusion and possibilities, such as a high number of jobs per worker, and no worse than average income inequality and age diversity.

Metrics

A location's total livability score is an average of those seven category scores. AARP explains: "Metrics measure how livable communities are in the present. Data is collected and analyzed from local, state, federal, and private sources. Policies measure how communities might become more livable over time based on actions taken now. Policy data is derived from publicly available data and information and covers the entire United States.

Source: www.aarp.org/livable-communities

LIVABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Grow Grand Island began taking steps to join the AARP Livable Community Network in the fall of 2018. (See *Chapter Five for more information on Grow Grand Island*.) The result was the *Livable Community*

Action Plan in 2020. The Action Plan set forth goals and actions in five domains.

Housing

Goal: Availability of home modification programs for aging in place as well as a range of age-friendly housing options.

Transportation

Goal: Safe and affordable modes of private and public transportation.

Community Support and Health Services

Goal: Access to home-based care services, health clinics and programs that promote wellness and active aging.

Outdoor Spaces and Places

Goal: Availability of safe and accessible recreational facilities.

Civic Participation and Employment

Goals: Paid work and volunteer activities for residents, and opportunities to engage in the formulation of policies relevant to their lives.

AARP Age-Friendly Community

Grand Island was the first city in the state of Nebraska to be named an "age-friendly community" by AARP. The city's initiatives in promoting outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, and housing were specifically recognized by the organization.

PUBLIC HEALTH & LIVABILITY GOALS and POLICIES

PUBLIC HEALTH GOAL 9.1

The City protects public and environmental health, helps residents avoid illness and injury, and mitigates other negative health outcomes.

Policies

- 9.1.1 Development projects are encouraged to provide quality of life amenities.

Actions

- 9.1.2 Continue support for local hospitals and health care services.
- 9.1.3 Advocate support for the Grand Island Veterans Administration facility.
- 9.1.4 Continue support for Central District Health Department (CDHD) and work to implement the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

PUBLIC HEALTH GOAL 9.2

The City encourages families and individuals to improve and maintain personal health.

Policies

- 9.2.1 Development projects should incorporate elements of Smart Growth, including increased density and diversity of building types in mixed-use developments.
- 9.2.2 Development projects should incorporate elements of Active Living, including recreation and walkability.

Actions

- 9.2.3 Promote compact, walkable development patterns, which support transit and reduce emissions from vehicles.
- 9.2.4 Evaluate and update zoning and subdivision regulations to allow traditional neighborhood development patterns .
- 9.2.5 Evaluate and update zoning and subdivision regulations to encourage active recreation.
- 9.2.6 Evaluate and update zoning and subdivision regulations to encourage walkability.

PUBLIC HEALTH GOAL 9.3

The City encourages local food production, processing, and marketing.

Policies

- 9.3.1 Food deserts should be mitigated where possible.
- 9.3.2 As land is developed, conserve opportunities for urban agriculture.
- 9.3.3 Direct-to-consumer food options should be expanded where possible.
- 9.3.4 Continue to allow local commercial retail development on section line roads.

Actions

- 9.3.5 Promote community-based and local food production.
- 9.3.6 Continue to support Farmers Markets, including minimizing the regulatory and permit burden.
- 9.3.7 Make sure zoning regulations clearly allow Community-supported Agriculture, routine on-farm processing, and small-scale marketing as typical agricultural operations.

PUBLIC HEALTH GOAL 9.4

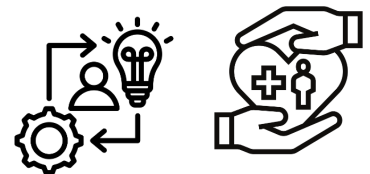
The City strives to create a livable community with safe, walkable streets, age-friendly housing, access to services, and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life.

Policies

- 9.4.1 New development should incorporate elements to maximize the potential Livability Index.

Actions

- 9.4.2 Support implementation of Grow Grand Island's *Livable Community Action Plan*.



Public Health & Livability Policies and Actions			\$\$\$	CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
9.3.1	Food deserts should be mitigated where possible.	1,8,9,12	4,5						
9.3.2	As land is developed, conserve opportunities for urban agriculture.	1,8,9	5						
9.3.3	Direct-to-consumer food options should be expanded where possible.	1,8,9	4,5						
9.3.4	Continue to allow local commercial retail development on section line roads.	1,10	1						
9.3.5	Promote community-based and local food production.	1	1,5						
9.3.6	Continue to support Farmers Markets, including minimizing the regulatory and permit burden.	1,12	1,4,5						
9.3.7	Make sure zoning regulations clearly allow Community-supported Agriculture, routine on-farm processing, and small-scale marketing as typical agricultural operations.	1,10	1						
9.4.1	New development should incorporate elements to maximize the potential Livability Index.	1,8,9	1,4,5						
9.4.2	Support implementation of Grow Grand Island's Livable Community Action Plan.	1,3,12	1,5						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax



Chapter 10

Communications, Utilities, and Energy

Communications, utilities, and energy are essential elements of a community's infrastructure. The continued functioning of critical infrastructure is underpinned by each of these components. This chapter describes these service industries as they apply to Grand Island.

Communications includes traditional media such as newspapers, television and radio, and telephone service, as well as new media including broadband internet. Utilities includes public and private services including electricity and natural gas, water, and wastewater service. Energy includes both traditional fuels and renewable energy sources.



COMMUNICATIONS

Communications services are constantly changing. Print, over-the-air, and telecommunications are vital to the functioning of a dynamic community.

NEWSPAPERS

There are currently 14 newspapers publishing daily or semi-daily print editions in Nebraska. The Omaha World Herald and Lincoln Journal Star state-wide newspapers, owned by Lee Enterprises, are generally available in Hall County.

Grand Island Independent

The Grand Island Independent is a daily newspaper owned by Lee Enterprises. As of 2024, the newspaper is printed five days a week, Tuesday-Saturday. The original Platte Valley Independent was founded in

1870 by Maggie Eberhart and Seth Mobley.

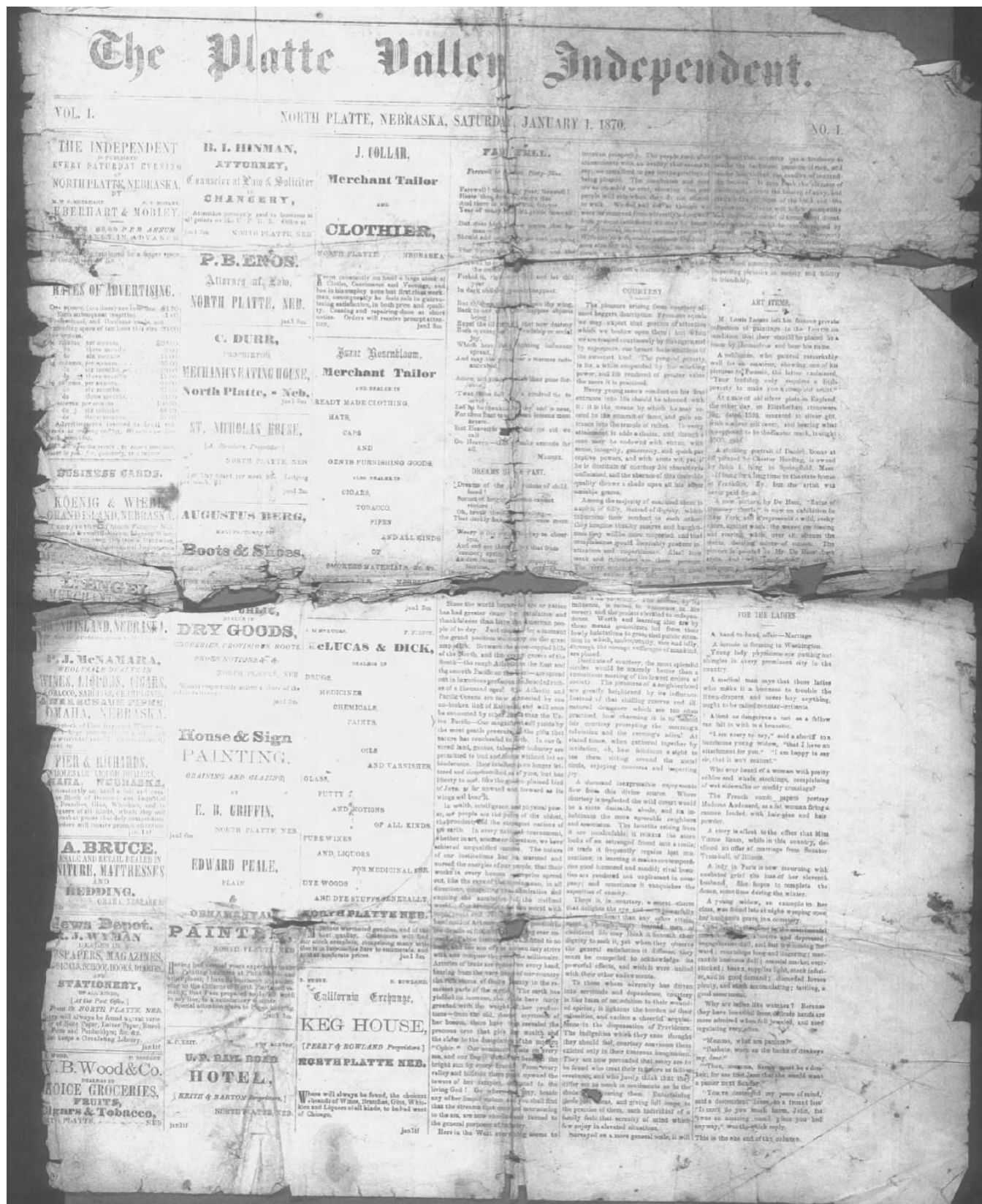
TELEVISION AND RADIO

For media marketing purposes, Hall County is assigned to the Southeast Nebraska region, Lincoln-Hastings-Kearney designated market area (Nielsen). This market area includes a large portion of central Nebraska. Local channels KGIN (11-CBS) and KTVG (17-Fox) broadcast from Grand Island. Stations KHAS (5-NBC) and KHNE (29-PBS) broadcast from Hastings. KHGI (13-ABC) broadcasts from Kearney. Charter Communications provides cable television service in the city.

Six FM and two AM radio stations are licensed and active in Grand Island:

- 88.3 FM KLNK
- 90.7 FM KNFA
- 91.5 FM KJWM
- 95.7 FM KROA

Figure 10.1: The Platte Valley Independent, January 1, 1870



Source: Newspapers.com.

- 96.5 FM KRGI
- 107.7 FM KSYZ
- 750 AM KMMJ
- 1430 AM KRGI

TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

According to the US Census Bureau's ACS estimates, in 2011, there were 665 housing units in Grand Island with no access to a telephone. This statistic decreased to 329 by 2021.

The ACS reported in 2021, 86.0% of households in Grand Island had an internet subscription, including 75.5% with a cellular data plan, 68.2% with cable, fiber optic, or DSL hardwire, and 6.9% with satellite internet service.

CenturyLink is the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (ILEC) for telephone service in Grand Island. The Nebraska Broadband Mapping Project indicates Grand Island and nearby areas in Hall County are served by minimum 50 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload or 100 Mbps DL/20 Mbps UL. However, actual speeds or reliability of service is not guaranteed.

Telecommunications service providers have continued to construct towers to improve voice and data cellular and fixed wireless service as well.

Wireless Services

AT&T, U.S. Cellular, Verizon, and Viera have established wireless cellular service across Hall County. Sprint provides limited coverage along major highways.

New technologies, such as 5G cellular service, generally require a larger number of shorter wireless facilities, on buildings or

towers. Grand Island and Hall County will likely be faced with an increasing number of requests to approve cellular and broadband antennae and towers. These requests must be reviewed in accordance with Federal Communications Commissions (FCC) rules and regulations, as well as the laws of the State of Nebraska. The Federal Communications Act also preempts local decisions premised directly or indirectly on the environmental effects of radio frequency (RF) emissions, assuming the provider is in compliance with the Commission's RF rules.

Towers meeting certain height and location criteria must also pass Federal Aviation

Administration (FAA) review. This assures safe aircraft operations.

The FCC sets a "shot clock" as a reasonable period of time within which a wireless infrastructure siting application must be acted upon. As of 2018, the FCC adopted 60 days for review of collocation of small wireless facilities and 90 days for review of attachment of small wireless facilities to a new structure. A 150-day shot clock applies for review of other new wireless facility construction.

While local zoning regulations may apply standards similar to other similar structures, including aesthetics, zoning may not "materially inhibit" provision of services. Some jurisdictions require "stealth" cell towers,

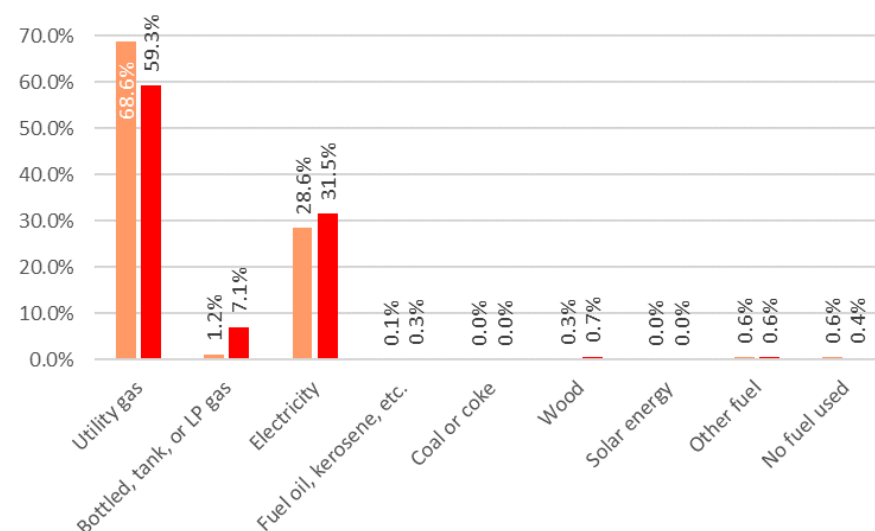


Wireless facility, US 34 at West Husker Highway, Grand Island
Source: Google Maps

wireless communication facilities that are disguised as another object or otherwise concealed from view to reduce environmental impacts. Examples would include flagpoles, pine trees, silos, steeples, and other structures or architectural features. The “stealth” elements reduce visual impacts on adjacent property.

FCC regulations allow wireless facility applications to be reviewed in a similar process as other projects, as long as the shot clock is maintained. Any adverse decision, however, must be accompanied by a substantial written record.

Figure 10.2: House Heating Fuel, 2022



Source: American Community Survey 2018-20222

Dig Once Policy

Installing conduit during road construction projects is one way to reduce costs of providing broadband and other utilities. Many jurisdictions adopt a “Dig Once” policy to reduce excavation costs, minimize disruption in public rights-of-way, and encourage broadband deployment. “Dig Once” most often requires conduit to be installed whenever a trench is opened in a public right-of-way. The conduit is then available for future deployment.

UTILITIES

Public and private utilities provide power, heat, and water to homes, businesses, and public places. They also treat wastewater, solid waste and recyclables.

ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS

According to the US Census Bureau’s ACS estimates,

approximately 69% of housing units in Grand Island (Figure 10.2) and 66% of housing units in Hall County are heated by utility gas, compared to 60% in Nebraska statewide. There was a decline from 15,193 housing units using utility gas in 2012 to 13,892 units in 2022, a -9% contraction. About 29% of housing units use electricity for heating, compared to 31% statewide, as the number of homes heated with electricity more than doubled from 2,668 to 5,797 in 2022.

Electricity in Nebraska is supplied to consumers by customer-owned not-for-profit entities, including public power districts, cooperatives, and municipalities. The City of Grand Island and the City of Wood River provide municipal electrical service.

Grand Island Public Utilities

The City of Grand Island Utilities Department generates and distributed electricity within the city limits. As of 2022, the Utilities

Department served approximately 26,000 electric meters. The distribution system had 295 miles of overhead primary 3 phase cable, 87 miles of overhead primary single phase, 87 miles of underground primary 3 phase, and 108 miles of underground primary single phase, as well as 9,895 transformers, 174 capacitor banks, and 18,634 power poles.

As early as June 1887, Grand Island had at least fifteen electric street lights. Electric lights were chosen over gas lights even though gas lighting was by far the most popular form of illumination at the time. Several private firms, the Grand Island Electric Company and Grand Island Gas Company supplied electricity until the city purchased the lines and poles from them in April of 1906. A vote authorized the City to purchase \$35,000 worth of bonds to build a light and power plant and provide service to all the community.

The first two electric generators were built at the original Pine Street station, about 1/2 block south of 4th and Pine Streets, accepted by the City on April 9th, 1906. The electric generators were engine driven with a combine capacity of 325 kilowatts. By today's standards, that's enough generation to supply the needs of one or two large grocery stores, or about 50 homes.

In 1957, the C.W. Burdick station located on south Cherry and Bischeld streets started to take over for the aging Pine Street Station and to meet Grand Island's growing demand for electricity. With continued increases in electrical use and costs of natural gas and oil, the City built another power plant. In 1981, the coal-fired Platte Generating Station (PGS) was completed and placed in service, and the Pine Street Station was retired.

The Utilities Department plans to conduct a Cost of Services Study in the near-term future. Newer electric meters will enable a transition to time-of-day rates and better tracking of conservation measures.

Source: www.giud.com

Southern Public Power District

Southern Public Power District (SPPD), based on West Husker Highway in Grand Island, provides electric service across Hall County outside of Grand Island. They also provide wholesale electricity to Wood River. SPPD operates over 7,112 miles of distribution and sub-transmission lines served by 78

substations across the seven-county service area.

SPPD works with local economic development organizations, NPPD, and the State of Nebraska on projects that will benefit communities in their service area. This includes the Energy Park located west of Grand Island.

SPPD sources power from the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), a member of the Southwest Power Pool. In 2022, operations commenced at SPPD's 2-turbine 5.6 MW wind project near Upland, Nebraska.

Source: southernppd.com

Natural Gas

Northwestern Energy, based in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, provides utility natural gas service to Grand Island and portions of Hall County.

Source: www.northwesternenergy.com

In general, there is limited natural gas pipeline capacity in the region, which may become a constraint on future industrial growth. Electric transmission capacity will likely become a future constraint depending on the state and federal regulatory environment.

Data Centers

Changes in technology over the past decade have escalated development of data centers and server farms nationwide. Some data centers are used for energy-intensive crypto-currency "mining" operations.

In January 2023, the Hall County Board approved a Conditional Use Permit for a 14 megawatt data center to be located on 60th Road south of Capital Avenue. The site is west of Grand Island in the Southern Public Power District's Energy Park, on the former Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant.

Data centers require access to utilities, including electricity, water, and fiber-optic broadband connections. However, they also tend to produce noise and should be separated with transitional uses between industrial and residential areas. Cyber-security may also be a concern.

EV Charging

As the number of Electric Vehicles (EVs) on the road increases, annual demands for electricity to charge them will grow as well, especially along Interstate highways. There will be increasing demands on electrical infrastructure as home and public chargers are added to existing loads. Time-of-day metering would likely encourage EV charging overnight, which would help mitigate spikes in electric loads.

Additional information on traditional and renewable energy generation is presented later in this chapter. Additional information on EVs is presented in Chapter 15 Transportation.

DOMESTIC WATER

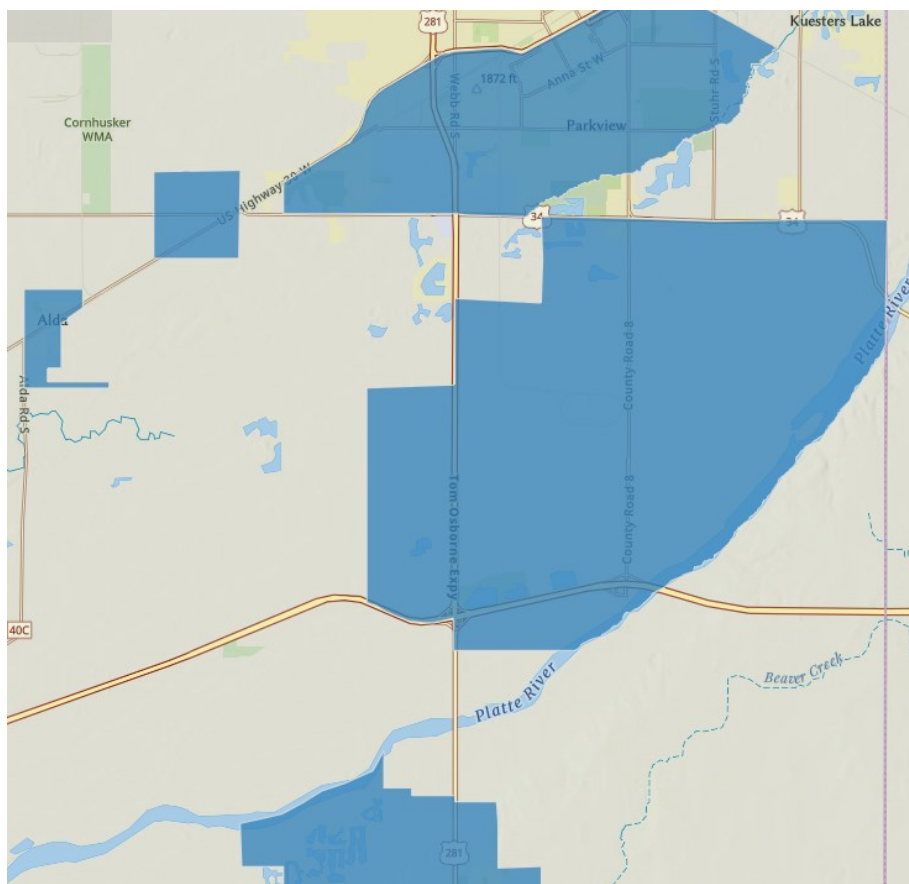
Grand Island Utilities Department distributes water from the production source to approximately 17,000 water meter connection of customers'

homes and businesses. The Water Division's mission is to supply the City with safe drinking water and fire protection. The Department is responsible for maintaining the water distribution system, including the underground pipes, fire hydrants, line valves, and service connections. There are several thousand valves that must be cycled on a regular basis to ensure they will operate when needed. Fire hydrants are physically cycled and flushed annually as an essential part of protecting public health and safety.

The City of Grand Island gets its water from 21 wells between two channels of the Platte River. The City has water rights to pump about 71 million gallons of water per year. Each well is capable of pumping 1,100 to 1,500 gallons per minute. The wells pump water from the ground into a central basin. To date there have been no major issues with common pollutants such as nitrates in the aquifer. The City has placed water remediation technologies into service to remove natural uranium from well water.

At the Platte River Pumping Station, there are three large pumps that move the water from the basin to three locations in town—Burdick, Rogers, and Pine Street pumping stations. Each location has a water storage reservoir ranging from 2.7 to 6.0 million gallons and three high pressure pumps per distribution station. These pumps move the water from the reservoirs to the piping distribution system connected to homes and businesses. In addition, Grand Island pumps water to the Village

Figure 10.3: Wellhead Protection Areas



Source: Nebraskamap.gov, 2023

of Alda to supplement their supply.

In November 2018, Grand Island added a 2 million gallon elevated water storage tank to the city water system, named for Robert Olson, Utility Director from 1975 to 1986. The tank, located off of Engleman Road, just south of Old Potash, provides water during peak demand periods and maintains water pressure if power is lost to the pumping stations. Several other reservoirs also provide municipal water storage.

Grand Island recently received grant funding to assist with a lead water line service program. Over the next 10 years, the Water Division will work with property owners to replace

about 3,000 lead service lines across the city.

Sufficient groundwater should be available to serve new demand. The Water Division expects to undertake a new Water Master Plan in the near future. As the city grows, especially to the northwest, additional pumping capacity may be necessary to even out water pressure across the service area.

Source: www.giud.com

Community Water Systems

There are several community water systems within Grand Island city limits and nearby Hall County permitted by the US EPA to pump and distribute public water supplies. A public water

system provides water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances to at least 15 service connections or serves an average of at least 25 people for at least 60 days a year.

Source: www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water

Groundwater

Groundwater near the Platte River has an effect on the flows within the Platte River. Central Platte NRD and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission have been granted instream flow rights to protect specified flow rates against future demands for water. The supply and quality of groundwater are of concern. High nitrate content in the groundwater, as well as aquifer depletion, are addressed in the NRD's Groundwater Management Plan adopted by the District's directors in 1987.

Wellhead Protection

The Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1161 in 1998 (Neb. Rev. Stat. §46-1501 – 46-1509) , authorizing the Wellhead Protection Area Act. This Act sets up a process for public water supply systems to use if they choose to implement a local Wellhead Protection plan. The Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy (NDEE) is the lead agency for Wellhead Protection (WHP) Plan approval.

The voluntary program assists communities and other public water suppliers, in preventing contamination of their water supplies. The goal of is to protect the land and groundwater surrounding public drinking water supply wells from contamination. Since approximately 85% of

Nebraskans receive their drinking water from groundwater, preventing groundwater contamination is vital. The Wellhead Protection planning process includes identifying the land surrounding the public water supply wells to be protected, identifying potential sources of groundwater contamination within this area, and managing the potential contaminant sources.

Grand Island's Wellhead Protection Areas extend south of US Highway 30 to the Wood River, an area south of US 34 and east of S. North Rd covering a large area south the Platte River (Figure 10.3) Development within the Wellhead Protection Area should be reviewed for any potential impacts on groundwater. The Prairie West system in Hall County has a Wellhead Protection Area on either side of US 30, west of Grand Island.

SURFACE WATER

Grand Island is located in the Platte River watershed. The Platte River is over 300 miles long, crossing the length of Nebraska on its way to the Missouri River.

Central Platte NRD

The Central Platte NRD is a unit of government serving all or part of 11 counties along the Platte valley, from Frontier, Dawson, and Custer on the west to Platte and Polk on the east, including Hall County. The district covers 2,136,304 acres in area. The main office is in Grand Island, with a field office in Cozad.

The NRD has programs in water resources, land management, flood reduction, wildlife, education, and NRCS cost-share initiatives. The Central Platte NRD Board of Directors adopted a comprehensive resources master plan in 2021. This plan covers soil conservation, flood prevention, drainage, groundwater/surface water supply, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, forestry, outdoor recreation, range management, pollution control and solid waste, and information and education programs. CPNRD also has a Drought Mitigation Plan developed in 2021 (see *Chapter 11 Hazard Mitigation for more information on natural hazards*).

Central Platte NRD also provides three recreation-oriented sites for public use:

- Alda Crane Viewing Site
- B-1 Reservoir, north of Lexington
- Richard Plautz Crane Viewing Site, rural Gibbon

Source: www.cpnrd.org

Wastewater

Grand Island Public Works Department is responsible for the sanitary and stormwater collection and treatment system. While rural sites are commonly served by (Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS), almost all lots within city limits are hooked-up to the municipal sewer system.

The city has over 240 miles of sewer mains in service throughout the city. These lines carry sewage to the city's wastewater treatment plant. Sewer pipe diameters range from 8 inches to 60 inches. There are

over 5,000 manholes located throughout the city. These manholes link into the sewer system and are a place where sewage pumps are installed. There are also 13 lift stations located throughout the city.

The Grand Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) was constructed off E. Swift and Shady Bend roads in 1966, with major upgrades in 1980 and 1995. It is responsible for the sewage collection system as well as for processing approximately 12 million gallons of sewage a day. The WWTP disinfects and separates waste into liquids and solids for treatment. Effluent is discharged by gravity to a utility ditch leading to the Wood River. The Department offers tours of the WWTP to help people understand how this essential city service works.

Public Works is also responsible for managing stormwater as required by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Platte River and Wood River are considered to be impaired waterways, due to pollutants from runoff. The City's Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) identifies a number of pollution sources, including industrial activity, construction standards, and residential practices. The SWMP provides best practices to reduce pollution and protect stormwater and the natural environment.

For sites disturbing less than one acre of land, the City code requires completion of a notice of intent and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), with an erosion and sediment control site plan. The

federal Clean Water Act applies to all construction activities disturbing one or more acres of land. These sites must obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit before any earthmoving activities begin.

The Public Works Department is considering the need for a long-range wastewater plan.

Source: www.grand-island.com/departments/public-works

Sanitary and Improvement Districts (SIDs)

Sanitary and Improvement Districts (SIDs) in Nebraska are a special authority which allows a development group and/or property owners' association to establish a special taxing district also known as a "quasi-municipal corporation".

An SIDs' primary function is to install and maintain public improvements such as streets, sewers, utility lines, and other improvements associated with residential and commercial development. As a political subdivision of the State, the creation of an SID is controlled by the District Courts of Nebraska.

SID #2 Hall County

This project extended the US Highway 281 sanitary sewer project that ended at the Bosselman Travel Center. The work included installation of 8,500 feet of 4-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC). A large portion of the installation was performed via directional drilling. This infrastructure serves the Bosselman Travel Center, Quality Inn, Days Inn, Uncle

Neal's, Fat Dogs, and USA Inn at Interstate 80. The area could not be served by gravity alone, therefore two lift stations were installed as part of the project.

On March 27, 2015, a construction contract in the amount of \$1,361,451.80 was awarded to Myers Construction, Inc. of Broken Bow, Nebraska. Construction was completed on June 3, 2016, for a total cost of \$2,244,704.75. This final cost accounted for additional work days and materials.

Source: www.grand-island.com/departments/public-works/engineering

SOLID WASTE

The Grand Island Solid Waste Division of the Public Works Department is dedicated to the environmentally and economically sound disposal of municipal solid waste for the City of Grand Island and the surrounding communities.

Two sites are available to the public for the disposal of waste. The Transfer Station is located at 5050 Old Potash Highway, three miles west of the city. The location is available for manual unloading of materials, and is also the location for the Yard Waste Site.

The Landfill is located at 19550 West Husker Highway, 18 miles west of Grand Island in unincorporated Hall County. The Landfill is open to the public; however, loads must be unloaded hydraulically. No manual unloading is allowed. The transfer station and landfill are licensed through the Nebraska Department of Environment and



Platte Generating Station, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Energy (NDEE) as solid waste facilities.

Recycling

Grand Island Area Clean Community System works with businesses, schools, neighborhood groups, and local government to enhance neighborhoods by reducing, reusing, and recycling. Their facility and programs are supported by public and private grants and donations, and support from the City of Grand Island, Hall County, and others.

The group promotes recycling and provides disposal of household hazardous waste. The disposal facility is located at 3661 Sky Park Road #2B, north of Grand Island.

Source: www.cleancommunity.org

ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

This section is intended to meet the requirements for an energy element in Neb. Rev. Stat. §23-114.02, which “assesses energy infrastructure and energy use by sector, including residential, commercial, and industrial sectors; evaluates utilization of

renewable energy sources; and promotes energy conservation measures that benefit the community”.

ENERGY USE BY SECTOR

According to Nebraska Energy Statistics, electricity use in Nebraska rose to 31,172 million kilowatthours (kWh) in 2020, an increase of 2.6 percent from 30,383 million kWh in 2019. The industrial sector used 37.1 percent, the residential sector used 33.7 percent, and the commercial sector used 29.2 percent. The use of electricity produced off-site is ultimately constrained by transmission capacity. Distributed generation of electricity (from wind farms or solar farms) is also constrained by capacity of the regional transmission grid.

In 2020, Nebraska used 180.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas, a decrease of 2.8 percent from 2019. The industrial sector consumed 52.5 percent of total natural consumption in Nebraska in 2020. The residential sector consumed 20.5 percent, and the commercial sector consumed 17.5 percent. The electric power and transportation sectors

accounted for the remainder of gas consumption.

Source: neo.ne.gov

Residential Energy Use

Energy is consumed in the residential sector primarily for space heating, water heating, air conditioning, refrigeration, cooking, clothes drying, and lighting. Fuel used for motor vehicles by household members is included in the transportation sector—electricity use will increase with increased use of electric vehicles (EVs) requiring home charging stations. Natural gas met almost one-half (47%) of residential energy needs in Nebraska in 2020, followed by electricity (42%).

Statewide, there were 555,618 residential natural gas customers in Nebraska in 2022, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Commercial Energy Use

Commercial uses include buildings such as retail stores, nonmanufacturing businesses, motels, health and education institutions for energy use reporting.. Government uses are included in this sector for these reports. Common uses of energy in the commercial sector include space heating, water heating, refrigeration, air conditioning, and cooking. Natural gas met almost one-half (47%) of commercial energy needs in Nebraska in 2020, followed by electricity (43%).

Statewide, there were 62,106 commercial natural gas customers in Nebraska in 2022, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Industrial Energy Use

Energy use in the industrial sector covers fuels for manufacturing, construction, mining, agriculture, and forestry. Energy to transport products is included in the transportation sector. Natural gas met 1/3 (34.6%) of industrial energy needs in Nebraska in 2020, followed by biofuels (32.7%), and electricity (13.5%).

Statewide, there were 5,624 industrial natural gas customers in Nebraska in 2022, according to the Energy Information Administration.

Energy Generation

According to the Energy Information Administration, in 2022, Nebraska obtained 49% of its total in-state electricity net generation from coal, 31% from wind, and 14% from nuclear power.

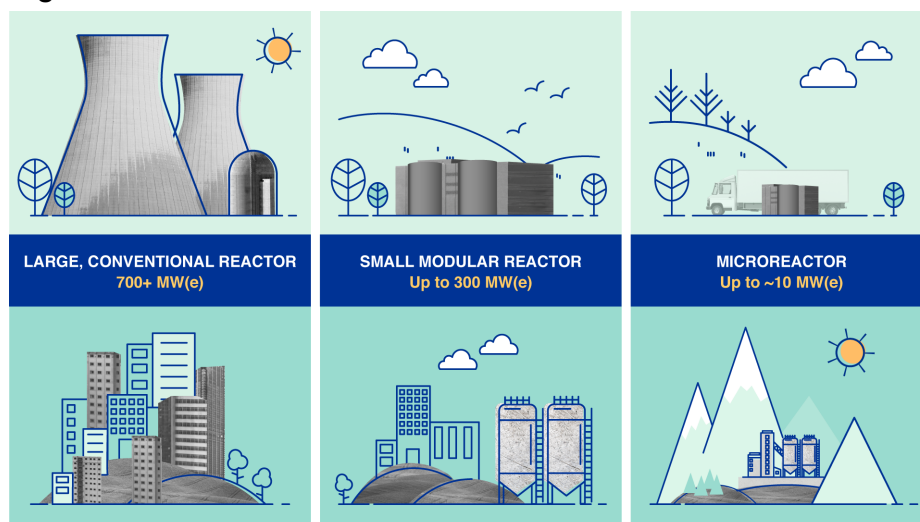
As noted earlier, the Grand Island City Utilities Department operates the coal-fired Platte Generating Station (PGS), located between the city and the Platte River at the southwest corner of S. Locust Street and Wildwood Drive. PGS has 109.8 MW of generating capacity. Coal is delivered by rail car on the old St. Joe rail spur.

Grand Island Utilities continues to operate the C.W. Burdick generating station with three natural gas combustion turbines with diesel fuel back up that are used for emergency and peaking power production:

- GT1 16 MW
- GT2 63.4 MW
- GT3 63.4 MW

Grand Island Utilities also sources electric supply from other

Figure 10.4: Small Modular Reactors



Source: International Atomic Energy Agency

generators across Nebraska, including:

- 15 MW share of City of Hastings powerplant
- 33 MW from OPPD's Nebraska City powerplant
- 11 MW solar (see following)
- 34.7 MW from four wind farms by Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) or ownership share through NPPD
- Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) hydropower (see following)

Statewide, Nebraska Public Power District, provides local PPD customers with wholesale power generated by a diverse mix of sources, including coal, nuclear, gas and oil (for peak demand), wind, hydropower, and solar.

NPPD is also a member of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), a non-profit regional transmission organization in the central part of the United States. Grand Island Public Utilities participates in SPP as well.

Grand Island Utilities conducts regular evaluations of the mix of

energy generation facilities. About the year 2030, the Department will need to re-evaluate the efficiency and availability of traditional fossil fuels compared to other sources, as well as ongoing changes in the state and federal regulatory environment.

Small Modular Reactors

Nuclear energy has played a vital role in safely and reliably powering Nebraska for more than 50 years. New technologies are in development for the next generation of nuclear.

The State of Nebraska has allocated funding the federal American Rescue Plan Act to complete a siting study. In January 2023, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development awarded a grant to NPPD to undertake the study, to determine the best potential sites for construction of advanced small modular reactors (SMR) — a new type of nuclear reactor.

According to the US Office of Nuclear Energy, SMRs represent a variety of sizes, technology

options, capabilities, and deployment scenarios. "Advanced SMRs offer many advantages, such as relatively small physical footprints, reduced capital investment, ability to be sited in locations not possible for larger nuclear plants, and provisions for incremental power additions. SMRs also offer distinct safeguards, security and nonproliferation advantages."

Source: nextgen.nuclearne.com and www.energy.gov/ne/advanced-small-modular-reactors-smrs

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Renewable energy is energy from naturally replenishing sources; virtually inexhaustible in duration but limited in the amount of energy available in the short-term. Statewide, Nebraska is moving towards renewable and away from legacy fuel sources. For example, while almost 75% of the state's electricity was generated by coal in 2011, only 50% came from coal in 2021.

The major types of renewable energy sources are:

- Biomass
- Hydropower
- Geothermal
- Solar
- Wind

Capacity of long-range power transmission lines can be a limiting factor for renewable energy production, since the electricity generated must be transferred into the regional or national power grid. Local, distributed power generation may be more practical in areas with limited access to the transmission grid.

Biomass

Biomass is renewable organic material coming from plants and animals. Biomass was the largest source of total annual U.S. energy consumption until the mid-1800s. The use of biomass fuels for transportation and for electricity generation is increasing.

The Biomass category of renewable energy sources includes biofuels, such as ethanol and biodiesel, along with wood waste, landfill gas, and similar fuels. Most biofuels are used as transportation fuels, but they may also be used for heating and electricity generation. In 2021, there were 6 units in Nebraska producing electricity from biomass, and 11 from landfill gas.

Ethanol

Nebraska is the second largest producer of ethanol for fuel in the United States, after Iowa. There are several ethanol plants in the region, including Wood River, Central City, Aurora, Hastings, Ravenna, and Minden. Green Plains, Inc. operates a biorefinery on 124 acres at 7874 South 140th Road, in the city of Wood River south west of US 30 and the Nebraska Highway 11 bypass.

Biodiesel

Nebraska's first biodiesel plant recently broke ground in Adams County at Hastings. Cargill and Loves Family are pursuing a joint project to construct a biodiesel plant at Hastings. The Heartwell Renewables plant broke ground in late 2022 with planned completion in 2024.

Carbon Sequestration

Efforts are under way to capture and store carbon dioxide generated by Nebraska ethanol facilities. Carbon capture equipment will extract CO₂ from the ethanol production process and transfer the gas via a carbon dioxide pipeline to an underground geologic sequestration site near the plant.

The US Department of Transportation and the State of Nebraska regulate interstate gas pipelines and hazardous liquid pipelines. As noted by the Center for Rural Affairs:

No legislation has been enacted that provides a permitting process at a state level in Nebraska. This leaves the responsibility of permitting to individual counties. Permits can cover everything that is not outlined in federal law, including the routing, construction mitigation, and abandoned pipelines.

While there is no regulation for the permitting of carbon pipelines, companies are still able to secure eminent domain power for their projects.

Biogas and Anaerobic Digestion

On-farm biogas production has a long history with recent technological innovation. A digester is a sealed vessel in which anaerobic digestion of organic matter occurs. The bacteria feed off manure and, in the process, release biogas (methane) as a by-product. Farmers can use digesters to improve the quality of manure and reduce odors, with the

energy content of the methane being a by-product. Biogas generated from anaerobic digestion processes is a clean and environmentally friendly renewable fuel. There are many uses for this fuel, including use in engines, generation of electricity, heat and hot water systems, and even refrigeration.

Source: www.eia.gov/energyexplained/biomass

Hydropower

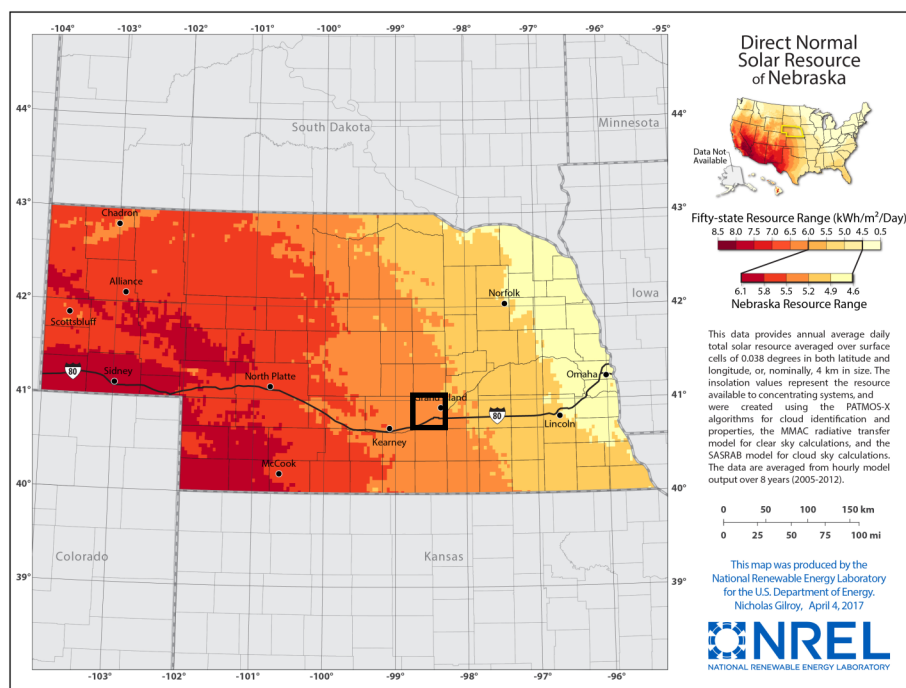
Hydropower was one of the first sources of energy used for electricity generation. Until 2019, hydropower was the largest source of total annual U.S. renewable electricity generation.

Nebraska has a long history of generating electricity with hydropower, which until recently was the largest source of renewable energy in the United States. In 2021, there were 20 units in Nebraska producing electricity with hydropower. Hydroelectric accounted for about 3% of Nebraska's annual electricity generation in 2021.

While there are no hydropower facilities in Hall County, Grand Island Utilities has a long-term PPA with the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) providing capacity and energy to the City. WAPA power is predominately generated via hydroelectric dams. The actual energy purchased varies from 5 to 9 MW depending on the time of year. Nebraska Public Power District also operates a 1.5 MW hydroelectric plant at Kearney in Buffalo County.

Source: www.eia.gov/energyexplained/hydropower

Figure 10.5: Direct Normal Solar Resource of Nebraska



Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 2017

Geothermal

Geothermal energy is heat within the earth. Geothermal energy is a renewable energy source because heat is continuously produced inside the earth. People use geothermal heat for bathing, for heating buildings, and for generating electricity. Geothermal electricity generation requires water or steam at high temperatures (300° to 700°F). According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), geothermal heat pumps are the most energy-efficient, environmentally clean, and cost-effective systems for heating and cooling buildings.

Source: www.eia.gov/energyexplained/geothermal

Solar

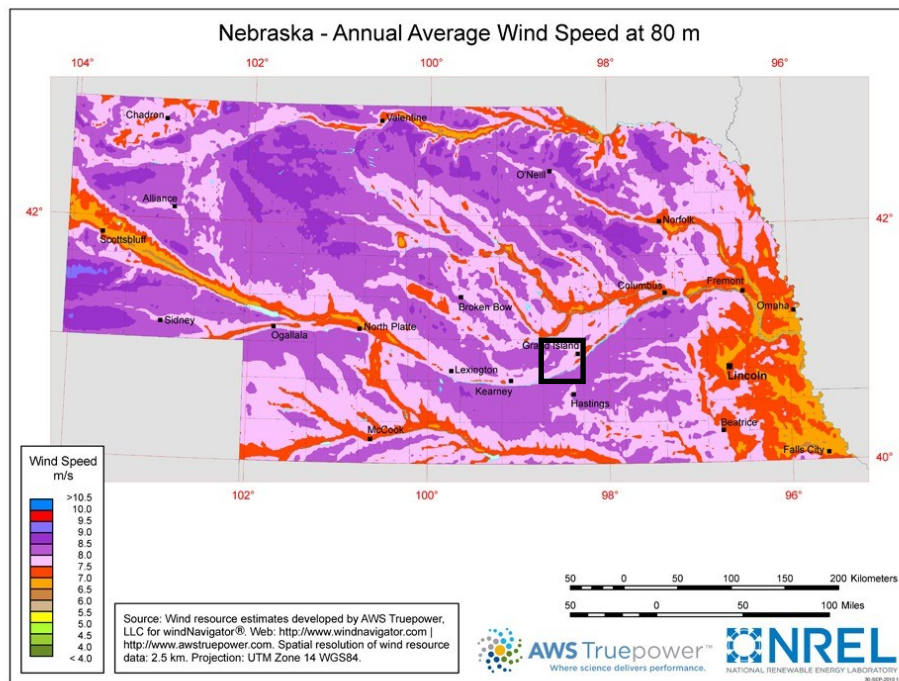
A photovoltaic (PV) cell, commonly called a solar cell, is a nonmechanical device which

converts sunlight directly into electricity. Some PV cells can convert artificial light into electricity.

The efficiency at which PV cells convert sunlight to electricity varies by the type of semiconductor material and PV cell technology. The efficiency of commercially available PV modules averaged less than 10% in the mid-1980s, increased to around 15% by 2015, and is now approaching 20% for state-of-the-art modules. Experimental PV cells and PV cells for niche markets, such as space satellites, have achieved nearly 50% efficiency.

Rooftop solar has increasingly become an option for many homeowners and small businesses. The direction and pitch of the roof affect the amount of energy produced, as to nearby trees or other structures.

Figure 10.6: Average Annual Wind Speed at 80m



Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 2010

In 2021, there were 13 units in Nebraska producing electricity with utility-scale solar facilities. Only 0.2% of Nebraska's electricity was generated by solar in 2021, but the capacity doubled in just two years.

In general there is greater solar resource range in western Nebraska (Figure 10.5). However, solar is also being used to firm modulation in wind power generation and evening power flows on the electric transmission grids, as well as diversifying generation portfolios. The American Farmland Trust has developed general principles for siting solar development on active farm land:

1. Prioritize solar siting on buildings and land not well suited for farming;
2. Safeguard the ability for land to be used for agriculture;

3. Grow agrivoltaics for agricultural production and solar energy;
4. Promote equity and farm viability.

Grand Island Utilities Department added solar to their energy portfolio in the fall of 2018, via a purchase power agreement, by constructing a 1 MW solar farm near the intersection of Museum Dr. and Swift Rd. The array consists of 4,004 modules on a single-axis tracking system. A new 10 MW solar farm is planned for construction in 2024 at the same site.

There are also solar projects located nearby:

- Hastings Community Solar Farm (Adams) 1.5 megawatt capacity, in operation 2109
- Saronville (Clay) 1.0 megawatt capacity in operation 2021.

- SoCore Energy LLC Kearney NPPD Solar Project (Buffalo) 5.8 megawatt capacity in operation 2017.

Source: www.eia.gov/energyexplained/solar and farmland.org

Wind

The wind blows in Nebraska and an increasing share of Nebraska's energy comes from renewable wind energy. In 2021, there were 1,333 utility-scale wind turbines producing electricity in Nebraska. The state's wind generation grew from 3% of electricity generated in 2011 to 25% in 2021.

According to the US Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy, "Areas with annual average wind speeds around 6.5 meters per second and greater at 80-m height are generally considered to have a resource suitable for wind development. Utility-scale, land-based wind turbines are typically installed between 80- and 100-m high although tower heights for new installations are increasing—up to 140 m—to gain access to better wind resources higher aloft." Figure 9.6 shows mapped windspeeds of approximately 8 m/s in Hall County.

Individual sites may be powered by Small Wind Energy Systems, a type of wind energy conversion system (WECS) with a rated capacity of 100 kilowatts or less. Technological advancements are driving growth of the small wind power market by making turbines more efficient and cost-effective. Small wind turbines can operate efficiently on wind speeds of just 9 miles per hour.

The location of large commercial utility-scale wind farms must be carefully planned. There are currently no installed utility-scale wind farms in Hall County. The CCC Hastings Wind Turbine (Adams County) 1.7 MW facility, placed in operation in 2016, is the only wind turbine in the vicinity.

Wind Energy Concerns

Concerns have been raised about land use conflicts with wind energy facilities. Concerns have been raised about impacts on viewsheds and wildlife of wind turbines.

Impacts on wildlife, in particular migratory birds and bats, is a real constraint on wind energy development in Hall County. In Nebraska, nearly one-half million Sandhill cranes (*Grus canadensis*) roost along the Central Platte River and feed in the meadows and crop fields adjacent to the river for six to eight weeks during the spring migration. The federal and state-listed endangered whooping crane (*Grus americana*) also migrates through Nebraska.

Source: www.eia.gov/energyexplained/wind; wind-energy-wildlife.unl.edu

Battery Energy Systems

Experimental energy storage technologies, particularly battery energy storage systems (BESS), are growing rapidly and already play a role in enhancing the electrical grid by supporting deployment and integration of renewable energy sources — increasing reliability, controlling costs, and building a more resilient grid.

As technology changes rapidly, zoning, environmental review, and sound level considerations are needed for the effective integration of energy storage systems in various locations and applications. The International Fire Code, NFPA fire codes, and other standards have been developed to ensure safety in manufacturing, construction, installation, and operations.

Source: cleanpower.org

Net Metering

Small-scale wind and solar generation facilities are typically front-of-the meter applications, intended to provide direct power to a home, farm, or business. These facilities tend to range from 20 kW or less up to 100 kW in size, although some manufacturers may be able to use larger generators on site.

Since 2009, private electricity generating facilities with capacity at or below 25 kilowatts may connect to the grid under Nebraska's net-metering statutes. Any excess generation produced by the system will be credited at the utility's avoided cost rate and carried forward to the next billing period. Any excess remaining at the end of an annualized billing period is to be paid out to the customer.

Local Power Generated

According to the Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE), in 2020, Grand Island Public Utilities had six net metering customers with a capacity to generate 60.2 kW of power, receiving 30,172 kilowatt-hours over the course of the year. By 2023, the City had 10

net metering qualified facilities with 110 kW of capacity, realizing 50,919 kilowatt-hours of electricity generated.

The Southern Public Power District (SPPD) had 25 net metering customers in 2020, with 306 kW of capacity, receiving 273,905 kilowatt-hours of power. By 2023, SPPD had 39 net metering customers with 446 kW of capacity, receiving 345,572 kilowatt-hours of power.

Solar/Wind Access

Nebraska's solar and wind easement provisions allow property owners to create binding solar and wind easements for the purpose of protecting and maintaining proper access to sunlight and wind. Originally designed only to apply to solar, the laws were revised in March 1997 (LB 140) to include wind. Counties and municipalities are permitted to develop regulations, or development plans protecting access to solar and wind energy resources if they choose to do so. Local governing bodies may also grant zoning exceptions to solar and wind energy systems which would be restricted under existing regulations, so long as the exception is not substantially detrimental to the public good.

LB 568, enacted in May 2009, made some revisions to the law and added additional provisions to govern the establishment and termination of wind agreements. Specifically, the bill provides the initial term of a wind agreement may not exceed forty years. Additionally, a wind agreement will terminate if development has not commenced within ten years of the effective date of the wind

agreement. If all parties involved agree to extend this period, however, the agreement may be extended.

CONSERVATION MEASURES

There are different strategies which can be undertaken to improve energy efficiency and usage. These strategies range from simple (often less costly) to complex (often more costly). Unfortunately, not all of the solutions will have an immediate return on investment. Individual property owners and tenants will need to find strategies fitting their budgets to harvest long-term savings.

Some common ways to make a structure more energy efficient include:

- Converting incandescent light bulbs to Compact Florescent Lights (CFL) or Light Emitting Diodes (LED).
- Installing additional insulation.
- Replacing windows.
- Changing out older, less-efficient air conditioners and furnaces to newer high-efficiency units.
- Changing out older appliances with new EnergyStar rated appliances.
- Adding solar panels
- Adding individual-scale solar or wind energy conversion systems (WECS).
- Installing a geothermal heating and cooling system.

CUE RESOURCES

BROWNFIELDS ASSISTANCE

A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.

In addition to the EPA programs described earlier in this plan, the State of Nebraska offers assistance with redeveloping brownfield sites. For example, Section 128(a) Assessments are Environmental Site Assessments (ESAs) providing preliminary environmental information to determine if there is contamination on a property. The NDEE offers these assessments to communities at no cost.

These assessments are performed in accordance with the “all appropriate inquiry” requirements but may include additional activities such as nearby drinking water well sampling and testing building materials for asbestos, lead-based paint and/or mold. The first part of the assessment examines the background, setting and past uses of a property. It includes a records review, site reconnaissance, interviews, and, as a final product, a report documenting the environmental conditions at the property.

The second part of the assessment examines and evaluates the environmental conditions identified in the initial assessment. Soil and

groundwater sampling and analyses are conducted to determine whether contamination associated with any environmental conditions has occurred on the site. The results of the sampling and analyses are evaluated in the Assessment Report.

Source: dee.ne.gov/

CUE GOALS AND POLICIES

CUE GOAL 10.1

Residents have access to communications networks.

Actions

- 10.1.1 Continue to support local news—in print, on air, and online.
- 10.1.2 Support improvements in high-speed wired and wireless communications.
- 10.1.3 Periodically review zoning regulations for conformance with broadband technological advances and FCC mandates.

CUE GOAL 10.2

Utility Infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of residents and employers.

Policies

- 10.2.1 Development projects shall mitigate impacts on utilities.
- 10.2.2 Development projects shall adequately mitigate stormwater runoff.

Actions

- 10.2.3 Maintain and extend powerlines as the city grows.
- 10.2.4 Maintain the quantity and quality of domestic water supply.
- 10.2.5 Make water and sewer service improvements to match projected future needs.
- 10.2.6 Maintain capacity for wastewater treatment.
- 10.2.7 Promote multiple uses for drainage to create greenspaces.
- 10.2.8 Provide for recycling service for local residents.
- 10.2.9 Proactively extend public utilities to reduce the costs of development and encourage development in appropriate areas

CUE GOAL 10.3

Energy Infrastructure is sufficient to meet the needs of residents and employers.

Actions

- 10.3.1 Plan for long-term energy generation to assure adequate power generation capacity.
- 10.3.2 Promote consumer energy conservation measures, in partnership with utility providers.

CUE GOAL 10.4

Renewable energy facilities—biomass, geothermal, wind, solar—are carefully planned.

Policies

- 10.4.1 Energy projects shall mitigate impacts on neighbors and the environment.
- 10.4.2 Energy projects shall proactively demonstrate no harm to wildlife and the Platte River corridor.

Actions

- 10.4.3 Provide for individual property owners to utilize small-scale, distributed renewable energy generation, eligible for net metering.
- 10.4.4 Carefully review utility-scale renewable energy facilities to avoid impacts on future development and the environment.

- 10.4.5 Periodically review zoning regulations for conformance with technological advances in renewable energy generation.

CUE GOAL 10.5

New development and redevelopment is more energy efficient.

Policies

- 10.5.1 Reduce water and energy consumption in new and existing development.
- 10.5.2 Reduce water and energy consumption in City buildings.

Actions

- 10.5.3 Promote water conservation and native landscaping.
- 10.5.4 Promote efficiency in residential and commercial construction.
- 10.5.5 Publicize energy efficiency improvements such as adding insulation or replacing windows, including guides to permitting.
- 10.5.6 Perform water/energy audits in public buildings and sites, and plan improvements.



Communications, Utilities, Energy Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
10.1.1	Continue to support local news—in print, on air, and online.	1	1						
10.1.2	Support improvements in high-speed wired and wireless communications.	1,2,3,7,8,12	1,4,5						
10.1.2	Periodically review zoning regulations for conformance with broadband technological advances and FCC mandates.	1,10	1						
10.2.1	Development projects shall mitigate impacts on utilities.	1,8,9	3,4,5						
10.2.2	Development projects shall adequately mitigate stormwater runoff.	1,8,9	3,4,5						
10.2.3	Maintain and extend powerlines as the city grows.	1,9	1,5	X					
10.2.4	Maintain the quantity and quality of domestic water supply.	1,9	1,4,5,6	X					
10.2.5	Make water and sewer service improvements to match projected future needs.	1,9	1,3,4,5,6	X					
10.2.6	Maintain capacity for wastewater treatment.	1,9	1,4,5	X					
10.2.7	Promote multiple uses for drainage to create greenscapes.	1	1						
10.2.8	Provide for recycling service for local residents.	1,8,12	1,4,5						
10.2.9	Proactively extend public utilities to reduce the costs of development and encourage development in appropriate areas.	1,9	1,2,4,5	X					

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

Communications, Utilities, Energy Policies and Actions			\$\$\$	CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
10.3.1	Plan for long-term energy generation to assure adequate power generation capacity.	1	1,2	X					
10.3.2	Promote consumer energy conservation measures, in partnership with utility providers.	1,12	1,4,5						
10.4.1	Energy projects shall mitigate impacts on neighbors and the environment.	1,8,9	3,5						
10.4.2	Energy projects shall pro-actively demonstrate no harm to wildlife and the Platte River corridor.	1,8,9	5						
10.4.3	Provide for individual property owners to utilize small-scale, distributed renewable energy generation, eligible for net metering.	1,8	5						
10.4.4	Carefully review utility-scale renewable energy facilities to avoid impacts on future development and the environment.	1,8,9	1,5						
10.4.5	Periodically review zoning regulations for conformance with technological advances in renewable energy generation.	1,10	1						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
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5. NEDED
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8. Private Businesses
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Communications, Utilities, Energy Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
10.5.1	Reduce water and energy consumption in new and existing development.	1,8,9	1,5						
10.5.2	Reduce water and energy consumption in City buildings.	1	1	X					
10.5.3	Promote water conservation and native landscaping.	1,12	1						
10.5.4	Promote efficiency in residential and commercial construction.	1,12	1						
10.5.5	Publicize energy efficiency improvements such as adding insulation or replacing windows, including guides to permitting.	1,12	1						
10.5.6	Perform water/energy audits in public buildings and sites, and plan improvements.	1,12	1,4						

Organization:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. City of Grand Island | 8. Private Businesses |
| 2. Hall County | 9. Developers |
| 3. GIAEDC | 10. Consultants |
| 4. Grand Island CRA | 11. Nebraska DOT |
| 5. NEDED | 12. Local Organizations |
| 6. NIFA | 13. Schools |
| 7. South Central EDD | |

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax



Street Light, Historic Federal Building
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



Chapter 11

Hazard Mitigation

Natural and man-made disasters can cause devastating consequences for a community's economic, social, and environmental wellbeing. They can destroy buildings and infrastructure, cause loss of life, and disrupt essential services. In the aftermath of a disaster, taxpayers often foot the bill for recovery efforts. Additional costs are incurred by insurance companies and private property owners. Many hazards are predictable, and much of the damage and expense caused by these events can be reduced or eliminated.

Hazard mitigation is intended to help eliminate risks caused by natural and man-made hazards

and disasters. Hazard mitigation plans provide a framework for decision-making throughout the community. Hazard mitigation informs the entire emergency management cycle (see Chapter Eight Public Safety).

This chapter summarizes findings of the Central Platte Natural Resources District Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022), and references resources for mitigation planning. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires hazard mitigation plans be updated every five years to reflect changing conditions. This Comprehensive Plan should itself be updated to reflect any changes in the hazard mitigation plan.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The *Central Platte Natural Resources District Hazard Mitigation Plan* was updated in 2022 by JEO Consulting Group, and approved by FEMA in compliance with requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. Developing a hazard mitigation plan is not only good public policy for a resilient community, but local participation in and adoption of a hazard mitigation plan is also required to become eligible for certain federal funding.

Central Platte Natural Resources District (NRD) sponsors the multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan process as an independent jurisdiction of the state. The NRD area reaches along the Platte



Chapter title photo: *Grand Island Tornado June 3, 1980, Photo by Rod Gartner about 9:00 p.m. National Weather Service.*

River from Polk County and Merrick County in the east, to Hall County and Buffalo County, to Dawson County, and portions of Custer County on the West.

The City of Grand Island and Hall County participated in the 2022 update, along with other municipalities in the county. The hazard mitigation plan includes goals, objectives, and action items, including:

- Goal 1: Protect the health and safety of residents from All Hazard Events
- Goal 2: Protect existing and new properties from All Hazard Events
- Goal 3: Increase public awareness and Educate About All Hazard Events
- Goal 4: Enhance Overall Resilience and Promote Sustainability

HAZARD RISK ASSESSMENT

The hazard mitigation plan identified historical incidents of different hazards in a risk assessment by county. From 1996 through June 2021, Hall County experienced the following hazard events, as documented by the NCEI Storm Events Database:

- Agricultural Disease: 25 incidents
- Dam Failure: 1 events
- Drought: 444 of 1,513 months
- Earthquakes: 0 events
- Extreme Heat: Average 5 days per year
- Flooding: one flood event
- Grass/Wildfire: 68 incidents affecting 5,349 acres
- Hazardous Materials: 78 fixed site events and 136 transportation-related events

- Levee Failure (none)
- Public Health Emergency: 2 deaths
- Severe Thunderstorms: 201 incidents of hail, plus heavy rain, lightning, and wind
- Severe Winter Storms: 10 blizzard events, plus extreme cold, heavy snow, ice and winter storms
- Terrorism: 1 event
- Tornadoes and High Winds: 11 tornadoes and 53 high wind events.

The following text is reproduced verbatim from the hazard mitigation plan.

Flooding

Grand Island's flood risk areas of concern surround the city on the north, east, and south sides. The planning team also noted that the areas in the community most prone to flooding are northwest Grand Island, north of Capitol Avenue, west of Highway 281. Compounding this, the planning team mentioned that when the city receives brief intense rain events

(at least two plus inches of water per hour), stormwater drainage systems lose efficiency. The closest bodies of water of concern are Wood River, Prairie Creek, Silver Creek, and Moores Creek.

The local planning team listed several dates of Grand Island flooding events, 1947, 1949, 1967, 1976, 1993-94, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2015, and 2019. In May 2005, the city set a rainfall record for a single event with over 7.21 inches of rain. Thirty-six homes were evacuated as flooding was worse in the west and north parts of the city. Many businesses and residential houses sustained some type of water damage from the event.

The city has completed and is finishing flood control projects to mitigate flooding in the community. First, the Wood River floodplain has largely been mitigated due to the construction of a levee system, completed in 2004. Then in partnership with the CPNRD, the Upper Prairie Silver Moores Flood



Wood River Flooding sign, Hall County Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Control Project impacted the northern floodplain. The flood control project that included stormwater detention cells, a diversion channel, and a series of upland detention dams. This project was completed in 2019 and removed 600 structures out of the floodplain. Damage from the 2019 floods was minimal thanks in large part to the Upper Prairie Silver Moores Flood Control Project. It was estimated that in 2019, Grand Island avoided \$47 million in potential damages because of the project. In July of 2019, the city and Central Platte NRD hosted a "Flood Control Stroll" through downtown Grand Island to increase community awareness of flood mitigation and flood safety.

The southern portion of the city falls under the Wood River Watershed Flood Risk Reduction Plan, which is currently under development. The plan will identify projects within the watershed to help reduce flood risk and damages to agricultural property, homes, and businesses. Projects deemed feasible in the plan will be added to this HMP once the planning process has concluded.

Based on the flooding observations and impacts experienced during the March 2019 flood event, a Flood Risk Assessment north of the city is underway for selected areas along Silver Creek and Moores Creek. As part the flood risk assessment for these areas, available flood risk models will be utilized to develop additional flood risk scenarios based on March 2019 flooding observations. In addition, building

Improvements in the floodplain

There were 271 improved structures located in Grand Island's mapped floodplain—approximately 1.6% of all improvements in the city—with a value of about \$147 million. (JEO Consulting group analysis)

footprint data and field visits will identify flood impact vulnerabilities and risks in these areas.

These flood impact observations and risk assessment findings will be utilized to identify potential flood risk reduction mitigation actions. The mitigation actions will be identified and prioritized based on the most at-risk buildings and property considering the risk assessment. It is anticipated the potential mitigation action alternatives considered will include but not necessarily be limited to structural mitigation actions (levees, diversion channels, floodplain storage), nonstructural mitigation actions (floodproofing, elevation, acquisition), and programmatic actions (NFIP participation, flooding studies, capital improvement programs). Once the Flood Risk Assessment is completed it will be added to this hazard mitigation plan as an appendix, and recommended mitigation actions integrated into the appropriate jurisdictional profiles.

The Grand Island Regional Medical Center is concerned with low level flooding affecting transportation in and out of the

medical center. The center is 10 feet above the floodplain, but the surrounding area is much lower and is more likely to flood.

Grand Island is a member of the NFIP, and the city's Floodplain Administrator (Chad Nabity) will oversee the commitments and requirements of the NFIP. The initial FIRM for the city was delineated in 3/2/1983 and the current effective map date is 9/26/2008. Over 2% of parcel improvements in the city are located in either the 0.2% or 1% annual flood risk areas (see tables in the Parcel Improvements and Valuation section). As of October 31, 2021, there are 50 NFIP policies in-force covering \$11,315,600. Grand Island has two single-family repetitive loss structures. A mitigation action can be found in the city's Mitigation Strategy to address this structure.

Hazardous Materials

Union Pacific, Central Nebraska Railroad Company, and Burlington Northern Santa Fe have main rail lines through Grand Island. In addition, Highways 2, 30, and 281 all run through the city. Many manufacturing facilities have reportable quantities of stored hazardous material. Chemicals are presumed to be transported daily by highway; however, the local planning team is not sure which types of chemicals are being transported. According to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, there have been 128 reports of chemical spills. Most of the events were small but in total the spills have caused \$196,910 in damages. The most damaging occurred in 2013 when 70 liquid

gallons of hypochlorite solution caused \$94,000 in damage. Hall County LEPC works regularly to identify and mitigate hazardous chemicals, including trainings and exercises. The hospital has all necessary components to receive patients affected by a hazardous materials event but would like to participate in more practical exercises.

Levee Failure

Levee failure may cause loss of life and injuries as well as damages to property, the environment, and the economy. There are four levee systems in or near Grand Island, the Wood River FPP, Grand Island – Wood River RB, Grand Island – Silver Creek RB, and Grand Island – Wood River LB. These levees protect 9,428 people and 3,833 buildings with a combined property value of \$936 million. The Grand Island – LB accounts for most of the protected people and buildings. Wood River FPP, Grand Island – Wood River RB, and Grand Island – Wood River LB are FEMA accredited. There have been no reports of levee failure in Grand Island. All levees are regularly inspected and maintained.

Public Health Emergency

This hazard was identified by the Grand Island Regional Medical Center as a hazard of top concern. A public health emergency similar to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic could stretch hospital equipment and staffing. The hospital would be the primary location for patients to go during a public health emergency. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic impacted the hospital on the essential supply equipment side. To help

with the potential impacts of this hazard, MOUs with other nearby hospitals are in place and the medical center is part of the TRIMRS 23 County Healthcare Coalition.

Severe Thunderstorms

The NCEI reported 198 severe thunderstorm events since 1996. Official reports of property damage topped \$20,149,500 for Grand Island. The most damaging event occurred in 2017 when 2.5-inch hail caused \$10,000,000 in damages. The planning team is concerned with the potential impact on utilities and transportation routes as well as property damage. There are weather radios in critical facilities, but not all have backup generators. Grand Island has an active tree management program that seeks to reduce the damage from falling trees and branches. Grand Island City Utilities estimates that 30% of their lines are buried and SPPD reports 10% of their lines are buried. Most of the critical facilities are fitted with hail resistant building materials and are insured. Building code limits community members to one layer of shingles which encourages hail resistant building materials. The city also has educational materials for severe thunderstorms, winter storms, and tornadoes on its website.

Severe Winter Storms

This hazard was identified by the Grand Island Regional Medical Center as a hazard of top concern. During the winter of 2020, whiteout conditions affected staffing availability and patient care. Extreme snow events can impact supply lines

for equipment, fuel for generators, and transportation routes to and from the medical center. The hospital has built some relationships with small local companies to remove snow in proximity to the hospital but needs to work closer with the City of Grand Island on priority snow removal areas. In addition, the Prairie Commons Medical Office Building that is attached to the hospital has an emergency generator and could be used to house a significant number of individuals during a disaster event.

Terrorism

This hazard was identified by the Grand Island Regional Medical Center as a hazard of top concern. They are primarily concerned with cyber terrorism. Hospitals have been targeted more than other industries and one cyber-attack could cripple the hospital's operational processes. Grand Island has two unaffiliated hospitals, so if one were to go down the other could help take patients if necessary.

Tornadoes and High Winds

There are two reports of tornadoes since 1996 in the City of Grand Island. However, on June 3rd, 1980, there were seven tornadoes that touched down in or near the community over the span of nearly three hours. This outbreak devastated entire sections of Grand Island killing five people and injuring more than 400. When it was over, the tornadoes had caused \$300 million in damages. This event is most famously referred to as Night of the Twisters after a book and television movie were made based on these events. Now, municipal servers are backed up

Table 11.1A: Hazard Mitigation Strategy

New Mitigation Actions

Mitigation Action	Emergency Exercise: Hazardous Spill
Description	Perform tabletop exercises for a hazardous materials release for all who would be involved.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Hazardous Materials Release
Estimated Cost	Staff Time
Local Funding	Staff Time
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	Medium
Lead Agency	City Administrator, Fire Department, County Emergency Management, Grand Island Regional Medical Center
Status	Not Started

Mitigation Action	Phragmites Reduction
Description	Work with Platte River Resiliency Project to fund projects to reduce phragmites in the Platte River to help keep channels open and flowing.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding, Animal and Plant Disease
Estimated Cost	\$750,000 per year
Local Funding	General Fund
Timeline	Ongoing
Priority	High
Lead Agency	Planning Commission, Platte River Resiliency Project, Central Platte NRD, Hall County
Status	This is an ongoing action with phragmites reduction occurring annually.

Mitigation Action	Project Scoping
Description	Evaluate potential flood risk reduction alternatives as identified through either the NRCS WFPO or Grand Island Flood Risk Assessment including project scoping and implementation.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding
Estimated Cost	Varies by Project
Local Funding	General Fund, WFPO, Cost Share
Timeline	2-5 Years
Priority	Medium
Lead Agency	City Engineer, City Administrator, Floodplain Administrator
Status	The Wood River Watershed Flood Risk Reduction Plan and Grand Island Flood Risk Assessment are currently under development. No formal alternatives have yet been determined; however, several alternatives are under further review.

Source: Central Platte Natural Resources District Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022).

Table 11.1B: Hazard Mitigation Strategy

Mitigation Action	Repetitive Loss Property Mitigation
Description	Identify and perform flood mitigation options on repetitive loss properties within the community.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding
Estimated Cost	Varies by Project
Local Funding	General Fund, Private Owner Funds
Timeline	5+ Years
Priority	Low
Lead Agency	City Administrator, Floodplain Administrator, City Engineer
Status	Not Started

Kept Mitigation Actions

Mitigation Action	Improve Electrical Service
Description	Evaluate hardening, retrofitting, looping and/or burying of power lines and related infrastructure and/or comparable protection measures; provide looped distribution service and other redundancies in the electrical system as a backup power supply in the event the primary system is destroyed or fails; implement measures to improve electrical service; bury power lines for future construction
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	\$1,000,000+
Local Funding	General Fund
Timeline	5+ Years
Priority	Low
Lead Agency	City Engineer
Status	Not Started

Mitigation Action	Improve Warning Systems
Description	Evaluate current warning systems (defined as alert sirens, weather radios, and television, telephone, and radio warning systems, etc.); improve warning systems/develop new warning system; obtain/upgrade warning system equipment and methods; conduct evaluation of existing alert sirens for replacement or placement of new sirens; identify location of weather warning radios; improve weather radio system; obtain/upgrade weather radios.
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Local Funding	City Emergency Management Budget
Timeline	Ongoing
Priority	High
Lead Agency	City Administrator, County Emergency Management
Status	Ongoing effort to upgrade and replace aging sirens. Instituted IPAWS capabilities. New sirens are installed as the city continues to grow.

Source: Central Platte Natural Resources District Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022).

Table 11.1C: Hazard Mitigation Strategy

Mitigation Action	Public Awareness/Education
Description	Obtain or develop hazard education materials; conduct multi-faceted public education; distribute fact sheets or maps at community events, public schools, other venues and to public and private communication systems; conduct scheduled siren/warning system tests; prepare educational materials listing safe rooms and shelters and evacuation plans; distribute educational materials listing safe rooms and shelters; purchase equipment such as overhead projectors and laptops to facilitate presentation of information.
Hazard(s) Addressed	All Hazards
Estimated Cost	\$5,000
Local Funding	Staff Time
Timeline	Ongoing
Priority	High
Lead Agency	City Administrator, County Emergency Management
Status	Ongoing Action. Promoting preparedness through social media, local media, BeReady, siren tests, and the Flood Control Stroll. No equipment has been purchased yet.

Mitigation Action	Reduce Damages from Floods, Stormwater, and Heavy Precipitation Events
Description	Evaluate repetitive loss or potential loss structures located in floodplain; acquire and relocate or demolish flood prone property or elevate flood prone property; elevate equipment vulnerable to flooding. Conduct stormwater drainage study; evaluate and implement recommendations or comparable measures to improve drainage; evaluate and improve stormwater system. Analyze system for issues and develop a plan to remedy the issues.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Flooding
Estimated Cost	\$500,000+
Local Funding	General Fund
Timeline	Ongoing
Priority	Medium
Lead Agency	Floodplain Administrator
Status	This is an ongoing project. It is checked with each flood event.

Source: Central Platte Natural Resources District Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022).

Table 11.1D: Hazard Mitigation Strategy

Mitigation Action	Reduce Tree Damage and Damage from Trees
Description	Conduct tree inventory; develop tree maintenance/trimming program; implement tree maintenance/trimming program; remove hazardous limbs and/or trees.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Tornadoes, Severe Winter Storms, Severe Thunderstorms, High Winds, Grass/Wildfire
Estimated Cost	\$5,000+
Local Funding	General Fund
Timeline	Ongoing
Priority	Medium
Lead Agency	Tree Board
Status	Trees are trimmed when issues are identified.

Mitigation Action	Storm Shelter / Safe Room
Description	Identify and evaluate existing safe rooms and/or storm shelters; improve and/or construct safe rooms and/or storm shelters; design and construct storm shelters and safe rooms in highly vulnerable areas such as mobile home parks, campgrounds, schools, etc.
Hazard(s) Addressed	Tornadoes, Severe Thunderstorms, High Winds
Estimated Cost	\$200 - \$250 per sq ft
Local Funding	General Fund
Timeline	5+ Years
Priority	Low
Lead Agency	Planning Commission, County Emergency Management
Status	Some saferoom projects have been identified and an NOI has been submitted.

Source: Central Platte Natural Resources District Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022).

to multiple locations; the city has warning sirens and some safe rooms, which are FEMA-certified. The County Emergency Management Agency offers text alerts, and the community does educational outreach through Grand Island TV, and the Weatherwise program.

MITIGATION STRATEGY

The primary focus of the mitigation strategy is to identify action items to reduce the effects of hazards on existing infrastructure and property

based on the established goals and objectives. These actions should consider the most cost effective and technically feasible manner to address risk.

Actions to implement the Hazard Mitigation Strategy for the City of Grand Island are presented in Table 11.1. The County and each municipality has its own mitigation strategy spelled out in the Hall County Appendix to the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Plan Maintenance

The hazard mitigation plan should be reviewed and updated after major disaster events, and no longer than five years after adoption. The local planning team is responsible for reviewing and updating the hazard mitigation plan's community profile as changes occur or after a major event.

This comprehensive plan should also be reviewed regularly and updated when the hazard mitigation plan is revised.

Figure 11.1: Flood Hazard Mitigation



On top - a home north of Quincy, Illinois within the 100- year floodplain. The river is between 1 and 2-miles away. On the bottom, the same house during the floods. Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Hall County Local Emergency Operations Plan

The Hall County Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) establishes standardized policies, plans, guidelines, and procedures for emergency resources and governmental entities to respond and recover when a disaster event occurs. It contains information regarding direction and control, communications and warning, damage assessment, emergency public information, evacuation, fire services, health and human services, law enforcement, mass care, protective shelters, and resource management. Flooding and dam failure information from the LEOP was incorporated into this HMP updated. This plan was updated in 2020 and is reviewed every five years.

FLOODPLAIN ADMINISTRATION

The Hall County Regional Planning Director also serves as Floodplain Administrator for Hall County, and the municipalities in Hall County. The Administrator works with the NRD, NEDNR, and FEMA to keep Hall County's floodplain development regulations up to date with changing state and federal requirements.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Hall County participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The initial Flood Hazard Boundary Map for Hall County was identified on 12/20/1974. The Initial Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)

became effective 8/01/1980. The currently in effect map was dated 9/26/2008, subject to map amendments and revisions.

Each of the municipalities in Hall County, including the cities of Grand Island and Wood River, and the villages of Alda, Cairo, and Doniphan also participate in the NFIP.

Community Rating System

During the next update to the Hazard Mitigation Plan, the City should consider participation in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS). The Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary program that communities can join to get credit for floodplain management activities above the minimum standards. Communities receive points for those activities and based upon the number of points, flood insurance premiums are reduced for policyholders in the community. CRS is a "win-win" for because it reduces a community's vulnerability to floods and also reduces the cost of flood insurance premiums.

While there are significant administrative costs to track compliance, CRS offers policy holders substantial potential savings, likely just for activities and policies already in place.

Source: dnr.nebraska.gov/floodplain/community-rating-system

RESOURCES

FEMA and the American Planning Association work together to provide resources to communities for hazard mitigation planning. Their report *Hazard Mitigation: Integrating Best Practices into Planning* (2010), identifies effective multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation strategies and tools based on a series of case studies for large and small towns and rural jurisdictions across the United States.

In 2020, the APA adopted a Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide, which includes 13 Guiding Policies on hazard mitigation. The guide supplements and updates APA's earlier report, with a focus on recent severe hazard occurrences. Plans need to consider not just mitigation, but adaptation to changing conditions and situations.

Source: www.planning.org/nationalcenters/hazards

HAZARD MITIGATION GOALS AND POLICIES

MITIGATION GOAL 11.1

Grand Island provides adequate support for goals and objectives of the hazard mitigation plan.

Actions

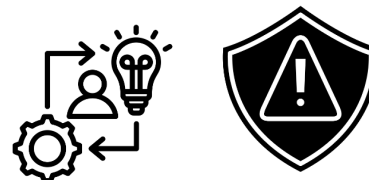
- 11.1.1 See Table 11.1.
- 11.1.2 Update this chapter upon adoption of any Hazard Mitigation Plan revision.

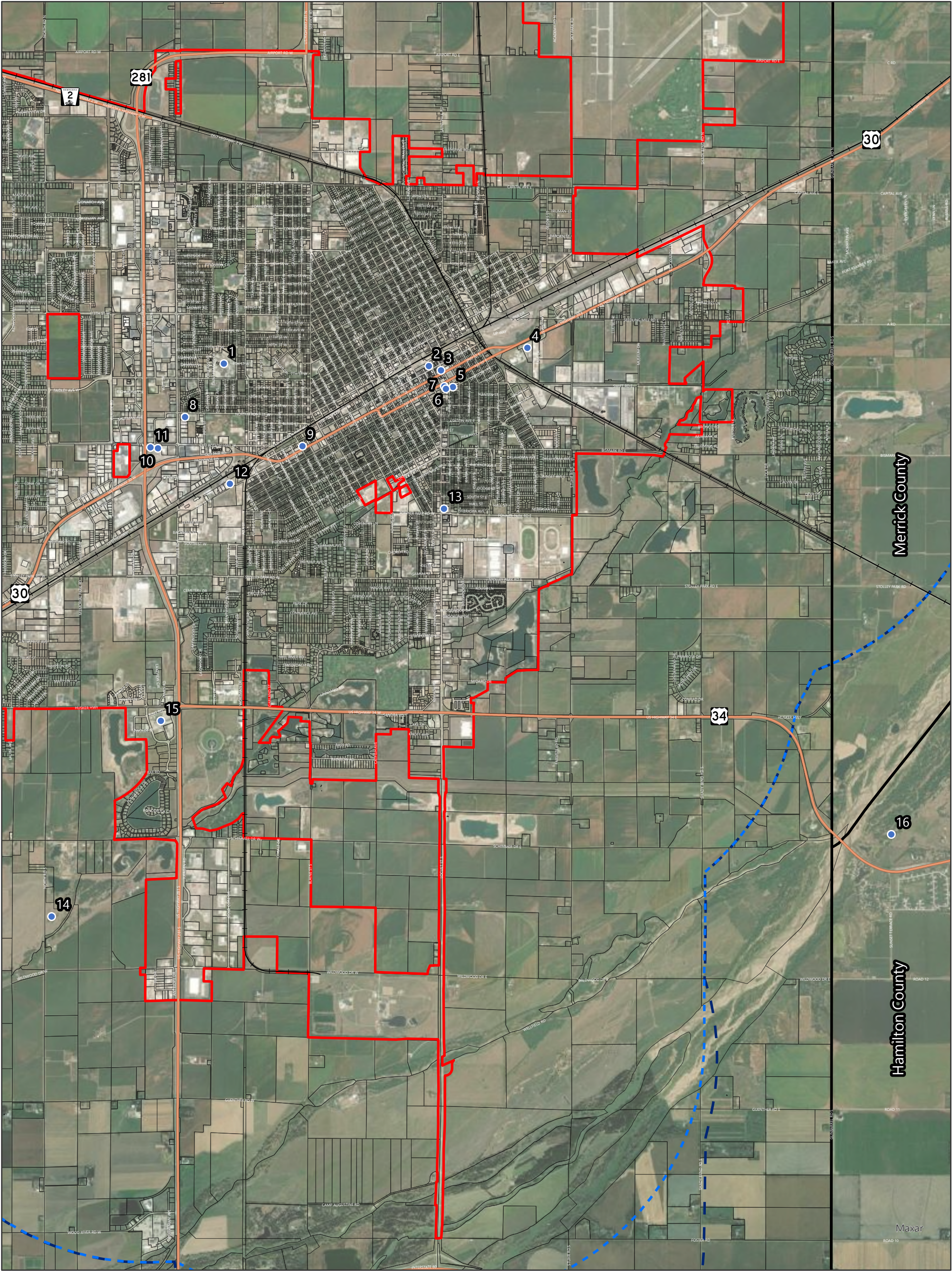
MITIGATION GOAL 11.2

Grand Island maintains conformance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Actions

- 11.2.1 Work with Hall County and nearby communities to mitigate flood hazards and assure conformance with NFIP requirements.
- 11.2.2 The Floodplain Administrator should work with the NRD and NeDNR on updated floodplain mapping for the county and municipalities.
- 11.2.3 The City Council should support participation by the Floodplain Administrator in specialized training opportunities for flood mitigation and floodplain administration.





- LEGEND**
- Critical Facilities
 - Highways
 - Railroads
 - Grand Island Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
 - Alda Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
 - Grand Island 2-Mile Planning Area
 - City Limits
 - County Boundaries
 - Parcels

- Critical Facilities**
- 1: CHI Health St. Francis
 - 2: FBI
 - 3: Nebraska Health and Human Services
 - 4: Law Enforcement Center
 - 5: Hall County Administration Building
 - 6: Hall County Jail
 - 7: Hall County Courthouse
 - 8: KRGI Station
 - 9: NDOR District Office
 - 10: NDOR Maintenance Yard
 - 11: Nebraska State Patrol
 - 12: Hall County Public Works

- 13: Central District Health Department
- 14: KRGI Transmitter
- 15: Grand Island Regional Medical Center
- 16: KRGI Transmitter

GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

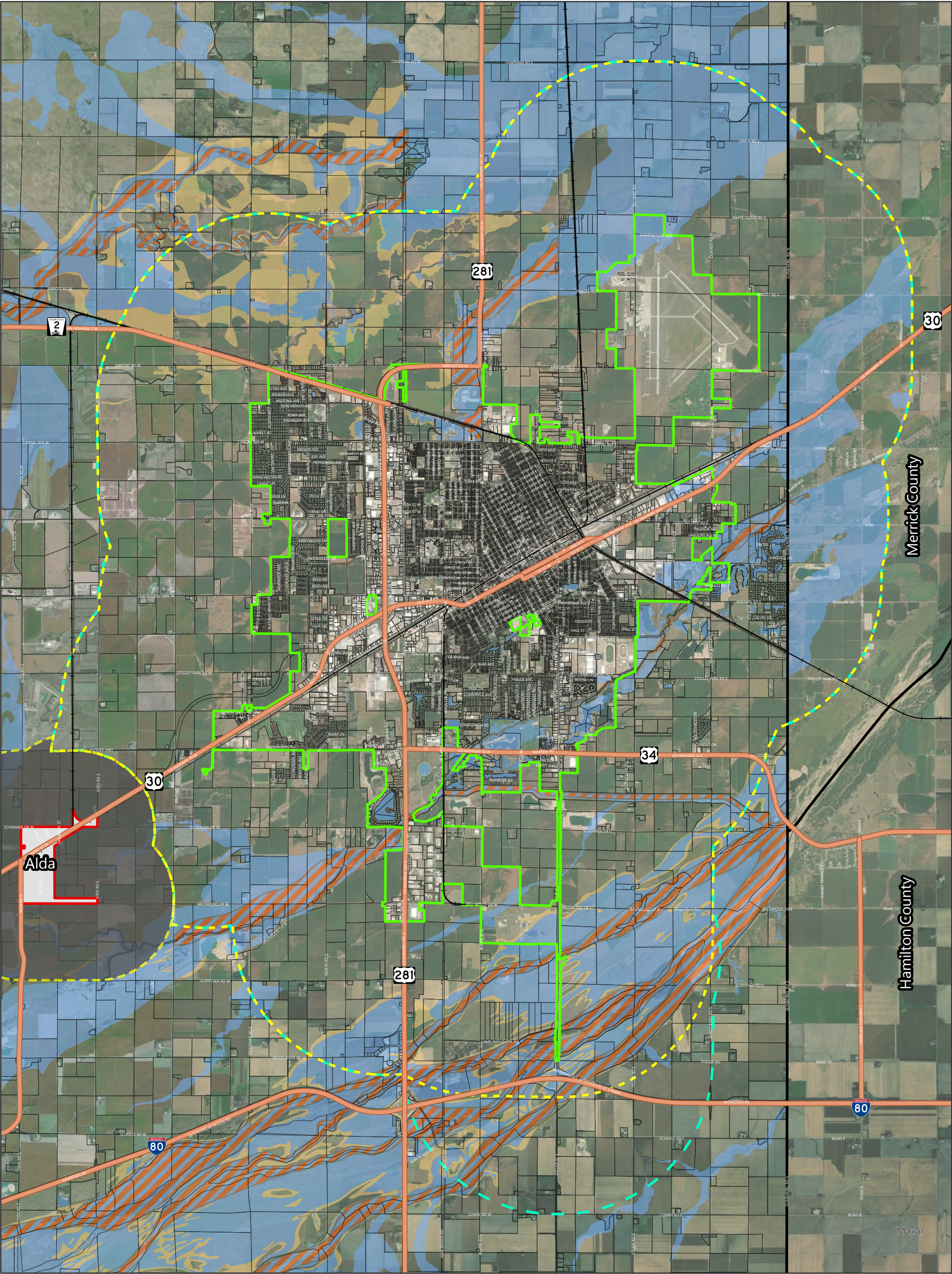
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 11.2: CRITICAL FACILITIES



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 Miles



LEGEND

- 0.1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
- 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard
- Floodway
- Highways
- Railroads
- Grand Island Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Alda Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Grand Island 2-Mile Planning Area
- City Limits
- County Boundaries
- Parcels

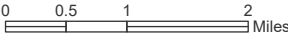
GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 11.3: FLOODPLAIN



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25





INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability sets a focus on economic, environmental, and social equity impacts—the triple bottom line. Resiliency enhances the City's ability to prepare, maintain, and build a more sustainable future.

Urban resilience and sustainability (URS) is a new kind of professional practice incorporating the principles of sustainable development. Planning for sustainable development is a dynamic, democratic process balancing the resources available today and tomorrow.



This chapter presents information on sustainability,

resiliency, environmental resources, and sustainable development metrics. This data, analysis, and implementation strategies are integral to all elements of the comprehensive plan.

SUSTAINABILITY

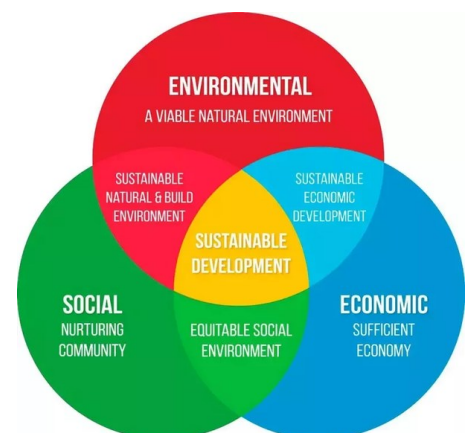
Sustainability is a new way to express an old idea of land stewardship and conservation of resources. Countless generations have built their communities with an eye for their children's grandchildren's future.

The concept of sustainability is expressed in the idea of the triple bottom line—decisions should consider economic, environmental, and social equity impacts (*Brundtland Report*, World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). A viable natural environment, a vital economy,

and a nurturing social community reinforce each other. Balancing these three key elements promotes sustainable development patterns (Figure 12.1).

The American Planning Association (APA) developed two reports on sustainable development, *Sustaining Place*:

Figure 12.1 Sustainable Development Venn Diagram



Source: Quora.com

The Role of the Comprehensive Plan (PAS 567, 2012) and *Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans* (PAS 578, 2015) based on a multi-year task force research project. The reports discuss how comprehensive planning can better align with sustainability principles, then translates general principles into recommended planning practices.

The task force effort produced six principles for consideration:

1. Livable Built Environment
2. Harmony with Nature
3. Resilient Economy
4. Interwoven Equity
5. Healthy Community
6. Responsible Regionalism

Each of these principles appears throughout this comprehensive plan from housing and economic development to land use and transportation systems. Some communities have created specific plans for sustainability and resilience, covering topics such as air and water quality, ecological health, local food and agriculture, energy and buildings, transportation, and economic resilience.

As noted, equity and inclusivity is also essential. The APA report emphasized the need for community participation in the planning process, as well as accountability and evaluation of progress. Plans shouldn't just sit on a shelf—they need to be put into action.

A SYSTEMS APPROACH

Sustainable development requires a systems-based approach to adapt traditional development patterns to the 21st century. Rather than considering each element of the plan—land use and zoning, parks and recreation, public facilities, or transportation infrastructure—as separate silos, a systems approach uses this comprehensive plan to look at the entire community's long-term future.

Planning for sustainability is essentially the long-term view of long-range planning.

"The system-based thinking, analysis, and integration, that has been progressively advanced from process to network to supply chain management to include environmental concerns, is a powerful methodology that could be used for incorporating societal considerations as well." (S.K. Sikdar, "Sustainable Development and Sustainability Metrics" *AIChE Journal*, Vol 49 No 8, August 2003)

Planning for sustainability is essentially the long-term view of long-range planning. While this comprehensive plan is constructed on a 20-year planning horizon, sustainability planning takes the 50-year or

greater view—generations into the future. Not only is this a more comprehensive view of comprehensive planning, but it also should prompt planning participants to think more about possibilities for change rather than how things are currently done.

City leaders could look at incorporating the principles of sustainable development through demonstration projects or creation of an urban resilience and sustainability working group, perhaps as a subcommittee of the Regional Planning Commission. At the very least, an *ad hoc* group could sponsor learning opportunities in sustainability and resilience topics.

Natural Systems

Urban development replaces the natural environment with an urban environment. However, sustainable development conserves and protects natural systems as much as possible.

Grand Island is situated in the Central Great Plains ecosystem, in an area of transition along the Platte River. The City and surrounding area rely mostly on groundwater for domestic water and irrigation. Central Platte Natural Resource District is primarily responsible for protection of groundwater resources in the area.

Green Building Standards

Green building standards and metrics are focused specifically on sustainable development systems. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a widely used sustainable building program,

Figure 12.2 USGBC LEED Cities and Communities Guide



Source: US Green Building Council

created by the US Green Building Council (USGBC) as a leadership standard defining best practices for healthy, high-performing green buildings. LEED certification provides a framework for healthy, highly efficient, and cost-saving green buildings, which offer environmental, social and governance benefits. The number of LEED projects highlights progress toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions, health impacts, and operating costs in buildings.

LEED certification systems have been developed for a variety of situations, from individual building design and construction to neighborhood development and entire cities. LEED for Cities and Communities helps local leaders create and operationalize responsible, sustainable and specific plans for factors that contribute to quality of life—influencing the way future-ready cities and

communities are planned, developed and operated to improve their overall sustainability and quality of life.

LEED for Cities and Communities specifically considers:

- Natural Systems and Ecology
- Transportation and Land Use
- Water Efficiency
- Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Materials and Resources (solid waste)
- Quality of Life
- Innovation
- Regional Priorities

Certification is initiated by an interdisciplinary team who develop a “roadmap” based on performing a gap analysis, setting goals, and drafting an action plan with stakeholder and public engagement. Membership in the US Green Building Council and technical assistance with the certification process is on a fee basis.

Source: www.usgbc.org

RESILIENCY

Resilience is the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties—toughness. Resiliency in sustainable development is demonstrated in the capacity of cities to function so people living and working there survive and thrive no matter the source of stress or shocks on the system (Rockefeller Foundation, City Resilience Index). These stressors may be environmental, economic, or social.

As noted by consultancy McKinsey & Company, “The resilient stance for organizations must be forward-looking, anticipating disruption rather than simply reacting, but continuously learning and amending based on experience” (Resilience for sustainable, inclusive growth, June 7, 2022). As it is said, the only thing that stays the same is change—managing disruption defines resiliency. Crises by their nature disrupt urban development systems along with people’s day-to-day lives. Yet the process of rebuilding creates the opportunity to rebuild better.

Resiliency of the city depends on resiliency of a city’s systems, businesses, institutions, neighborhoods, and individuals to survive, adapt, and thrive in a rapidly changing world. Proper preparation and planning for response to a variety of stress-points can easily translate into more sustainable outcomes. As well, disruptions are likely to have even greater impacts on the city’s most vulnerable populations—more resilient planning, response, and mitigation (as seen in Chapter 11 for natural and man-made hazards) protects all residents of the community.

Future approaches to resiliency must go beyond a defensive stance of risk-avoidance toward growth-oriented strategies. Resiliency will require focusing on creation of flexible systems oriented toward, and adaptable to, quickly changing local, regional, and national conditions.

Figure 12.3 Resiliency Index

Key actions to improve resiliency in sustainable development may include:

- Designing flexibility into infrastructure development and development review
- Building buffers to ensure redundancy—for example, identify potential disruptions to the City's utility distribution networks and mitigate bottlenecks in equipment supply chains.
- Strengthening networks to account for low-risk but potentially high-impact "black swan" events.

Metrics support the practical and efficient implementation of resiliency actions. Yet measuring the value of such actions can be a challenge in itself. New ways to measure and mitigate the largest risks often also offer the best return on reducing more common day-to-day risks as well.

The Rockefeller Foundation assembled a Resiliency Index around four dimensions of resiliency:

- Health and wellbeing: Systems that ensure the health and wellbeing of people living and working in the city.
- Economy and society: The social and financial systems that enable urban populations to live peacefully, and act collectively.
- Infrastructure and Environment: Built and natural systems that provide critical services, protect and connect urban citizens.
- Leadership and strategy: The need for informed, inclusive, integrated and iterative decision making in our cities.



Source: resiliencyindex.com

A HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION

Grand Island can only be a sustainable and resilient community if the city government itself is aligned with the values of sustainable development. Data-driven decision making and continuous improvement will lead to more sustainable and resilient outcomes. Urban resilience demands that cities look holistically at their capacities and their risks, including through meaningful public engagement.

The City of Grand Island should strive to become an efficient, innovative, transparent, effective, and collaborative City government. A responsibly governed, high-performance organization will more easily achieve the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan, and help the residents and employers of Grand Island build a sustainable and resilient community for the future.

BEYOND MITIGATION

As discussed in Chapter 11 Hazard Mitigation, the *Central Platte Natural Resources District Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022)*, approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), provides detailed analysis of natural hazards and local mitigation actions. The specific actions for Grand Island includes evaluating improvements to the local power supply system. Chapter 10 Communications, Utilities, and Energy describes the substantial local and regional electric and natural gas infrastructure, with an overview of the renewable energy situation.

As the hazard mitigation planning process is sponsored by FEMA and requires FEMA approval, the action items are focused on tasks and projects fundable by FEMA. There are many other tasks which can improve Grand Island's resiliency and the sustainability of the community.

Resilience Hubs

Cities across the country are investing in so-called "resilience hubs", retrofitting public buildings, schools, and community centers to support vulnerable populations. Neighborhoods with less wealth and lower household income may lack the resources to prepare for, survive, and recover from natural and man-made disasters—from winter's cold to summer heat. A resilience hub, often outfitted with wind energy or solar power generation and backup battery storage systems (BESS), along with redundant communications networks, can provide a safe harbor in the

storm. These locations can provide traditional storm shelters and food service, but also a place to charge electronic devices, chill life-saving medicines, or simply talk to counselors and fill out paperwork.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION EASEMENTS

Conservation easements have become a popular incentive-based strategy for land conservation. As the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy has noted, "Beyond tax credits, tax deductions, and other public subsidies that provide financial incentive for landowners to enter into conservation partnerships, this phenomenon is fueled by the perception that conservation easements are a win-win strategy in land protection, benefiting both landowners and the environment."

Agricultural easements are a valuable tool for farmers and ranchers, allowing them to exercise private property rights while keeping land in agricultural production. Preservation easements can help protect important and significant sites and structures in the community.

Yet the governing laws and conventions can be problematic. Easements can conserve sensitive lands, yet wildlife and land or water easements can also take

productive farmland out of production.

Easements can also have impacts on tax revenues if the market value of land is reduced. Local school districts and units of government rely on these tax revenues to provide essential services. However, local service providers would face even greater impacts if these sensitive lands were converted to dispersed housing sites demanding the full range of public services.

Review Process

Nebraska Revised States §76-2,111 *et seq.* (Reissue 1997) sets out a process for review of conservation easements under the Conservation and Preservation Easements Act.

- "Conservation Easement" is defined as "an easement, restriction, covenant, or condition...in real property" protecting "natural, scenic, or open condition, assuring its availability for agricultural, horticultural, forest, recreational, wildlife habitat, or open space use, protecting air quality, water quality, or other natural resources..."
- "Preservation Easement" is defined similarly, to protect "historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural aspects of real property..."

§76-2,112(3) requires "each conservation or preservation easement shall be approved by the appropriate governing body." If the property in question is partially or entirely within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) then the City is the governing body for this review.

The process outlined is:

1. The governing body refers the proposed easement to the local planning commission with jurisdiction over the property.
2. The planning commission has 60 days to provide comments regarding the conformity of the easement to the comprehensive plan.
3. The governing body shall receive the comments of the local planning commission.

Approval of a proposed easement may only be denied upon a finding of fact the acquisition is "not in the public interest" when:

1. A comprehensive plan for the area which had been officially adopted and was in force at the time of the conveyance, or
2. Any national, state, regional, or local program furthering conservation or preservation, or
3. any known proposal by a governmental body for use of the land.

Any state agency can accept a conservation or preservation easement after soliciting comments from the local planning commission, without approval by the local governing body.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

These issues require careful consideration of future development and land use impacts, especially in the City's ETJ. Some municipalities have implemented this review process in their zoning regulations, requiring a Conditional Use Permit for recreation,



Pier Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

preservation, conservation, and open space easements. For the purposes of this comprehensive plan, the following review criteria may be considered:

1. While agricultural easements protect and enhance farming and ranching operations and property rights as they currently exist, the ETJ is where the city will need to grow and develop in the future. Easements in the ETJ should be considered carefully for impacts to the future land use pattern in this Grand Island Comprehensive Development Plan.
2. Wildlife and land or water easements generally restrict use of land. While the property owner is voluntarily separating their bundle of private property rights, taking land out of production also impacts future development patterns. Potential impacts of these easements on adjacent property should be reviewed for the public record.

3. The alternative to an easement may be fee simple acquisition by a private non-profit entity or a governmental body, or development of the property. A conservation or preservation easement for a limited period of time may have lesser community impacts than fee simple acquisition.

Review of a conservation easement must be based in a substantial evidentiary record. The planning commission comments must be made in writing.—statute specifies comments, not necessarily a recommendation. As well, the governing body's decision should be supported by evidence received. In the case of a decision to deny acquisition of an easement, there must be a clear statement of reasoning citing the criteria in statute, and how the proposed easement fails to meet the criteria.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT METRICS

There are a variety of potential metrics or indicators of sustainability and sustainable development, across dozens of different measurement and evaluation systems. In general these measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) fall into two “balance sheet” categories—*content indicators* measuring the assets and liabilities of a system, and *performance indicators* measuring the income and expenses of a system.

Sustainable development indicators are generally more holistic than individual measures for any of the three components of the triple-bottom line, looking instead at all three **economic, environmental, and social equity impact** dimensions, as well as resiliency in implementation. More specific indicators should be integrated as close to their sources as possible. These collaborative measures highlight concerns with economic costs, environmental concerns, and health and social impacts on the community.

Further this plan considers existing and potential metrics which are (or can be) measured at the city, county, or metropolitan area level. Many appropriate metrics are only available at the state, regional, or national level. LEED for Cities and Communities, for example, suggests benchmarking performance against national and global standards

These metrics are intended to be iterative diagnostic tools. They

are intended to be evaluated and adjusted as the plan is implemented.

Content Indicators (point in time)

- Population with (at least) a High School Degree / Bachelor's Degree
- Number of “missing middle” housing units—duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters, and townhouses (ACS)
- Acres of City parks and open space
- Miles of City trails
- Renewable energy generation capacity
- Peaking generation capacity available during extreme system demand.
- Share of alternate energy fueled vehicles in City fleet
- Landfill Capacity
- Acres of land in City and ETJ protected by conservation easements
- Number of buildings in City and ETJ protected by preservation easements

Performance Indicators (Yearly)

- Number of new housing units permitted
- Median Gross Rent as share of Household Income
- Median Household Income
- Unemployment Rate
- Crime Rate
- Electricity generated by Renewable Energy sources
- Share of Grand Island Utilities electricity sources by Net Metering
- City buildings average energy use per square foot
- Operational net cost for water production and delivery

- Operational net cost for wastewater treatment
- Municipal solid waste generated
- Share of solid waste diverted from landfill for recycling and composting
- Number of pollution events — air, water, hazardous materials
- Number of permits for construction in the regulated floodplain.
- Share of City staff and elected officials participating in NIMS/ICS training.
- City employee cumulative turnover rate
- LEED Certification level for each new City building/ facility
- Vehicle Miles Traveled (daily per capita)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 12.1

Grand Island grows sustainably, with a focus on the triple-bottom line of economic, environmental, and social equity impacts.

Policies

- 12.1.1 Development projects should demonstrate elements of sustainable development.
- 12.1.2 There are opportunities for the public to learn about sustainability practices in the community.

Actions

- 12.1.3 Organize an urban resilience and sustainability working group.
- 12.1.4 Promote the use of environmentally friendly development practices.
- 12.1.5 Sponsor learning opportunities in sustainability and resilience.
- 12.1.6 Encourage developers to incorporate LEED sustainable building standards in project design and construction.

12.1.7 Minimize urban runoff and encourage use of "green infrastructure" which maximizes stormwater retention and minimizes flooding.

12.1.8 Preserve natural vegetation and land cover.

12.1.9 Review and revise regulations to encourage green roofs, "living walls" (i.e. vine applications) and trees to shade buildings and paving.

12.1.10 Monitor progress toward becoming a more sustainable community.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 12.2

Grand Island develops capacity for resilience to economic, environmental, and social equity stressors.

Policies

- 12.2.1 Development projects should demonstrate elements of resilience .

Actions

- 12.2.2 Design flexibility into infrastructure development and development review.
- 12.2.3 Consider elements of a high-performance organization in City management practices.
- 12.2.4 Consider "resilience hub" projects to support vulnerable populations.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 12.3

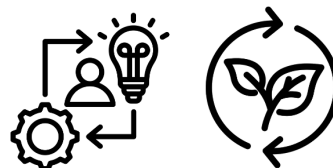
Natural and working landscapes and historic structures are protected from development where appropriate.

Policies

- 12.3.1 Development projects should avoid premature conversion of prime farmlands.
- 12.3.2 New development should appropriately rehabilitate and reuse historic buildings and sites.

Actions

- 12.3.3 Promote a healthy urban forest to enhance the city's environment, air quality, and appearance.
- 12.3.4 Regularly review and update land use regulations for impacts on agricultural operations and structures
- 12.3.5 Consider impacts of conservation easements on future development as well as the environment.



Sustainable Development Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
12.1.1	Development projects should demonstrate elements of sustainable development.	1,8,9	1,5						
12.1.2	There are opportunities for the public to learn about sustainability practices in the community.	1,12	1,5						
12.1.3	Organize an urban resilience and sustainability working group.	1,12	1,5						
12.1.4	Promote the use of environmentally friendly development practices.	1	1						
12.1.5	Sponsor learning opportunities in sustainability and resilience.	1	1						
12.1.6	Encourage developers to incorporate LEED sustainable building standards in project design and construction.	1,9	1,5						
12.1.7	Minimize urban runoff and encourage use of "green infrastructure" which maximizes stormwater retention and minimizes flooding.	1,8,9	1,5						
12.1.8	Preserve natural vegetation and land cover.	1,8,9	1,5						
12.1.9	Review and revise regulations to encourage green roofs, "living walls" (i.e. vine applications) and trees to shade	1,10	1						
12.1.10	Monitor progress toward becoming a more sustainable community.	1	1						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

Sustainable Development Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
12.2.1	Development projects should demonstrate elements of resilience.	1,9	1,5						
12.2.2	Design flexibility into infrastructure development and development review.	1	1						
12.2.3	Consider elements of a high-performance organization in City management practices.	1	1	X					
12.2.4	Consider "resilience hub" projects to support vulnerable populations.	1,12	1,4,5						
12.3.1	Development projects should avoid premature conversion of prime farmlands.	1,9	1,5						
12.3.2	New development should appropriately rehabilitate and reuse historic buildings and sites.	1,9	1,4,5						
12.3.3	Promote a healthy urban forest to enhance the city's environment, air quality, and appearance.	1	1						
12.3.4	Regularly review and update land use regulations for impacts on agricultural	1,10	1						
12.3.5	Consider impacts of conservation easements on future development as	1	1						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax



Land use is the primary focus of the comprehensive plan. The land use element does not regulate land use—it is a general guide for future decision making. The *Grand Island Comprehensive Development Plan* is not regulatory; however, the plan

Chapter 13 is intended to meet the requirements in Neb. Rev. Stat. §19-903(1) that the Comprehensive Plan include: "A land-use element which designates the proposed general distributions, general location, and extent of the uses of land for agriculture, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, education, public buildings and lands, and other categories of public and private use of land".

reflects the community's preferences to guide and plan for development and land use policy.

The Comprehensive Plan—in particular the land use element—plays a fundamental role as the substantive basis for regulations implementing the plan such as zoning, subdivision, and floodplain management. A clear land use element provides a vision for the future and helps mitigate conflicts between different uses of land.

It is essential the Land Use element reflect the needs and preferences of Grand Island's residents and property owners, while being clear about constraints on development. This chapter addresses the statutory requirements of the land use element, describes existing land use, and presents the future land use plan.

LAND USE ELEMENT

The land use element is based on an understanding of the distribution, location, and extent of existing land use. The other elements presented so far in this plan, from demographics to sustainable development, inform the analysis of existing land use to determine recommendations for the future land use plan, annexation, and transportation following this chapter.

The land use element, in essence, establishes the basic policies guiding the physical form of the city, and provides direction on a range of development, conservation, and preservation policy. These land use policies may apply city-wide, to the city and two-mile planning area, or to specific areas within the city.



EXISTING LAND USE

Land in Grand Island and the surrounding area has been developed for many different purposes. Existing land use includes both the use of buildings and parcels of land. The use of land is constantly changing—this plan presents a snapshot in time of existing land use. It is essential to have a solid understanding of existing land use at a point in time to carefully consider future land use policy.

The predominate land use in the majority of cities in the U.S. is residential housing, mostly single-family homes. There are also homes located on agricultural property in the unincorporated area around the city (extraterritorial jurisdiction or ETJ). Grand Island also has several commercial/industrial corridors—along US 30 and the UP railroad through the heart of the city, South Locust south of downtown, and along US 281 on the west side of the city south to I-80.

The Marvin Planning Consultants team analyzed data provided by Grand Island's GIS system to produce base maps of every parcel of land in the city's jurisdiction. After consulting satellite aerial imagery, the team spot-checked locations in the city and extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction. Every attempt was made to assure the Existing Land Use Map is as accurate as possible as of mid-2024.

Table 13.1: City of Grand Island Existing Land Use, 2024

	Acres	Share of Developed Area (acres)	Share of Total Area (acres)
Residential	5,494.6	30.8%	28.1%
Rural Residential	401.6	2.3%	2.1%
Single-Family	4,546.0	25.5%	23.2%
Multi-Family	409.5	2.3%	2.1%
Manufactured Housing	137.5	0.8%	0.7%
Commercial	1,525.9	8.6%	7.8%
Industrial	1,558.3	8.7%	8.0%
Parks/Recreation	695.1	3.9%	0.0%
Public/Institutional	4,829.3	27.1%	24.7%
Transportation/ROW	3,737.4	20.9%	19.1%
Total Developed Land	17,840.6	100.0%	91.2%
Lake/Water	127.6	-	0.7%
Vacant	1,599.9	-	8.2%
Total Area	19,568.0	-	100.0%

EXISTING LAND USE CATEGORIES

The most common land use patterns fall into several general categories. Some parcels may include multiple uses, in which case the primary use or use of the majority of the property is mapped. Some parcels are mixed use, such as apartments over retail storefronts, in which case the primary use is mapped. The use of land is constantly changing. As such, the short-and long-term success of the city requires flexibility while avoiding undue impacts on property rights and property values.

Land use is best described in specific categories providing broad descriptions where numerous businesses, institutions, and structures can be grouped.

For the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, the following land use classifications are used:

- Rural Residential
- Residential Single-Family
- Residential Multi-Family
- Manufactured Housing
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Right-of-Way
- Vacant/Agriculture

Table 13.1 summarizes each type of land use, within City limits.

Residential

The largest amount of land in Grand Island—31% of the developed area and 28% of the total area inside the city limits—is residential land use, and predominately used for single-family homes (Table 13.1).



Downtown Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Overall, over 25.5% of the developed area of the city is limited to single-family homes. These areas include some single-family attached homes (townhouses); however, most are stand-alone detached homes.

As discussed in Chapter Four Housing, a large portion of Grand Island's existing housing stock was constructed in the 1960s and 1970s. The City will want to promote and facilitate maintenance and improvements to the existing housing stock as these buildings age, especially in the harsh Great Plains environment.

Rural Residential

Some areas on the outskirts of the city share characteristics with Rural Residential property in the unincorporated ETJ—larger acreage, and often served by well and/or OWTS (septic systems). These areas may be transitional pending urban infill or stable large-lot neighborhoods.

Multi-Family

Multi-family housing is located throughout the city. Some are individual buildings, but many are part of apartment complexes. This category includes "missing middle" housing units, including fourplexes, cottage courts, and multiplexes. Some units, such as upper-story apartments, may be classified with the primary land use and would not be reflected in this summary.

Manufactured Housing

This category is primarily intended to track established manufactured home parks and subdivisions. As noted in Chapter Four, homes built off-site are defined as "manufactured home" if they meet the HUD Code. The term "mobile home" only covers older units, built prior to 1976,

Many modern manufactured home parks provide land lease spaces to both older mobile

homes (which may no longer be "mobile") and more modern manufactured homes. These locations are an important source of affordable housing.

Commercial

Existing commercial land use includes retail and services facilities, and associated parking lots. This includes both downtown buildings and newer strip-commercial and "big box" development.

In general, commercial uses are centered at several locations:

- Downtown, on either side of the UP railroad west of the BNSF flyover.
- On the west side of town, near the intersection of US 30 and US 281 (older and newer developments).
- South Locust from Fonner Park past US 34.
- South US 281 at I-80 (continuing outside the ETJ in Hall County's jurisdiction).

Some light commercial and office uses fit well into mixed-use neighborhoods providing convenient access to everyday needs. Other commercial uses, like drive-thrus with impacts of noise, lighting, and exhaust, require more careful siting and mitigation of impacts.

As discussed in Chapter Five Economic Development, commercial and industrial users have a variety of needs for use and re-use of existing sites and buildings. In many of these areas, especially near railroad corridors, commercial and industrial uses are sited side-by-side.

Industrial

Industrial land use includes both light and heavy industry, ranging from manufacturing to outdoor storage and salvage yards. Data centers and server farms would be included in this category, as they typically use large amounts of energy and produce noise from constant air-handling equipment operations.

Industrial uses are important job centers. They also tend to have external effects on neighbors, including sight impacts, smells, and other noxious effects. These uses require careful siting to mitigate impacts on infrastructure and adjacent residents and property owners.

Parks/Recreation

Parks and recreation land uses cover public parks, trails, and dedicated open space. Most of these areas are under the care of the Grand Island or Hall County parks departments. Mormon Island State Recreation Area is in both the Grand Island ETJ and Hall County's planning area at I-80 intersection 312.

Public/Institutional

Public and Institutional land use accounts for public property (other than parks and recreation or rights-of-way). Public land use includes city property, as well as county, state, and federal facilities.

Institutional land use includes property typically exempt from taxation, such as churches, as well as non-profit organizations which may or may-not be taxed.

Grand Island's Central Nebraska Regional Airport property is included in this category. (See



Pier Park Entrance
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Chapter 15 Transportation for more information on the airport.)

Transportation/ Right-of-Way

The existing transportation/right-of-way land use category accounts for highway, streets, and road, and railroad rights-of-way.

Vacant

Areas of vacant land without structures or other uses are included in this category, along with structures which would obviously need to be redeveloped prior to occupancy. Some areas, particularly at the edges of the city and in the two-mile planning area, will be used for active agriculture for the foreseeable future.

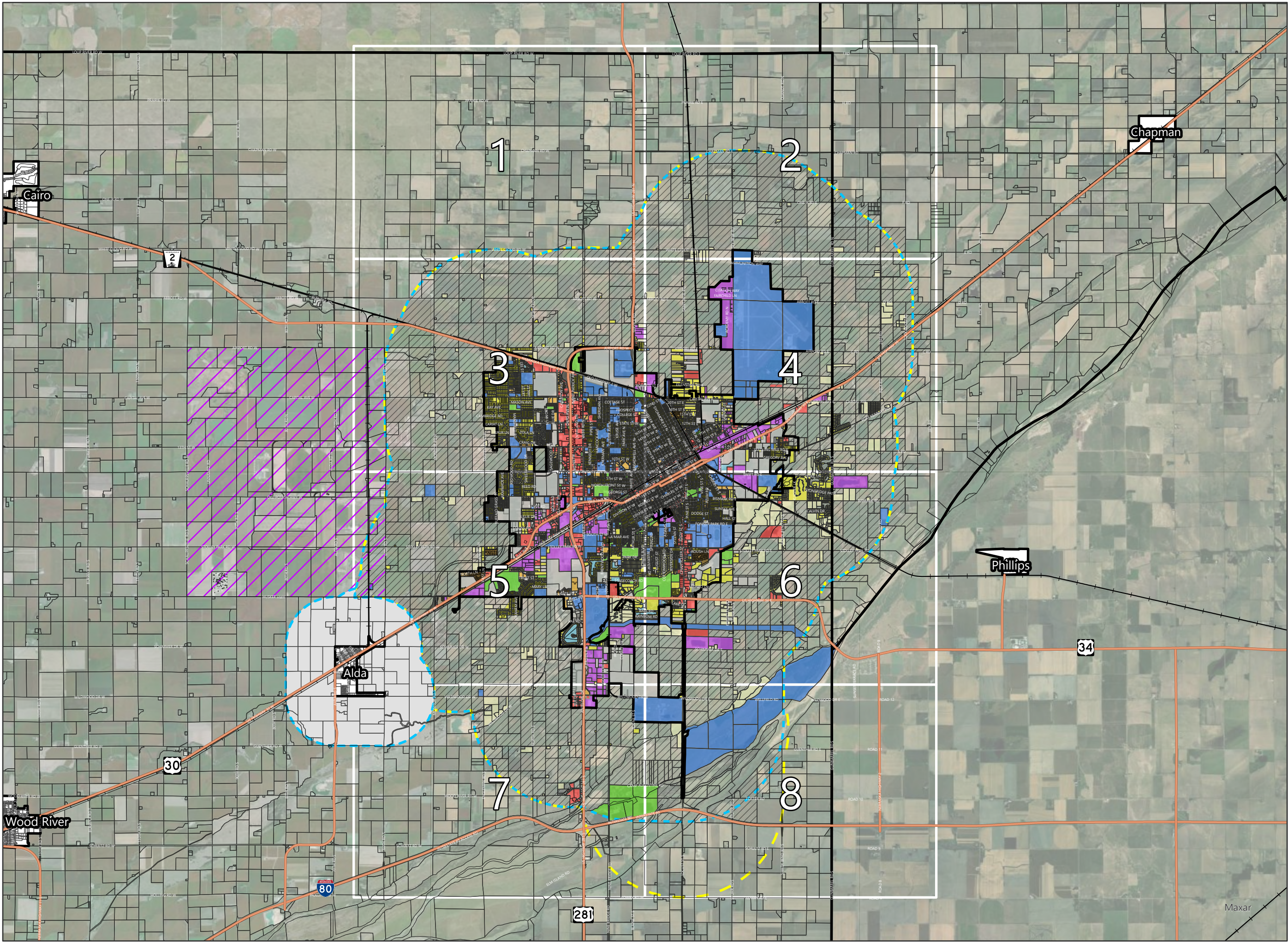
LAND USE CONSTRAINTS

While certain areas are well situated for different types of growth and development, they may also be subject to constraints discussed throughout this plan. These constraints may direct

development elsewhere, or they may simply be issues to be improved and resolved.

Constraints to land use include concerns such as:

- Limited opportunities for in-fill development
- Highway corridors—Interstate and US Highways—pulling commerce out of downtown and other established commercial areas.
- Desire for walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods.
- Limits on mass transit availability and frequency of service.
- Neighborhood impacts of existing and future commercial and industrial uses, including visual blight
- Extent of regulatory floodplains.
- Protecting well fields and wellhead protection areas.
- Cost to extend infrastructure including streets, electricity, water, and sewer service.
- The reach of gravity-fed sewer systems and expense of adding lift stations
- Willingness of adjacent property owners to sell land at prices which the market will support.



GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 13.1: EXISTING LAND USE INDEX MAPS

LEGEND

Agriculture

Vacant

Rural Residential

Single-Family Residential

Multi-Family Residential

Manufactured Housing

Commercial

Industrial

Public/Institutional

Parks/Recreation

Lake/Water

Transportation/ROW

Cornhusker Army Ammo Plant

Highways

Railroads

Parcels

GI ETJ

Alda ETJ

GI 2-Mile Planning Area

City Limits

County Boundaries

N

MPC

MARVIN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Specializing in Municipal, County and Neighborhood Planning

PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)

DATUM: NAD 83

DATE: 1.28.25

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Miles

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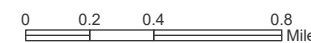
FIG 13.1: EXISTING LAND USE
INDEX MAPS 1-8

LEGEND

-  Agriculture
-  Vacant
-  Rural Residential
-  Single-Family Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Manufactured Housing
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Public/Institutional
-  Parks/Recreation
-  Lake/Water
-  Transportation/ROW
-  Cornhusker Army Ammo Plant
-  Highways
-  Railroads
-  Parcels
-  GI ETJ
-  Alda ETJ
-  GI 2-Mile Planning Area
-  City Limits
-  County Boundaries



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25



INDEX MAPS 1-8



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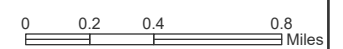
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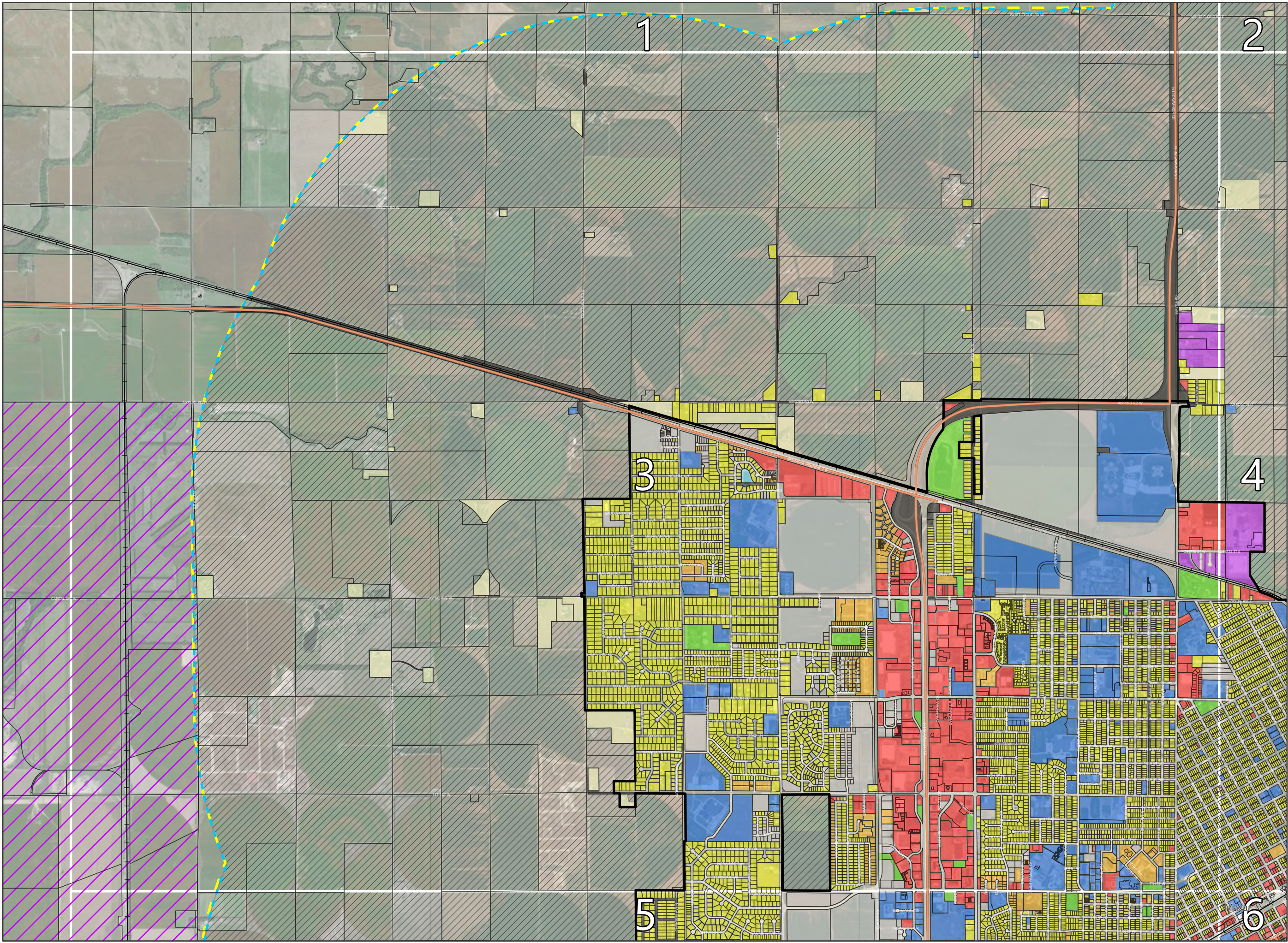
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County Boundaries



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GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 13.3: EXISTING LAND USE

INDEX MAPS 1-8

LEGEND

Agriculture

Vacant

Rural Residential

Single-Family Residential

Multi-Family Residential

Manufactured Housing

Commercial

Industrial

Public/Institutional

Parks/Recreation

Lake/Water

Transportation/ROW

Cornhusker Army Ammo Plant

Highways

Railroads

Parcels

GI ETJ

Alda ETJ

GI 2-Mile Planning Area

City Limits

County Boundaries

N

MPC

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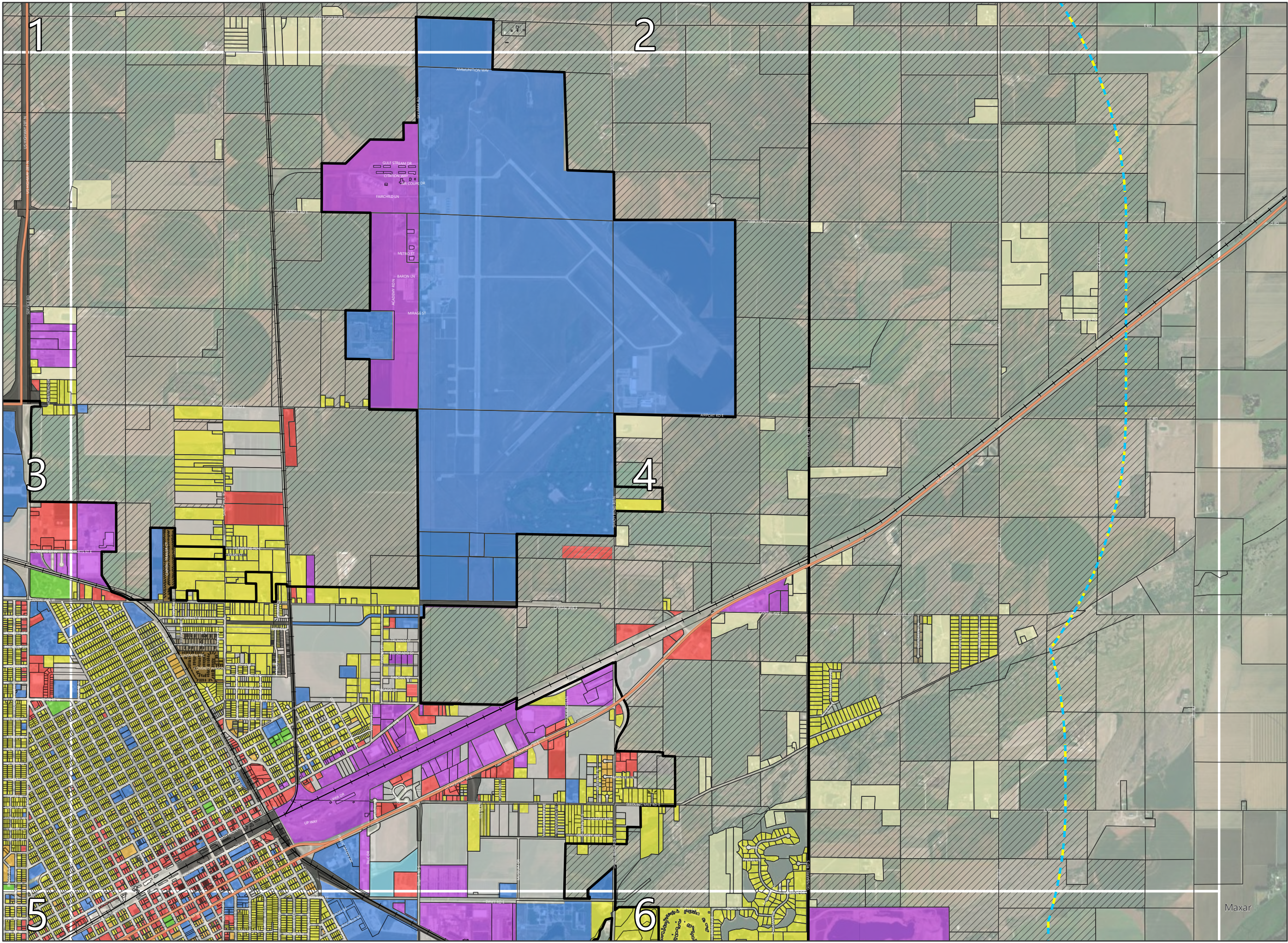
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GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

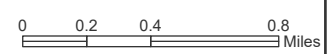
FIG 13.4: EXISTING LAND USE
INDEX MAPS 1-8

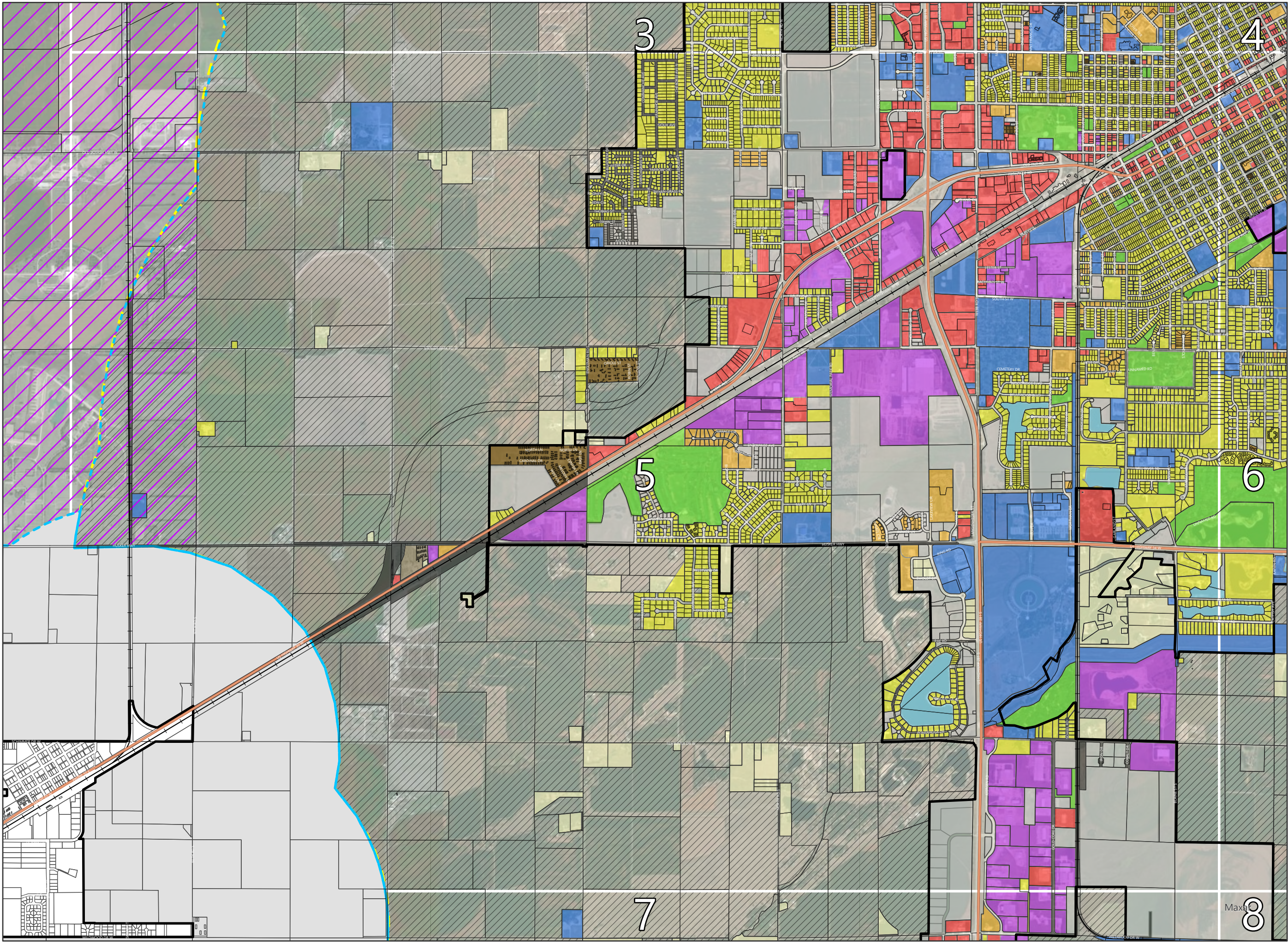
LEGEND

- Agriculture
- Vacant
- Rural Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Manufactured Housing
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Parks/Recreation
- Lake/Water
- Transportation/ROW
- Cornhusker Army Ammo Plant
- Highways
- Railroads
- Parcels
- GI ETJ
- Alda ETJ
- GI 2-Mile Planning Area
- City Limits
- County Boundaries



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GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 13.5: EXISTING LAND USE

INDEX MAPS 1-8

LEGEND

Agriculture

Vacant

Rural Residential

Single-Family Residential

Multi-Family Residential

Manufactured Housing

Commercial

Industrial

Public/Institutional

Parks/Recreation

Lake/Water

Transportation/ROW

Cornhusker Army Ammo Plant

Highways

Railroads

Parcels

GI ETJ

Alda ETJ

GI 2-Mile Planning Area

City Limits

County Boundaries

N

MPC

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PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)

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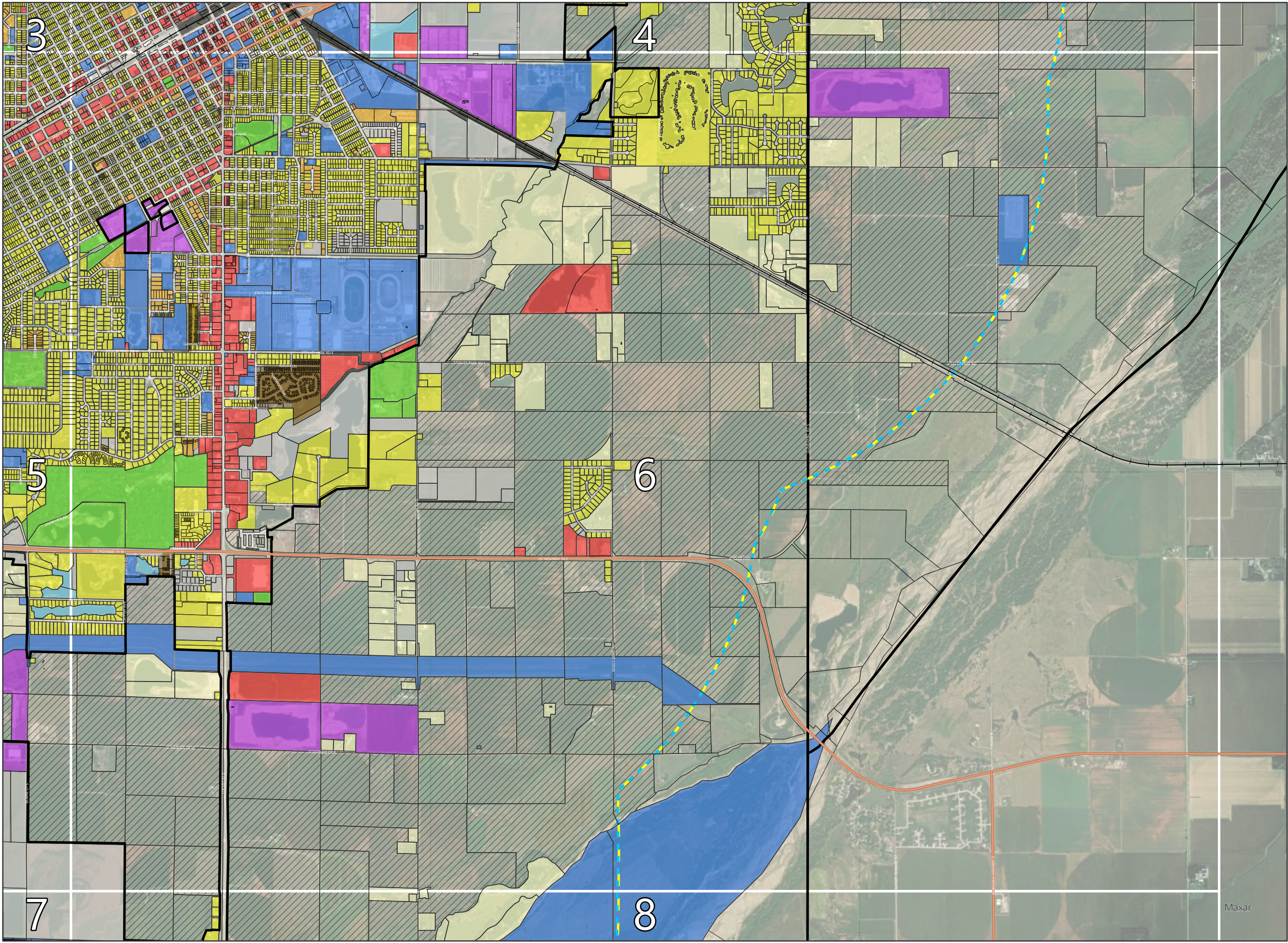
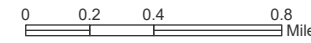


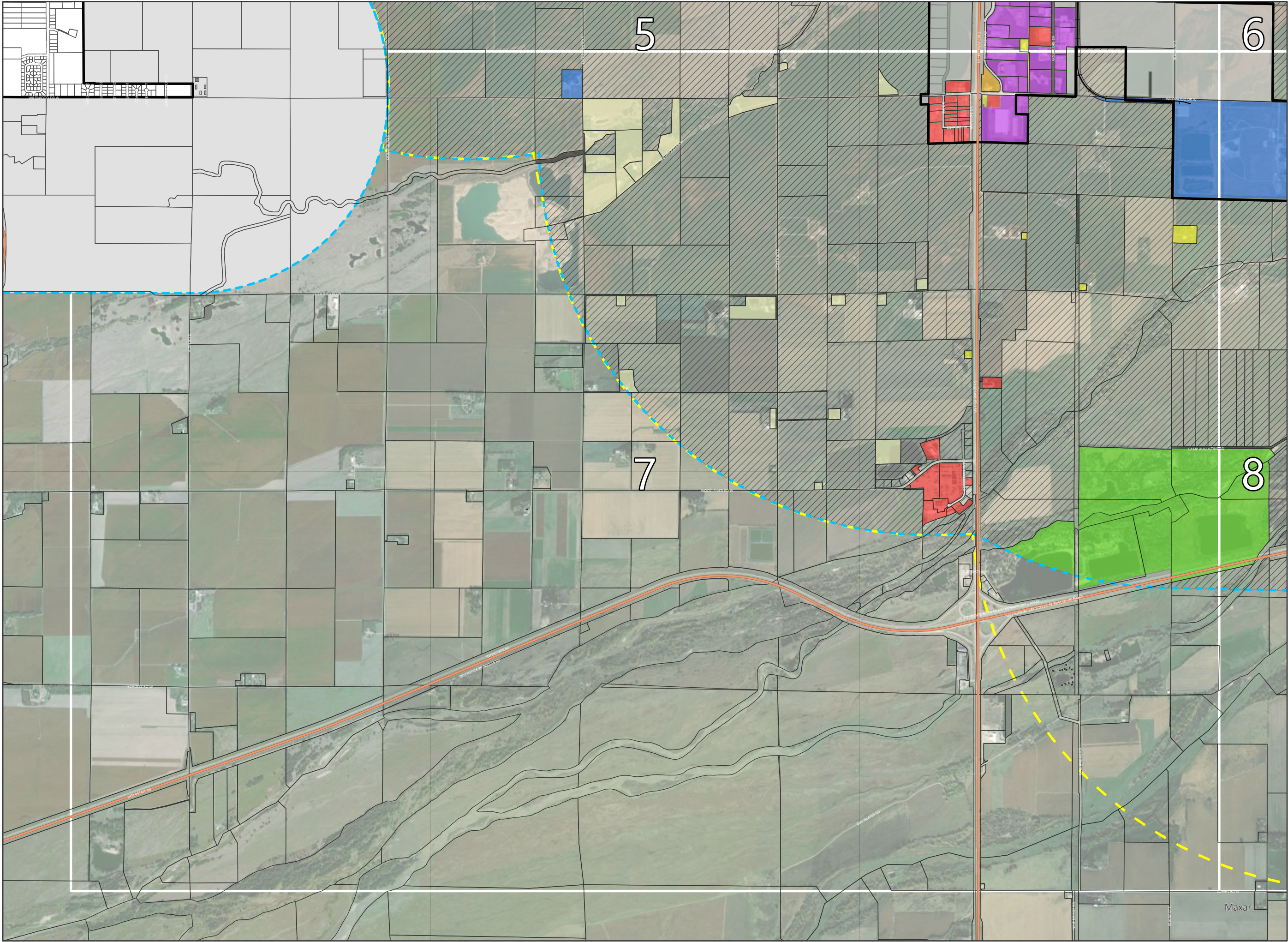
FIG 13.6: EXISTING LAND USE
INDEX MAPS 1-8

- LEGEND**
- Agriculture
 - Vacant
 - Rural Residential
 - Single-Family Residential
 - Multi-Family Residential
 - Manufactured Housing
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Public/Institutional
 - Parks/Recreation
 - Lake/Water
 - Transportation/ROW
 - Cornhusker Army Ammo Plant
 - Highways
 - Railroads
 - Parcels
 - GI ETJ
 - Alda ETJ
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 - City Limits
 - County Boundaries



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GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 13.7: EXISTING LAND USE

INDEX MAPS 1-8

LEGEND

Agriculture

Vacant

Rural Residential

Single-Family Residential

Multi-Family Residential

Manufactured Housing

Commercial

Industrial

Public/Institutional

Parks/Recreation

Lake/Water

Transportation/ROW

Cornhusker Army Ammo Plant

Highways

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LEGEND



FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan is the foundation of land use policy and regulations in the village. The Future Land Use Plan implements the goals and objectives of the residents and property owners of Grand Island and Hall County, as expressed in the *Comprehensive Development Plan*.

The Future Land Use Plan is based upon existing conditions and projected future conditions of the community. It both reflects those trends as well as assisting decision makers in determining the type, direction, and timing of future growth and development.

The Future Land Use Map illustrates the plan. Several factors contribute to this map:

- Current use of land within City jurisdiction, including the full two-mile planning area and adopted extraterritorial jurisdiction or ETJ;
- Desired characteristics of growth;
- Future development patterns;
- Physical character and constraints of the land as well as infrastructure;
- Functional capacity of utilities and public services;
- Population and economic trends affecting the city and county.

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

The Future Land Use Plan is intended to be a general guide to future land uses balancing private sector development with the public interest, so the city can effectively and efficiently

deliver public services. The future land use categories cover areas inside current city limits, future annexation areas, and the extraterritorial jurisdiction.

- AG-Agriculture General
- AOS-Agriculture Open Space
- TA-Transitional Agriculture
- RR-Rural Residential
- LMDR-Low Medium Density Residential
- MDO-Medium Density Residential-Office
- DC-Downtown Commercial
- MUC-Mixed Use Commercial
- GC-General Commercial
- BP-Business Park
- C/I-Commercial/Industrial
- I-Industrial
- Cornhusker AAP
- P/R-Parks and Recreation

There are also overlay categories for certain types of land use or special areas:

- Residential Manufactured Home Park
- Airport Influence Area
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Gateway Corridor
- Locust Commercial Corridor
- Flood Hazard Area
- Wellhead Protection Areas

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

The City of Grand Island, as a city of the first class, has the option to plan for and enforce land use regulations within two miles of their corporate limits (see Neb. Rev. Stat. §17-1001 et seq.):

"...the extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction of a city of the first class shall consist of the unincorporated area two miles beyond and adjacent to its corporate boundaries." The City has not yet extended their Zoning Extra-Territorial

Jurisdiction (ETJ) to the full extent of the two-mile area after recent annexations.

Under statute, the Future Land Use Plan applies to the full two-mile planning area covering the full extent of the area eligible for inclusion in the ETJ. As the City has chosen to exercise their zoning authority over a small er area, in the meantime property in the planning area not zoned by the City is governed under the zoning authority of Hall County.

How to Use the Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map is a graphic representation of the goals and policies of the *Comprehensive Development Plan*, and the Future Land Use Plan in particular. The map is the primary guide for the desired future development and character of the community.

The Future Land Use Map represents the types of land use the City of Grand Island believes it can support over the next 20-years. Much of the city will likely remain as it has grown today. A few areas will grow and change rapidly while other areas grow and change slowly. Areas of change on the map may be ready for development and rezoning in the next year, while other areas will take many years for infrastructure and market demand to catch up.

The Future Land Use Map should be interpreted broadly. While land use categories may follow streets and/or parcel lines, the boundaries are complex and may change over time.

—continued page 231



AG-Agriculture General

General Purpose

This land use district provides for agricultural uses. In this "ag first" area, agricultural activities should be given primary consideration as the highest and best use of land. Non-farm residential development is discouraged. Premature residential development in these areas also puts undue demand on public services.

This area is also intended to conserve and protect the value of open space, wooded areas, streams, mineral deposits, and other natural resources and to protect them from incompatible land uses. This land use district is intended for areas which will not have urban services in the next 20 years.

Compatible Uses

1. By-right Agricultural use, including
 - Principal and accessory ag buildings, crops and grazing
 - Grain, hay, and produce storage
 - Irrigation facilities
 - Wholesale tree farms, plant nurseries, and vineyards
 - Land application of manure within NDEE requirements
2. Livestock operations, within necessary setbacks
3. Commercial uses related to agriculture (such as grain storage and elevators, veterinary clinics, farm machinery repair, fertilizer plants, etc.) when odors and hazards are mitigated
4. Other Limited Commercial and Industrial uses
5. Agri-Tourism activities (i.e. game farms, fishing, vineyards and wineries)
6. Residential dwellings associated with an Agricultural use.
7. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utility substations, wildlife areas, etc.)
8. Religious and educational facilities
9. Commercial sand and gravel mining
10. Renewable Energy facilities (Biomass, geothermal, solar, wind), within performance standards
11. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Residential/Acreages not associated with a farming operation
2. Large commercial development

Issues

1. Groundwater / Rural Water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS/septic)
3. Proximity of conflicting uses such as acreages near livestock confinements, mining, renewable energy facilities, etc.
4. Conservation easements
5. Soil conditions
6. Site drainage and wetlands
7. Flood hazard areas
8. Wellhead protection areas
9. Site access (public roads)

AG-Agriculture General (continued)

Special Policies

1. The Agriculture General (AG) land use area is intended to protect and preserve production agriculture, including both farming and ranching.
2. AG minimum lot sizes should accommodate adequate area for private water and onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS).
3. AG residential densities no more than 4 dwelling units per 1/4 section of land (160 acres) allow room for continued agricultural operations.
4. Given state statutes, regulations need to provide for at least one farm/ranch home per 20 acre parcel.
5. In specific situations, an 80+ acre tract may be split once for a single-family dwelling site (recommended minimum 3-acres unless on water/sewer service).
6. Outside of Prime Farmland, small lot development may be appropriate in limited circumstances as a Planned Unit Development (PUD).
7. Separation distances should be applied to rural acreages and uses with off-site impacts.
8. Odd-shaped parcels such as flag lots should be avoided.





AOS-Agriculture Open Space

General Purpose

The Agriculture-Open Space land use area is intended to protect environmentally sensitive lands, especially along the Platte River corridor, within Grand Island's planning area. The corridor is designed to preserve the scenic quality of the Platte River by restricting certain land use, while allowing development of uses which are compatible with maintaining water quality and scenic qualities.

Compatible Uses

1. By-right Agricultural use, including
 - Principal and accessory ag buildings, crops and grazing
 - Non-commercial grain, hay, and produce storage
 - Irrigation facilities
 - Wholesale tree farms, plant nurseries, and vineyards
2. Livestock operations (smaller scale) within necessary setbacks
3. Small-scale commercial uses related to agriculture, when odors and hazards are mitigated
4. Agri-Tourism activities (such as game farms, farmstands, vineyards and wineries, etc.), and public and private recreational uses.
5. Residential dwellings associated with an Agricultural use.
6. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utility substations, wildlife areas, etc.)
7. Religious and educational facilities
8. Commercial sand and gravel mining
9. Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards

Incompatible Uses

1. Large scale residential development
2. Larger livestock operations which cannot mitigate odor impacts
3. Large commercial development

Issues

1. Groundwater / Rural Water / Municipal water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS/septic)
3. Proximity of conflicting uses such as acreages near livestock confinements, mining, renewable energy facilities, etc.
4. Natural amenities such as trees, ponds, and streams
5. Conservation Easements
6. Soil conditions, site drainage, and wetlands
7. Flood hazard areas
8. Wellhead protection areas
9. Site access (public roads)

Special Policies

1. Lot sizes may vary depending upon the source of potable water and OWTS/sewer service.
2. Residential densities up to 8 dwelling units per 1/4 section of land.
3. In specific situations, an 80+ acre tract may be split once for a single-family dwelling site (recommended min. 3-acres unless on water/sewer service).
4. Cluster developments should be considered and used whenever soils, topography, and natural amenities warrant.
5. Separation distances should be applied to rural acreages and uses with off-site impacts.



TA-Agriculture Transition

General Purpose

The Transitional Agriculture category represents the area where agriculture is protected, but may be limited due to proximity to cities and villages. This land use category is intended for areas outside the City limits in the first mile of the ETJ.

Compatible Uses

1. By-right Agricultural use, including
 - Principal and accessory ag buildings, crops and grazing
 - Non-commercial grain, hay, and produce storage
 - Irrigation facilities
 - Wholesale tree farms, plant nurseries, and vineyards
 - Land application of manure within NDEE requirements
2. Livestock operations (smaller scale) within necessary setbacks
3. Commercial uses related to agriculture (such as grain storage and elevators, veterinary clinics, farm machinery repair, fertilizer plants, etc.) when odors and hazards are mitigated
4. Agri-Tourism activities (such as game farms, farmstands, vineyards and wineries, etc.), and public and private recreational uses.
5. Residential dwellings associated with an Agricultural use.
6. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utility substations, wildlife areas, etc.)
7. Religious and educational facilities
8. Commercial sand and gravel mining
9. Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
10. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Large scale residential development
2. Larger livestock operations which cannot mitigate odor impacts
3. Large commercial development

Issues

1. Groundwater / Rural Water / Municipal water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS/septic)
3. Proximity of conflicting uses such as acreages near livestock confinements, mining, renewable energy facilities, etc.
4. Natural amenities such as trees, ponds, and streams
5. Conservation Easements
6. Soil conditions
7. Site drainage and wetlands
8. Flood hazard areas
9. Wellhead protection areas
10. Site access (public roads)

Special Policies

1. Lot sizes may vary depending upon the source of potable water and OWTS/sewer service.
2. Residential densities up to 8 dwelling units per 1/4 section, with recommended 3-acre minimum lot size.
3. Cluster developments should be considered and used whenever soils, topography, and natural amenities warrant.
4. Separation distances should be applied to rural acreages and uses with off-site impacts.





RR-Rural Residential

General Purpose

The Rural Residential land use category represents areas in the City's planning area where non-farm small lot residential development may be appropriate. There may also be areas which are, for demonstrable reasons, not well-suited to agriculture and which are also not constrained by soils or floodplains. These areas should be designed as clustered developments to conserve agricultural land and open space. Several different zoning districts may be appropriate for this land use area.

Compatible Uses

1. Residential development
2. Ag production (small scale)
3. Agri-Tourism activities (such as farmstands, wineries, etc.)
4. Recreation facilities, including golf courses.
5. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utility substations, etc.)
6. Religious and educational facilities
7. Home occupations
8. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards

Incompatible Uses

1. Major agricultural operations
2. Livestock operations
3. Large commercial development
4. Industrial development

Issues

1. Groundwater / Municipal water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic)
3. Proximity to existing livestock facilities and/or industrial sites
4. Natural amenities such as trees, ponds, and streams
5. Conservation easements
6. Site drainage and wetlands
7. Flood hazard areas
8. Wellhead protection areas
9. Site access (public roads)

Special Policies

1. Lot size may vary depending upon the source of drinking water and OWTS/sewer service.
2. A minimum lot size of 3-acres is recommended unless connected to municipal services.
3. Cluster development should be considered whenever soils, topography, and natural amenities warrant.
4. Greater density may be achievable with a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

IMDR—Low-Medium Density Residential

General Purpose

The Low-Medium Density Residential land use district includes existing and new residential suburban neighborhoods with a mix of single-family detached and attached dwellings on larger-sized lots, as well as tree-lined medium density neighborhoods, with supporting community facilities. Streets are paved with sidewalks, typically with curb and gutter, or vegetated drainage swales in less dense areas. Several different zoning districts may be appropriate for this land use area, including LLR inside city limits, R-1, R-2, and R-3.

Compatible Uses

1. Residential single-family dwellings (attached and detached)
2. Missing Middle residential development (cottage court, townhouses, fourplex)
3. Medium-scale multi-family residential development
4. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
5. Small-scale mixed use development
6. Public facilities (fire stations, public utilities, community centers, etc.)
7. Religious and Educational uses and structures
8. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards

Incompatible Uses

1. Industrial uses

Issues

1. Off-site impacts—visual, noise odors, runoff
2. Traffic and site access
3. Natural amenities such as trees and waterways
4. Topography and drainage
5. Municipal water and sewer availability
6. Sidewalks and multi-modal accessibility

Special Policies

1. Minimum lot size ranges between 7,000 and 10,000 square feet with public water and sewer services—effective residential density ranging from four to about 12 dwelling units per acre.
2. Density may be increased for small lot development.
3. Cluster development should be considered with community well and OWTS if municipal services are not yet extended.





MDO—Medium Density Residential-Office

General Purpose

The Medium Density Residential-Office (MDO) land use district includes both existing and new residential neighborhoods with a mix of dwelling types on smaller lots or shared lots (multiple buildings on one site), with supporting community facilities. It is intended to provide residential homesites and convenient mix of uses in walkable neighborhoods. Streets are paved with sidewalks, curb, and gutter. Several different zoning districts may be appropriate for this land use area, such as R-3, R-3SL, R-4, or R-O, and similar districts/overlays.

Compatible Uses

1. Residential single-family dwellings (attached and detached)
2. Missing Middle residential development (cottage court, townhouses, fourplex, live-work space)
3. Multi-family residential development
4. Boarding and lodging houses
5. Manufactured home park
6. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
7. Residential care facilities
8. Mixed-use development
9. Limited office and services uses.
10. Public facilities (such as fire stations, public utilities, community centers, etc.)
11. Religious and Educational uses and structures
12. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards

Incompatible Uses

1. Industrial uses

Issues

1. Off-site impacts—visual, noise odors, runoff
2. Traffic and site access
3. Natural amenities such as trees and waterways
4. Topography and drainage
5. Municipal water and sewer service must be available
6. Sidewalks and multi-modal accessibility

Special Policies

1. Minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet —effective residential density of over 12 dwelling units per acre.
2. Public water and sewer services required.
3. Density may be increased for small lot development.
4. Creative development projects should be encouraged.

DC—Downtown Commercial

General Purpose

The Downtown Commercial land use area is provides for commercial and mixed-use development, in the original heart of Grand Island. Downtown is distinguished by the predominance of substantial brick, stone, and steel buildings, typically of two or more stories, built to the sidewalk at the front lot line. Downtown Grand Island includes both the Railside and 4th Street corridors along the UP railroad line, between Clark Street and the BNSF railroad, with a core of light industrial and warehouse property adjacent to both railroads.

Compatible Uses

1. Commercial retail and services uses, providing goods and services to the local community and region.
2. Wholesaling, with sufficient buffers and site review
3. Mixed use residential development with sufficient buffers and site review, particularly on the second or higher floor
4. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utility substations, community centers, etc.)
5. Religious and educational uses and structures
6. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
7. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Industrial uses
2. Surface parking lots
3. New single-family residential development

Issues

1. Groundwater / Municipal water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic)
3. Topography
4. Site drainage and wetlands
5. Flood hazard areas
6. Wellhead protection areas
7. Site access (public roads)
8. Need to buffer incompatible uses to mitigate off-site impacts (noise, smell, traffic, visual blight)
9. Off-site commercial advertising (billboards) may lead to blight conditions.

Special Policies

1. No minimum lot sizes or setbacks recommended, and tallest practical building heights permitted.
2. Redevelopment is encouraged for historic residential, commercial, and institutional structures, within appropriate historic guidelines.
3. Developments of one acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
4. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.





MUC—Mixed Use Commercial

General Purpose

The Mixed-Use Commercial land use area is intended to provide for a mix of commercial and residential uses, within and between development projects. Mixed-use areas are conveniently located to meet the daily retail and service needs of nearby residents, and often serve as a buffer zone. These areas typically are located along arterial and collector streets and roads. Several different zoning districts may be appropriate for this land use area, such as R-3, R-3SL, R4, R-O, and B1, or as part of a planned development.

Compatible Uses

1. General commercial uses, providing goods and services to local communities
2. Offices
3. Mixed use residential development with buffers
4. Public facilities (such as fire stations, community centers, etc.)
5. Religious and educational uses and structures
6. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
7. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Industrial uses
2. Auto-oriented uses
3. Single-family residences

Issues

1. Groundwater / Municipal water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic)
3. Topography
4. Site drainage and wetlands
5. Flood hazard areas
6. Wellhead protection areas
7. Site access (public roads)
8. Need to buffer incompatible uses to mitigate off-site impacts (noise, smell, traffic, visual blight)
9. Off-site commercial advertising (billboards) may lead to blight conditions.

Special Policies

1. Minimum lot sizes based upon adequate space for vehicular movement, parking, and drinking water/wastewater treatment systems.
2. Developments of one acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
3. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.
4. Pre-existing cropping and general agricultural use out in the county typically continues until property is ready to develop.

GC—General Commercial

General Purpose

The General Commercial land use district provides for higher-traffic commercial uses. This district is intended to provide for commercial and mixed-use development with visibility on Collector and Arterial roads. Several different zoning districts may be appropriate for this land use area, such as B-2, B-3, or TD zones.

Compatible Uses

1. Big box and stand-alone commercial retail and services developments, including shopping malls and warehouse clubs
2. Accommodations (lodging) and food/beverage services (indoors/outdoors)
3. Arts, entertainment, and recreation
4. Auto-oriented uses (such as auto sales or repairs, fuel stations, etc.)
5. Business and professional offices
6. Mixed-use development
7. Public facilities (such as fire stations, public utilities, community centers, etc.)
8. Religious and Educational uses and structures
9. Wireless telecommunication facilities
10. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
11. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

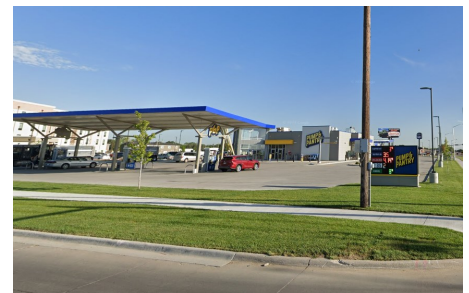
1. Single-family residential development
2. Outdoor storage
3. Heavy Industrial development

Issues

1. Off-site impacts—visual, noise odors, runoff
2. Traffic and site access, and parking
3. Municipal water and sewer availability and connections
4. Flood hazard areas
5. Sidewalks and multi-modal accessibility
6. Off-site commercial advertising (billboards) may lead to blight conditions.
7. Secondary impacts of adult entertainment uses

Special Policies

1. Effective minimum lot area should be based upon adequate space for vehicular movement and parking.
2. Highway corridor development should provide higher quality site and building design.
3. Developments of one acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
4. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.
5. Screening should be provided between residential and commercial/ industrial property.
6. Landscaping should be provided along streets and roads, and in parking lots.
7. Limit new access along arterial streets and roads.





BP—Business Park

General Purpose

The Business Park land use district is intended to accommodate a flexible blend of commercial, wholesale, and light industrial uses, while minimizing potential conflicts. Development along highway corridors should have higher design standards, while providing productive use of the land. This area is intended to be implemented through the ME Industrial Estates zoning district.

Compatible Uses

1. Light manufacturing, warehousing, self-storage
2. Offices associated with business, manufacturing, and warehousing
3. Freight terminals, truck and trailer storage, or bus garages
4. Heavy manufacturing or materials processing, with review
5. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utilities, community centers, etc.)
6. Religious and Educational uses and structures
7. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
8. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Hazardous uses
2. Residential development, unless properly buffered or as studio space.

Issues

1. Groundwater / Municipal water availability and connections
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic) or connection to municipal sewer system
3. Natural amenities such as trees, ponds, and streams
4. Site drainage and wetlands
5. Flood hazard areas
6. Wellhead protection areas
7. Site access to Arterial and Collector roads
8. Billboards may lead to blight conditions.

Special Policies

1. Minimum lot size based upon adequate space for vehicular movement, parking, and drinking water/wastewater treatment.
2. Developments of one acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
3. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.
4. Limit new access along arterial roads and highways.
5. Landscaping should be provided along front yards, especially along Arterial roads.

C/I—Commercial/Industrial

General Purpose

The Flex (Commercial/Industrial) land use district is intended to accommodate a flexible blend of agricultural, commercial, and light industrial uses, while minimizing potential conflicts. While development along highway corridors should have higher design standards, development in this land use area should be focused on productive use of the land rather than aesthetics. This area may be appropriate for the current Mi-1 Light Manufacturing or M-3 Mixed-Use Manufacturing zones.

Compatible Uses

1. Agricultural uses, including farm buildings, storage, and irrigation
2. Commercial uses serving the traveling public (i.e. truck stops, gas stations, auto sales and repair, restaurants, lodging)
3. Light manufacturing, warehousing, self-storage
4. Commercial grain storage and processing, bulk fertilizer and fuel plants, livestock auction barns, veterinary clinics, etc. when off-site impacts and hazards are mitigated
5. Farm machinery and vehicle sales and service
6. Agri-Tourism activities (such as farmstands, vineyards, etc.)
7. Existing residential uses
8. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utilities, community centers, etc.)
9. Religious and Educational uses and structures
10. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
11. Off-site commercial advertising (billboards)
12. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Hazardous uses
2. Residential development, unless properly buffered or as studio space.

Issues

1. Groundwater / Municipal water availability and connections
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic) or connection to municipal sewer system
3. Natural amenities such as trees, ponds, and streams
4. Site drainage and wetlands
5. Flood hazard areas
6. Wellhead protection areas
7. Site access to Arterial and Collector roads
8. Billboards may lead to blight conditions.

Special Policies

1. Minimum lot size based upon adequate space for vehicular movement, parking, and drinking water/wastewater treatment.
2. Developments of one acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
3. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.
4. Limit new access along arterial roads and highways.
5. Minimize site design standards to maximize use intensity.
6. Uses should be better able to mitigate impacts on residents than those in heavy industrial areas.





I—Industrial

General Purpose

The Industrial land use area is intended to provide for industrial and wholesale land use countywide. These uses tend to have the potential for impacts on adjacent and area property, including hazardous materials. Light or heavy industrial zoning districts may be appropriate in this land use area. This area is most appropriate for the M-2 Heavy Manufacturing Zone and similar uses and districts.



Compatible Uses

1. Manufacturing and warehousing (including value-added agricultural processing)
2. Commercial grain storage and services (such as at locations along active and historic rail corridors)
3. Gravel, sand, and dirt stockpiling, processing, and batching plants
4. Auto-oriented uses (such as auto sales or repairs, fuel stations, etc.)
5. General commercial uses, including contractors' yards, with potential for impacts on adjacent property
6. Railroad-related facilities
7. Public facilities (such as road maintenance storage, fire stations, public utility substations, etc.)
8. Religious and higher education uses and structures, with limitations
9. Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
10. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

1. Residential development
2. Public assembly uses subject to industrial hazards

Issues

1. Groundwater / Municipal water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic)
3. Topography
4. Site drainage and wetlands
5. Flood hazard areas
6. Wellhead protection areas
7. Site access (public roads)
8. Need to buffer incompatible uses to mitigate off-site impacts (noise, smell, traffic, visual blight)
9. Off-site commercial advertising (billboards) may lead to blight conditions.

Special Policies

1. Minimum lot sizes based upon adequate space for vehicular movement, parking, and drinking water/wastewater treatment systems.
2. Developments of one acre or more may be required to meet the standards of NPDES permitting.
3. Developments which create more than a 5% increase in runoff may be required to construct a detention basin to control runoff.
4. Cropping and general agricultural use in unincorporated areas typically continues until property is ready to develop.
5. Caretaker's dwelling units may be appropriate.



Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant (CAAP)

General Purpose

The CAAP land use area is intended to maintain lands in predominately agricultural use, yet allow for limited uses in accordance with the Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant (CAAP) Comprehensive Reuse Plan. Ranch and farm dwellings are not allowed due to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concerns with the CAAP site. Several different zoning districts may be appropriate in this land use area, including current AG-SC Special Agriculture/Conservation Zone, AG-SE Special Agriculture/Events Zone, AG-SI Special Agriculture/Industrial Zone, and SRC-Special Recreation/Conservation Zone.

The City of Grand Island's Heartland Public Shooting Park is located in the CAAP land use area.

Compatible Uses

1. By-right Agricultural use, including
 - Principal ag buildings, and crop and grazing lands
 - Non-commercial grain, hay, and produce storage
 - Irrigation facilities
 - Wholesale tree farms, plant nurseries, and vineyards
 - Land application of manure within NDEE requirements
2. Livestock operations within necessary setbacks
3. Commercial uses related to agriculture (such as grain storage and elevators, veterinary clinics, farm machinery repair, fertilizer plants, etc.) when odors and hazards are mitigated
4. Manufacturing, processing, fabrication, research, warehousing, storage, and wholesaling, where designated in the CAAP Comprehensive Reuse Plan.
5. Railroad-related facilities
6. Public facilities (such as groundwater treatment and contaminated soil remediation facilities, etc.)
7. Low-impact recreation uses
8. Special Events Facilities
9. Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards
10. Adult entertainment where appropriate

Incompatible Uses

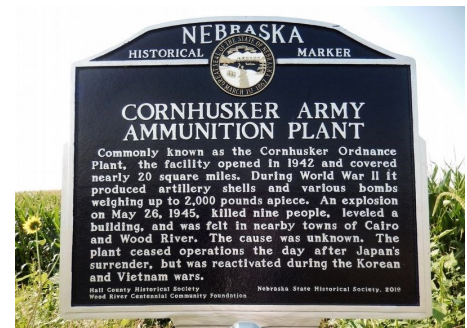
1. Residential development

Issues

1. Domestic water availability
2. Suitability for onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS/septic)
3. Proximity to existing livestock confinements, mining, renewable energy facilities, etc.
4. Site drainage and wetlands
5. Flood hazard areas
6. Site access (public roads)

Special Policies

1. Lot sizes shall remain large to accommodate requirements of the CAAP Comprehensive Reuse Plan.
2. Caretaker's dwelling may be appropriate for short-term use at the Heartland Shooting Park.





P/R—Parks/Recreation

General Purpose

The Parks and Recreation land use district provides for parks and recreation land uses. In the unincorporated county, these tend to be larger tracts such as wildlife management areas. Cemeteries and some other passive recreation and drainage facilities are included in this category.

Compatible Uses

1. Local and County parks and recreation areas
2. Golf courses and accessory uses
3. Non-profit conservation lands
4. State and Federal recreation and wildlife management areas.

Incompatible Uses

1. Large commercial development
2. Industrial development

Issues

1. Conservation easements may have long-term impacts on property tax revenues.

Special Policies

1. Proposals for conversion of park or recreation lands for other uses must provide ample opportunities for public input and consideration of public costs and benefits.



Residential Manufactured Home Park (Overlay)

General Purpose

The Residential Manufactured Home Park land use district includes both existing mobile home parks and new manufactured home communities, with supporting community facilities. It is intended to encourage long-term provision of land-lease and fee-simple lots for affordable housing.

Compatible Uses

1. Manufactured home park and supporting facilities
2. Residential single-family dwellings, meeting building code or HUD code
3. Older pre-HUD mobile homes, with proper maintenance.
4. Missing Middle residential development (such as cottage court, townhouses, duplex, fourplex)
5. Public facilities (such as fire stations, public utilities, community centers, etc.)
6. Religious and Educational uses and structures
7. On-Site Renewable Energy facilities, within performance standards

Incompatible Uses

1. Industrial uses

Issues

1. Off-site impacts—visual, noise odors, runoff
2. Traffic and site access
3. Natural amenities such as trees and waterways
4. Topography and drainage
5. Municipal water and sewer service must be available
6. Sidewalks and multi-modal accessibility

Special Policies

1. Manufactured home communities should be of adequate size for home sites, access, and amenities.
2. Individual home sites should be of adequate size for setting manufactured homes, with parking, green space, and buffers between units.
3. Multi-modal and auto access within parks shall be designed with traffic-calming techniques, keeping in mind the need to move housing units to and from sites.
4. Manufactured Home Parks and Subdivisions shall develop not less than 10% of the space as recreational areas easily accessible to all park residents, such as playgrounds, recreation buildings, swimming pools, storm shelters, etc.
5. Campgrounds may be appropriate with sufficient buffering, after public review and approval.
6. Public water and sewer services required.





Airport Hazard Area (Overlay) *not mapped*

General Purpose

Airport hazard areas recognize the need to protect aircraft and land use in airport approach paths. This area is identified to inform zoning and land use development decisions.

As noted in Chapter 15 Transportation, Central Nebraska Regional Airport (GRI) is located within the City of Grand Island—this hazard area represents the controlled space beyond the City ETJ. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Nebraska Statutes establish requirements for construction near airports.

Compatible Uses

1. Determined by underlying zoning
2. Uses which can coexist with aviation noise and navigation airspace (14 CFR Part 77 "imaginary surfaces")

Incompatible Uses

1. Towers and other large structures with the potential to create hazards to aircraft.
2. Visual obstructions such as open mining which produce dust, or uses creating glare and light emissions (including LED-illuminated billboards)
3. Wildlife and bird attractants
4. Residential development
5. Dense commercial development



Neighborhood Commercial (Overlay) *not mapped*

General Purpose

The Neighborhood Commercial future land use category is intended to establish an overlay to enable small-scale commercial development serving local neighborhoods. This overlay is appropriate for the intersections of arterial and collector roads. In the tradition of the neighborhood corner store or cafe, these developments should be located as business clusters rather than as strip malls.

Compatible Uses

1. Determined by underlying zoning, with limitations.

Incompatible Uses

1. Outdoor storage.
2. Storage and use of hazardous materials, such as gasoline, pesticides, and chemicals.

Issues

1. New development shall meet higher design standards.
2. Site design shall direct primary vehicular access to Arterial and collector streets, reducing traffic on adjacent local streets and alleys.

Gateway Corridor (Overlay) *not mapped*

General Purpose

The Gateway Corridor is intended to establish development criteria for entrances to the city. These areas are generally one-half mile wide centered along US Highway 281 south of Schimmer Drive and South Locust Street south of US Highway 34.

Compatible Uses

1. Determined by underlying zoning, with limitations.
2. New development providing quality design and construction.

Incompatible Uses

1. Not applicable.

Issues

1. New development shall meet higher design standards.
2. New residential development along an Arterial road (or associated frontage road) shall meet landscape and site design standards, except in agricultural zones.



Locust Commercial Corridor (Overlay) *not mapped*

General Purpose

The Locust Commercial Corridor is intended to establish an overlay for increased front setbacks, landscaping, and higher standards for certain uses along the South Locust Arterial Corridor between US Highway 34 and Fonner Park. This Overlay is designed to work in tandem with the B-2AC Land Use District.

Compatible Uses

1. Determined by underlying zoning, with limitations.

Incompatible Uses

1. Outdoor storage.
2. Storage and use of hazardous materials, such as gasoline, pesticides, and chemicals.

Issues

1. New development shall meet higher design standards.
2. Site design shall direct primary vehicular access to Arterial streets, reducing traffic on adjacent non-Arterial streets and alleys. Frontage and/or Backage streets may be necessary.





Flood Hazard Areas (Overlay) Figure 11.3

General Purpose

Flood Hazard Areas represent the regulatory floodplain as designated on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), discussed in Chapter 11 Hazard Mitigation. Developers and residents should be aware flooding can (and does) occur outside of the mapped flood hazard area.

Compatible Uses

1. Determined by underlying zoning, in accordance with the adopted floodplain management ordinance
2. Passive parks, recreation, and open space
3. Drainage and stormwater impoundments

Incompatible Uses

1. Damage-prone development susceptible to damage by flooding or flood-related hazards.
2. Storage and use of hazardous materials, such as gasoline, pesticides, and chemicals.
3. Development which would impede water flow in the effective floodway.

Issues

1. New construction and substantial improvement requires structures to be brought into conformance with FEMA standards, as specified in the floodplain management ordinance.
2. Agricultural structures may be treated differently than residential and commercial structures.



Wellhead Protection Areas (Overlay) Figure 10.3

General Purpose

Wellhead Protection Areas are established for the protection of public water supplies. These areas are identified to inform zoning and land use development decisions.

As noted in Chapter 12, nine entities in Hall County have an approved Wellhead Protection Plan (WHP), as of 2024:

- Village of Alda
- Village of Cairo
- Village of Doniphan
- City of Grand Island
- City of Wood River
- Prairie West Mobile Home Park

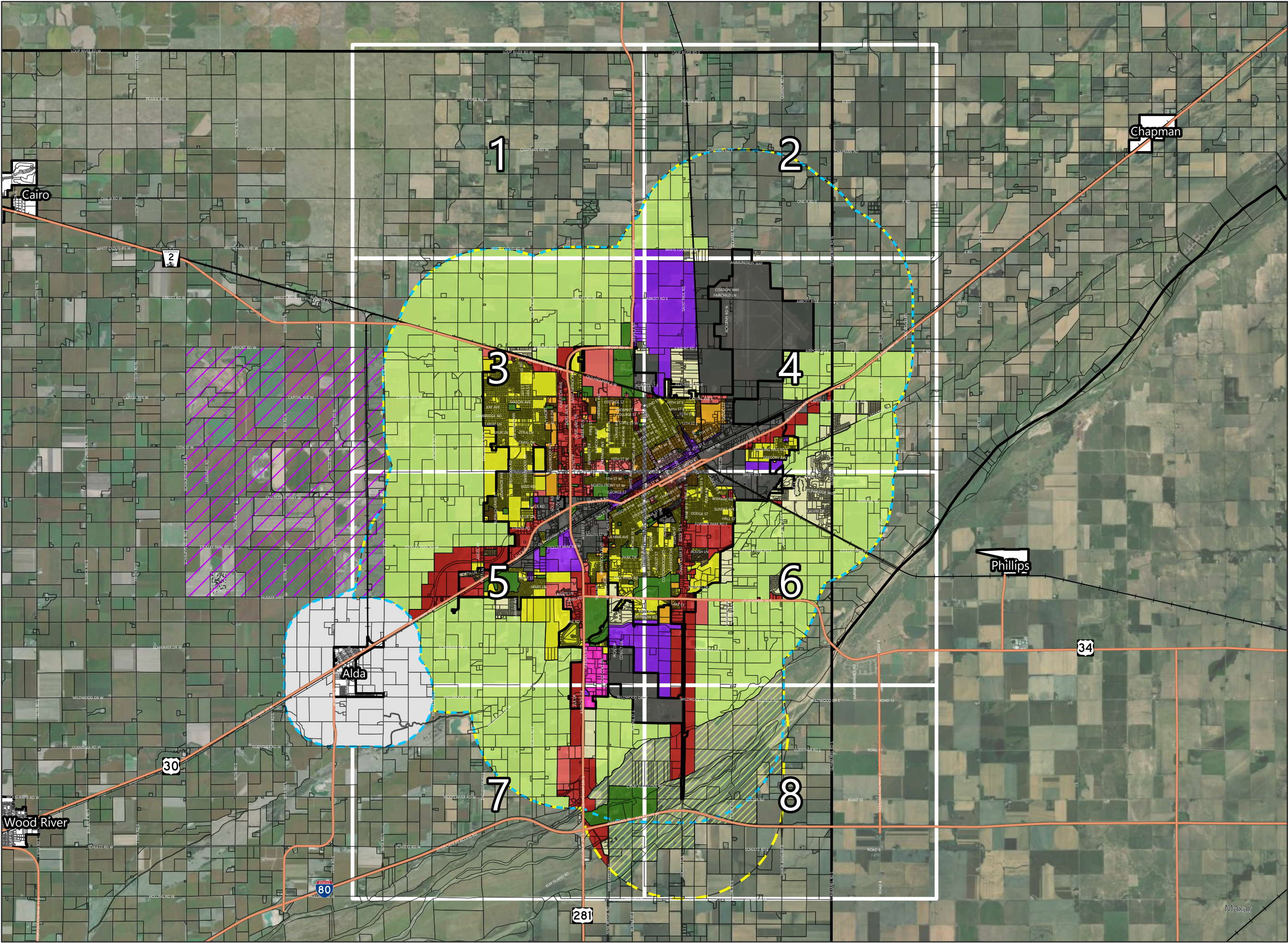
Each municipality or other publicly-owned water supply system should execute an interlocal agreement with Hall County for administration of Wellhead Protection Overlay District regulations in Hall County's jurisdiction.

Compatible Uses

1. Determined by underlying zoning, with certain exceptions

Incompatible Uses

1. Common potential groundwater contaminant sources (agricultural, commercial, industrial)
2. Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)
3. Landfills and refuse recycling centers



GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 13.2: FUTURE LAND USE INDEX MAPS

LEGEND

Agriculture General (AG)

Agriculture Open Space (AOS)

Transitional Agriculture (TA)

Rural Residential (RR)

Low-Medium Density Residential

Medium Density Residential-Office (MDO)

Downtown Commercial (DC)

Mixed-Use Commercial (MUC)

General Commercial (GC)

Business Park (BP)

Commercial/Industrial (C/I)

Industrial (I)

Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plan (CAAP)

Parks/Recreation (P/R)

Residential Mobile Home Overlay

Highways

Railroads

Parcels

GI ETJ

Alda ETJ

GI 2-Mile Planning Area

City Limits

County Boundaries

N

MPC

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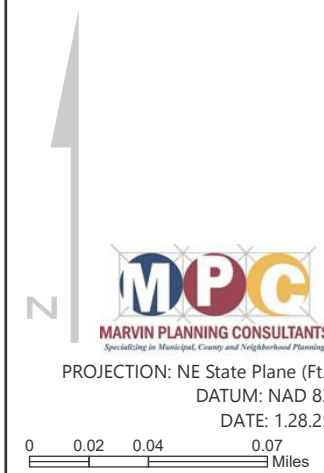
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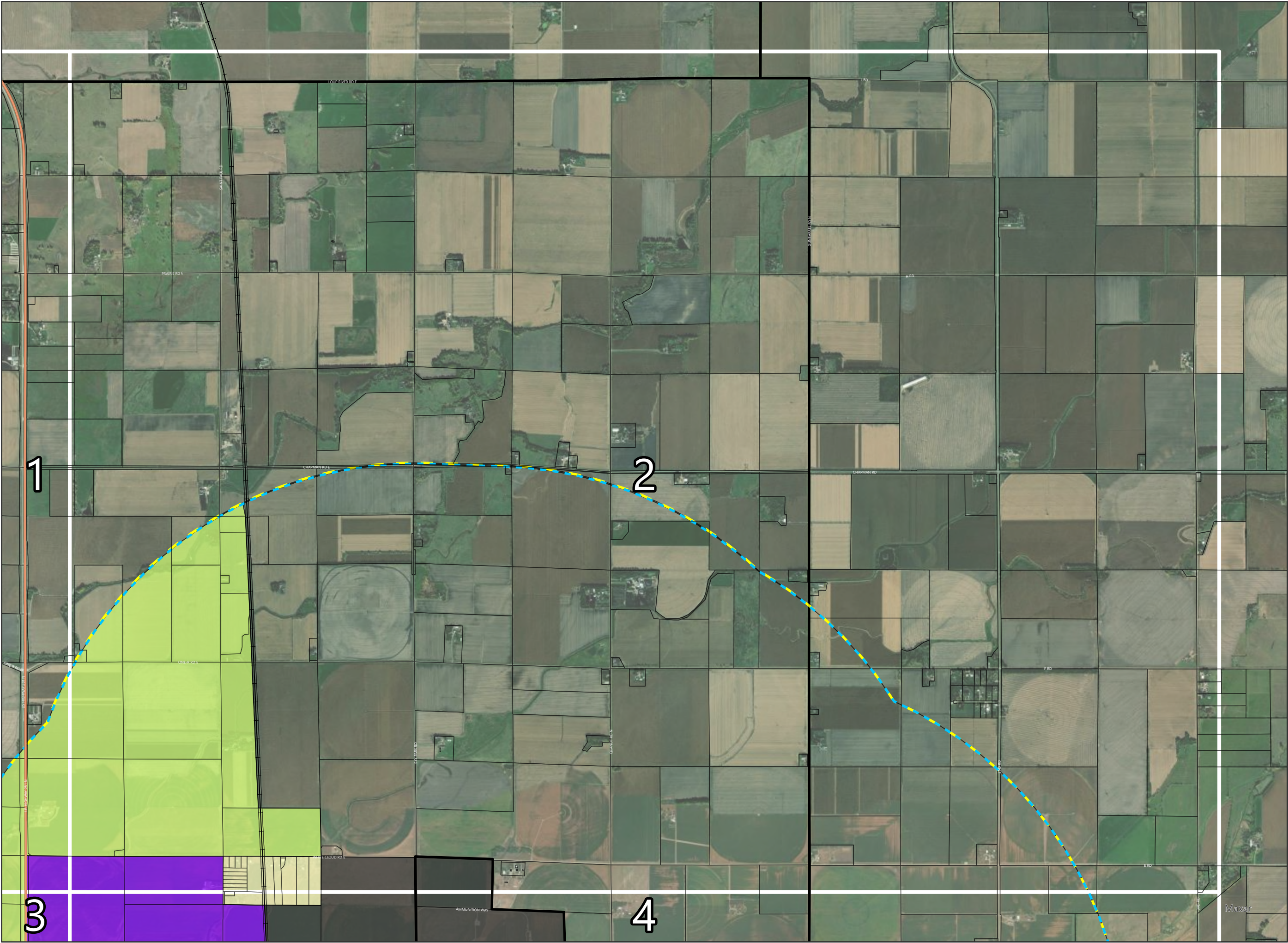
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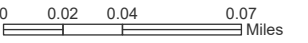


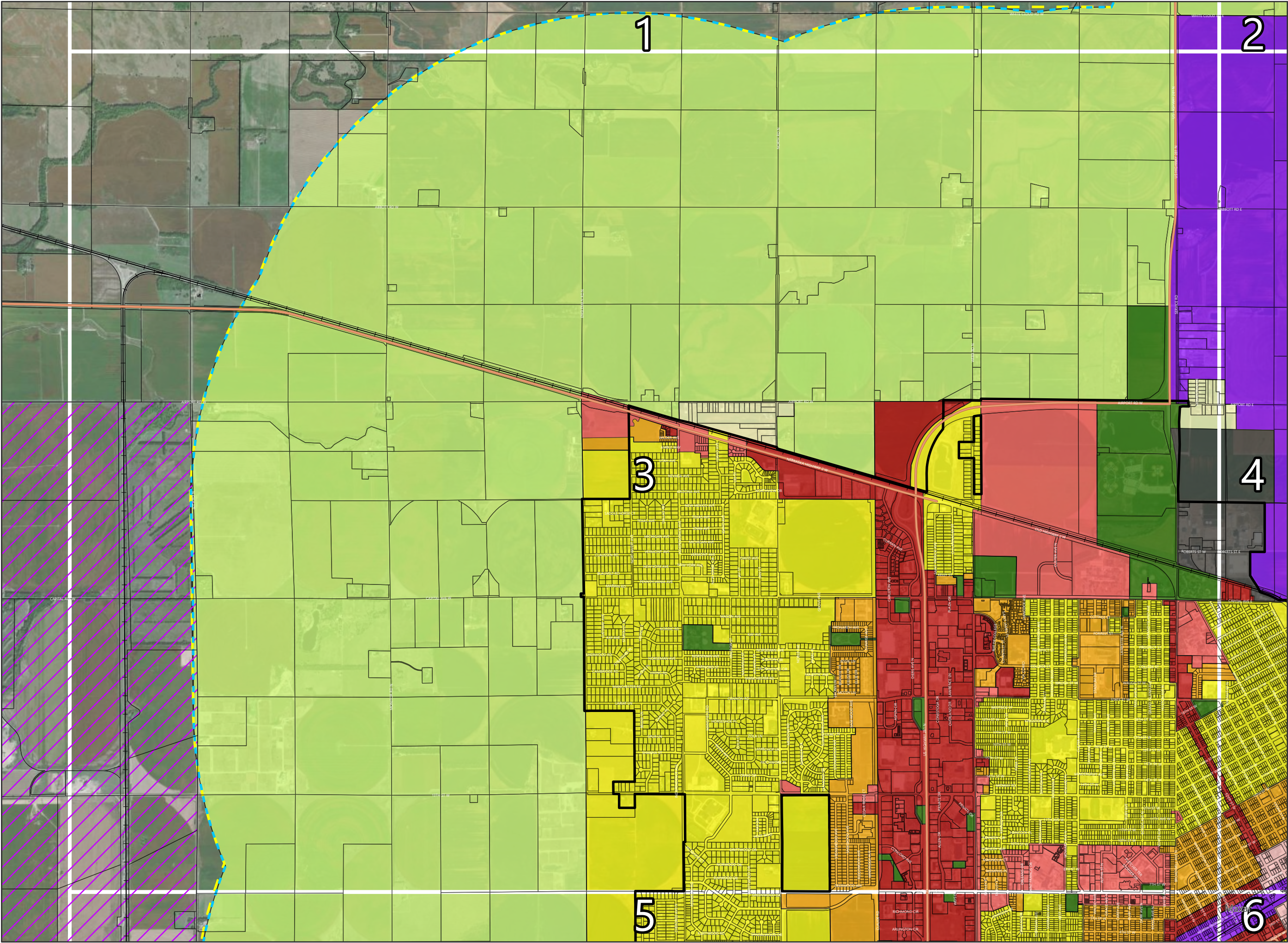
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-  Alda ETJ
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GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FIG 13.2: FUTURE LAND USE

MAPS 1-8

LEGEND

Agriculture General (AG)

Agriculture Open Space (AOS)

Transitional Agriculture (TA)

Rural Residential (RR)

Low-Medium Density Residential

Medium Density Residential-Office (MDO)

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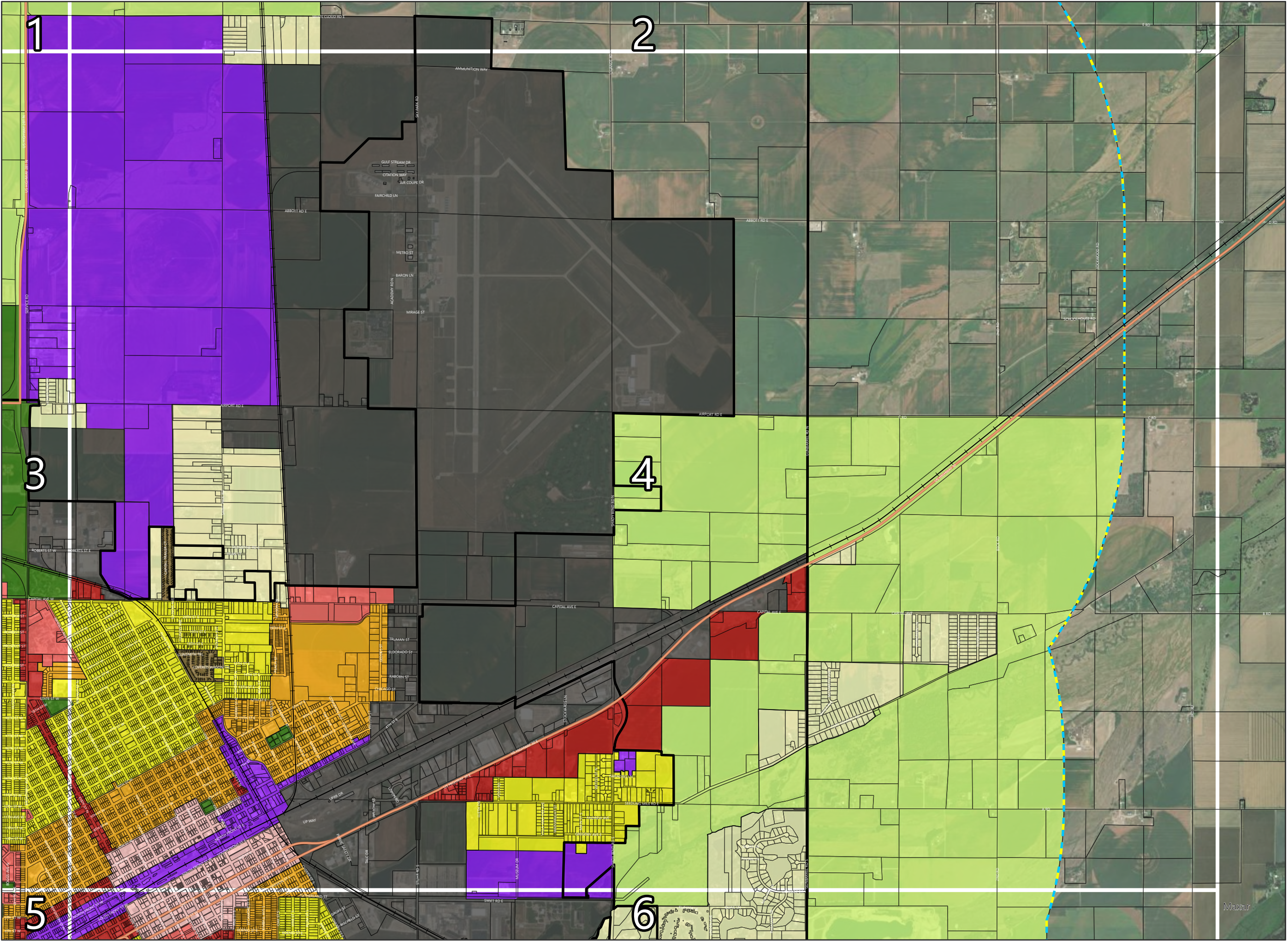
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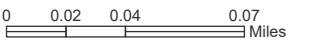


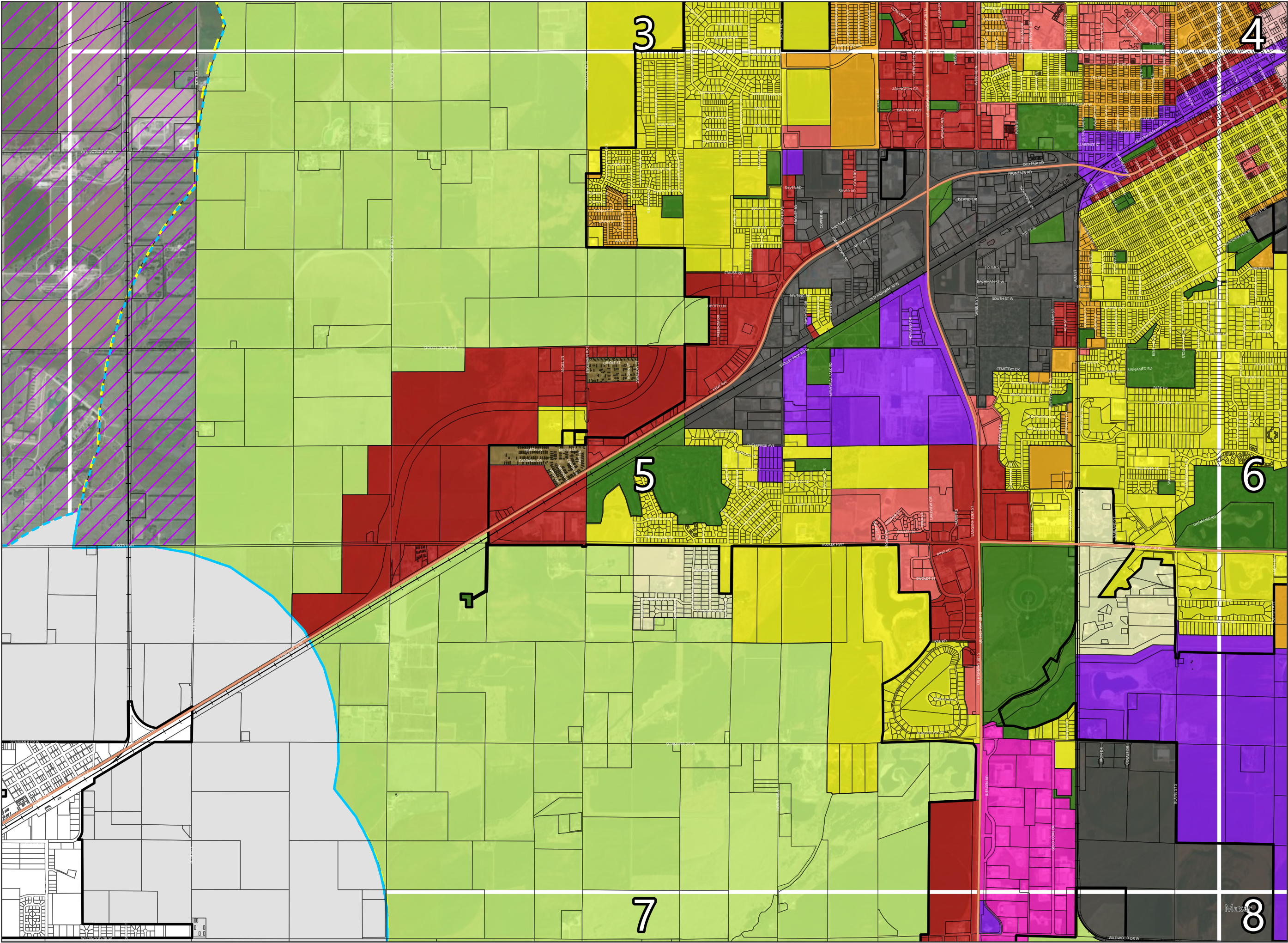
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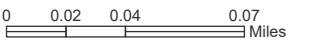


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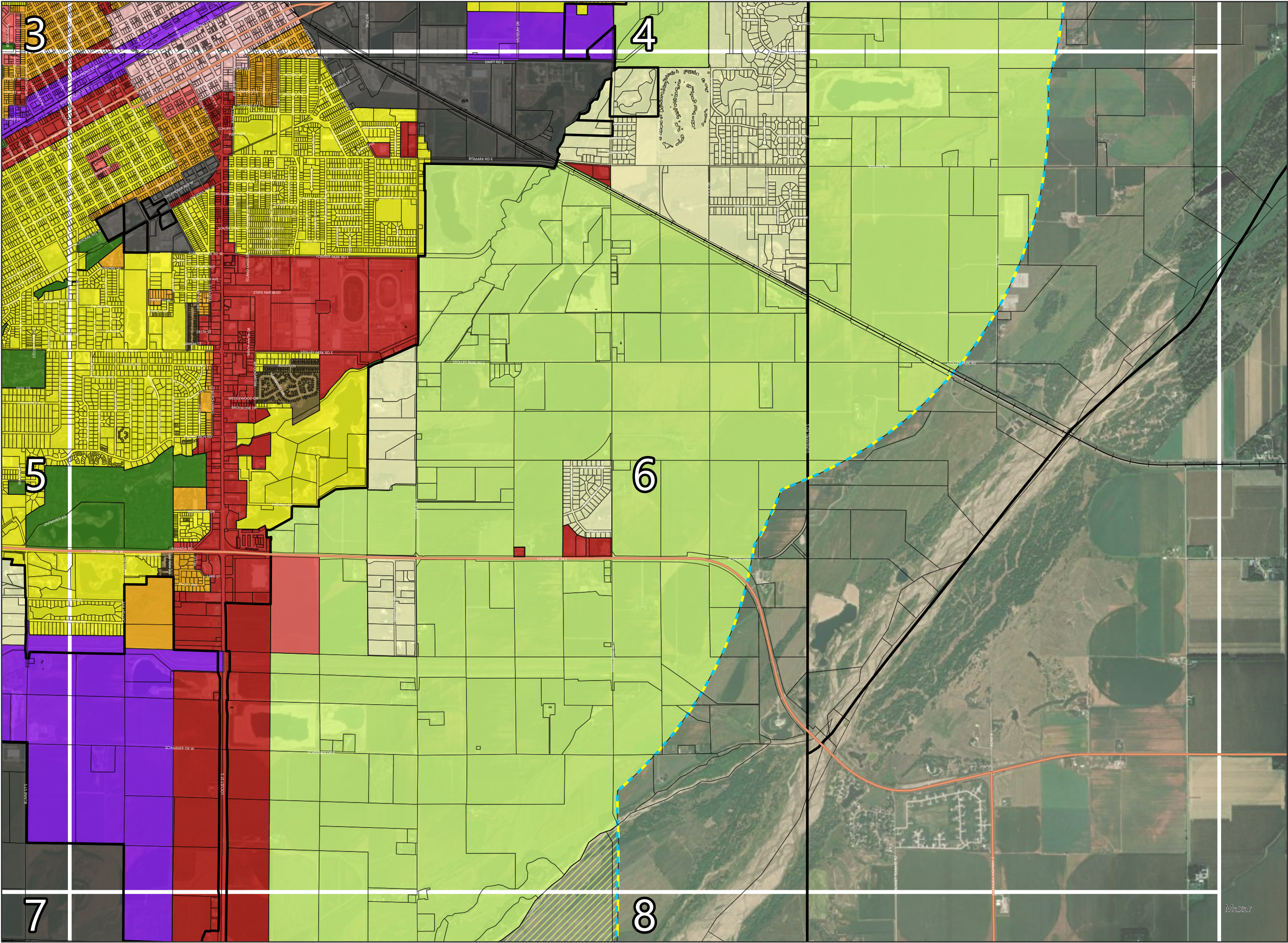


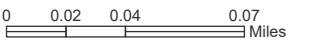
FIG 13.2: FUTURE LAND USE
MAPS 1-8

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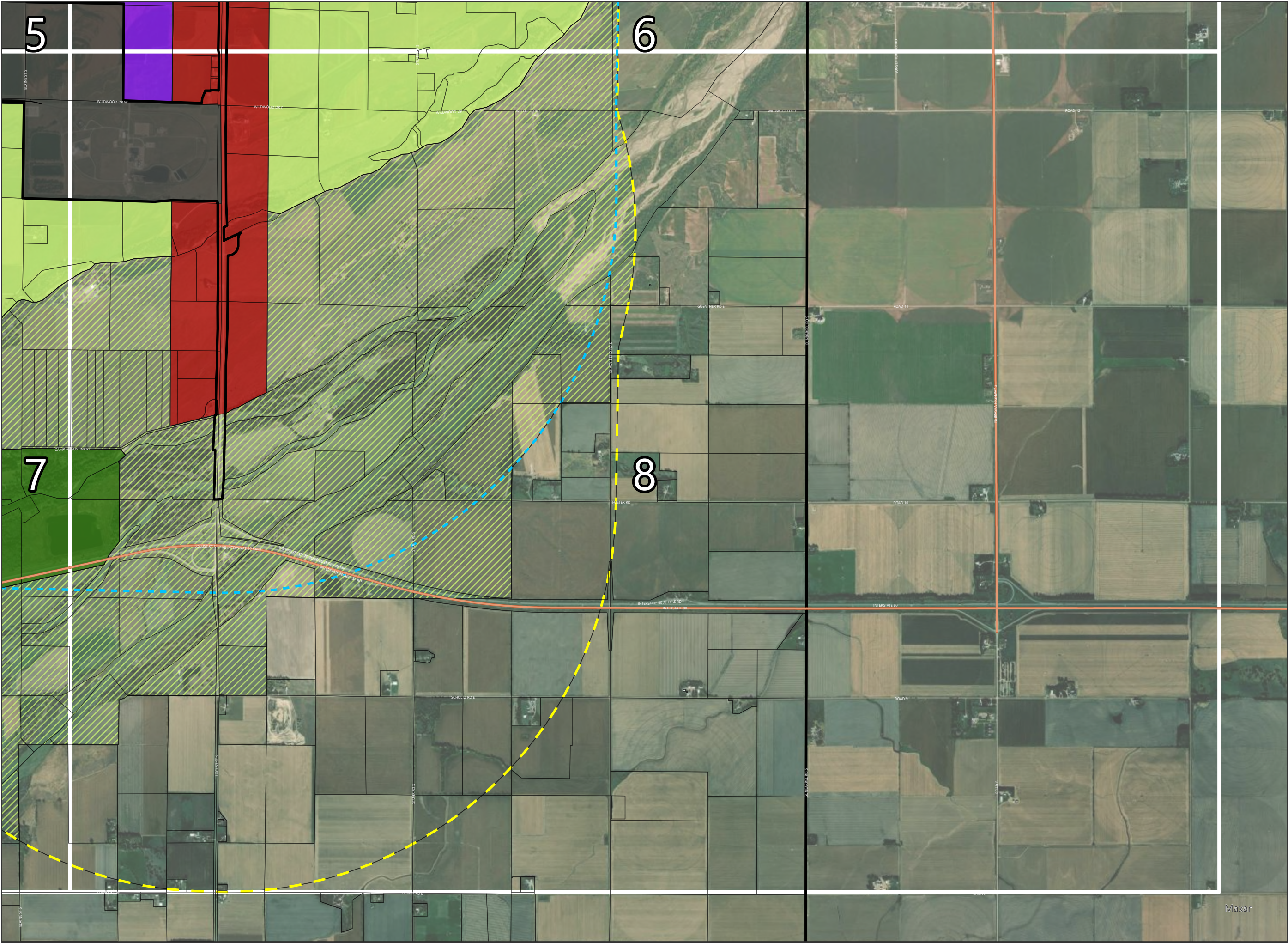


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	City Limits
	County Boundaries



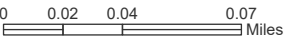


LEGEND

- Agriculture General (AG)
- Agriculture Open Space (AOS)
- Transitional Agriculture (TA)
- Rural Residential (RR)
- Low-Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential-Office (MDO)
- Downtown Commercial (DC)
- Mixed-Use Commercial (MUC)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Business Park (BP)
- Commercial/Industrial (C/I)
- Industrial (I)
- Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plan (CAAP)
- Parks/Recreation (P/R)
- Residential Mobile Home Overlay
- Highways
- Railroads
- Parcels
- GI ETJ
- Aldo ETJ
- GI 2-Mile Planning Area
- City Limits
- County Boundaries



PROJECTION: NE State Plane (Ft.)
DATUM: NAD 83
DATE: 1.28.25



COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Every community has a unique character distinguishing that specific place from every other place. Character also promotes a sense of place—hopefully a sense of pride—among residents.

Communities with lots of character have curb appeal—they attract visitors and tourists, they attract new residents, and consequently they attract and support certain businesses. Character encompasses many aspects of the community, from the street grid, lots, and blocks, to brick “Main Street” storefronts and tree-lined neighborhoods.

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

Community character includes a combination of physical and psychological experiences. Residents and visitors learn to “read” a place based on formal and informal clues.

Community Entrances

There is only one chance to make a first impression on visitors, and potential new residents and employers. Community entrances are a statement welcoming new and returning people to town. A well-designed monument sign conveys a message more than mere words.

Grand Island has substantial and well-designed welcome signs at several locations, including US Highway 30, US Highway 281, and at the airport. Other major community entrances should be considered for similar monuments. For example, with the new alignment of US 30



Grand Island welcome sign, US 30
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

between Grand Island and Alda, the City has an opportunity to improve that community entrance from the west. Consideration should be given for community entrance features along I-80 from the east and west.

See *Chapter 15 for more information on Transportation systems.*

Wayfinding

Wayfinding refers to how people find their way around



Wayfinding in Railside, Downtown
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

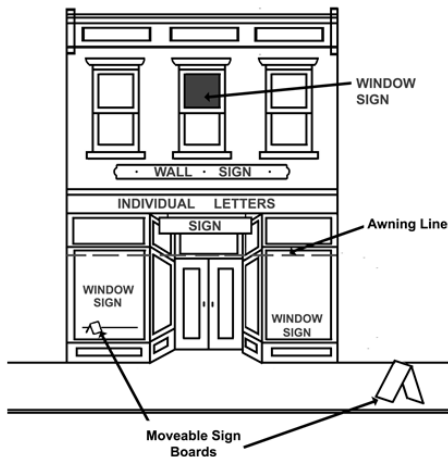
the community. Appropriate signage helps people walk and/or drive to specific locations in the community. Wayfinding would more easily direct visitors to downtown, public facilities, and city parks.

Wayfinding is more nuanced than simply sticking up more signage. Well designed graphics and monuments provide directional, informational, identity, and regulatory direction with the end-user in mind.

The Railside BID has established an easy-to-use wayfinding system in Downtown Grand Island. There are opportunities, though, city-wide for a unified system to direct residents and visitors to amenities such as public facilities, the hospital, ball fields, and schools.

Signage

Signs are an important form of communication. Sign control—or the lack of sign control—can have a significant impact on the community's appearance and economic competitiveness.



Traditional storefront sign design
Source: Wisconsin Historical Society

The image of a community is important to its economic vitality and the signs along city streets can greatly affect the image of a place. Sign clutter is ugly, costly, and ineffective.

Commercial signage on the street and building front helps people get where they need to go. A good sign code is pro-business because an attractive commercial district will attract more customers than an unattractive area. Sign regulations should reward clarity and simplicity in sign design, and deal fairly with business' needs for brand consistency while honoring local identity.

Especially downtown and in walkable areas city-wide, good quality signage follows the style and character of the building and site. Very often, historic signs can be kept and preserved—City zoning should make allowances for ghost signs, neon signs, and signs from the Lincoln Highway era. Lighting should also be appropriate to the sign and location, unobtrusive and cut-off to avoid glare and light pollution.

On city streets outside downtown, ground-mounted monument signs are an effective form of commercial signage. They can also be designed to fit into the overall architectural character of a specific building or development.

Landscaping

Landscaping is critical to creating positive community character. Well designed landscaping—including living plants and hardscapes—improves the appearance of property while also reducing energy costs, filtering drainage and providing buffers between structures and uses. Landscaping can better define public and private spaces than simple paint and concrete.

Landscaping makes a particular impression in high visibility areas such as:

- Along streets, especially major thoroughfares
- Along parking barriers and in parking lots
- Near commercial and public buildings
- In public spaces

As new development occurs in the community—especially along the arterial and collector



Xeriscape example
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

streets and roads—the City should work closely with developers and property owners to assure appropriate landscaping is installed and maintained to improve the appearance of the community.

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Downtown is historically the heart of Grand Island. It offers commercial and civic services unlike any other community in the state or region. The city's downtown includes two business improvement districts—Railside and the new 4th Street BID—as well as surrounding areas characterized by building lines at the sidewalk and walkable distances between destinations.

A Place to Last

Buildings downtown are typically built of substantial materials such as brick and stone, avoiding flimsy tin or stucco that does not hold up well in the Great Plains weather. These structures are often two or three stories — sometimes taller—with commercial retail and services on the ground floor. Upper floors may be used for offices or residences. Downtown is also where people look for public institutions—City Hall, the County Courthouse, the Federal Building.

Downtown should be the place where property is in the greatest demand. It should be the location where people go to buy things and patronize services; where they go to work and play.

Many of downtown's buildings are historic in nature and character—the may be formally recognized on the National



Downtown Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Register of Historic Places or may be eligible for recognition. The Main Street America program, mentioned in Chapter Five Economic Development, has been quite successful in downtown revitalization across the country. As well, as noted in Chapter Six Community Facilities, inclusion on the National Register may enable income-producing properties to qualify for tax credits for eligible rehabilitation costs

Downtown provides options for residents and businesses. By maintaining an expectation for flexible, quality design, downtown buildings will remain a vital part of the city for years into the future.

Successful Downtowns

What do successful downtowns share? Research by the Extension Service found several common characteristics of successful downtowns:

1. No single organizational model exists—successful downtowns focus on results.

2. Successful downtowns tend to have multiple destinations within walking distance.
3. Successful downtowns are beloved by local residents.
4. Successful downtowns have been and continue to overcome challenges.
5. Successful downtowns are walkable.
6. Successful downtowns have property owners committed to mixed use development.
7. There are broad public/private partnership investments.
8. The nature of downtown retail is in flux.
9. Entertainment is driving growth.
10. Strong walking connections to nearby neighborhoods.

BRINGING BACK THE CORNER STORE

When places like Grand Island first developed along the railroad, it was common to have small commercial retailers set up shop on busy corners, even in residential

neighborhoods. When people walked everywhere, it was convenient to have the necessities close to home.

As our cities grew and became dependent on automobiles, many of these locations closed or were zoned out of business. This happened even though many residents don't have automobiles, or would prefer not to drive everywhere.

Legalizing the traditional corner store—or even the corner pub—could make food and other essential items more accessible, particularly in “food desert” neighborhoods lacking major grocery stores and services.

CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT

Conservation development is a customized approach to residential or commercial subdivision of land, where parcels are clustered into a smaller area to conserve agricultural or natural areas. Conserved areas may be prime farmland, wetlands and floodplains, or areas with steep slopes or soils unsuitable for building. The smaller developed area reduces costs for infrastructure such as roads and provides a variety of lot options for home builders and buyers.

Conservation development provides many benefits:

- Preservation of farmland
- Conservation of natural areas and floodplains
- Property owners can enjoy viewsheds without maintenance costs
- Lower costs of infrastructure
- Less construction impacts

- Potential for enhanced property values

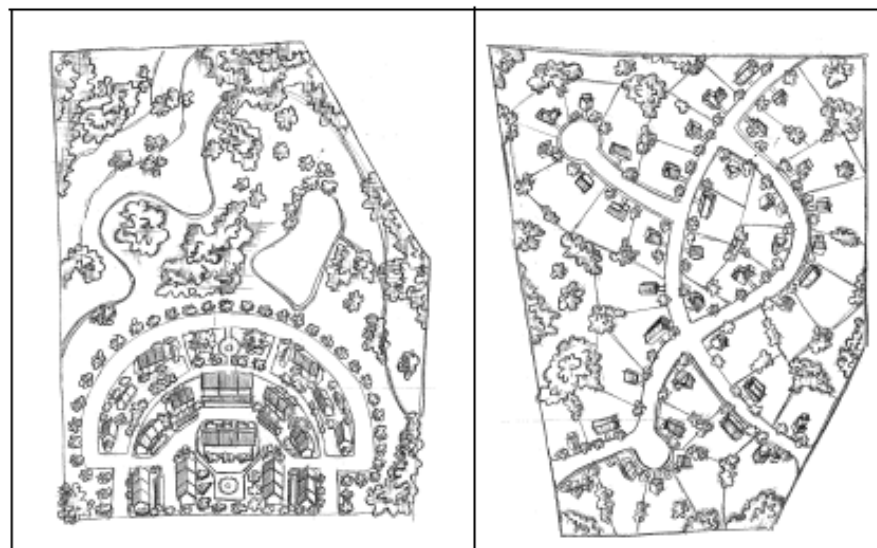
Many jurisdictions have provided a system of density bonuses for conservation development. For example, a developer may be able to build twice as many homes as typical zoning would allow if they conserve substantial open space or prime farmland. This option has proven popular with homeowners who prefer some breathing room without requiring them to spend extra time and money maintaining a larger acreage.

It is estimated up to 10% of new real estate development across the US is taking a conservation development approach. Resulting open space may be protected by conservation easements or covenants overseen by a land trust or homeowners association. Implementation of conservation development is often accomplished through a specific stand-alone or overlay zoning district, or through Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning and subdivision regulation provisions.

LAND USE AND ZONING

The City of Grand Island's zoning regulations implement the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan. Zoning regulations require zoning permits for new development. Redevelopment must also be in conformance with the zoning regulations.

The Hall County Regional Planning Commission provides planning related services for the City of Grand Island, Hall County, and the villages of Alda, Cairo,



Conservation subdivisions (left) feature smaller lots with a high percentage of open space. Conventional subdivisions (right) feature large lots with little common open space. A conventional subdivision is subject to all of the base zoning district standards, such as minimum lot size, front setbacks, landscaping, and adequacy of public facilities.

Source: Robert H. Freilich and S. Mark White, 21st Century Land Development Code, APA Planners Press, 2008.

Doniphan, and Wood River, The Regional Planning Commission was created by an interlocal agreement in 1967.

The Hall County/Grand Island Regional Development Department is responsible for the development, maintenance, and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, administration of the development review process, and administration of land use regulations established by the member entities. The Department also provides planning and zoning services to villages in the county.

Zoning regulations and the zoning map must be consistent with the Future Land Use Map in

this plan. Any given parcel may have a base zoning district and one or more overlay districts (such as floodplain) which must be considered in development review, or when a change of zoning is proposed.

Each municipality is responsible for their planning area, yet may choose to zone a portion of that area in their ETJ. Land between the municipal planning area boundary and the ETJ remains the County's zoning jurisdiction.

The first implementation task for this comprehensive plan will be to review and update zoning and subdivision regulations.

LAND USE RESOURCES

SMALL AREA PLANNING

Small area plans, such as neighborhood plans or corridor plans, are often used to guide changes for a particular area in a community. Small area plans are generally prepared for places which would benefit from a closer look—through focused attention, community dialogue, or technical assistance. Such areas are often undergoing or have the potential for rapid change.

Upon completion, the City should consider incorporation of small area plans into the Comprehensive Development Plan by reference. This may be done easily by adding an Appendix at the end of the document. Small Area Plans adopted by reference and included as appendices to this document should be considered the primary controlling documents for land use and zoning approvals.

The text, graphics, tables, and maps included in Appendices to this Comprehensive Development Plan are made part of this Comprehensive Plan by reference. A true and correct copy of this document and each Appendix is on file in the Regional Planning Department—all are available for public inspection during normal business hours.

4th Street Corridor

During the comprehensive planning process, the planning team, including MSP Design, conducted more focused studies on the 4th Street corridor downtown, north of the UP railroad, where a new BID was forming. Team members walked the area and talked to business owners along 4th Street. Recommendations applied to the area could also be implemented in other parts of the city. The BID has already expanded on the initial results to plan improvements for the area. *(More information available in Appendix C.)*

Good Life District

the City is currently undertaking a specific plan for the Good Life District (see *Chapter Five*). These small area plans should be reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Development Plan, as they are useful tools to implement the goals and policies developed in this effort. *(More information available in Appendix D.)*

LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES

LAND USE GOAL 13.1

Grand Island celebrates the community's character and heritage in future growth and development.

Policies

- 13.1.1 Development projects shall follow the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 13.1.2 Future development should follow the Future Land Use Plan, with an emphasis on creative, mixed-use development patterns.
- 13.1.3 Land Use policy does not predetermine all land use, requiring flexibility for market demand.
- 13.1.4 Developers are prepared to pay the cost of necessary and required on-site and off-site improvements.

Actions

- 13.1.5 Consider impacts of future development on adjacent land use.
- 13.1.6 Continue support for regional land use planning and regulation.
- 13.1.7 Work with property owners to clean up deteriorated and dilapidated properties.

- 13.1.8 Regularly review and update the Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations (zoning and subdivision ordinances) and application documents.

LAND USE GOAL 13.2

New development is focused within municipal limits.

Policies

- 13.2.1 New development should be located within existing city limits, where urban services are available, or be annexed.
- 13.2.2 New development should be contiguous to existing developed areas and avoid "leapfrog" patterns inefficient for public services.
- 13.2.3 Priority areas shall be identified and incentives established for infill and redevelopment.

Actions

- 13.2.4 Direct development away from prime farmland and environmentally sensitive areas.
- 13.2.5 Aid development or redevelopment through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) where appropriate.
- 13.2.6 Work on implementation of Wellhead Protection Plans.

LAND USE GOAL 13.3

Agriculture is the predominate use in agricultural land use districts.

Policies

- 13.3.1 Development projects shall mitigate impacts on agriculture and prime farmland.
- 13.3.2 Recognize production agriculture as the highest and best use of land in agricultural districts.

Actions

- 13.3.3 Discourage low-density, non-farm residential development in prime farmland areas of the ETJ.
- 13.3.4 Encourage development of local foods and value-added agricultural processing.

LAND USE GOAL 13.4

The Agriculture-Open Space (AOS) land use area protects environmentally sensitive lands, especially along the Platte River corridor.

Policies

- 13.4.1 New development projects should minimize impacts on the Platte River surface waters, ecosystem, and environment.

Actions

- 13.4.2 Review and update land use regulations for adequate protection of surface and groundwater.

LAND USE GOAL 13.5

New neighborhoods incorporate the best features of the city's existing neighborhoods and are integrated with the surrounding community.

Policies

- 13.5.1 Residents are able to choose from a variety of housing styles and types.
- 13.5.2 Existing neighborhoods are attractive and well maintained, with opportunities for redevelopment.
- 13.5.3 New neighborhoods are designed in traditional patterns with a mix of uses, amenities, and convenient access to services.

Actions

- 13.5.4 Review and update land use regulations to remove barriers to new and rehabilitated housing, including ADUs.
- 13.5.5 Encourage development of "Missing Middle" housing types across the community.
- 13.5.6 Encourage mixed-use projects.
- 13.5.7 Consider the use of small area plans to provide more specific objectives and programing for commercial, residential, and/or mixed-use neighborhoods.

LAND USE GOAL 13.6

Residential development is protected from conflicting land uses in residential land use districts.

Policies

- 13.6.1 Residential development is separated from more intensive uses, by setbacks, visual and landscape buffers, or impact easements.

Actions

- 13.6.2 Work with property owners to clean up deteriorated and dilapidated properties.
- 13.6.3 Encourage maintenance and improvement of older manufactured and mobile homes.
- 13.6.4 Review and update land use regulation infill standards to protect the character of existing neighborhoods.

LAND USE GOAL 13.7

Employers have adequate land available in Commercial/Industrial land use districts.

Policies

- 13.7.1 Support opportunities for development of activity centers including mixed-use neighborhood service centers, business parks, and regional commercial destinations.
- 13.7.2 Neighborhood commercial centers should be allowed at select intersections of arterial and collector routes, where multimodal access can be efficiently provided.
- 13.7.3 New development should provide access improvements and a backage road system along major roadways.
- 13.7.4 New commercial/industrial development projects should minimize impacts on their present and future neighbors.

Actions

- 13.7.5 Proactively extend infrastructure for commercial and industrial development.
- 13.7.6 Encourage continued maintenance and new commercial development at activity nodes along major highway corridors.

- 13.7.7 Facilitate continued improvements in signage and wayfinding, including landscaping of commercial property.
- 13.7.8 Locate surface parking to the side or rear of structures and provide screening.
- 13.7.9 Require landscape buffers and screening between commercial/industrial and residential uses.
- 13.7.10 Encourage industrial uses to locate at a distance or provide substantial buffers from residential uses.
- 13.7.11 Provide support to the Business Improvement Districts.

LAND USE GOAL 13.8

The Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant (CAAP) is available for redevelopment.

Policies

- 13.8.1 Re-development is encouraged within the Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plan (CAAP).

Actions

- 13.8.2 Continue to support Redevelopment Goals of CAAP Reuse Plan (1997).
- 13.8.3 Support continued remediation of groundwater.

LAND USE GOAL 13.9

Parks/Recreation and Public/Institutional uses are provided for by those land use districts and sites in other appropriate districts.

Policies

- 13.9.1 Development projects are encouraged to provide parks, recreation, and open space amenities.
- 13.9.2 The City respects the special Constitutional protections of religious and institutional uses of land throughout its jurisdiction.

Actions

- 13.9.3 Provide Parks and Recreation facilities across the city in all neighborhoods.
- 13.9.4 Work with other units of government on facilities siting.
- 13.9.5 Work with public school districts on long-term facilities siting.

LAND USE GOAL 13.10

Downtown Grand Island remains the vibrant and dynamic, mixed-use historic heart of the community.

Policies

- 13.10.1 The City will continue to work on creating and maintaining a sense of place unique to downtown Grand Island.
- 13.10.2 Downtown projects should maximize the development potential of their sites.
- 13.10.3 Downtown projects should express high-quality architectural design and craftsmanship.
- 13.10.4 Downtown projects should maintain human scale in buildings and spaces.
- 13.10.5 Downtown projects should facilitate pedestrian access, and provide shelter from the elements to promote walkability.

Actions

- 13.10.6 Encourage upper-level residential units downtown.
- 13.10.7 Leverage the Nebraska Creative Districts program for arts-led and innovation-based entrepreneurship.
- 13.10.8 Update and implement the Downtown Housing & Development Study.

- 13.10.9 Support continued improvements in the Railsid BID.

- 13.10.10 Support continued improvements in the 4th Street BID.

LAND USE GOAL 13.11

Grand Island's entry corridors offer opportunities for high quality future growth and development which creates a good impression for residents and visitors.

Policies

- 13.11.1 Development on US 281 from I-80 into the city should reflect the importance of high-quality urban design.
- 13.11.2 Development on South Locust from I-80 into the city should carefully consider environmental impacts to the Platte River and the municipal well fields.
- 13.11.3 Development on US 30 east of city limits should include landscaping and minimize points of access along the highway.
- 13.11.4 Development on US 30 between Grand Island and Alda should include landscaping and minimize points of access along the highway.

Actions

- 13.11.5 Encourage appropriate architectural design and craftsmanship, including substantial landscaping and restrained signage.
- 13.11.6 Review and update land use regulations and design standards for entry corridors to the city.

LAND USE GOAL 13.12

Grand Island's highway corridors and activity centers should provide business locations while adding value to adjacent development.

Policies

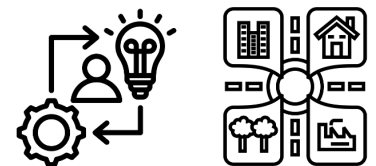
- 13.12.1 Development on US 281 north of US 30 should reflect high quality site design.
- 13.12.2 Development on US 30 and US 34 through the city and ETJ should carefully consider site design in minimizing impacts on nearby residential uses.
- 13.12.3 Development along the future East Bypass should be buffered from traffic impacts.

Actions

- 13.12.4 Promote creativity in urban design, including native landscaping.
- 13.12.5 Review and update land use regulations and design standards for highway corridors through the city and ETJ.



Residential homes Downtown Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants



Land Use Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
13.1.1	Development projects shall follow the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.	1,9	-						
13.1.2	Future development should follow the Future Land Use Plan, with an emphasis on creative, mixed-use development patterns.	1,9	1,5						
13.1.3	Land Use policy does not predetermine all land use, requiring flexibility for market demand.	1	1						
13.1.4	Developers are prepared to pay the cost of necessary and required on-site and off-site improvements.	1,9	1,5						
13.1.5	Consider impacts of future development on adjacent land use.	1,9	1,5						
13.1.6	Continue support for regional land use planning and regulation.	1,2	1						
13.1.7	Work with property owners to clean up deteriorated and dilapidated properties.	1,7,8	1,4,5						
13.1.8	Regularly review and update the Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations (zoning and subdivision ordinances) and application documents.	1,10	1						
13.2.1	New development should be located within existing city limits, where urban services are available, or be annexed.	1,2,9	1,3,4,5	X					
13.2.2	New development should be contiguous to existing developed areas and avoid "leapfrog" patterns inefficient for public services.	1,2,9	1,3,4,5	X					
13.2.3	Priority areas shall be identified and incentives established for infill and redevelopment.	1	1,2,3,4,5, 6	X					
13.2.4	Direct development away from prime farmland and environmentally sensitive areas.	1,9	1,3,5						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

Land Use Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
13.2.5	Aid development or redevelopment through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) where appropriate.	1,4	1,3,5	X					
13.2.6	Work on implementation of Wellhead Protection Plans.	1,2,10	1,4						
13.3.1	Development projects shall mitigate impacts on agriculture and prime farmland.	1,2,9	1,3,5						
13.3.2	Recognize production agriculture as the highest and best use of land in agricultural districts.	1,2	1						
13.3.3	Discourage low-density, non-farm residential development in prime farmland areas of the ETJ.	1,2	1						
13.3.4	Encourage development of local foods and value-added agricultural processing.	1,2,3,5,7	1,4,6						
13.4.1	New development projects should minimize impacts on the Platte River surface waters, ecosystem, and environment.	1,4,5,9	1,3,4,5						
13.4.2	Review and update land use regulations for adequate protection of surface and groundwater.	1,10	1						
13.5.1	Residents are able to choose from a variety of housing styles and types.	1,3,5,6,7,9	1,3,4,5						
13.5.2	Existing neighborhoods are attractive and well maintained, with opportunities for redevelopment.	1,3,4,5,6,7,8	1,3,4,5						
13.5.3	New neighborhoods are designed in traditional patterns with a mix of uses, amenities, and convenient access to services.	1,3,4,9	1,3,4,5						
13.5.4	Review and update land use regulations to remove barriers to new and rehabilitated housing, including ADUs.	1,10	1,3,4,5						

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Land Use Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
13.5.5	Encourage development of "Missing Middle" housing types across the community.	1,4,6,9	1,3,4,5						
13.5.6	Encourage mixed-use projects.	1,3,4,9	1,3,5						
13.5.7	Consider the use of small area plans to provide more specific objectives and programing for commercial, residential, and/or mixed-use neighborhoods.	1,3,4,10	1,4						
13.6.1	Residential development is separated from more intensive uses, by setbacks, visual and landscape buffers, or impact easements.	1,9	1,5						
13.6.2	Work with property owners to clean up deteriorated and dilapidated properties.	1,2,3,4,7,8,9,12	3,4,5						
13.6.3	Encourage maintenance and improvement of older manufactured and mobile homes.	1,8,12	1,4,5						
13.6.4	Review and update land use regulation infill standards to protect the character of existing neighborhoods.	1,10	1						
13.7.1	Support opportunities for development of activity centers including mixed-use neighborhood service centers, business parks, and regional commercial destinations.	1,3,4,5,9	1,3,4,5						
13.7.2	Neighborhood commercial centers should be allowed at select intersections of arterial and collector routes, where multimodal access can be efficiently provided.	1,3,4,5,9	1,3,4,5						
13.7.3	New development should provide access improvements and a backage road system along major roadways.	1,3,4,9	1,3,4,5						
13.7.4	New commercial/industrial development projects should minimize impacts on their present and future neighbors.	1,3,4,9	1,3,4,5						

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Land Use Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
13.7.5	Proactively extend infrastructure for commercial and industrial development.	1,4,8,9	1,2,3,4,5	X					
13.7.6	Encourage continued maintenance and new commercial development at activity nodes along major highway corridors.	1,8,9,11	1,3,4,5						
13.7.7	Facilitate continued improvements in signage and wayfinding, including landscaping of commercial property.	1,3,8	1,4,5						
13.7.8	Locate surface parking to the side or rear of structures and provide screening.	1,3,4,9	1,3,4,5						
13.7.9	Require landscape buffers and screening between commercial/industrial and residential uses.	1,3,4,9	1,3,4,5						
13.7.10	Encourage industrial uses to locate at a distance or provide substantial buffers from residential uses.	1,9,3,4,	1,3,4,5						
13.7.11	Provide support to the Business Improvement Districts.	1	1,4						
13.8.1	Re-development is encouraged within the Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plan (CAAP).	1,2,3,4,5, 9,12	1,2,3,4,5	X					
13.8.2	Continue to support Redevelopment Goals of CAAP Reuse Plant (1997).	1,2,3,4	1,4,5						
13.3.3	Support continued remediation of groundwater.	1,2	1,2,4						
13.9.1	Development projects are encouraged to provide parks, recreation, and open space amenities.	1,3,4,8,9	1,3,4,5						
13.9.2	The City respects the special Constitutional protections of religious and institutional uses of land throughout its jurisdiction.	1	1						
13.9.3	Provide Parks and Recreation facilities across the city in all neighborhoods.	1,3,4	1,2,3,4,5						

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Land Use Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
13.9.4	Work with other units of government on facilities siting.	1,2	1,2,4,5	X					
13.9.5	Work with public school districts on long-term facilities siting.	1,2,13	1,2						
13.10.1	The City will continue to work on creating and maintaining a sense of place unique to downtown Grand Island.	1,12	1,3,4,5						
13.10.2	Downtown projects should maximize the development potential of their sites.	1,9,12	1,3,4,5						
13.10.3	Downtown projects should express high-quality architectural design and craftsmanship.	1,3,4,9,10	1,3,4,5						
13.10.4	Downtown projects should maintain human scale in buildings and spaces.	1,9,12	1,5						
13.10.5	Downtown projects should facilitate pedestrian access, and provide shelter from the elements to promote walkability.	1,9,12	1,3,4,5						
13.10.6	Encourage upper-level residential units downtown.	1,3,4,8,9	1,3,4,5						
13.10.7	Leverage the Nebraska Creative Districts program for arts-led and innovation-based entrepreneurship.	1,8,12	1,4,5						
13.10.8	Update and implement the Downtown Housing & Development Study. (See also Actions 4.1.5 and 5.3.9)	1,3,5,10	1,4,5						
13.10.9	Support continued improvements in the Railside BID.	1,3,4,8,12	1,3,4,5						
13.10.10	Support continued improvements in the 4th Street BID.	1,3,4,8,12	1,3,4,5						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

Land Use Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
13.11.1	Development on US 281 from I-80 into the city should reflect the importance of high-quality urban design.	1,3,4,9,11	1,3,4,5						
13.11.2	Development on South Locust from I-80 into the city should carefully consider environmental impacts to the Platte River and the municipal well fields.	1,3,4,9	1,3,4,5						
13.11.3	Development on US 30 east of city limits should include landscaping and minimize points of access along the highway.	1,3,4,9,11	1,3,4,5						
13.11.4	Development on US 30 between Grand Island and Alda should include landscaping and minimize points of access along the highway.	1,3,4,9,11	1,3,4,5						
13.11.5	Encourage appropriate architectural design and craftsmanship, including substantial landscaping and restrained signage.	1,3,4,8,9	1,3,4,5						
13.11.6	Review and update land use regulations and design standards for entry corridors to the city.	1,10	1						
13.12.1	Development on US 281 north of US 30 should reflect high quality site design.	1,3,4,9,11	1,3,4,5						
13.12.2	Development on US 30 and US 34 through the city and ETJ should carefully consider site design in minimizing impacts on nearby residential uses.	1,3,4,9,11	1,3,4,5						
13.12.3	Development along the future East Bypass should be buffered from traffic impacts.	1,3,4,9	1,3,4,5						
13.12.4	Promote creativity in urban design, including native landscaping.	1	1						
13.12.5	Review and update land use regulations and design standards for highway corridors through the city and ETJ.	1,10	1						

Organization:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. City of Grand Island | 8. Private Businesses |
| 2. Hall County | 9. Developers |
| 3. GIAEDC | 10. Consultants |
| 4. Grand Island CRA | 11. Nebraska DOT |
| 5. NEDED | 12. Local Organizations |
| 6. NIFA | 13. Schools |
| 7. South Central EDD | |

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

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Chapter 14

Annexation

Expanding the municipal boundaries will be necessary to supply infrastructure for new development as the city experiences growth in population, employment, and services

ANNEXATION ELEMENT

This section is intended to meet the requirements in Neb. Rev. Stat. §19-903(5)(a) that the Comprehensive Plan include: “an identification of sanitary and improvement districts, subdivisions, industrial tracts, commercial tracts, and other discrete developed areas which are or in the future may be appropriate subjects for annexation and (b) a general review of the standards and qualifications that should be met to enable the municipality to undertake annexation of such areas.”

ANNEXATION PROCESS

The State of Nebraska has established a process for municipalities to extend their corporate limits into contiguous areas, provided the criteria for such action is justified. The property in question may not be further than 500 feet from corporate limits of the municipality in order to be considered adjacent and contiguous.

There are two methods for annexing land into the corporate limits:

- Voluntary—Land requested to be annexed by the property owner(s), or
- Involuntary—Any contiguous or adjacent lands, lots, tracts, streets, or highways which are urban or suburban in character and annexation is initiated by the municipality.

Landowners desiring voluntary annexation of land must submit an annexation plat prepared by a licensed surveyor. The annexation plat must be approved by the City Engineer and filed with the City Clerk along with a written request signed by all owners of record within the proposed annexed area.

The City Council must make three separate readings of the annexation ordinance (waiver of the three readings is not allowed by State law for this process). A majority of the City Council must make affirmative votes in favor of an annexation at each reading to pass the ordinance.

A certified copy of the annexation ordinance shall then be filed with the County.



The City has one year to develop a plan addressing the provision of services to residents of the annexed area.

With regard to annexation, the City should establish provisions for subdivision improvement agreements and non-contested annexation agreements with any future Sanitary Improvement Districts (SIDs). This type of agreement assures the City the SID can be annexed at such time as it becomes necessary, without the SID contesting the action.

Boundary Changes Affecting State Aid

The Nebraska Department of Review sets forth procedures for reporting population changes due to boundary changes and the resulting effect on state aid.

The municipality must submit the following documentation to the Department when a boundary change occurs:

1. A certified copy of the annexation ordinance;
2. A certified map of the municipality showing the area annexed (or de-annexed);
3. Calculations and basis for the population estimate by count of housing units multiplied by average persons per household in the most recent federal census, or by other method specified by the Department.

The Department will review documentation within 60 days and certify the total new population of the municipality.

Source: revenue.nebraska.gov/government/municipal-boundary-changes

POTENTIAL FUTURE ANNEXATION AREAS

The City of Grand Island should consider annexation of adjacent property to assure the proper provision of health and safety public services.

Proposed Annexation Areas

Near-term annexation areas should be considered for annexation within the next one to five (1-5) years. Many of these areas are currently eligible for annexation, and should be brought into the corporate limits at the earliest opportunity. Other areas should be considered for annexation over the long-term, five or more years from plan adoption or when developed.

Nebraska requires "any part of a county road shall be deemed to have annexed, without further action, all of the contiguous or abutting road at the time of such annexation" (Neb. Rev. Stat. §17-405.1). In 1992, the Nebraska Attorney General gave an opinion that a separation of up to 500 feet would be considered contiguous or abutting.

City decisionmakers should take into consideration:

- Annexation DOES NOT commit the City to extend services in the near term;
- Statutory requirements only require a "plan" for how services will be provided, to be completed within one year; and
- Annexation DOES NOT require the City to pay for the extension of services.

Property can be considered for annexation when meeting state requirements, even if not shown in this plan as a proposed annexation area.

Annexation Policy

The City of Grand Island has established an annexation policy. The policy is consistent with the provisions allowed by the State of Nebraska. This policy is as follows:

1. All areas deemed to be urban and suburban in character adjacent to the Corporate Limits of Grand Island shall be considered eligible for annexation and annexed according to the Revised Nebraska State Statutes.
2. The City of Grand Island shall require the owner of any and all properties adjacent to the Corporate Limits of the City of Grand Island to file subdivision plats on such properties as additions to the City of Grand Island.
3. The City of Grand Island shall consider sandpit lakes as property that is urban/suburban in character.
4. The City of Grand Island shall consider extension of the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City along with all approved annexations.
5. All areas encompassed by the Corporate Limits of Grand Island should be considered for annexation.
6. County Industrial Tracts should periodically be reviewed as allowed by Revised Nebraska State Statutes for consideration of annexation

ANNEXATION GOALS AND POLICIES

ANNEXATION GOAL 13.1

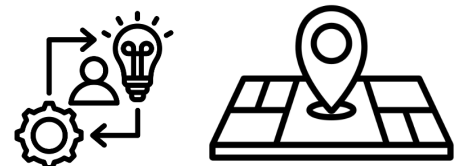
Future growth and development has adequate land available while avoiding land use conflicts and incompatible impacts.

Policies

- 13.1.1 The City should proactively pursue annexation of eligible property over the short-term.
- 13.1.2 The City should be prepared to annex additional property as it becomes developable over the long-term.
- 13.1.3 The City of Grand Island has established an annexation policy as part of the this comprehensive development plan and provisions of the policy shall be considered when evaluating annexation proposals.
- 13.1.4 The City should be prepared to annex new development in the CAAP—Cornhusker AAP area, when eligible for annexation.

Actions

- 13.1.5 As property is annexed, the City should concurrently amend the Official Zoning Map and consider extending the ETJ.
- 13.1.6 Property along the US Highway 30 realignment should be considered urban and suburban in character and evaluated for potential annexation.
- 13.1.7 Applicants for annexation shall demonstrate conformance with the established Annexation Policy of the City of Grand Island.



Annexation Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
13.1.1	The City should pro-actively pursue annexation of eligible property over the short-term.	1	1						
13.1.2	The City should be prepared to annex additional property as it becomes developable over the long-term.	1	1						
13.1.3	The City of Grand Island has established an annexation policy as part of the this comprehensive development plan and provisions of the policy shall be considered when evaluating annexation proposals.	1	-						
13.1.4	The City should be prepared to annex new development in the CAAP— Cornhusker AAP area, when eligible for annexation.	1	1						
13.1.5	As property is annexed, the City should concurrently amend the Official Zoning Map and consider extending the ETJ.	1	1						
13.1.6	Property along the US Highway 30 realignment should be considered urban and suburban in character and evaluated for potential annexation.	1	1						
13.1.7	Applicants for annexation shall demonstrate conformance with the established Annexation Policy of the City of Grand Island	9	-						

Organization:

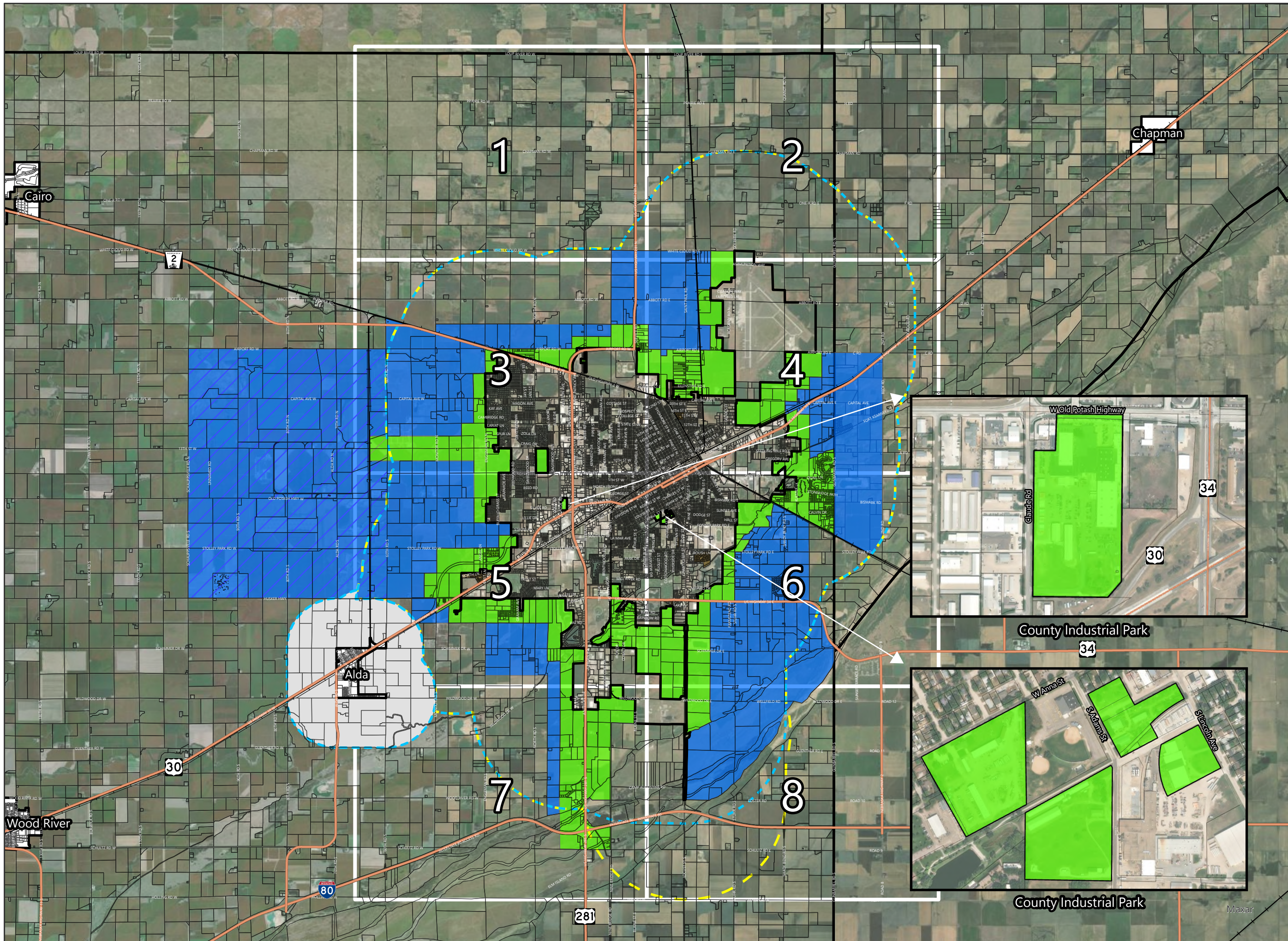
1. City of Grand Island
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5. NEDED
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12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

FIG 14.1: POTENTIAL
ANNEXATION AREAS



LEGEND

- | Term | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Short | |
| Long | |
| Cornhusker Army Ammo Plant | |
| Highways | |
| Railroads | |
| Parcels | |
| GI ETJ | |
| Alda ETJ | |
| GI 2-Mile Planning Area | |
| City Limits | |
| County Boundaries | |



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Chapter 15 Transportation

Transportation is a system providing access for people and places. Access is a prerequisite for every land use. It defines how people and goods move between different destinations in a community, and it defines the potential for what is developed at any given destination.

A well-connected, multi-modal transportation network features many linkages between origins and destinations—between homes and work, school, and play. A community has a higher quality of life when it is easier to “go around the block”, when neighbors can be neighbors, and people have accessible choices to drive, walk, or bike.

The traditional neighborhood grid of streets and sidewalks, platted parallel to the railroad, provides a clear and easy path, well-suited to complex and rapidly changing uses of land. However, streets—providing local access—and

roads—serving through traffic—are very different things and how we design streets and roads must acknowledge this different.

Heavy traffic can be directed by functional classification with purposeful variations following topography—a terminating vista at the end of a road or greenspace are unique opportunities for the developer and the community. The key is the regulatory of community interconnection and purposeful design.

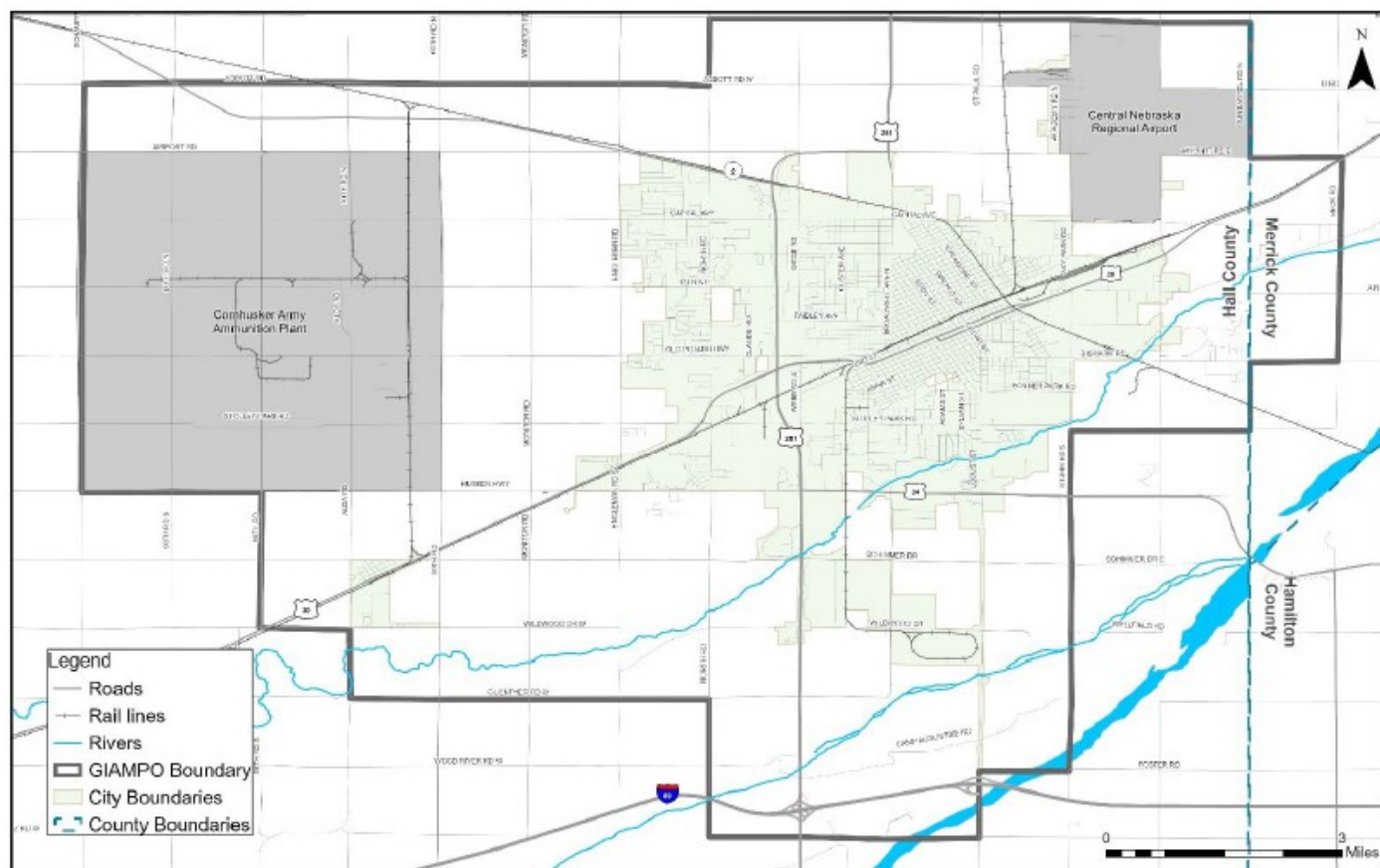
In a well-planned neighborhood, streets and sidewalks are centers of community life, welcoming residents and customers to interact and get to know each other. In poorly planned development, streets become walls and moats, fostering division and isolation. Public and private decisionmakers and

investors should consider the economic and social benefits of the transportation network.

Grand Island Area MPO (GIAMPO) is the official Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Grand Island Urbanized Area (Figure 15.1). GIAMPO serves as the formal transportation planning body for the greater Grand Island metropolitan area, with membership of the City of Grand Island, Village of Alda, Hall County, Merrick County, Nebraska Department of Transportation, and Central Nebraska Airport. While most of the GIAMPO area is in the jurisdiction of this plan, it also affects much of the transportation system of the greater Grand Island Metropolitan Area.



Figure 15.1: GIAMPO Metropolitan Planning Area



Source: Grand Island Area MPO, 2024

This chapter is intended to meet the requirements for a transportation element in Neb. Rev. Stat. §19-903(2), including "The general location, character, and extent of existing and proposed major roads, streets, and highways, and air and other transportation routes and facilities."

STREETS

Grand Island's primary road and street network consists of a combination of Interstate, US and State highways, and local streets and alleys. This system must meet the needs of local residents and people working in Grand Island. In 2021, about half

of those employed in Grand Island lived outside the city. As of 2022, the ACS found approximately 36% had access to one vehicle, 35% to two vehicles and 23% to three or more vehicles.

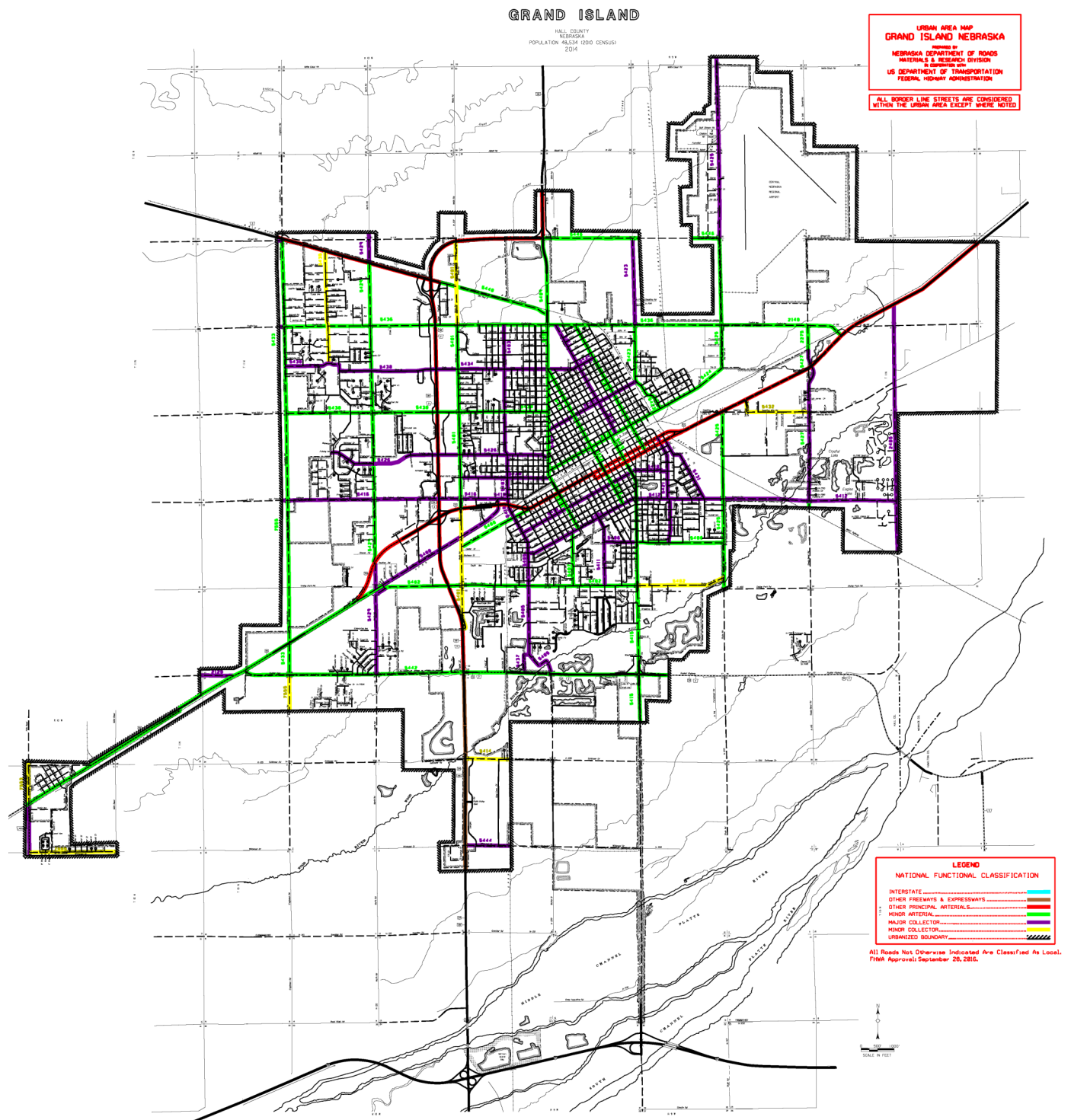
A distinction should be made between streets and roads. A road or highway is part of a transportation system to move people and goods at speed from one destination to another. A street is a platform for building local wealth—the primary function of a street is to provide access to individual lots, homes, businesses, and public places. They are both necessary, yet serve very different functions.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

Streets, roads, and highways are classified by function:

- **Interstate/Freeway**—major roadway for state or regional access
- **Arterial**—major road with high volumes of traffic, primarily connecting places to each other
- **Collector**—street with less traffic, connecting local traffic to arterial roads
- **Local**—street with low traffic volumes and slow design speeds, primarily used for direct access to property.

**Figure 15.2: Grand Island Urbanized Area
National Functional Classification**



Source: Nebraska Department of Roads

Interstates

Interstate 80 runs east and west coast-to-coast, and south of Grand Island south of the Platte River (Figure 15.2). There are three interchanges providing local access to Grand Island:

- Exit 312 at US 34/281
- Exit 314 at S. Locust Street
- Exit 318 at Highway 2

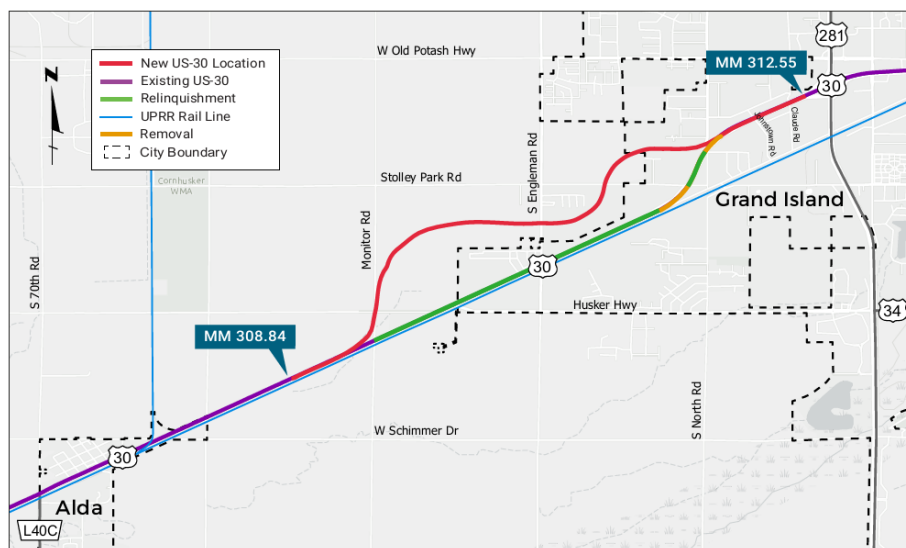
Freeways

- A portion of US 281 in Grand Island is classified as "Other Freeways and Expressways". US 281 enters Hall County from the north as a Principal Arterial, crossing Grand Island north-south, and joins US 34 south as a Principal Arterial to Hastings.

Arterials

- US 34 runs from Lincoln-Omaha to Grand Island parallel to I-80, entering Hall County as a Minor Arterial, then south as a four-lane Principal Arterial through Doniphan to meet US 6 at Hastings.
- US 30 connects Grand Island to Columbus along the UP Railroad to the east, and through Alda and Wood River as a Minor Arterial to Kearney, parallel to I-80 to the west.
- Nebraska Highway 2 enters northwestern Hall County along the BNSF railroad as a Principal Arterial, joining US 281 in Grand Island.
- Nebraska Highway 11 connects Cairo and Wood River to I-80 as a Minor Arterial. South Locust Street is also classified as a Minor Arterial south out of Grand Island, with an intersection at I-80 and continuing south just east of Doniphan.

Figure 15.3: US 30 West Realignment



Source: Nebraska Department of Transportation

The US 30 Principal Arterial follows one-way pairs through downtown Grand Island on 1st and 2nd streets. One-way streets promise greater traffic capacity, yet also encourage speeding and detract from accessibility to business along these streets. Many cities are eliminating one-way pairs and returning to two-way streets in the interest of traffic calming and economic development downtown.

Collectors

A network of Major and Minor Collectors crisscross the city, providing links between local roads and the arterial highway network.

Where arterial roads and highways typically have limited access, collector streets and roads typically do allow local access. While every developable lot must have frontage on a public road, direct driveways to collector roads should be consolidated to avoid conflicts with street traffic.

Local Streets

The vast majority of streets in the city are Local Streets. Their primary function is to provide direct access to adjacent lots and buildings, for people walking and biking as well as driving.

Well-designed streets also give the community a sense of place. An attractive, tree-lined street network encourages more people to walk or bike. More people on the street improves personal security and road safety.

While in the past, engineers assumed wider streets were safer, more recent studies have found that wider streets are more dangerous—people drive faster on wider streets. On local streets, narrower pavement leads to safer, slower streets.

Street Lighting

In urban areas, street lights can improve quality of life by enhancing inviting, safe, and lively streets and paths. When designed well, lighting can also reduce energy consumption,



Street, sidewalk, and amenities, Downtown Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

minimize light pollution, and add to the sense of place and character of a neighborhood. Street lighting should fully illuminate pedestrians and cyclists, as well as roadways, without creating light pollution or glare for motorists.

ONE AND SIX YEAR PLANS

Each year, cities in Nebraska develop and adopt a One & Six Year Street Improvement Plan. The Nebraska Board of Public Roads, Classifications, and Standards requires that the Department of Transportation, each Municipality, and each County within the State develop and file a One- and Six- Year Plan of highway, road, and street improvements.

2023/2024 City Plan

The 2023/2024 Capital Projects listed range from curb ramps to flood control and facility improvements. A total of \$13.5 million was budgeted to be funded by gas tax, with almost

\$1 million additionally funded by the general fund for 2023. For 2024, an additional \$13.6 million was budgeted from gas tax and \$1.275 million from the general fund.

Highway 30 Realignment

Among the largest projects, the US Highway 30 Realignment was in progress as this plan was being completed. This NE DOT

project will move US 30 to the north, with improvements from west of Monitor Road to the existing 4-lane divided section west of the US 30/US 281 intersection. This realignment will likely have effects on future land use between the village of Alda and city of Grand Island.

Broadwell/UPRR Grade Separation

This long-range project is intended to mitigate traffic delays and conflicts with the busy at-grade railroad crossing on Broadwell Avenue. The City estimates a 10-year process to plan the project and acquire funds. At this time, construction is anticipated to begin about FY2028.

NDOT

Grand Island is the location of the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) District 4 office. NDOT's Surface Transportation Program Book for Fiscal Year 2025 included several projects in Hall County.



While most streets are paved, many alleys are undeveloped, dirt or gravel.
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Proposed construction projects included:

- US 34 (9.8 miles) crack seal between Hastings and Doniphan, \$261,000
- District 4 Wetland Bank

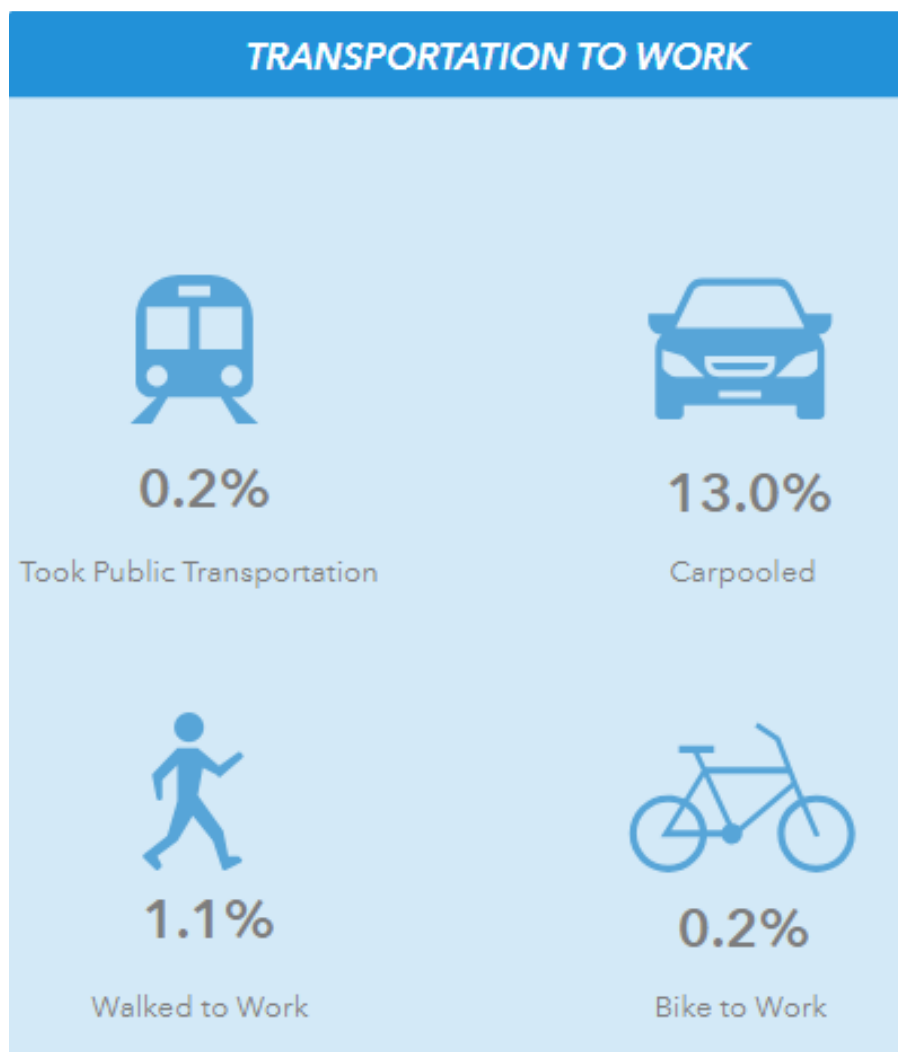
Asset preservation projects included:

- Wood River North and South Bridges, \$2,695,000
- US 30 (1.0 miles) Grand Island \$12,410,000
- US 34 (3.4 miles) mill, resurface, & bridge from Doniphan to I-80 \$6,970,000
- US 34 (5.9 miles) mill and resurface in Grand Island, \$6,143,000
- US 34 (6.8 miles) mill, resurface, & bridge, Grand Island to Phillips, \$2,864,000
- I-80 (8.4 miles) crack seal Shelton to N 11, \$367,000
- I-80 (15.4 miles) cable median barrier, Shelton to Alda, \$8,008,000
- I-80 (11.5 miles) mill and resurface, Wood River to Grand Island, \$12,675,000
- I-80 (14.4 miles) cable median barrier, Alda to Giltner, \$7,250,000
- I-80 (7.7 miles) mill, resurface, & bridge, Platte River to Phillips, \$17,250,000

BILLBOARDS

Off-site commercial advertising, commonly referred to as "billboards" advertise goods or services which are not sold or produced on the premises where the sign is located. The Federal Highway Beautification Act (HBA) of 1965 regulated the location of billboards on federal-aid highways. The "Kerr Amendment" allowed outdoor advertising in commercial and industrial zones.

Figure 15.4: Grand Island Transportation to Work



Source: American Community Survey 2017-2021; ESRI.

Many communities do not allow billboards, due to concerns with distracted driving and visual blight. As Professor We Marshall has noted, "Removing billboards was associated with a decrease of 30 to 40% in injury crashes, and restoring billboards was associated with an increase of 40 to 50% in injury crashes." The National Association of Realtors has also reported billboards hurt nearby residential property values.

In 2022, the US Supreme Court ruled in the case of City of

Austin v. Reagan National Advertising local sign codes may continue to strictly regulate off-premise advertising.

MULTI-MODAL

Transportation access is more than cars and trucks. Multi-modal transportation systems provides access by bus, bikes, and walking, as well as rail and air travel. The ACS reports about 0.2% of Grand Island residents report taking public transportation to work, and the same report riding a bike to work



CRANE Public Transit bus
Source: City of Grand Island

(Figure 15.3). While 1.1% walked to work, 13% reported they commute by carpool. These numbers vary over time yet indicate opportunities for infrastructure improvement.

TRANSIT—LOCAL AND INTER-CITY

Grand Island and Hall County have had public transportation services available to residents since the mid-1970s. After designation of the Grand Island MPO, the City of Grand Island became the primary provider for public transportation within the urbanized area, with Hall County responsible for the rural areas of the county. As of 2022, the ACS found approximately 6% of households in Grand Island do not have access to a motor vehicle.

CRANE Public Transit

Central Ride Agency of Nebraska (CRANE Public Transit) is the public transit system for the Urbanized Area of Grand Island, Nebraska. The City of Grand Island currently contracts with

Brown Transit, Inc. to provide transit service for the general public.

In 2013, the City of Grand Island became a provider of transit services with the establishment of the Grand Island MPO. In 2017, a *Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study* was completed to provide baseline information as the City began managing transit services, and to give the City a plan for transit service, and in 2019, Hall County Public Transportation was rebranded as CRANE.

In 2021-2023, Grand Island Transit completed the 2045 *Transit Development Plan*, in alignment with the GIAMPO 2045 *Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP). As noted in that plan,

“The greater the density of compatible land uses, the greater the propensity of non-auto modes like transit, walking, and biking. An adequate mix of residential, retail, mixed-use, commercial/office, and

recreational land uses, creates a synergy of places where people originate from and go to.”

At the time of the Transit Development Plan, CRANE provided approximately 29,000 trips per year within their service area. All trips must be pre-scheduled, with limited hours of operation.

Micro-transit

Some cities have set up “micro-transit” service, which improves the rider’s experience with small-scale, on-demand public transit services which can offer fixed routes and schedules, as well as flexible routes and on-demand scheduling. As technology brings down the cost of on-demand scheduling, the City should weight the costs and benefits of micro-transit services.

Intercity Transit

Burlington Trailways provides intercity bus transit with a stop in Grand Island, at 3231 Ramada Road—northwest corner of S. Locust Street and US 84. As of summer 2024, full service is provided Monday through Saturday, 11am to 5pm.

Source: burlingtontrailways.com/locations/nebraska

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) has studied the feasibility of delivering future Grand Island to Hastings to Kearney public intercity bus service.

SIDEWALKS

People are connected to places by sidewalks and trails. Functional and accessible sidewalks provide an essential

service to all users, of all ages and all abilities.

Sidewalks are an essential part of any city's infrastructure. Sidewalks enhance connectivity and promote walking...or disconnect people and places and discourage walking.

Sidewalks serve several critical functions. Clearly, they provide a safe frontage for people to walk between destinations—from home to the store, school, or park. Sidewalks in front of buildings also serve as an extension of the building, as an entryway or perhaps as a sidewalk café. Sidewalks—especially downtown but also in other areas—often provide a setting for street furniture and amenities, such as lighting, benches, tree pits, bicycle parking, or bus stops. The area between the sidewalk and street is often used for enhancements such as a grass buffer or rain-garden for environmental benefit.

In commercial and other high-traffic areas, sidewalks benefit from at least a six foot cross-section, with a minimum of five feet exclusive of amenities, and large enough for two people walking side by side. Where a sidewalk is directly adjacent to moving traffic, the desired minimum is 8 feet, providing a minimum 2-foot buffer for street furniture and utilities. In all areas, sidewalks should be installed on both sides of every new and existing street in the urban area.

Accessibility

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed by President George H.W. Bush in



John Brownell Trail at Pier Park
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

1990. The ADA is intended to make sure people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

The NDOT Roadway Design Manual (May 2022) provides guidance for design of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in conformance with ADA. This includes having a transition plan when structural modifications are required to provide accessibility, including curb ramps.

NDOT states sidewalks on rights-of-way and bridges must be at least four-feet wide, provided there are larger passing spaces every 200 feet. (Driveways may be considered as passing spaces.) The City of Grand Island currently requires new sidewalks to be five-feet wide. NDOTA states a shared-use path must be a minimum 10 feet wide, with 11-14 feet preferred in certain situations.

TRAILS

As noted in *Chapter Seven: Parks and Recreation*, multi-user trails are becoming a popular piece of infrastructure for everyday transportation as well as exercise and recreation. The City of Grand Island has invested in an extensive system of city trails.

- On-Street Trails consist of a 8.25-mile trail network connecting neighborhoods.
- John Brownell/Beltline Trail runs 2.72 miles.
- The East Lakes Trail begins at the John Brownell/Beltline Trail and heads east, with future extension planned.
- The Riverway Trail runs 4.3 miles from Hall County Park to S. Locust Street and points east.
- The State Street Trail is a shorter, 0.8-mile trail along State Street and North Road.
- The Shoemaker Trail runs 1.9 miles starting at North Road and State Street, near Shoemaker Elementary.

- The St. Joe Trail is a 2.91-mile trail from Hall County Park at the old St. Joseph & Grand Island Railroad right-of-way.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The *Grand Island Metropolitan Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* was completed in 2018, for GIAMPO. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee participated in the project. The plan included an outline of the existing active transportation environment, and markets/demand for active transportation. Existing land use and density, as well as plans for future land use, parks and trails, and major destinations, set the stage for future improvements.

The plan then set out principles and framework for the active network, including support facilities and crossing barriers. These principles are based on both the characteristics of the community and the preferences of users expressed during public process. For bicycles in particular, some locations can support off-street multi-use trails, while in

other locations on-street use is required.

The plan looked in more detail at getting around Grand Island on foot, and set out route details and support programs and policies. As the plan notes, “incorporating walking paths (sidewalks, paths, and multi-use trails) into new development and areas of existing development are essential to maintaining a safe, convenient active environment.”

RAILROADS

There are four railroads operating in Grand Island:

- Union Pacific's main line travels through the center of Grand Island, with about 90 trains every 24 hours.
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe has a main line route through Grand Island.
- Nebraska Central Railroad Company, owned by Rio Grande Pacific Railroad, operates a 340-mile network with a rail line connecting with UP in the northern part of Grand Island.

- Cathcart Rail launched the 27-mile Cornhusker Railroad (CNRR) in 2021 as a shortline serving Grand Island and Hastings.

In addition to these rail lines, there are a number of rail sites throughout the area, including “The Diamond”, where Burlington Northern-Santa Fe track passes over the Union Pacific main line and serves as a notable tourist attraction for railroad enthusiasts.

Cathcart Rail is a private freight rail company which operates a contract repair shop at the former Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant. The site is serviced by both BNSF and UP railroads by way of the shortline. Central Nebraska Transload also operates a rail car to truck facility and rail car storage on East Highway 30.

The Federal Railroad Administration's Highway-Rail Crossing Inventory indicates that there are 87 rail crossings within the GIAMPO boundary, and 65 of these crossings are at-grade and public. As noted earlier in this chapter, the City of Grand Island is working with Nebraska DOT for construction of a \$26 million overpass at Broadwell Avenue, north of Third Street. The City should continue to assess the safety of these crossings, and consider closure or improvements as necessary.

AMTRAK

Amtrak provides access to passenger rail service at five stations in Nebraska. The closest is at Hastings. There have been several efforts to restore and expand passenger rail service across Nebraska.



Coal train passes outside Grand Island
Source: Carol Highsmith, Library of Congress

Figure 15.5: GRI Airport Diagram

QUIET ZONES

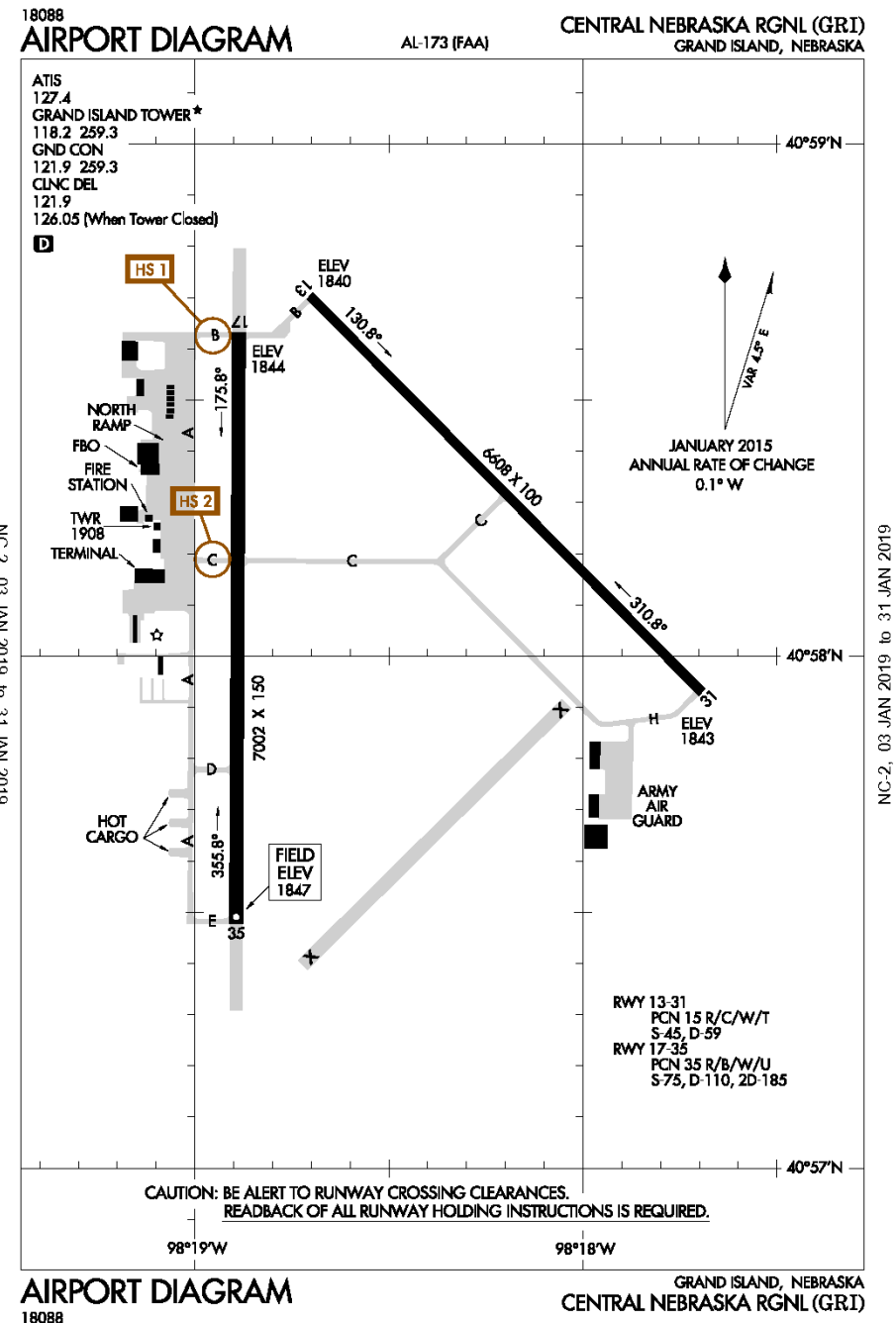
Since 2005, local communities have been able to establish "Quiet Zones" as designated stretches of railroad tracks where the routine sounding of train horns while approaching public crossings is not required. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has set stringent regulations governing how Quiet Zones may be sought and implemented. Warning devices must be constructed and maintained, including flashing light signals with gates, constant warning time train detection circuitry, and power-off indicators visible to the train crew. Additional safety measures may be required before approval by the FRA.

Source: railroads.dot.gov/railroad-safety

AIR TRAVEL

The Central Nebraska Regional Airport (KGRI) is a major aviation facility serving the region. Grand Island's first airstrip, in the 1920s, was a grass field at the end of East Fourth Street, used for air mail service. In 1937, Aarasmith Field was dedicated on 640 acres north of the original airstrip, named in honor of Dr. W.W. Arrasmith. From 1942 to 1948, the facility was an Army Air Force training facility, expanding to 1,920 acres.

The modern airport facility, renamed in 1985, is owned and operated by the Hall County Airport Authority. The 1,800 acre facility hosts four runways which serve an average of 69 aircraft per day. As of mid-2024, passenger service is available on multiple airlines to Dallas/Ft Worth, Phoenix/Mesa, and Las Vegas, as well as charter flights to Nevada.



Source: Nebraska Department of Transportation

FAA rules and regulations and the Airport Zoning Act (Nebraska Revised Statutes Section 3-301 et seq.) establish requirements for development in the vicinity of a public use airport. It is important that any development projects near the

airport are reviewed early in their design process for conformance with FAA regulations.

Source: flygrandisland.com



Central Nebraska Regional Airport terminal
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

Figure 15.6: Omaha Sectional Aeronautical Chart



Source: Federal Aviation Administration

RESOURCES

GIAMPO

As noted earlier in this chapter, the GIAMPO is responsible for multimodal transportation planning in the Grand Island urbanized area, as well as administering Federal and state transportation funding. The MPO has a Policy Board made up of local elected and appointed officials, and a Technical Committee with staff members from participating bodies. Both groups also have participating Ex-Officio (non-voting) members.

GIAMPO develops, maintains, and monitors the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a five-year program of projects and the financial plan to implement those projects. The City's One and Six Year plan is coordinated with the TIP.

Long-Range Transportation Plan

The GIAMPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is updated every five years, per Federal requirements. The current 2045 LRTP lays out a 25-year roadmap for the urbanized area's future transportation system which details the condition, issues, and opportunities of the existing system, while outlining a realistic plan for future improvements based on historical and projected funding trends.

The 2045 LRTP Goals and Objectives include:

- System Safety
- Multimodal Connectivity and Accessibility
- Economic Development
- System Preservation

- Environment and System Resiliency
- Traffic Operations and System Reliability

The LRTP identified future growth trends and forecasts, relying on projections by Woods and Poole. The plan further allocated future growth using travel demand model software with a Transportation Analysis Zone (TAX) structure, with a base year of 2017. The LRTP discusses projects already committed at the time the plan was adopted. An example is the US 30 west four-lane divided re-alignment between Grand Island and Alda.

Recommended fiscally constrained roadway projects are presented from 2026 through 2045, as well as High Priority Vision projects which would require additional future funding. Short-term projects include:

- Claude Rd, Fairley to State (New Corridor)
- Broadwell Ave at UP railroad (Grade Separation) mentioned previously
- Locust St, Walnut to Fonner Park (Reconstruction and Intersection improvements)
- State St west of US 281 (Access Management)
- 13th St west of US 281 (Access Management)
- Fairley Ave west of US 281 (Access Management)

East Bypass

The largest of the unfunded High Priority Vision projects is a potential East Bypass, diverting traffic from South Locust Street near Wildwood Drive then east of the city to the airport, connecting to US 281 north of Capital Avenue. NDOT, which has dedicated Nebraska Built

Act funding to preliminary design of the facility, estimates 8,800 ADT in 2035. Such a project would have a substantial impact on both existing and future land use and development across the city of Grand Island.

Plan Maintenance

The MPO reviews and updates plans and policies regularly. The LRTP is required to be updated no longer than five years after adoption. This comprehensive plan should also be reviewed regularly and this chapter

Complete Streets Policy Grand Island, Nebraska

Vision

The City of Grand Island will strive to plan for, design, and construct a multimodal transportation network that is safe, efficient, and accessible for people of all ages and abilities. This transportation system will enhance Grand Island's quality of life by promoting interconnectivity, economic development, mobility, equity, safety, and public health.

Complete Streets Definition and Purpose

Complete Streets is a transportation approach intended to provide safe, efficient, integrated, equitable, and connected transportation that provides access, mobility, and health for all users: pedestrians, cyclists, assistive mobility device users, motorists, transit users, commercial vehicles, and users of other common modes of transportation. Complete Streets connects travel networks including: safe streets, sidewalks, trails, bicycle lanes, bus shelters, and other infrastructures to facilitate travelers' needs.

Jurisdiction and Applicability

Complete Streets are the work of City departments and partners. The Complete Streets policy will apply to public and private street design, construction, and retrofit projects managed and implemented by the City of Grand Island, except in unusual or extraordinary circumstances. The City and partners will approach every transportation improvement and project as an opportunity to create safer, more accessible, and connected streets for all users.

The City has historically provided much of the Complete Streets infrastructure through the Subdivision Review Committee, the design process, and recent street improvement projects. The City and its partners developed the Complete Streets Guiding Document to continue to facilitate these efforts.

Now, therefore, the City of Grand Island hereby states its support of Complete Streets and its intent to continue to pursue development and projects that include Complete Streets infrastructure.

updated when MPO plans are revised.

Source: www.grand-island.com/departments/public-works/metropolitan-planning-organization

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Complete streets serve all users and modes of transportation. They require connected travel networks and context-sensitive, best practice design. Complete streets involve the work of all City departments, and include all roadway projects and phases. While not every street can be complete for every traveler, the exceptions should be rare.

Smart Growth America has studied the benefits of complete streets, and found that in a majority of cases, collision rates decreased significantly. Other research has documented how complete streets projects have attracted jobs and new residents in communities across the country—people were willing to pay a 20 percent premium to live directly on a complete street with access to convenience retail and services.

As noted in Chapter Nine Public health & livability, The Central District Health Department (CDHD) organized the Walkable Communities Initiative to encourage walking and biking. In 2018, the City of Grand Island adopted a Complete Streets policy.

This policy is not a mandate that all streets conform to Complete Streets Standards. It is also not a mandate that the City make changes to streets in their current form. It is however, a statement

by the City Council recognizing the importance of providing transportation alternatives and routes for all members of the community. It is formal recognition of the importance of increasing the transportation options available to the Citizens of Grand Island.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

Electric vehicles (EVs, also known as battery-electric vehicles) require off-board electric charging stations. Although the majority of EV owners charge at home, public charging and workplace charging stations are necessary for trips away from home.

There are currently three types of EV charging stations:

- Level 1 chargers use typical electric outlets (120V);

- Level 2 chargers are typically freestanding or hanging, and require a higher level of service (240V);
- Level 3 or DC fast chargers are freestanding stations. They can take around 30 minutes to charge a vehicle but require a very high level of service (480V).

General public charging uses Level 2 or DC fast charging, while Level 1 stations are typically located in a home garage or place of business. Charging stations should typically be located where vehicle owners are highly concentrated and parked for long periods of time. Public charging stations should also be located along highway corridors. A Level 2 charging station typically provides approximately 25 miles of range per hour of charging, while DC charging stations provide 100 to 200 miles range for 30 minutes of charging.



EV Charging Station, Grand Island
Source: Marvin Planning Consultants

According to the US Department of Energy and Nebraska DOT, there are already public EV charging station locations in Hall County, including:

- Super Saver, 1604 W. 3rd Street, Grand Island
- TD Hyundai, 3312 W. Stolley Park Road, Grand Island
- Central CC CCC, 3134 US 34, Grand Island
- Bosselman Travel Center, 3335 West Wood River Road, Grand Island
- Quality Inn, 7838 S. Hwy 281, Grand Island
- 13650 S. Platte River Drive, Wood River

There are also chargers at Aurora, Hastings, and Dannebrog in the vicinity. Currently, NDOT is focusing electric charging infrastructure funding on the designated Alternative Fuel Corridor (AFC) along I-80 and in the Omaha area. Additional state and federal funding programs may be available in the future.

Source: afdc.energy.gov/fuels/electricity-basics

TRANSPORTATION GOALS AND POLICIES

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 15.1

Hall County has a connected transportation system serving local residents and destinations.

Policies

15.1.1 New development should be located on existing improved roads, while limiting direct access on arterial routes.

15.1.2 Non-agricultural development should be banned on designated Minimum Maintenance roads.

15.1.3 High-volume roads and highways should minimize local access to preserve carrying capacity.

15.1.4 Streets providing local access should prioritize value added to adjacent property and calm through traffic.

Actions

15.1.5 Annually review the One and Six Year Plan for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

15.1.6 Continue regular maintenance of streets and sidewalks citywide.

15.1.7 Preserve alley access city-wide, to reduce need for curb cuts.

15.1.8 Prioritize paving and drainage improvements in areas with inadequate surface drainage.

15.1.9 Encourage consolidated access along section roads, rather than individual driveways.

15.1.10 Review and update street and road standards to optimize required widths of pavement.

15.1.11 As the industry evolves, review zoning requirements for EV charging stations.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 15.2

The road/street network meets the needs of those passing through the metropolitan area without impacting local users.

Policies

15.2.1 As the area grows, arterial and collector roads and highways will need to be improved to maintain economic vitality and quality of life.

15.2.2 Improvements to roads and truck routes will minimize impacts on existing neighborhoods.

15.3.3 New development should provide access improvements and a backage road system along major roadways.

Actions

- 15.2.4 Work with Nebraska DOT on improving State highways.
- 15.2.5 Engage Nebraska DOT on design work for the proposed East Bypass to assure local needs are met and impacts on existing residents are minimized.
- 15.2.6 Update this chapter upon update of the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan or other significant planning documents.
- 15.2.7 Maintain and improve community entrances to Grand Island along major corridors.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 15.3

Multi-modal transportation infrastructure is provided for walking, bicycling, and public transportation where necessary.

Policies

- 15.3.1 Development projects are encouraged to provide multi-modal amenities.
- 15.3.2 Larger development projects should work with CRANE/Hall County Rural Transportation to incorporate bus pullouts, benches, and/or shelters as necessary.

Actions

- 15.3.3 Support the CRANE transit system.
- 15.3.4 Encourage maintenance, replacement, and installation of sidewalks.
- 15.3.5 Complete and maintain ADA improvements to sidewalks and public facilities.
- 15.3.6 Support Parks and Recreation Department maintenance and expansion of the city trails network.
- 15.3.7 Update and implement the MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 15.4

Commercial rail transportation continues to be a regional asset for local producers and manufacturers.

Actions

- 15.4.1 Work with UPRR and BNSF to ensure continued local service.
- 15.4.2 Work with railroad companies to improve railroad crossings.
- 15.4.3 Work with the FRA to establish Quiet Zones at local railroad crossings.

- 15.4.4 Participate in regional efforts to re-establish passenger rail through the Grand Island area.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL 15.5

Air transportation is available for residents and businesses.

Actions

- 15.5.1 Support maintenance and improvements to Central Nebraska Regional Airport.
- 15.5.2 Support continued air passenger service at Central Nebraska Regional Airport.
- 15.5.3 Coordinate development review in the vicinity of the Airport with the County and the Hall County Airport Authority Board.



Transportation Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
15.1.1	New development should be located on existing improved roads, while limiting direct access on arterial routes.	1,2,11	-						
15.1.2	Non-agricultural development should be banned on designated Minimum Maintenance roads	1,2	-						
15.1.3	High-volume roads and highways should minimize local access to preserve carrying capacity.	1,2,11	-						
15.1.4	Streets providing local access should prioritize value added to adjacent property and calm through traffic.	1,2	1,2,45						
15.1.5	Annually review the One and Six Year Plan for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.	1,2	1	X					
15.1.6	Continue regular maintenance of streets and sidewalks citywide.	1	1,4						
15.1.7	Preserve alley access city-wide, to reduce need for curb cuts.	1	1,4,6						
15.1.8	Prioritize paving and drainage improvements in areas with inadequate surface drainage.	1	1,4						
15.1.9	Encourage consolidated access along section roads, rather than individual driveways.	1,2,8	1,2,5						
15.1.10	Review and update street and road standards to optimize required widths of pavement.	1,2,10	1						
15.1.11	As the industry evolves, review zoning requirements for EV charging stations.	1,10	1						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
2. Hall County
3. GIAEDC
4. Grand Island CRA
5. NEDED
6. NIFA
7. South Central EDD

8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

Transportation Policies and Actions				CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
15.2.1	As the area grows, arterial and collector roads and highways will need to be improved to maintain economic vitality	1,2,11	1,2,3,4,5	X					
15.2.2	Improvements to roads and truck routes will minimize impacts on existing neighborhoods.	1,2,11	1,2,3,4,5	X					
15.2.3	New development should provide access improvements and a backage road system along major roadways.	1,9,11	1,2,3,4,5						
15.2.4	Work with Nebraska DOT on improving State highways.	1,2,11	1,4	X					
15.2.5	Engage Nebraska DOT on design work for the proposed East Bypass to assure local needs are met and impacts on existing residents are minimized.	1,2,11	1,4	X					
15.2.6	Update this chapter upon update of the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan or other significant planning documents.	1,2,10	1						
15.2.7	Maintain and improve community entrances to Grand Island along major corridors.	1,2,11	1,2,4,5,6						

Organization:

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Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax

Transportation Policies and Actions			\$\$\$	CIP	Less than 1 Year	1 to 5 Years	5 to 10 years	10 to 20 years	On-going
15.3.1	Development projects are encouraged to provide multi-modal amenities.	1,3,4,9	1,3,4,5						
15.3.2	Larger development projects should work with CRANE/Hall County Rural Transportation to incorporate bus pullouts, benches, and/or shelters as necessary.	1,9,12	1,4,5						
15.3.3	Support the CRANE transit system.	1,2	1,4,5						
15.3.4	Encourage maintenance, replacement, and installation of sidewalks.	1,8,12	1,4,5						
15.3.5	Complete and maintain ADA improvements to sidewalks and public facilities.	1	1,4,5,6						
15.3.6	Support Parks and Recreation Department maintenance and expansion of the city trails network.	1,12	1,4,5,6						
15.3.7	Update and implement the MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.	1	1,4						
15.4.1	Work with UPRR and BNSF to ensure continued local service.	1,8	1,5						
15.4.2	Work with railroad companies to improve railroad crossings.	1,8	1,5						
15.4.3	Work with the FRA to establish Quiet Zones at local railroad crossings.	1,8	1,4,5						
15.4.4	Participate in regional efforts to re-establish passenger rail through the Grand Island area.	1,8,10,11,12	1,4,5						
15.5.1	Support maintenance and improvements to Central Nebraska Regional Airport.	1,12	1,2,4,5						
15.5.2	Support continued air passenger service at Central Nebraska Regional Airport.	1,8,12	1,4,5						
15.5.3	Coordinate development review in the vicinity of the Airport with the County and the Hall County Airport Authority Board.	1,2	1						

Organization:

1. City of Grand Island
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8. Private Businesses
9. Developers
10. Consultants
11. Nebraska DOT
12. Local Organizations
13. Schools

Funding Sources:

1. General Funds
2. Bonding
3. TIF
4. Grants
5. Private Funds
6. Sales Tax



Chapter 16 Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan is not meant to sit on a shelf. This document is intended to be used by the decisionmakers, residents, and investors of Grand Island.

This section of the plan describes the next steps to implement the comprehensive plan. The ultimate success of this plan is in the dedication offered by residents of the community.

There are numerous goals, policies, and actions in this plan. These items should inform development review, annual workplans, and budget setting to assure progress continues to bring the plan to life.

ACTION PLAN

The action plan for implementation is a combination of goals, policies, and action items, with provisions to bring the plan to life while evaluating development proposals. Goals and action items specific to each plan element are included in the relevant chapter.

Action items provide a toolbox for Grand Island. They are suggestions—what might be done, who might be involved in completing actions, potential sources of funding, and suggested timeframes for implementation.

SMALL AREA PLANS

Grand Island is growing as a metropolitan area. As noted in Chapter 13 Land Use, it may be useful and necessary to look more carefully at small areas of

the city and the ETJ—areas which have potential for redevelopment, or where special opportunities for investment arise. An example is the 4th Street Concept planning undertaken as part of this comprehensive planning process. Many larger cities conduct neighborhood plans to provide a more granular level of study and evaluate area-specific goals, policies, and action items.

As noted several places in this plan, the City has completed several projects such as special studies of Downtown Grand Island, parks and recreation master plans, etc. The City should continue to support and coordinate these efforts with the



goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP)

A Capital Improvements Program or Plan (CIP) is a planning and fiscal management tool assessing the City's evolving needs and prioritizing tasks to meet these needs. Capital improvements are typically permanent structural changes to property or assets, rather than routine maintenance. The CIP should also consider major long-range planning projects and studies. Those needs should be annually evaluated against the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Capital improvement planning helps bridge the gap between the planning process and the budget process. Programming in the CIP should cover project financing, location, and timing, for capital projects such as:

- City Facilities
- Capital equipment
- Parks and recreation
- Utilities
- Sidewalks and trails
- Transit
- Other capital facilities

The CIP process should be coordinated with the One-and-Six Year plan for streets. Development of a CIP is among the immediate and ongoing implementation items for this comprehensive planning process.

EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Development applications, including Conditional Use Permits, should be carefully reviewed against the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan, as well as the specific requirements of the development regulations. This plan is not regulatory; however, zoning and subdivision regulations are based on compatibility with this plan. Each development application should address how the specific proposal meets the policies of the comprehensive plan.

In cases in which a proposal is counter to the policies of this plan, the developer should be encouraged to bring the proposal into conformance. On the other hand, approval of a proposal which is not in conformance would point to the need to review and update the plan to better serve the community..

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAINTENANCE

Annual Review of the Plan

A relevant, up to date plan is critical to the on-going planning success. To maintain both public and private sector confidence; evaluate the effectiveness of planning activities; and, most importantly, make mid-plan corrections on the use of public resources, the plan must remain current. The annual review should be performed each January to begin the calendar year. This review should result in a report

from the Planning Commission and Staff to the City Council and the citizens of Grand Island.

Public Education

Broad public support and involvement is necessary to the development and use of practically any implementation policy or program. If adequate support is to be developed, a permanent program educating residents is necessary. People who understand the needs and ways of meeting those needs of the community must take the initiative to stimulate the interest and the understanding required to assure action is taken.

The governing body of Grand Island should strive to implement an active public participation process by creating an educational process on land use issues annually. The City should actively continue to use their website to communicate with residents and investors in the community.

Unanticipated Opportunities

If major new, innovative development and/or redevelopment opportunities arise which impact any number of elements of the plan and which are determined to be of importance, a plan amendment may be proposed and considered separate from the Annual Review and other proposed comprehensive plan amendments. The comprehensive plan amendment process should adhere to the adoption process specified by Nebraska law and provide for the organized participation and involvement of citizens.

Ten Year Review

As discussed in the Introduction, the *Grand Island Comprehensive Development Plan* is a 20-year plan. However, the City should review the plan annually and update the document at least every 10 years (2034), or when major, unanticipated opportunity arises. Completing updates every ten years or so will allow the City to incorporate ideas and developments not known at the time of this comprehensive planning process.

IMPLEMENTATION GOALS AND ACTIONS

IMPLEMENTATION GOAL 16.1

Development policies and regulations are updated and maintained.

IMPLEMENTATION GOAL 16.2

The Planning Commission reviews this plan regularly.

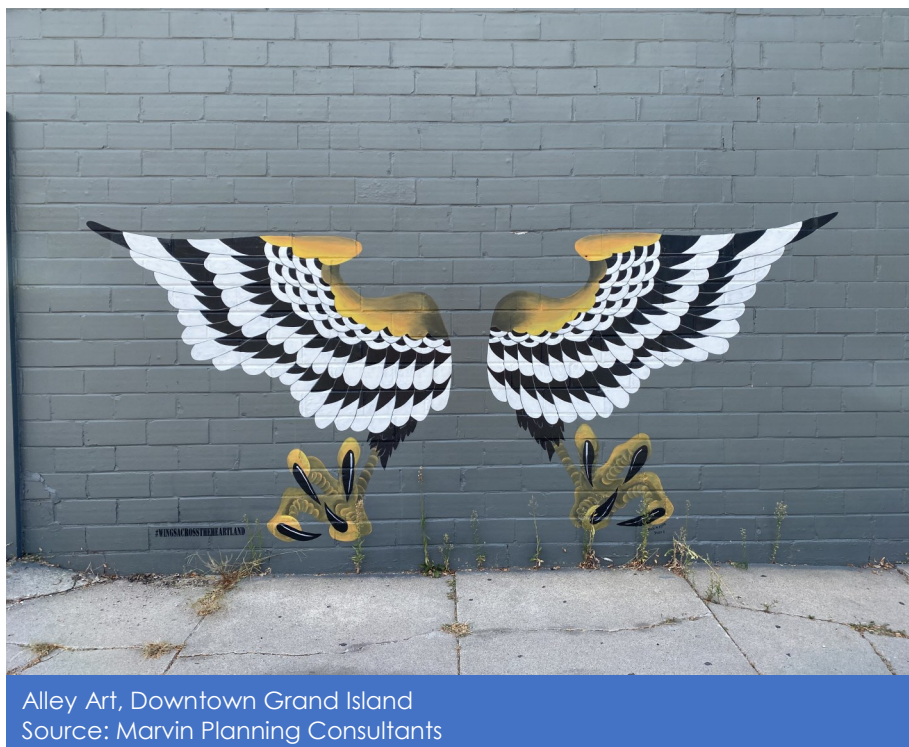
Action Items

This plan recommends several immediate tasks as implementation action items. These include:

1. Zoning Regulations
2. Subdivision Regulations
3. Floodplain Regulations & Mapping
4. Capital Improvements Program
5. Plan Maintenance

The City Council will have a critical role in implementation of this plan through the annual budgeting process. City staff and volunteers take the primary role in implementation of the comprehensive plan.

Other action items are referenced in support of activities by other entities supporting



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Appendix A: Public Participation

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

As noted in Chapter Two Community Engagement, the first round of Town Hall public participation meetings were held at 6:00 PM on October 25, 26, and 27 of 2022. A fourth Town Hall meeting was held on January 31, 2023, to gather additional input. These meeting were an integral part of the planning process.

October Meetings

At the first round of meetings, held at Barr, Walnut, and Westridge middle schools, attendees were asked the following five broad questions about their thoughts on Grand Island.

Why do you choose to live or have a business in Grand Island?

- Born and raised, raised kids here
- Stability
- Tied to agriculture
- Good place to live
- The people
- The size - not too big, not too small
- We have what we need
- Schools - choice of schools
- Location between east and west part of state
- Easy to move into - neighborly
- Family
- Good environment for families
- Opportunities for growth
- Easy to get things done
- Jobs (x2)
- From here
- Safety
- Cost of living

- Cost of living is high - cannot afford to move, being stuck
- Good place to live in 1999

What do you love about Grand Island?

- Hustle, can do attitude, leadership
- Positive change
- Parks, Parks and Recreation Department
- Community College
- Public power
- Choice of school size
- Bigger city amenities
- Location, easy access to I-80
- City Library
- Bike trails
- Job opportunities (x2)
- Schools
- Jobs
- Potential - capillaries of life
- Aesthetics
- Room to grow
- Platte River Corridor
- Variety of dinner options
- Stuhr Museum, Shooting park, clubs and activities
- Variety of retail stores
- Airport
- Neat small town
- Has everything you need
- Easy to live here
- Centrally located - convenient
- Good hunting and fishing - recreation
- Parks and rec

What are the biggest opportunities Grand Island has for the future?

- Be creative to keep people here
- Infrastructure improvements
- Airport leading to business growth

- Healthcare choices (2 hospitals)
- 4th St, Multicultural District
- Casino, indoor flea market
- Lots of hotels to choose from
- Central location for shipping and logistics
- Open land, especially to south
- Destination for tourism (ex. cranes)
- Destination as a place to live, retaining young people - improve cost of living
- Expansion of high schools
- Entrepreneurship Center (CCC) - small business growth
- Industrial park growth
- CAAP
- Trails - hike and bike, fitness and recreation, access
- Shooting range
- CAAP - overall development (non-residential)
- State fairgrounds
- River corridor - cranes
- Business expansion/small business
- Airport/expansion/destination and location
- Build up instead of out/ Downtown density
- Diversity
- More housing
- Space for redevelopment
- Still recovering from the pandemic
- Family-oriented activities
- Childcare and pre-K
- Parks and recreation - affordability
- Elder care
- RV Parks

What are the biggest weaknesses Grand Island has right now?

- Infrastructure
- Public transportation
- Following through on future planning
- GIPS
- Property taxes too high
- Crime and drugs
- Apathy, need more involvement
- Transparency and top down communication
- Lack of shopping, closing of Conestoga
- Not enough planning for the future
- Roundabouts/transportation route changes
- Lack of minority representation on city and county board
- Labor force
- Public participation
- Connectivity/transport
- Expand bike trails - connect to neighborhoods
- Railroad tracks are a barrier
- Daycare
- Housing availability, affordability, and choices
- Public transportation - transit plan
- Communication - not everybody is online
- Geriatric medical care - regionally
- No four-year college (Doane does have a facility, College Park)
- High poverty level
- Aging infrastructure - maintenance
- Retainability - keeping people here
- Housing poverty - maintenance
- Edges of town - rural profile roads and drains, no sidewalks, access to schools

- Capacity for grant writing
- Lack of all types of housing

How would you describe the ideal Grand Island 20 years from now?

- Equitable property taxes
- Steady growth of 3-5%, sustainable
- Good schools
- No TIF for vacant ground
- Vibrant core of city
- Increase of small businesses and start-ups
- Young people staying in GI, through education pathways?
- Safe
- Family oriented entertainment
- Affordable and adequate housing
- Amenable codes/building/energy codes
- Grow your own jobs
- Connect hike/bike trail, better active transportation
- Overpass on Broadwell over Burlington
- A place where your dreams come true
- Opportunities for housing
- Less "dead space"
- Homelessness eliminated
- Ok to grow, moderately
- Not hearing train whistles 24/7, e.g. quiet zones
- Opportunities for family-oriented fun
- Attractive to people from outside GI
- Unique recreation activities (i.e. steam engine)
- Entertainment - get what's up across the US
- Good schools with options
- New high school #2
- Continued growth
- Life long housing choices

- Golf course
- Good health care - facilities and talent

January Meeting

At the fourth meeting, held at the Bosselman Corporate Meeting Room, attendees split into groups of 5 to 6. Each group was given the same five questions to answer. After answering these questions as a group, each table reported out their top responses. The highlighted answers below were each table's top answers.

Why do you choose to live or have a business in Grand Island?

- Currently work here
- Grandkids and family
- Slower pace of living
- Good size (small, big city)
- Welcoming community
- School system
- Pride
- Eco system for businesses and employers
- Safe
- Non-restrictive and streamlined regulations
- Family/good place to raise a family
- Easy to get around town
- Sense of community
- Easy to open a business
- Events downtown
- It has a skate park
- People and good business community
- Not too small – not too big. "Big Hometown"
- Good location
- Keep adding routes to airport
- Raise our children
- Growing!!
- Industry and agriculture
- Saw the potential in GI
- Where I want to raise my kids

- Everyone I know is here
- Family
- Location between Denver and Kansas City
- Diversity
- Size of GI – good place to raise children, small town feel but with lots of opportunities, stores, and restaurants
- Come to GI because of jobs
- Great churches and services
- Central location
- Airport
- Demand for services
- Grew up in GI – we came back to raise our kids, be close to parents
- Opportunity
- Diversity – good places to raise kids
- Good jobs – good people
- Chill, don have to impress anyone
- Low cost of entry – business
- 2 hospitals
- Healthcare
- Comfortable/familiarity/sense of security
- Nice people
- Really big small town
- Jobs, people
- It is home
- Make a good living
- Company assignments
- Connections (friendship, church)
- Family connections
- Safety, safe community
- Friendliness
- Home
- Family
- Agriculture
- Small-town feel
- Culture
- School system
-

What do you love about Grand Island?

- Diversity
- 4th Street
- Public school – academy model

- Non-profits – meeting needs
- Parks
- Job and family
- HEAR GI – one night
- Good people
- Large, free soccer fields
- More housing
- Small town friendliness
- Diversity of employers (high vs low tech)
- Entrepreneur environment
- Movie theater (nice)
- Arts and entertainment
- Destination (family friendly)
- Transportation – improvements
- Diversity
- Small town feel/family oriented
- Utilities are affordable
- The parks
- Good relationship between law enforcement and citizens
- Community looks out for each other
- Good place to raise a family
- Good skate boarding community
- Airport
- Diverse population (great food!)
- Education opportunities – school choices
- Location
- Easy to travel across town
- State fair, water park, and indoor activities
- Husker Harvest Days
- Hike and bike trail
- Downtown – the festoon lights and nostalgia
- Great environment for families
- People – connect with people – know neighbors
- Park/lights downtown
- Small-town feel
- Downtown retail
- Traditions
- Stuhr Museum
- Growth GI has seen

- Retail boutiques
- State Fair
- The people – city of kindness
- The central location
- Size of Grand Island ideal
- Have great retail/restaurants
- Medical services are great – VA, hospitals, specialists, cancer treatment center
- Great pickleball community
- Stolley Park – we have good parks
- Eagle Scout lake/park
- Airport
- Lower crime/drugs – positive attitude toward law enforcement
- Amos
- Young task takers
- People who want to see progress
- This turnout
- Diversity
- Progressive city leadership
- Stuhr Museum
- Fonner Park
- Access routes – Highway 30, 2, 281
- Religious institutions
- Downtown
- Opportunities – business
- Access to city leadership
- Chill, laid back, nice people
- Like minded people
- Economic stability
- Airport
- Small businesses
- Cheap electricity/utilities
- Reliable infrastructure
- Responsive government
- City-county coordination
- Community service organizations
- City gardener, Brad Foster
- Good people/small town feel
- Downtown
- Diversity
- Parks

- Library
- Generosity and support
- Easy to navigate

How would you describe the ideal Grand Island 20 years from now?

- Public transportation
- Affordable housing – build ready lots
- Traffic planning – bypass system – eastside, westside
- Infrastructure piped in
- Thriving communities – access to parks and public spaces
- Sustainable economic opportunity – young workers
- Continue development of college park
- Diverse political representation
- Better activities for youths – more than sports
- Expand entertainment – diverse activities
- Storyline, rich historically
- Retail opportunities
- Family values
- State fair and subsequent spin-off
- Friendly
- Airport access
- Hometown pride
- Diversity of churches
- Small business support
- Safe for the youth, the teenagers need activities
- Indoor skate park
- Rec center youth center – place for help with homework or youth mentorship
- Well lit walk ways in Railside and the bike trails
- More industry
- Expand the pathway for GISH
- A 4 year college
- More flights at the airport
- More jobs for teens
- Adequate jobs
- Expand education (all ages)
- example, Wayne State College
- Improved retail/medical
- Plentiful affordable housing
- More activities/facilities
- Better traffic/bypass
- Infrastructure (internet/5G/ Digital access)
- More entertainment
- No more roundabouts
- Grade separation of railroad crossings
- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Trails connected
- More quality childcare
- More businesses
- Fun family-oriented activities and centers
- Diers Ave fixed
- Improved airport access
- Affordable, multi-sport, multigenerational recreational facility
- GI is the hub of Kearney, Hastings, York, St. Paul
- Need city to attract young families, professionals, and retirees
- Lower property taxes
- Keep youth here after high school
- Fluoride in water
- 4 year college
- Entrepreneurship support
- Thriving downtown
- Young people/families are back
- Strong health care
- More jobs/housing
- Redevelopment of older parts of town
- Reduced TIF usage
- Progressive events
- Excellent public education
- Population growth
- Adequate, affordable housing
- Highway bypass
- Better surface transportation
- Senior-oriented medical facilities
- Senior-oriented mental

health services

- Tree city
- Improved cultural opportunity
- Completed hike and bike trails
- Attractive parks – detention cells
- Infrastructure keeping pace with growth
- Property taxes in line with other communities
- School tax is lower
- All American City
- Youth entertainment – art, skating rinks, hockey
- Walking tours
- GI Passport

What are the biggest opportunities Grand Island has for the future?

- Diverse economic opportunities – grow their own business - for instance lack of barber and beauty salons
- Can't attract big business without affordable housing
- Opportunities with college park – chance for diversity/ inclusion
- Opportunity for arts and culture – transcends single culture
- Grow diversity
- Academics – student attraction
- Maximize fairgrounds
- Small business growth, producing jobs especially at industrial park
- Air connections
- Transportation connections
- Identify pool, maximize integration, and help with education
- Support diverse professional job opportunities
- Developers partnering with businesses
- Infrastructure in place

- Plenty of land
- Growth on S Locust to I-80 – businesses and homes
- Investing in the youth, keeping them in the community
- Higher education, 4 year college
- I-80 and two railroads
- Airport
- Expanding hike and bike trail/ new skate park
- Central location with good highways and railroad
- Adequate water and other resources
- Clean air – smogless, odorless now
- Well established economic development corporation and small government
- Acres available for residential development, recreation, and agriculture
- New revenue for local income and sales tax increase
- 4-year college (expand on our community college)
- 2nd GIPS High School
- Airport (bigger and better)
- Entrepreneurship
- Retain youth
- Hub for freight – multimodal transportation center for distribution to region
- Data processing centers
- Technical/trade school development – e.g. culinary
- Growing number of trade programs at CCC – connection to high school
- Educational facilities
- Chance to plan for traffic to have good growth
- Music venue (event center size)
- Baseball tourney complex
- Create an affordable, multi-sport, multigenerational recreational facility. This could include pickleball

- courts, basketball, volleyball, soccer fields, baseball cages, a track, and pool
- Connect neighborhoods with walking trails
- Safe pedestrian walkways and sidewalks
- Opportunities – bring in more high-paying jobs
- Farmers market
- Fix what we have – examples include Stolley Park pickleball court needing resurfaced and repairing the basketball courts; Island Oasis; Lincoln pool; Kings Kingdom
- Add/expand on fieldhouse
- Event center/Fonner Park/ State Fair complex
- Ordinance plant
- Vets home
- Downtown
- Family ties
- Concert association
- College park/4 year school
- Entrepreneurship/ opportunity
- Retail hub
- PV industrial site – power/ water/fiber
- Interstate is close
- Ag industry
- Water is abundant
- Fieldhouse/recreation
- Sports complex
- Childcare museum
- Stuhr Museum
- GIPS
- YMCA
- Flexibility
- Simple life, the people
- Airport
- Utilize available higher education facilities
- Location for transportation hub
- Ammunition plant
- Land for improved parks
- Downtown development, energetic entrepreneurs
- Regional airport concept
- Small-town feel

- Leadership – local
- Newspaper
- Mall
- Downtown market
- Tours
- Convention Visitors Bureau involvement
- Continued restoring old buildings such as the old post office
- Promote tourism
- Hall County Historical Society could follow in downtown's footsteps

What are the biggest weaknesses Grand Island has right now?

- Lack of diversity
- Lack of representation
- No adequate public transportation
- Lack of affordable housing
- Saturation of low-wage work – service industry
- Not welcoming to others – particularly from different cultures
- Lack of support for public schools
- Lack of good dining and food
- No public art
- Lack of inclusion of 4th St – minority business
- Expand infrastructure to underserved parts of the city
- Lack of youth engagement
- Lack of diversity in employers
- Lack of employers
- Housing needs
- Health care stability
- Greater bi-lingual community communication
- Child care opportunities
- Young people leaving
- Low paying jobs
- Crime/gangs
- Property taxes
- Affordable housing
- How the school deals with fighting and safety in schools

- More free activities
- Public transportation
- Lack of affordable housing
- High taxes/property tax
- Ryder Park/Recreational facilities
- Bypasses – lack of
- Eyesore – 281 entrances
- Lack of 4 year college
- More progressive attitude
- Continue to expand hike and bike trails
- No medical specialist – have to go out of town to get wisdom teeth out – usually go to Hastings or Kearney
- Lack of places to go/amenities
- Traffic congestion
- Lack of entertainment, recreation for youth
- Lack of childcare options
- Limited higher education opportunities
- Too small scale of transit – need regular fixed routes
- Taxes
- Trashy areas
- Maintenance of parks and recreation facilities
- Perception of GI
- Diers Ave and Highway 281 intersection
- Workforce
- Housing
- Lack of quality movie theaters
- Capital investment
- Conference space
- Lack of private schools, higher education
- County Board – assessments
- Lack of risk taking – roll the dice
- Workforce
- Perception from Eastern NE leadership
- Large high school
- GIPS
- Competition
- Child care/early childcare
- Traffic efficiency/roundabouts
- Strict parking requirements
- Blue-collar quality of life
- Lack of cultural opportunities
- Poor east-west traffic flow
- Need for high-paying (tech) jobs
- Need for higher education
- Need for quality restaurants
- Need for active recruitment of industry
- High rent
- Not enough youth entertainment
- Skate Island being gone
- Youth retention/youth leadership
- Downtown drainage
- Lack of pride, littering
- Traffic control/lights
- Council meetings with seemingly predetermined outcomes
- Railroad crossings
- Noise from bands downtown, fair
- Civic/elected leaders don't listen to constituents

Appendix B: Grand Island Market Analysis Report

As noted in Chapter Two Community Engagement, Leland Consulting Group performed a Market Analysis including elements of demographics, housing, and economic development, as part of the comprehensive planning process for Grand Island and Hall County. Their report is incorporated by reference into this plan as Appendix B.

The full report is available on the Regional Planning page at the City of Grand Island's website, grand-island.com.

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Appendix C: 4th Street Streetscape and Enhancement

As discussed in Chapter 13 Land Use, the MSP team partnered with the City of Grand Island as part of the planning team to conduct a thorough study focused on improving the 4th Street corridor. The initial phase involved defining the project scope, desired outcomes, methodology, and stakeholder engagement plan. This phase included a detailed review of existing conditions, design standards, utility information, traffic data, and current land use policies.

The design team then worked with community members to establish a vision for the area, considering the corridor's opportunities, constraints, and stakeholder feedback. The final plan features design renderings and graphics to effectively communicate the goals and objectives.

To ensure a clear path for implementation, action items were developed and prioritized. These items outlined immediate improvements to streetscape amenities as well as longer-term investments in capital and streetscape enhancements.

The full report is available on the Regional Planning page at the City of Grand Island's website, grand-island.com.

* * *

4TH STREET CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENT STRATEGIES

GRAND ISLAND, NE

The Street scape of Grand Islands was greatly improved during the 2018 Railside Business Improvement District development connecting 3rd street and its residents. These improvements have greatly enhanced the aesthetics, safety, and walk ability of the local main street area and offer all a more pleasant visit during their time downtown. 3rd street also offers better signage and way finding that create a sense of place within the community and strengthens its urban core. Railside Plaza on 3rd street is another great example of utilizing space in order to strengthen Grand Plazas community. This space not only offers seating and a place to meet but can double as an event space for special occasions. These improvements can be utilized just as well on the other side of the tracks on 4th street in order to connect these two strong networks together and make them feel more apart of the city of Grand Island.



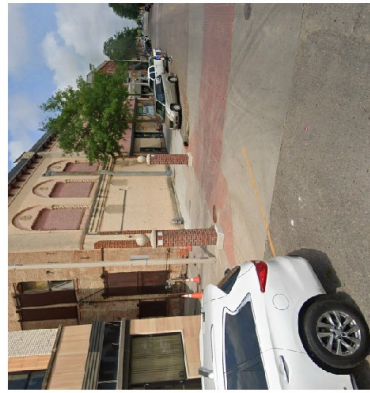
Festival at Railside Plaza



View From N Wheeler and 3rd



Public Space on 3rd



Enhanced Crosswalks



Improved Street Lighting



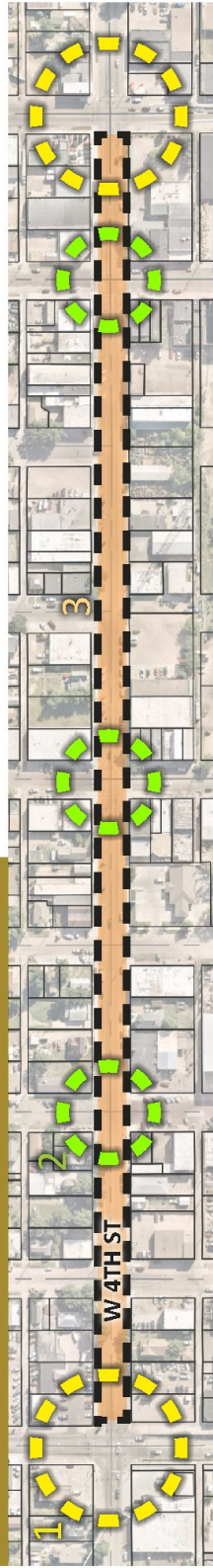
Entry Banner on Main Street



Aerial View of Crosswalk on 3rd

4TH STREET CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENT STRATEGIES

GRAND ISLAND, NE



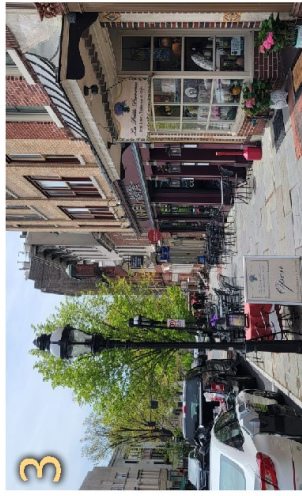
These locations highlighted above would be perfect areas to bring the same improvements seen on 3rd street into 4th across the tracks. Below are examples of these concepts to illustrate what can be possible with simples changes to the main street network of Grand Island.



For the major intersections of Eddy and Sycamore, the addition of colorful paver crosswalks, pedestrian crossing lights, and improved wayfinding would help to create a strong sense of place for 4th street.



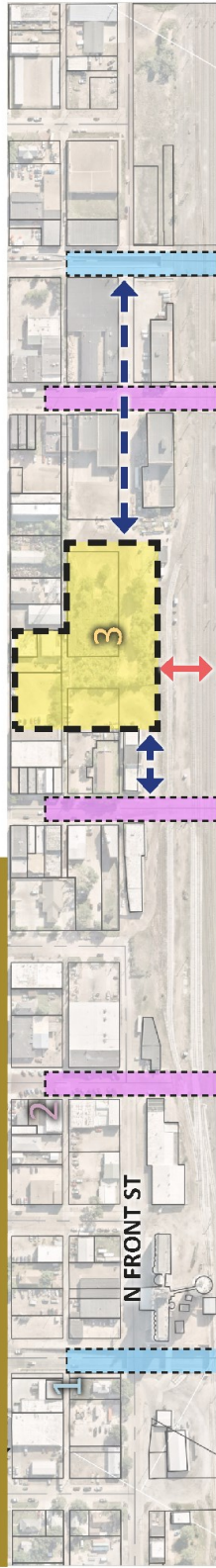
For 4th Streets minor intersections, simple improvements can help the areas safety and aesthetics. These would include additions pictured above on Pine street such as, painted crosswalk markings on the asphalt, the addition of crosswalk lights, and enhanced signage to improve the road network.



Along the main street of 4th, the additions of planters, improved street lights, string lighting across the street, and other visual improvements would help establish the same welcoming and walkable environment that is present on 3rd street.

4TH STREET CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENT STRATEGIES

GRAND ISLAND, NE



The train tracks are an integral part of Grand Island's physical development and urban structure. This feature can be utilized to create interesting and engaging pedestrian interactions. Examples from all over the US have utilized these features to their benefit. Ideas from Railside park on 3rd street can also be utilized on 4th to extend the feeling of connectivity.



To help beautify and encourage pedestrian travel through the underpasses of N Eddy Street and N Sycamore Street, Murals can be implemented to brighten and welcome those who use these routes.



In Austin Texas, this example of pedestrian crossing over train tracks is done by implementing simple pavers, bollards and signage. The tracks also incorporate a bike trail that runs parallel to the tracks. This could be utilized along with a vehicular crossing option to support both means of transit.



Railroad Park in Birmingham is a prime example of incorporating and managing existing infrastructure into a developed public space. This park would mirror Railside park on 3rd to create a more cohesive design for the entire downtown of Grand Island.

