ALTOONA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

AUGUST 2014

AUGUST 2014

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Southeast
Polk
RAM
PRIDE

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

This plan lays out a vision for the future of Altoona, with a focus on priorities for policy and investments in the next 20 years. The plan serves three primary roles:

1. Community Building

Comprehensive planning provides an opportunity for residents to create a shared vision for their community. Residents and city staff identified issues and opportunities for Altoona's land use, infrastructure, public facilities, natural resources, and more. These findings were used to create a vision for Altoona and set public priorities.

2. Guidance for Decision-Makers

The plan will serve as a guide for City staff, the Planning & Zoning Commission, City Council, and other City boards and commissions, as they set policy, make public investments and deliberate land use decisions.

3. Legal Basis for Land Use Regulations

Section 414 of the Code of Iowa allows cities to adopt land use regulations, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances, to promote the "health, safety, morals or general welfare of the community." These regulations govern how land is developed within a municipality and its extra-territorial jurisdiction. Land use regulations recognize that people live cooperatively and have certain responsibilities to coordinate and harmonize the uses of private property. The comprehensive plan provides a legal basis for these regulations.

The plan recommends policies and actions related to land use, environmental preservation, community character, parks, recreation, community services, housing, transportation, infrastructure, and public safety. These recommendations will help achieve Altoona's community vision and goals, described on the following pages.

Community Building

This plan is based on the vision of Altoona residents. At left: Residents Work Together at a Community Goals workshop to identify priorities for Altoona.

Guidance for Decision-Makers

Altoona City Council, staff, and city commissions will use this plan as a guide for future decisions.

Legal Basis for Land Use

Decisions about zoning and future development will be based on the principles of this plan.

A VISION FOR ALTOONA

Through the public input process (p.10), a four part vision for the future of Altoona emerged. The following four concepts represent the priority concepts (aka, the "big ideas") of the comprehensive plan.

A Community of Neighborhoods

Altoona is growing quickly, and could double in population over the next 20 years. The comprehensive plan provides a land use and transportation concept for the growth areas of Altoona. It uses the "neighborhood unit" concept to envision a growth pattern that maintains Altoona's small town character.

A Regional Economic Center

Altoona is a regional entertainment and commercial center, and has great potential for continued growth. The plan provides strategies that Altoona can use to build on its regional status, prime location, and growing population. Strategies include: commercial diversification, encouraging "spillover" from existing attractions, investing in quality of life amenities, and promoting housing diversity.

A "Green," Active Community

Altoona has a history of preserving natural areas and constructing trails throughout its neighborhoods, both as an amenity and a stormwater management tactic. As Altoona grows into the environmentally sensitive Mud Creek area, the need for preservation will remain important. The comprehensive plan provides a map and set of policies to preserve a system of "greenways," natural areas that will provide stormwater drainage and become part of Altoona's extensive park and trail system.

A Distinctive Identity

While Altoona has much to offer, many residents have noted that the community lacks a clear identity. The comprehensive plan helps advance two primary ideas that give Altoona its distinctive identity:

1. A small town with big city amenities: The core of Altoona has quality, family-friendly neighborhoods, while the north side of town has amenities that few small towns can match.
2. A healthy, "green" community: Altoona values both nature and recreation. Green trail corridors weave through Altoona's neighborhoods, and the community offers a growing array of signature recreational opportunities.

GOALS AND PLAN ORGANIZATION

The comprehensive plan is organized into chapters by topic. Each of those topics has a goal statement, based on public input (p.10) and discussions during the comprehensive plan process. Most goals apply to multiple topic areas and therefore inform various chapters of the plan.

Chapter 1 - Land Use and Environment

Efficient and Sensitive Growth

Encourage development that maximizes infrastructure efficiency, prioritizes infill and contiguous growth, is sensitive to environmental features, and preserves Altoona's existing neighborhood-oriented character.

Chapter 2: Economic Development

Healthy, Diverse Economy

Support a healthy economy by attracting a variety of quality businesses and industries, including office uses and regional attractions.

Chapter 3: Quality of Life

Small Town Community Character

Preserve Altoona's small town character and invest in features that support a unique community identity.

Parks and Recreation Opportunities

Enhance parks and recreation opportunities, including trails, organized recreation, and natural open space.

Quality Community Services

Attract and retain residents by supporting quality community services, such as education and public safety.

Chapter 4: Housing

Diverse Housing Options

Encourage a variety of quality housing, including moderately-priced single family homes, quality multi-family options, and high-end homes, to attract and retain residents at all stages of life.

Chapter 5: Transportation and Infrastructure

Strategic Transportation and Infrastructure

Provide quality infrastructure and streets by planning extensions in strategic growth areas, building an inter-connected street system, and investing in upgrades to existing streets, sewer, water and stormwater systems.

Public Safety and Hazard Protection

Keep Altoona a safe community by maintaining sound infrastructure, providing quality police and fire protection, and protecting against hazards, such as flooding, through strategic stormwater and floodplain management.

A GROWING COMMUNITY

Altoona is a fast growing community. If current trends continue, Altoona could gain 10-15,000 new residents in the next 15-20 years, more than doubling its 2010 population.

Figure 0.2 shows population projection scenarios for Altoona through 2035. Scenarios, described below, are based on the continuation of historical growth rates. The project team used scenario 2 for the purposes of this plan, with an expected 2035 population of around 33,500.

1. 1960-2010 Growth Rate: The population Altoona will achieve if it grows at the average rate experienced from 1960-2010
2. **2000-2010 Growth Rate: The population Altoona will achieve if it grows at the average rate experienced from 2000-2010**
3. Construction Rate: The population Altoona will achieve if it grows at a rate consistent with the average rate of residential construction experienced from 2000-2010.
4. Natural Population Change: For comparison purposes only: the population Altoona will achieve if there is no migration in or out of Altoona, and population change occurs only due to births and deaths.

Figure 0.1 - **Historical Population Change in City of Altoona, 1900-2012**

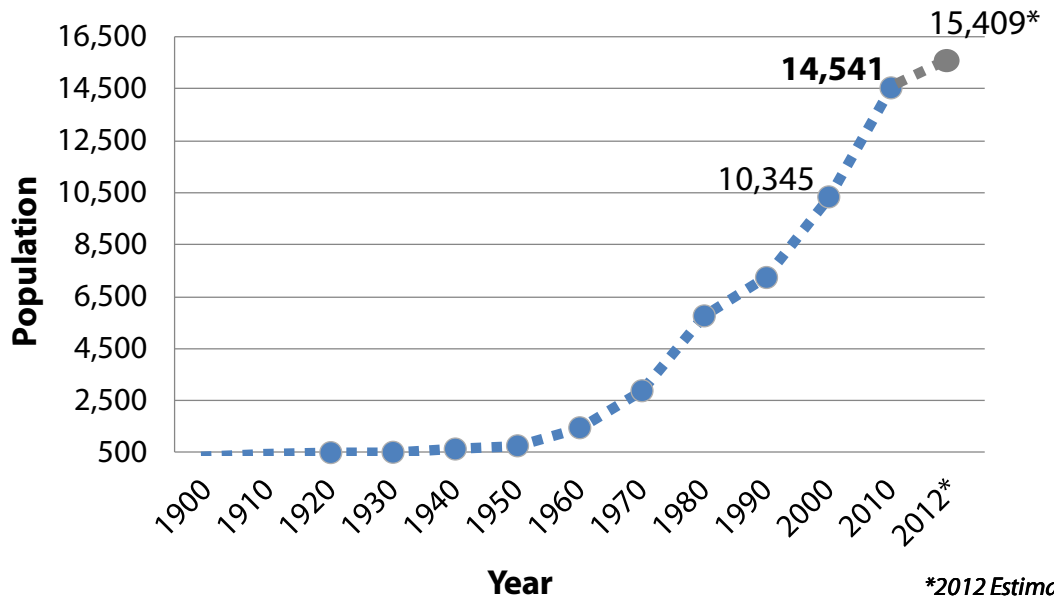
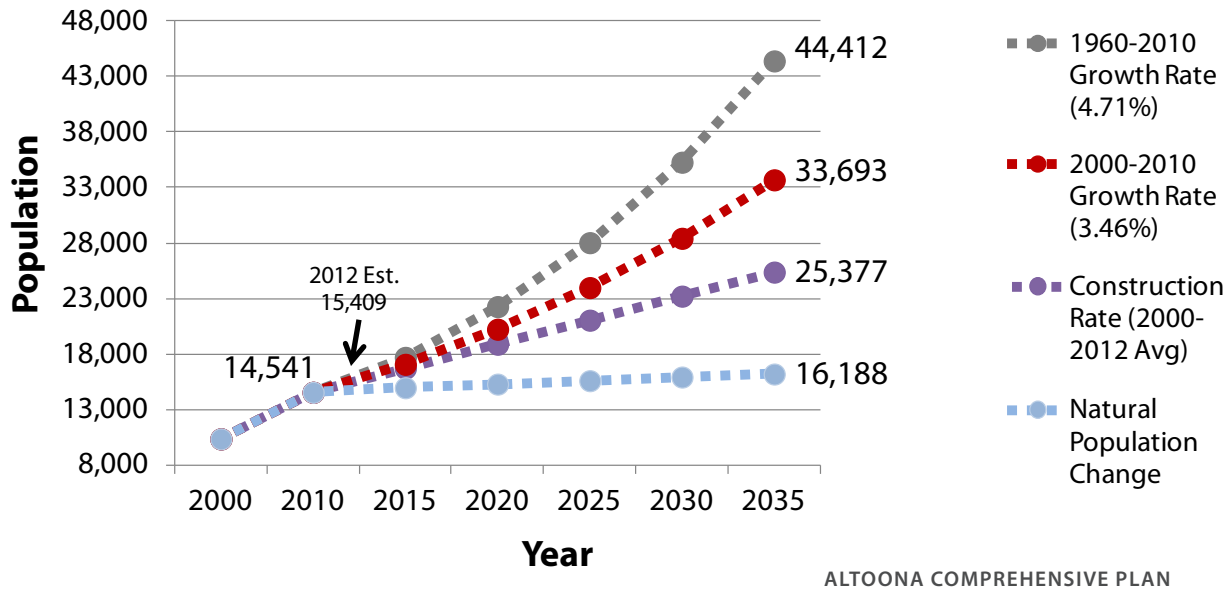


Figure 0.2 - **Population Projection Scenarios for Altoona through 2035**



Sources on this page: U.S. Census 2013, RDG Planning & Design 2013

PLAN PROCESS

The comprehensive plan was led by a project team that included city staff, a consulting team, and a 20-person committee of Altoona residents, workers, and elected officials. The plan was created over a 10-month process that included 4 major phases.

1. Understanding Altoona Today

The project team analyzed the existing conditions and historical trends of land use, transportation, economic conditions, natural resources, parks, housing, population and more.

2. Vision and Goal Setting

The project team worked with the public to set goals for the next 20 years of growth and change in Altoona. The public input opportunities are listed in the following section.

3. Concept and Policy Development

Building on the previous 2 phases, the project team proposed concepts for land use and transportation, strategies for economic development, designation of parks and natural areas, policies for housing and infrastructure, and more. This phase included the creation of the plan document.

4. Approval and Implementation

The plan approval process included a public open house and public hearings before the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council. Chapter 6 proposes a process for implementation of the plan.

Public Input

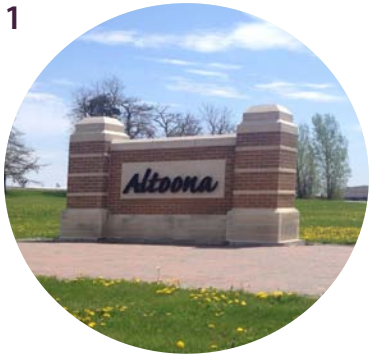
The project team worked with the public throughout the planning process to set goals and develop content for the plan. Public input included the following:

- Community Goals Workshop (Nov 2013)
- 4 Focus Groups (Nov-Dec 2013)
- Online Survey (Nov-Dec 2013)
- Online "Town Hall" Meeting (Nov 2013-Feb 2014)
- 2-day Design Studio and Open House (Feb 2014)
- Online Document Review (Jun-Jul 2014)
- Public Open House (Jul 2014)
- Public Hearings with the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council (Jul/Aug 2014)

Incorporating Other Planning Efforts

- Altoona Parks Plans: The recommendations of the Altoona Parks Comprehensive Plan (2005) and Parks Needs Assessment (2007) are integrated into the comprehensive plan and should be considered a part of the plan.
- The Tomorrow Plan (2013): The comprehensive plan helps further several key goals of the Tomorrow Plan, the long range plan for the Des Moines Metropolitan Region. Those goals include:
  - Create a Resilient Economy;
  - Improve the region's environmental health; and
  - Further the health and well-being of all residents.
- Mud Creek Watershed Study (2014): The watershed study assesses flooding issues, predicts consequences of upstream development, and identifies management strategies for stormwater in Altoona. The watershed study informs the preservation approach to development that is demonstrated throughout the comprehensive plan.
- Polk County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2009): The plan sets priority hazard mitigation actions for Polk County and its municipalities. At the writing of this document, a hazard plan update was awaiting approval.

1



Understanding Altoona Today
October - December 2013

2

Vision and Goal Setting
November 2013 - February 2014

3

Concept and Policy Development
February 2014- May 2014

4

Approval and Implementation
June 2014 and beyond

1 LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT

Goal: Encourage development that maximizes infrastructure efficiency, prioritizes infill and contiguous growth, is sensitive to environmental features, and preserves Altoona's existing neighborhood-oriented character.

LAND USE & ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW

Altoona's Land Use Plan is a core component of the comprehensive plan document. It establishes a development vision to: accommodate future growth, maintain and enhance the quality of existing development, and provide a sound basis for public and private decisions, including infrastructure investments. It also provides a physical framework to guide the remainder of the plan.

This section of the document provides the tools and principles to guide future land use and development, including:

Neighborhood Unit Principles (p. 13-15)

- Describes the desired characteristics for all of Altoona's existing and future development.

Environmental Framework (p. 16-18)

- Identifies sensitive environmental areas, such as floodplains and wetlands, that should be conserved and incorporated into an environmentally sensitive development concept that maximizes the potential of these areas as amenities.

Existing Land Use Map (p. 19-20)

- Shows land uses in Altoona as they are today, in 2014.

Development Concept (p. 23-24)

- Shows land uses and road connections for strategic growth areas. The elements of the concept are explained in detail in the housing chapter, transportation chapter, and economic development chapter of this plan.

Future Land Use Map (p. 23, 25)

- Presents the land uses in Altoona as envisioned for the long-term future. The changes represented on this map will happen gradually, over decades, as property owners voluntarily sell, develop, or change the use of their property.

Land Use Categories and Characteristics Table (p. 26-28)

- Describes the characteristics of the land use categories shown in the Existing Land Use and Future Land Use maps.

Land Use Compatibility Matrix (p. 29)

- Shows which land uses are compatible with each other, to help identify potential conflicts before they happen.

Annexation Strategy (p. 31)

- Provides specific guidelines for proper annexation process, to help minimize unnecessary conflict and expenditures.

Annexation Map (p. 32)

- Presents the areas that Altoona should consider for annexation, both in the short term (5-10 years) and long term (10-25 years).

Recommended Actions In This Chapter

1. Use the neighborhood unit principles as criteria for making land use decisions, such as reviewing new subdivision proposals and rezoning requests.
2. Preserve sensitive natural areas from development, using the development suitability map (Figure 1.2) as a guide
3. Use the future land use map (Figure 1.7), along with tables 1.2 and 1.3, to guide all land use decisions, such as subdivision review or re-zoning.
4. Base all annexation decisions on the six-point annexation strategy and the annexation map (Figure 1.9).

Recommended Action: Use the neighborhood unit principles as criteria for making land use decisions, such as reviewing new subdivision proposals.

NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT PRINCIPLES

As Altoona continues its fast-paced growth, new development should follow the form of the "neighborhood unit," a desirable pattern of growth that will help maintain our community character as we grow. Many of Altoona's existing neighborhoods already follow the neighborhood unit form.

The seven neighborhood unit principles described below will help foster a comprehensive approach to the growth of Altoona, instead of a piece-meal pattern that can result in disconnected, unbalanced growth. The planning and zoning commission, city council, and private developers should use these principles as criteria for making land use decisions.

1. Develop balanced neighborhoods with a mix of uses

Mixing compatible uses creates dynamic and resilient communities that provide residents with places to live, play, and engage with the community. This mixture also promotes efficient infrastructure provision and shorter travel times. Appropriate transitions should be made between uses. Table 1.1 outlines the recommended mix of land uses, along with the corresponding housing unit mix.

Table 1.1 - Neighborhood Unit Land Use Distribution

	% Acres (includes ROW)	% Housing Units
Low Density Residential	70-75%	60-65%
Medium Density Residential	10-12%	15-20%
High Density Residential	5-7%	20%
Mixed Use	5%	NA
Civic Center: Parks and Schools	5%	NA
Greenways	Dependent on environmental conditions	

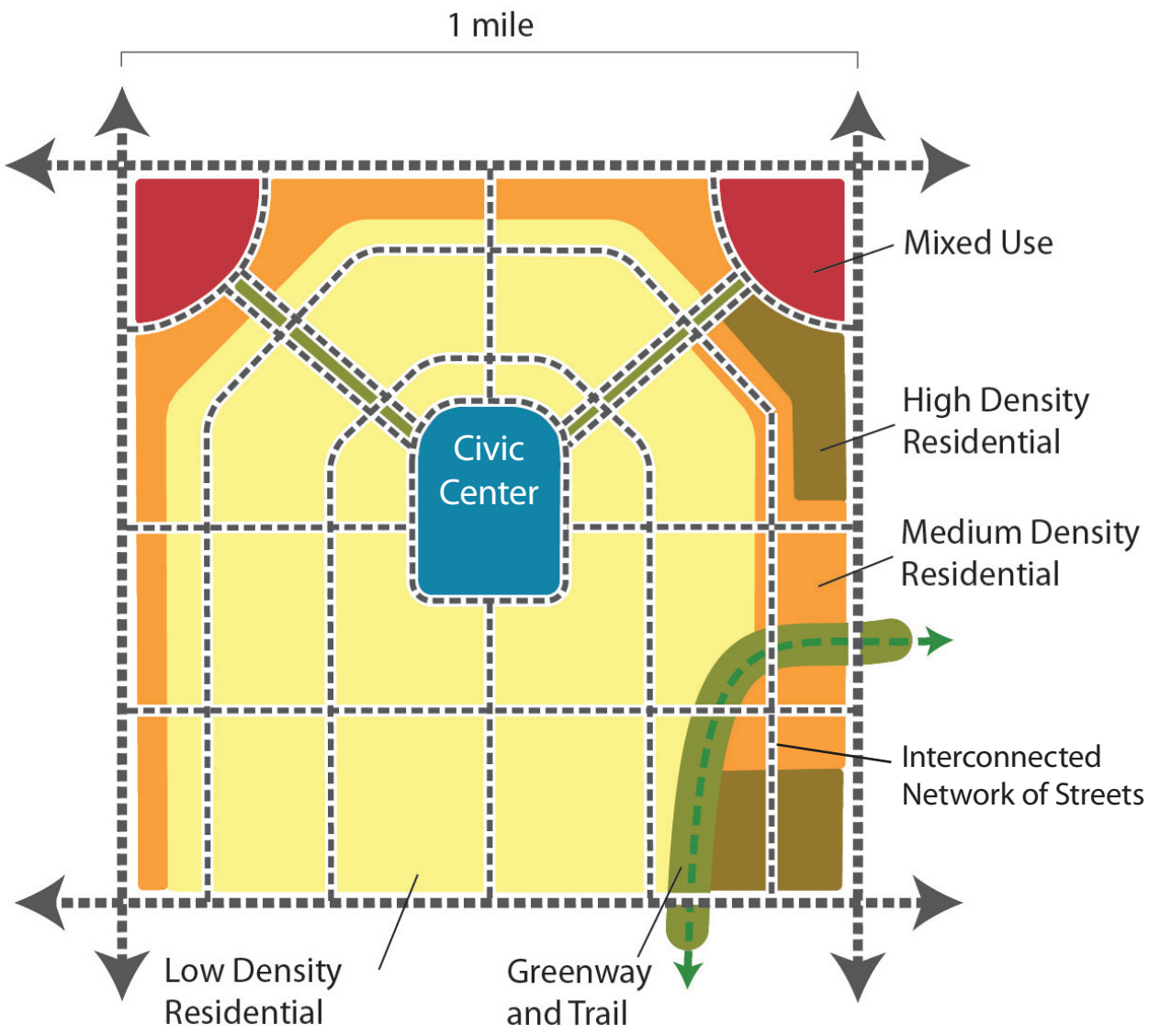


Figure 1.1 - Diagram of Neighborhood Unit Design

Neighborhood Unit Principles (cont.)

2. Provide a Civic Center: Parks and Schools

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

3. Provide multi-modal, interconnected streets

A network of streets, bikeways, and pedestrian paths should provide connectivity throughout Altoona and accommodate a diverse set of mobility needs and preferences. Connected street networks make private travel and public service provision more efficient and contribute to a feeling of cohesion in the community.

Altoona is known for its enthusiasm for recreation. A stronger emphasis on biking and walking options would reinforce this identity while providing options for residents.

4. Promote diverse housing choices

To be appealing to residents and potential residents at all stages of life, Altoona must provide diverse housing options. A variety of choices allows residents to stay in Altoona as their housing needs change throughout their life. In addition, popular housing needs and preferences are diversifying beyond the traditional single family home. The recent economic downturn has inspired a greater preference for affordable and/or rental options, and the baby boomer and Millennial generations are demonstrating a growing preference for smaller lot homes and multi-family housing. Table 1.1 shows the suggested mix of acreage for a neighborhood and the corresponding housing mix that would result.

Neighborhood Unit Principles (cont.)

5. Preserve Important Natural Areas (Greenways)

Preserving key natural areas can protect plant and animal habitats, increase property value for adjacent development, enhance and connect the park system, and reduce flash-flooding by providing natural stormwater drainage. As Altoona grows into the Mud Creek area, it has a great opportunity to create a unique amenity by preserving a network of natural areas, or "greenways," that will enhance community character and make Altoona more attractive to new residents. Greenways protect wetlands, floodplains, drainage-ways, and other areas. See "Environmental Framework" section of this chapter for guidance on this principle.

6. Enhance public safety and minimize hazard risk

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

7. Encourage good design

- Relegated Parking: Parking visibility should be minimized by making street parking the norm and locating parking lots to the rear and/or sides of buildings. The amount of paved area should be limited.
- Appealing Streetscape: Trees, landscaping and lighting should provide a positive aesthetic experience.
- Building Placement and Scale: Building massing, height, setbacks and orientation can either detract from or enhance the public realm. Buildings should be at a "human scale."

Recommended Action: Preserve sensitive natural areas from development, based on the sensitive areas identified in the development suitability map (Figure 1.2).

ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK

Altoona's natural environment can be a tremendous asset for future growth, but only if development is sensitive to key environmental features, such as floodplains, wetlands, hydric soils, and steep slopes. Preserving natural areas can increase property values for adjacent development, enhance and connect the park system, protect plant and animal habitats, and reduce flood risk by providing natural stormwater drainage.

Development Suitability Map

Figure 1.2 identifies areas that should be preserved and receive special consideration during development. The map was created by weighing the significance of various environmental features, and generating an aggregated rating for the level of environmental consideration in each geographic area. The ratings are explained in the box at right.

Developers, the Planning & Zoning Commission, City Staff, and City Council should use the development suitability map, definitions on this page, and the example in Figures 1.3a-c to determine if proposed developments adequately protect and preserve sensitive environmental features.

While the suitability map gives a general overview of environmental conditions, each development proposal should undergo a detailed environmental analysis to determine how to address environmental concerns. The development suitability map was developed with a high level of scrutiny, and exceptions to the preservation requirement should be limited to rare cases where the developer can show, through a detailed environmental analysis, that development will not create negative environmental effects.

Definitions and Guidelines

Wetlands

Areas of poorly drained soils characterized by permanent or temporary soil saturation and occasionally standing water. Wetlands perform an important ecological function by absorbing and slowing floodwaters, and providing a unique habitat for plants and animals. Wetlands are protected by state and federal law and must be preserved as part of any new development.

Hydric Soils

Soils that have a high capacity to detain water. Hydric soils capture and detain rainwater, releasing it more gradually into Altoona's minor drainage-ways, which mitigates stream bank erosion and flash flooding. Allowing hydric soils to perform this function is an important part of a stormwater management plan. Hydric soils should be preserved where possible to avoid flooding and water quality deterioration.

Watershed

An area of land in which all water drains to the same place. Communities which share a watershed often have inter-related or shared water issues, and may have an interest in collaborative efforts related to water quality and flood control.

Floodplain

An area that is susceptible to being inundated by a flood event. The 100-year floodplain indicates a 1% chance of flooding in any given year, while the 500-year floodplain indicates a 0.2% chance of flooding in any given year.

Other Features

Additional environmental features to be considered, including slopes and land cover, are presented in maps in the appendix.

Development Suitability Ratings (Figure 1.2)

Major Considerations (Red)

Should be preserved from development - includes drainage-ways, 100-year floodplains, wetlands and the steepest slopes.

Higher Considerations (Orange)

Should ideally be preserved, but could potentially allow low impact development - includes areas such as 500-year floodplains and steep slopes.

Minor Considerations (Yellow)

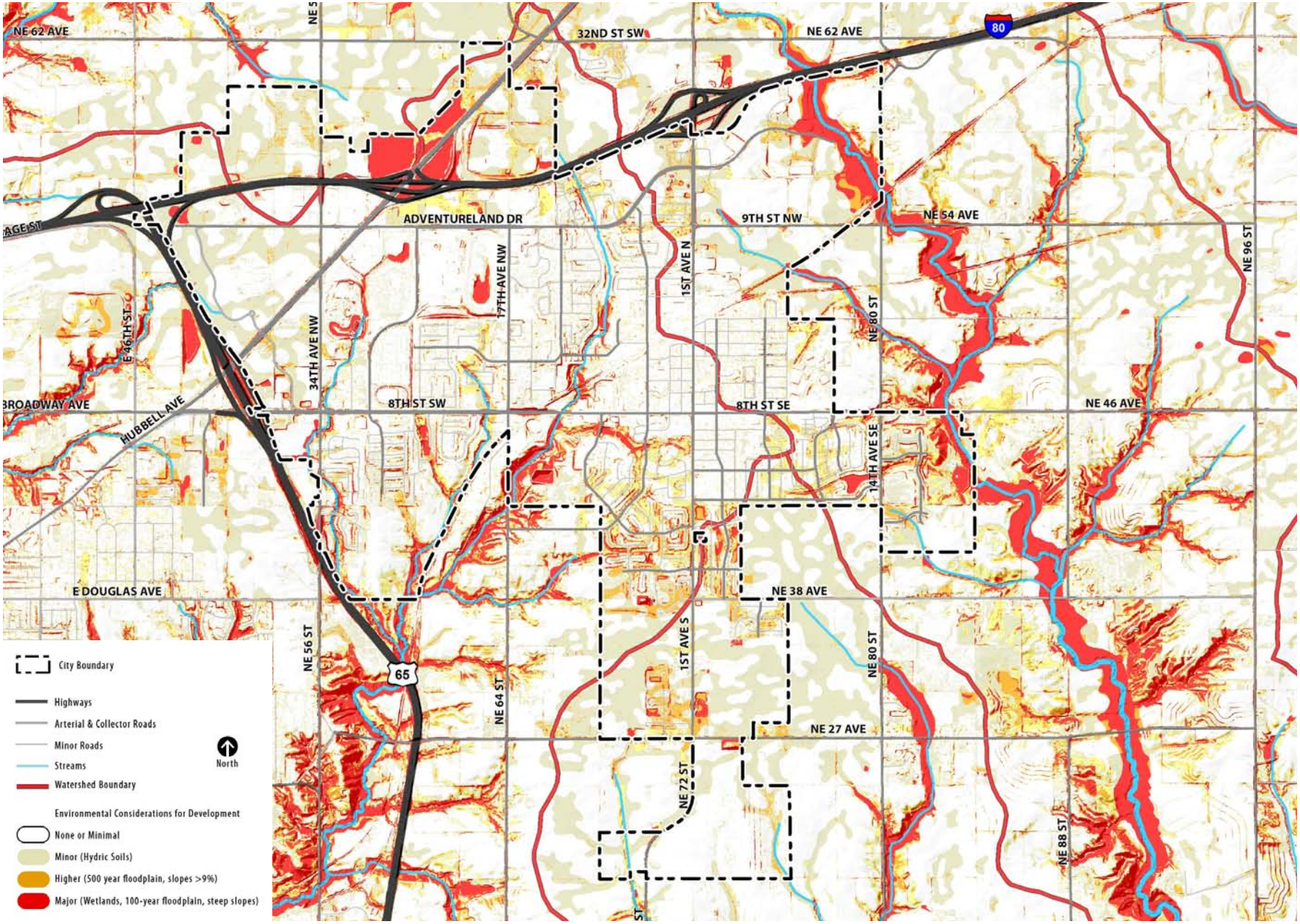
Can be developed, but developers should be particularly attuned to good stormwater management - includes areas with hydric soils.

Implementation Options

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

- Ban all development in the 100-year floodplain
- Ban or restrict development in the 500-year floodplain
- Adopt a stream buffer ordinance
    - Stream buffer ordinances specify a distance around streams that must be preserved from development. Altoona's neighbors, the City of Pleasant Hill and Polk County, both have stream buffer ordinances.

Figure 1.2 - Development Suitability Map



Environmental approach to development: An example from Altoona

A. Start with an analysis of the natural environment, including hydrology and topography. The aerial below shows a possible growth area in Altoona.

B. Identify sensitive natural areas that should be preserved, such as floodplains and drainage-ways. The development suitability map (Map 1.2) for this area shows a range of environmental consideration ratings.

C. Create a land use and transportation plan that preserves the sensitive natural areas as open space. In this example, the critical natural areas are preserved as greenways (green color) to allow natural drainage that serves the existing and proposed residential uses (yellow and orange colors) . Street patterns should avoid encouraging development in sensitive areas.

Figure 1.3a

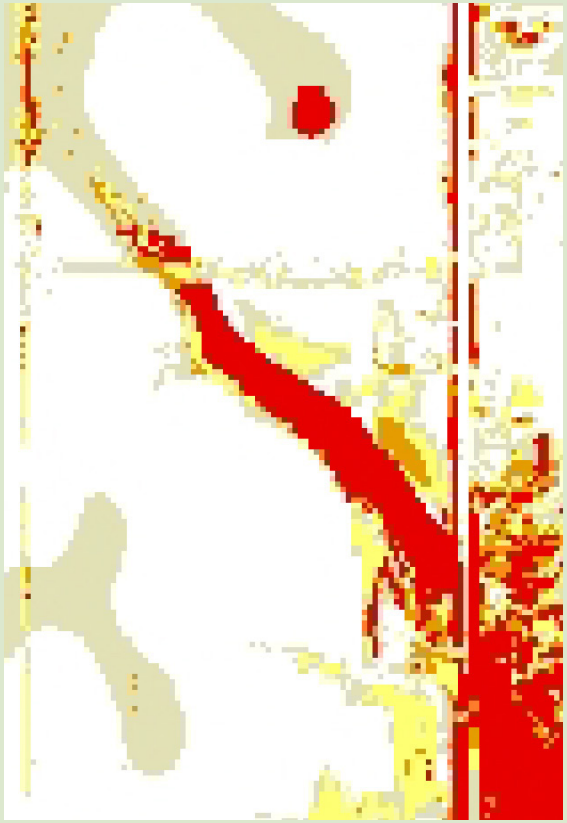


Figure 1.3b

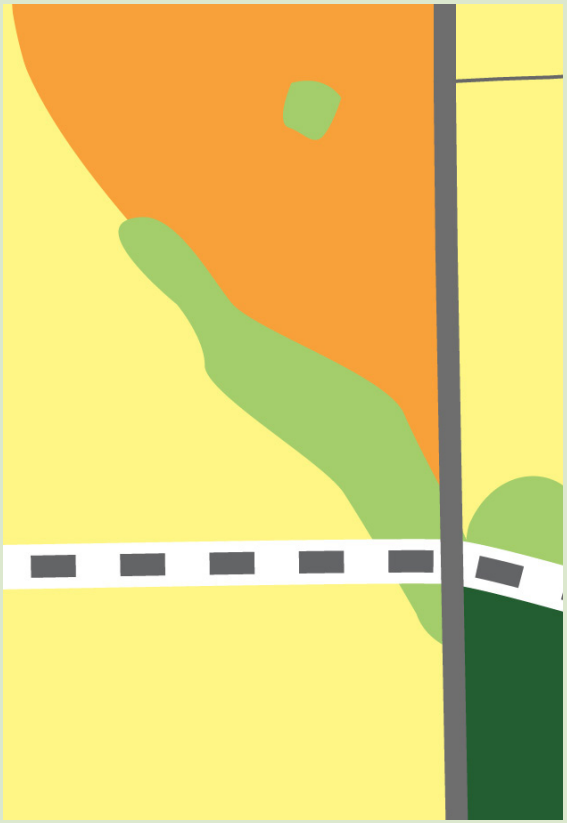


Figure 1.3c

EXISTING LAND USE

The Existing Land Use Map - Figure 1.4 - classifies parcels of land in Altoona according to their use. The land use categories are described in Table 1.2 and a photo-guide of common uses is provided here. A table in the appendix lists the number of acres in each land use category.

The Existing Land Use map can be used in conjunction with the compatibility matrix (Table 1.3) to determine if proposed developments are compatible with existing uses.

Low Density Residential

Commercial

Community

Regional

Civic

Duplex

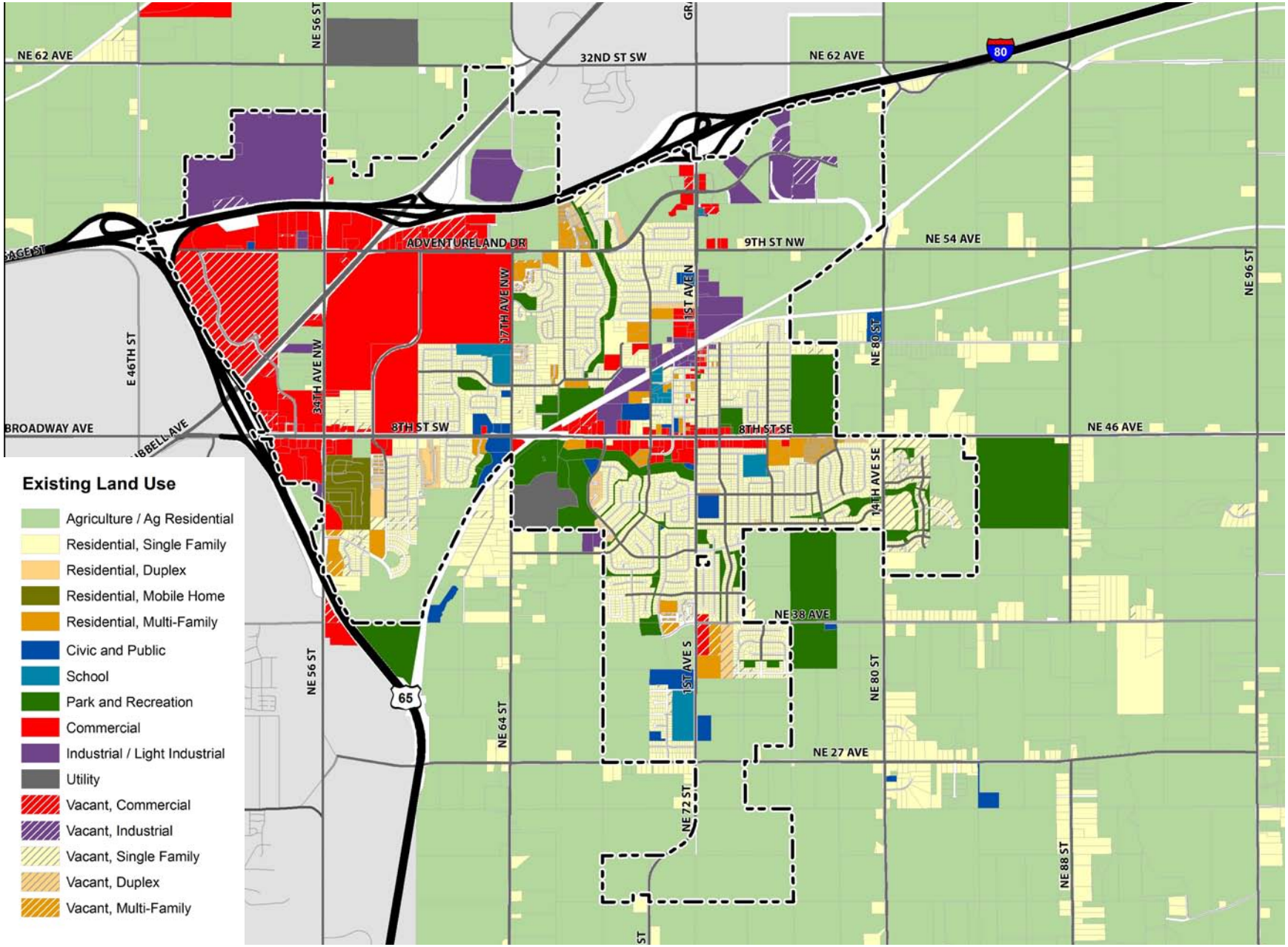
Parks and Recreation

Public

Multi-Family Residential

Industrial

Figure 1.4 - Altoona Existing Land Use, 2014



FUTURE LAND USE

Preferred Growth Areas

As Altoona grows, new land will be developed to accommodate housing, commercial, industrial and other uses. The planning team identified preferred growth areas (Figure 1.5) based on environmental features, the existing land use pattern, infrastructure capacity and market trends. Figure 1.6 shows a land use and transportation plan for these areas.

Residential Areas

The preferred residential growth areas are to the south and east of the existing city - areas with access to infrastructure and new amenities such as parks and schools.

The Southeast growth area around Mud Creek requires a particularly strategic approach for two reasons.

1. The unique environmental context presents both an exciting opportunity for creating unique neighborhoods with access to natural areas, and an imperative for developers to work with the natural environment.
2. The land is outside of city limits and has a number of existing homes. (The annexation section of this chapter discusses a strategy for voluntary annexation of these areas.)

Figure 1.8 provides a model design option for this area that is sensitive to both of these issues.

Commercial Areas

The Prairie Crossing area and the adjacent land to the east provide Altoona's biggest area for commercial growth. As a supplement to Altoona's well-established commercial and entertainment uses, this area holds potential for a diverse Commercial Mix (CM) of healthcare, office, recreation, civic, entertainment, multi-family housing and more. East of Hubbell, along Adventureland Drive, there are small areas that could hold Commercial Mix, or a Mix of Office and Multi-Family Residential (O/R). Chapter 2 discusses the vision for commercial areas in more detail.

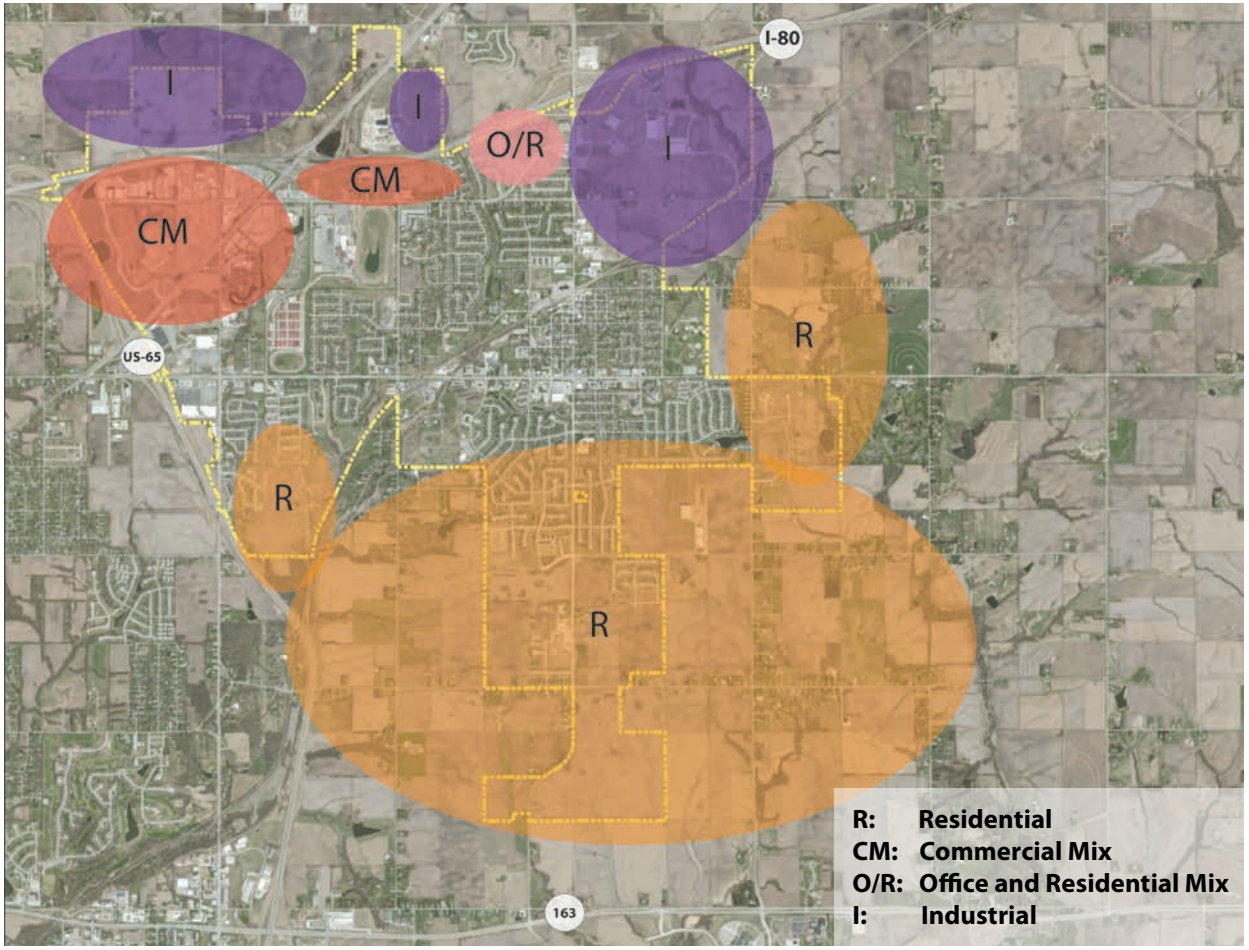


Figure 1.5 - Preferred Growth Areas (Turn to pages 24 and 25 for land use concepts)

Industrial Areas

Altoona has established industrial areas - on the north side of I-80 at the Hubbell exit and on the south side of I-80 at the 1st Ave exit. These areas hold sufficient vacant space to accommodate the expected future need. The area around the new data center north of I-80 holds potential for other technical industry companies that could tap into the fiber optic and other infrastructure put in place for the data center.

Details on Preferred Growth Areas

- Figure 1.6 - Development Concept
- Chapter 4 - Housing
- Chapter 2 - Economic Development

Amount of Future Land Need

The projected 2035 population for Altoona is more than 30,000 people, approximately double the population today. This projected population is used to estimate the number of acres of development that the city should plan for.

Residential

Estimates of future residential land require assumptions about housing preferences. This plan predicts that Altoona would support the following mix of housing units:

- 65% low density (single family detached)
- 15% medium density (e.g. - townhomes)
- 20% high density (apartments)

This housing mix results in a need to plan for 3,340 acres (see graphic at right). Chapter 4 provides more discussion on Altoona's future housing.

Commercial and Industrial

Altoona has an unusually high proportion of commercial land compared to its size, due to the presence of regional attractions such as Adventureland and Prairie Meadows. As a result, it is difficult to draw a direct connection between Altoona's projected population growth (local demand) and the geographic growth of its commercial areas (local + regional demand).

However, it is reasonable to conclude that Altoona currently has sufficient room reserved for commercial growth. There is approximately **350 acres of commercial land available**, the equivalent of 2 Adventurelands. Altoona will need approximately 50-75 acres over the next 10-20 years to serve local needs (Altoona residents), which leaves 300 acres available for potential new regional attractions. Chapter 2 provides additional detail on economic growth potential.

Similarly, Industrial growth is difficult to predict, since one large user (such as the Facebook data center) could change the need dramatically. The Future Land Use map provides space for approximately **350 acres of Industrial land**.

* The land need is doubled for planning purposes, to provide market flexibility.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Use the future land use map, along with Tables 1.2 and 1.3, as the basis for all land use decisions, such as subdivision review and re-zoning.

Development Concept and Future Land Use Map

The Development Concept map, Figure 1.6, shows proposed uses for the preferred growth areas. The concept focuses on areas that are most well-suited for short to mid-term growth.

As explained on the previous page, the amount of land that is planned for is approximately double the projected need, in order to provide market flexibility and avoid creating a false land shortage. This means that **many areas shown in the concept will not develop in the 20-year time frame** (unless the population grows at a higher rate than expected).

The Future Land Use Map - Figure 1.7 - combines the development concept with existing land uses and longer term growth areas. This map shows land use transitions that may not occur for many years, beyond the 2035 time frame. Land use categories are described in Table 1.2.

Figures 1.6 and 1.7 also show proposed streets and trails. These are discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 3, respectively.

Both the development concept and future land use map are based on the neighborhood unit principles on pages 13-15.

3 important points about the Development Concept and Future Land Use Maps

1. Property Owners Decide

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

2. Generalized Map

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

- Generalized land use locations and transitions: The boundaries between land uses on the map are "fuzzy" lines and are meant to show approximate areas for transition, rather than rigid boundaries. Additionally, minor variations in land use, such as a small civic use on a residential block, are not reflected in this generalized map, but may still be permitted per zoning regulations.
- Collector and Arterial Street connections: Critical arterial and collector street connections are specified on this map, though the exact routes will depend on detailed engineering studies. Local streets will be determined as development occurs. See Chapter 4: Transportation.
- Natural Resource Preservation Areas: Greenways on the map are based on the development suitability map in Figure 1.2. The boundaries of the greenways should be given significant weight in decision-making.

3. Basis for Land Use Decisions

The Future Land Use map should provide the basis for decisions of the Planning & Zoning Commission, the City Council, and private developers. The map is a critical part of the approval process for development proposals and zoning decisions.

Figure 1.6 - **Development Concept for Preferred Growth Areas**

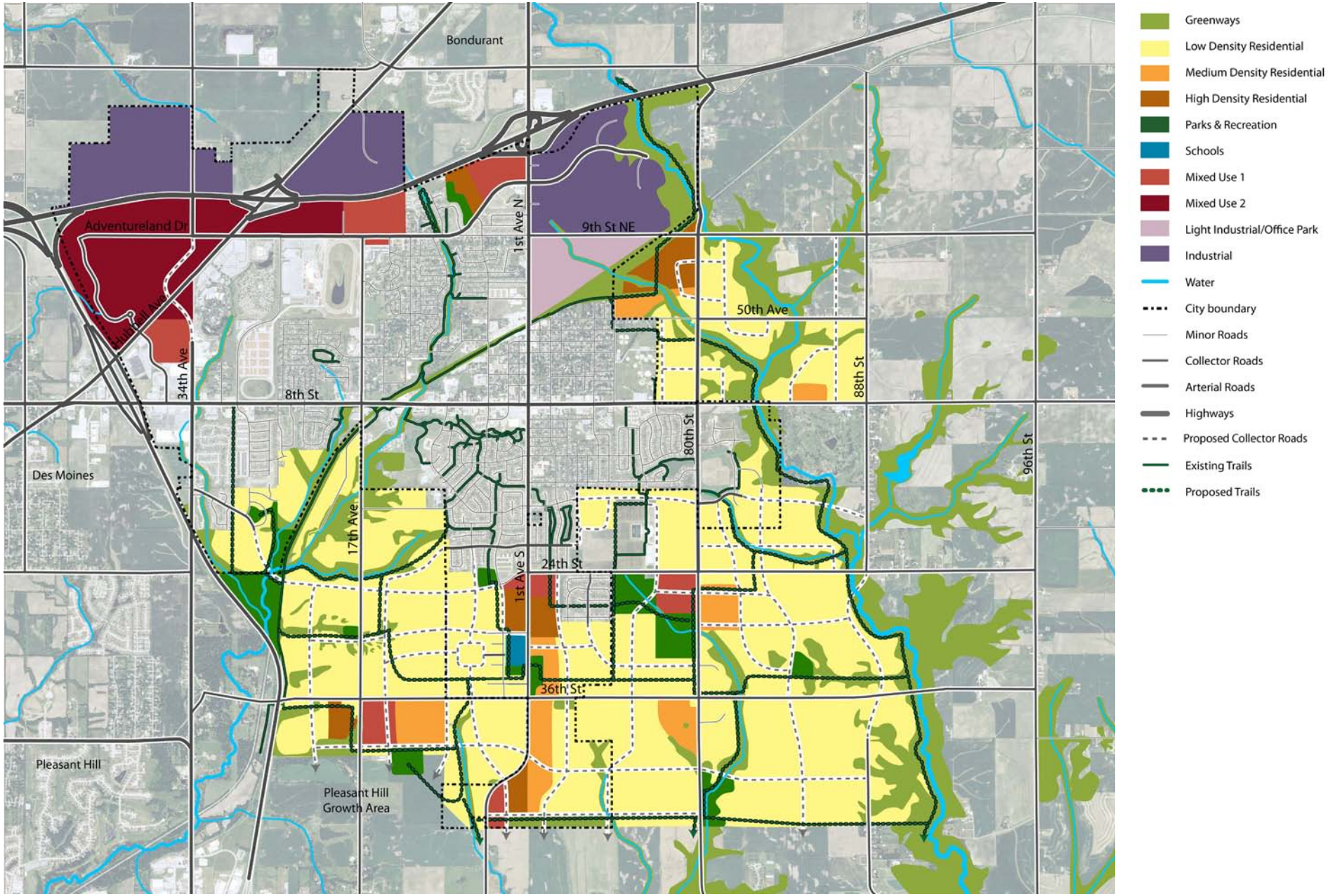
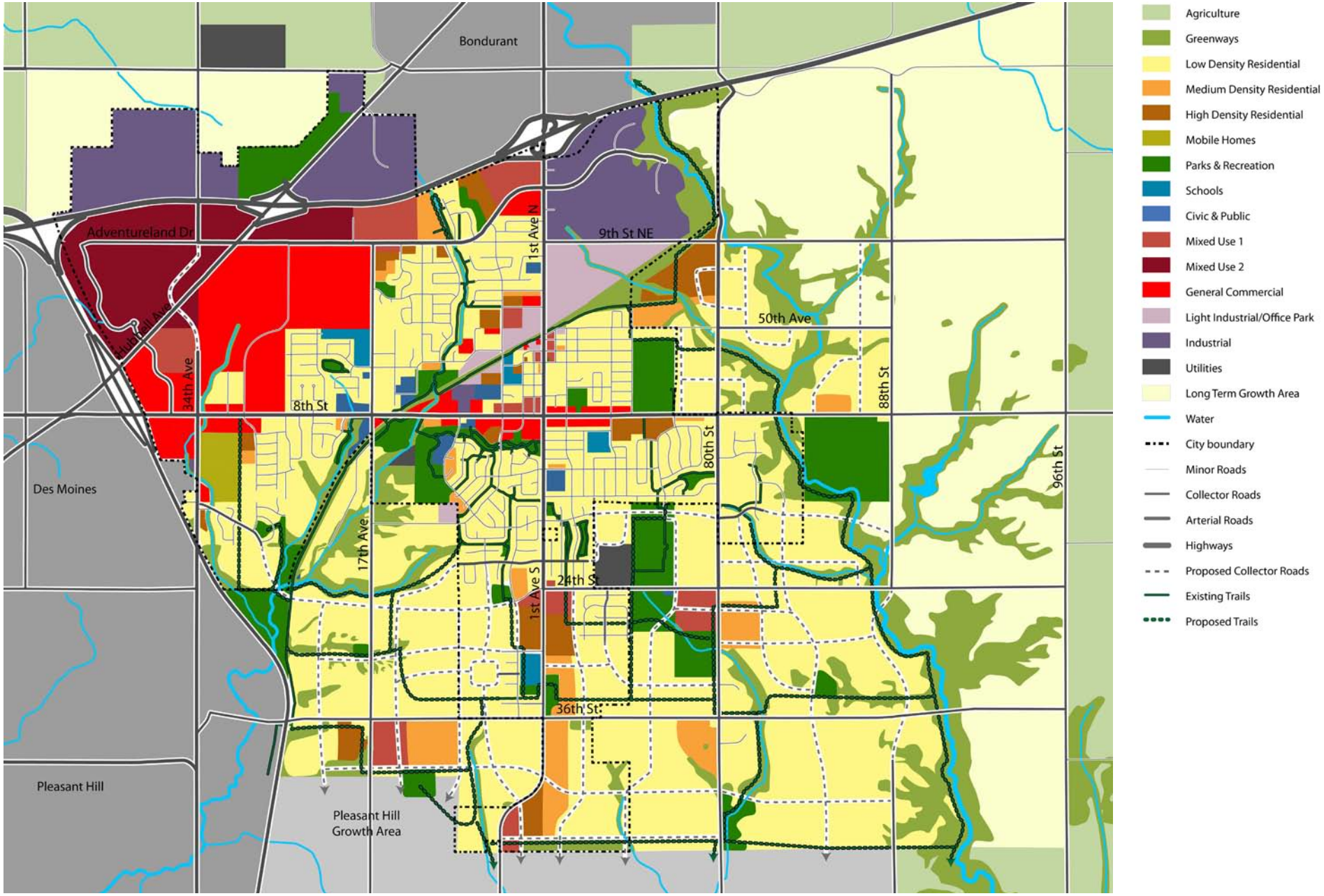


Figure 1.7 - Future Land Use Map



LAND USE CATEGORIES AND CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1.2- Land Use Categories and Characteristics

Land Use Category	Use Characteristics	Features and Location Criteria
Agriculture	Agriculture or conservation will remain the principal use. Can be used as a holding zone until extension of city infrastructure permits urban development. Extremely low residential densities, typically below 1 unit per 20 acres, may be permitted.	Urban encroachment, including large lot subdivisions, should be discouraged. Areas may be designated for conservation, including floodplains and steep topography Commonly zoned as A1 (Agricultural).
Greenways/Open Space	Environmentally sensitive areas that are preserved and protected from development. Includes wetlands, native prairies, floodplains, drainage channels and scenic corridors.	Should follow environmental features. Should be pre-designated in development areas. Can be incorporated into the city's trail system when appropriate.
Low Density (Single Family) Residential 	Restrictive land use emphasizing single family detached development. Innovative single family forms may be permitted with special review. Civic uses are generally allowed, with special permission for higher intensity uses. Manufactured units with HUD certification (post-1976 units) that comply with other criteria in State statute may be treated as conventional single family construction.	Density is 1 to 4 units per acre, although these areas may include some single family attached projects with densities up to 6 units per acre in small areas (Up to approximately 15% of a low density area could be built at 6 units per acre, for example, by mixing in duplexes on corner lots, or adding a row of townhouses. Good design should be used so that medium density and low density areas blend together well.) Should be insulated from adverse environmental effects, including noise, smell, air pollution, and light pollution. Should provide a framework of streets and open spaces. Developments will be provided with full municipal services. Commonly zoned as R1 (Single-Family Residential) or R2 (One and Two-Family Residential).
Medium Density Residential 	Restrictive land use emphasizing housing. May incorporate a mix of housing types, including single family detached, single family attached, and townhouse uses. Limited multifamily development may be permitted with special review and criteria. Civic uses are generally allowed, with special permission for higher intensity uses.	Density is 4 to 12 units per acre. Developments should generally have articulated design that maintains identity of individual units. Tend to locate in clusters, but should include linkages to other aspects of the community. Innovative design should be encouraged in new projects. Projects at this density may be incorporated in a limited way into single family neighborhoods. May be incorporated into mixed use projects and planned areas. Commonly zoned as R-2 (One and Two-Family Residential) or R-3 (Multiple-Family Residential).

Table 1.2 - Land Use Categories and Characteristics

Land Use Category	Use Characteristics	Features and Location Criteria
High Density Residential	Allows multifamily and compatible civic uses. Allows integration of limited office and convenience commercial within primarily residential areas.	Density is 12 units per acre or higher. Locate at sites with access to major amenities or activity centers. Should be integrated into the fabric of nearby residential areas, while avoiding adverse traffic impacts on low density uses. Traffic should have direct access to collector or arterial streets to avoid overloading local streets. Can be developed near lower intensity uses or in mixed use developments with development review Avoid creation of isolated compounds. Attractive landscape standards should be applied. Commonly zoned as R-3 (Multi-Family Residential).
Parks	Traditional park and recreation areas including passive and active recreation uses.	Parks should be centrally located with easy access for both pedestrian and auto users. Residents should be within approximately a half mile of a neighborhood park. All parks should be connected through the city's trail and greenway system.
Civic and Public	Includes schools, churches, community centers, cemeteries, publicly-owned buildings and other public facilities that act as centers of community activity.	May be permitted in a number of different areas, including residential areas. Individual review of proposals requires an assessment of operating characteristics, project design, and traffic management. Commonly allowed in areas zoned for residential or commercial.
Commercial	Includes a variety of commercial and office uses. May allow residential units above commercial development, and may incorporate planned residential uses, typically at higher densities. Serves as focus of retail activity. Can include freestanding commercial uses and shopping centers on larger lots.	Should be located on arterials at intersections or in established commercial areas. Should be accessible to transit and should supply an adjacent amount of off-street parking. Traffic systems should provide alternative routes and good internal traffic flow. Negative effects on surrounding residential areas should be limited by location and buffering. Good landscaping and restrictive signage standards should be maintained. Good pedestrian/bicycle connections should be provided into surrounding residential areas. Commonly zoned as C-2 (General Commercial).

Table 1.2- Land Use Categories and Characteristics

Land Use Category	Use Characteristics	Features and Location Criteria
Mixed Use 1 (Neighborhood Commercial Center)	Can include a range of low-impact commercial uses, higher-density residential uses, and office. Provides for daily convenience shopping and service needs of nearby residents.	Typically located at intersections of higher order streets: collectors and arterials. Developments should related well to adjacent properties and provide appropriate transitions from higher intensity uses to lower intensity uses. External effects that would negatively impact adjacent properties should be limited. Pedestrian traffic should be encouraged, using a neighborhood-scale design where appropriate. Signage, landscaping and site features should respect neighborhood scale and quality. For example, avoid large expanses of parking visible from major streets. Could be zoned as C-1, C-2, C-3, or C-4.
Mixed Use 2 (Community/ Regional Commercial Center)	Includes a variety of commercial, office and high-density residential uses, and limited industrial uses that do not generate noticeable external effects. Intended to serve as the regional foci of commercial activity providing retail commercial services, entertainment and business offices. Could include high intensity employment centers or health care campuses.	Typically located at intersection nodes along major arterial highways or expressways, or along rapid transfer nodes. Design standards should be enforced to ensure top-quality appearance. Ensure minimal negative impact on surrounding land uses. Strict control over signage, landscaping and design is necessary for locations nearer to low intensity uses. Should incorporate well-defined entrances, shared internal circulation, limited curb cuts to arterial streets, sidewalks and shade trees in parking lots, landscaping, and well-designed signage. Could be zoned as C-1, C-2, C-3, C-5, C-6 or C-7.
Light Industrial/Office	Light Industrial areas may combine office, business parks, and warehouse uses. These areas can also include supporting commercial activity. Includes uses that do not generate noticeable external effects.	Signage, landscaping, and design standards should be established, with more restrictive controls for locations nearer to low intensity uses. Uses that involve substantial peak traffic should locate near major arterials and regional highways, and provide multiple access points. Commonly zoned as M1 (Limited Industrial).
General Industrial	Provides for a range of industrial enterprises, including those with significant external effects.	General industrial sites should be well-buffered from less intensive uses. Sites should have direct access to major regional transportation facilities, without passing through residential or commercial areas. Developments with major external effects should be subject to review. Commonly zoned as M2 (Heavy Industrial).
Utilities	Includes facilities with industrial operating characteristics, including public utilities, maintenance facilities, and public works yards.	Industrial operating characteristics should be controlled according to same standards as industrial uses. When possible, they should be located in industrial areas. Facilities like the water treatment plant should be well buffered from residential uses. Commonly zoned as M1 or M2.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

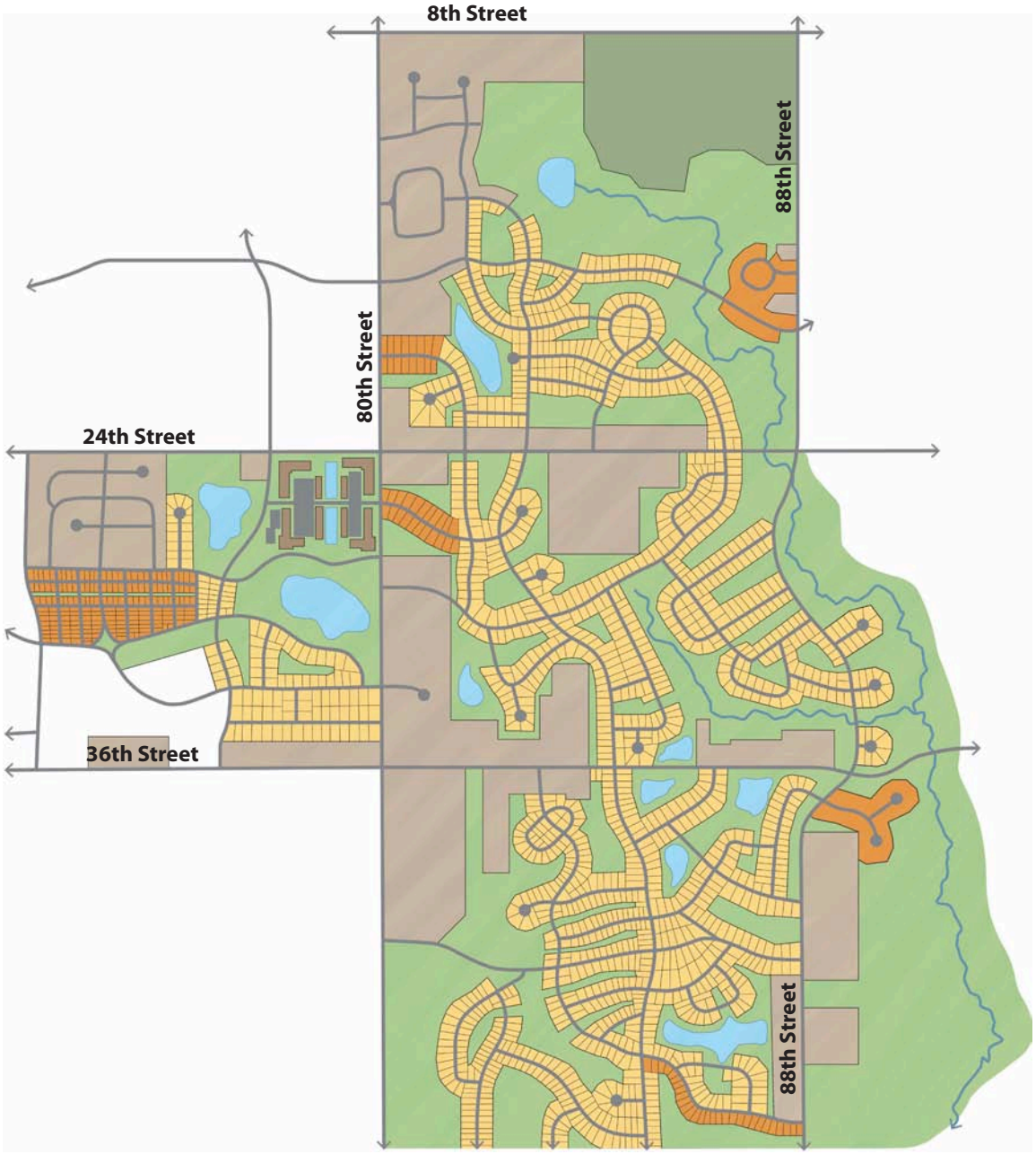
Table 1.3 provides a land use compatibility guide that indicates which land uses can be located near each other, and which land use combinations will create significant conflict. The creation of new conflicts should be avoided moving forward. Existing conflicts should be encouraged to change over time as property turns over. **This chart should be used to assess the relationship between land uses and provide a basis for development proposal review.** The compatibility of each pairing is rated 1 to 5:

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

Table 1.3 – Land Use Compatibility Matrix

	AGRICULTURE	PARKS	LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	MIXED USE 1	GENERAL COMMERCIAL	MIXED USE 2	LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE	GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AND UTILITIES	CIVIC AND PUBLIC
AGRICULTURE	-	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3
PARKS		-	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	5
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL			-	5	3	3	2	2	1	1	4
MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL				-	5	4	3	2	2	1	4
HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL					-	5	3	3	2	1	4
MIXED USE 1						-	4	4	3	2	4
GENERAL COMMERCIAL							-	5	4	3	4
MIXED USE 2									5	3	3
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE									-	4	3
GENERAL INDUSTRIAL AND UTILITIES										-	1

Figure 1.8 - A Conservation development option for a portion of the southeast residential growth area (preserves existing rural residential).

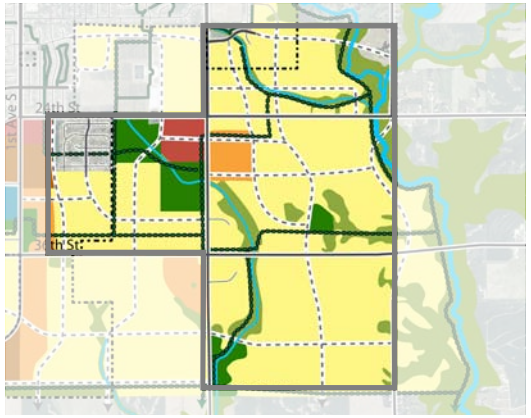


Environmental Design - Neighborhood Scale

Environmentally sensitive areas were identified in Figure 1.2 and shown as "greenways" in Figure 1.7. While these maps cover the major environmental features on a city-wide scale, there is far more that can be done to design with nature on the neighborhood scale. Figure 1.8 shows a concept for the southeast residential growth area that takes a conservation development approach. The concept demonstrates how neighborhoods can integrate the natural environment and natural drainage system into their development pattern. Minor drainageways and streams are preserved, providing good stormwater management and an amenity for adjacent houses. Homes are put closer together to leave more green space in between lots. This is similar to the pattern in several existing Altoona neighborhoods where trails pass along back property lines.

The design demonstrates a balance between establishing good connectivity and respecting what is already on the ground. The design not only works with the natural environment, but also preserves existing rural homes.

This is one of many ways that this area develop. The concept follows the general principles for land use and major street connections established in the Future Land Use map, while allowing for minor variations. Figure 1.8 demonstrates how the Future Land Use map and the principles in this plan can serve as a guide to create an environmentally-oriented neighborhood design.



RECOMMENDED ACTION: Use this 6-point strategy and Figure 1.9 to guide all Annexation decisions.

ANNEXATION

1: Pursue Voluntary Annexation

Altoona should use the "voluntary annexation" provisions of Iowa annexation law (including the 80/20 rule, see below) and not annex areas under "involuntary" procedures. The drawbacks of involuntary annexations include:

- More complex annexation process
- Confrontation with land owners
- Susceptibility to court challenges, which add delays and expense
- Costly extension of city services are mandated within a short time period, even if development is not imminent

In contrast, the benefits of voluntary annexation are:

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

To make the voluntary annexation approach work the city must:

- Enact Parts 2-6 of this strategy
- If necessary, use the 80/20 rule for voluntary annexation, which allows up to 20% of the ***total*** annexed area to be included without consent from property owners. This allows for the "squaring off" of annexation areas to logical boundaries to avoid the creation of unincorporated "islands", which are not permitted by state law. While full consent from property owners is ideal, there may be situations where the 80/20 rule is necessary to follow state laws.

2. Initiate Outreach to Property Owners

Initiate ongoing communication with owners of properties in the annexation priority areas (Figure 1.9). Communicate the potential benefit of annexation: The extension of city services/infrastructure greatly enhances the development potential of the land and maximizes its sale value.

3: Negotiate Development Agreements

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

4. Wait to Zone

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

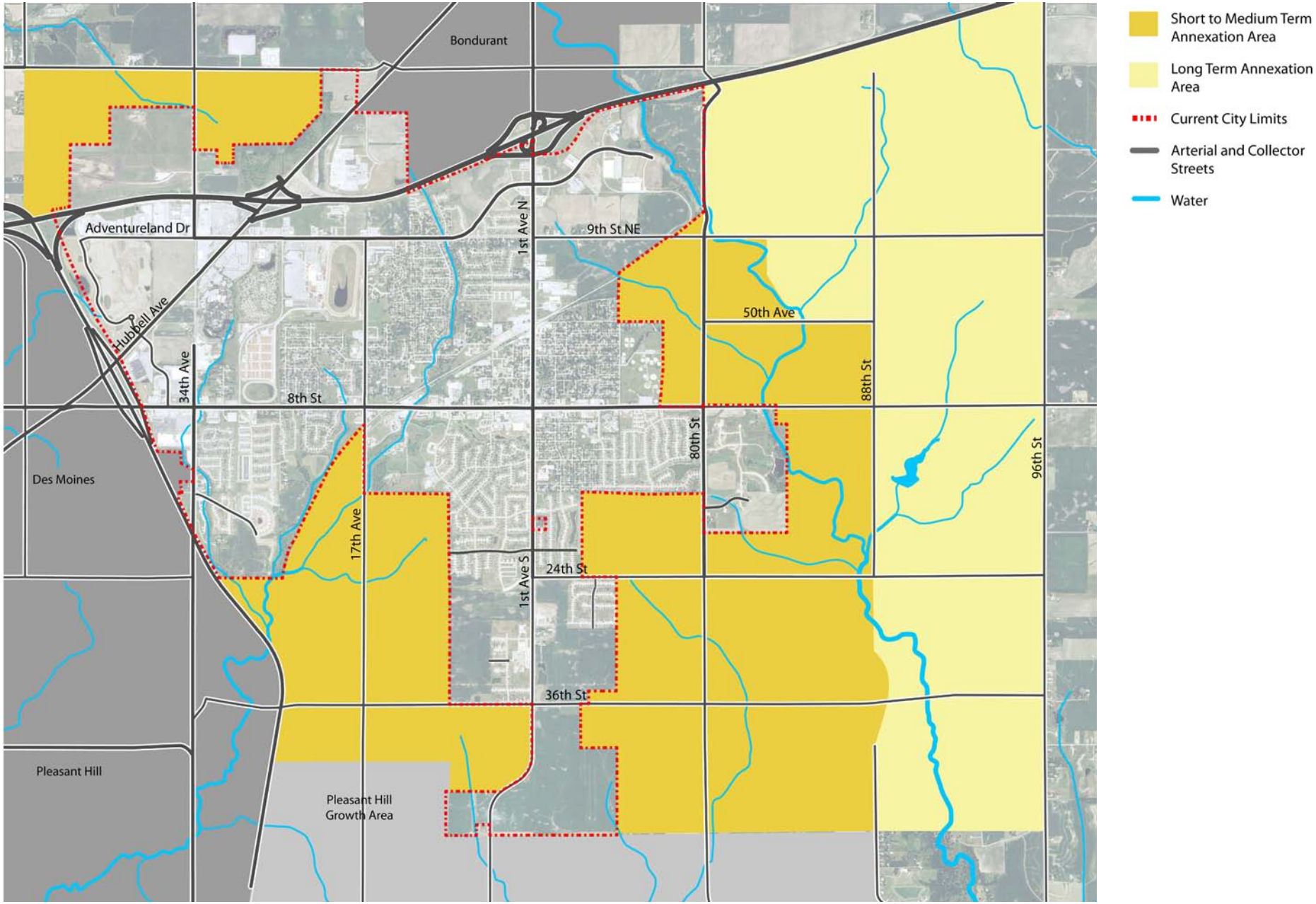
5. Prioritize Contiguous Parcels

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

6. Continue Extra-Territorial Subdivision Review

The City of Altoona reserves the right to perform subdivision review for any land to be developed in the unincorporated area within two miles of the city boundaries, its extra-territorial area. Subdivisions in the extra-territorial area are held to the same standards as those in the city limits. The city should continue this practice, to ensure that any development in the city's long-term growth area (that is, development that may eventually be annexed into the city) meets city standards for design and infrastructure, and does not interfere with the city's long-term plans for transportation connections.

Figure 1.9 - Annexation Priority Areas



2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: Support a healthy economy by attracting a diverse mix of quality businesses and industries, building on Altoona's status as a regional entertainment center, and providing a high quality of life for residents.

ASSETS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Altoona has a wide variety of economic assets that have contributed to its strong economic position. The community has grown tremendously over the past decade, and trends indicate that growth will continue. The following pages highlight Altoona's chief economic assets and challenges. Altoona can support a strong economic future by maintaining its status as a regional center, diversifying its commercial base, maximizing spillover between attractions, and supporting a high quality of life for the workforce.

Assets

Altoona is a Regional Center for Entertainment and Retail

Challenges

Altoona's commercial base is large, but lacks diversity, such as office or medical uses.

Assets

Altoona has long-term stability of infrastructure, including sewer and water.

Altoona has excellent transportation accessibility and a large amount of available land.

Altoona is not fully capitalizing on potential "spillover" effects from their attractions.

Altoona can benefit from "East Side" customer loyalty.

Altoona is a growing community

The Metropolitan area offers a relatively complete supply of retail and services, with few gaps in the market.

ALTOONA'S THREE MARKETS

Altoona is a regional entertainment center, providing attractions such as Adventureland Amusement Park, Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino, the Bass Pro Shops, and soon, an outlet mall. At the same time, Altoona serves a Sub-Regional market with big-box retail options for the east side of the metro, such as Target, and a Community-based market with grocery stores and other daily services along 8th Street.

These three markets provide different options for growth for Altoona. While Altoona's potential as a regional entertainment center depends on providing unique new attractions for Central Iowa and beyond, its potential in community-based retail relies primarily on population growth in its primary trade area (see following page).

1. The Regional Market

Adventureland, Prairie Meadows and the Bass Pro Shops form the core of Altoona's regional attractions. Combined, these places draw approximately 7 million visitors per year from around the state and beyond, and from passing Interstate 80 traffic.

The numbers confirm Altoona's regional status. Altoona has significantly more retail than its population size would suggest. Per capita retail sales in Altoona are more than double the per capita sales for Polk County as a whole (excludes automotive sales). Since 2002, retail sales grew 79% and the supply of retail space in Altoona grew more than 500,000 square feet, with the attraction of Target, Lowe's, Bass Pro, Staples and Walgreens.

Altoona has plans to continue growing as a regional entertainment center. The 200-acre Prairie Crossing development is working to attract new retail, restaurants and entertainment. Developers recently announced the expected 2015 construction of a 300,000 square foot outlet mall that will serve the Central Iowa region.

The market in the Central Iowa region is growing. The region's long-range plan, The Tomorrow Plan, projects that the area will grow by approximately 250,000 new residents by 2050.

Adventureland

Prairie Meadows

Altoona's regional attractions draw in customers from around the state and beyond.

2. The Sub-Regional Market

Sub-Regional Primary Trade Area (Figure 2.1):

- Area from which 70% or more of retail customers are drawn. Includes 28,000 households.
- Trade area relevant to large retail such as Target and Wal-Mart (not regional attractions such as Adventureland).
- Market growth for this category of retail will depend on population increase in the area, which is projected to be 7,000 households in the next 20 years.

Other Nearby Retail Centers

Retail sales competition is high in the Greater Des Moines region and will likely remain high in the foreseeable future.

- There is a relatively complete supply of big-box and community-serving retailers (e.g. - Wal-Mart, Home Depot) in close proximity to Altoona (See Table 2.1).
- Nearby big-box retail centers include Delaware Avenue in Ankeny, 14th Street in Des Moines, and Merle Hay Mall.
- Altoona captures a relatively low amount of the retail sales potential west of I-235/I-35, which is dominated in part by the 1 million square-foot Jordan Creek Mall.
- Altoona is well situated to serve markets to the east, however, these are mostly rural areas that are relatively low in population density.

Target and Lowe's are part of Altoona's sub-regional market.

Figure 2.1 - Altoona's Trade Area for the Sub-Regional Market

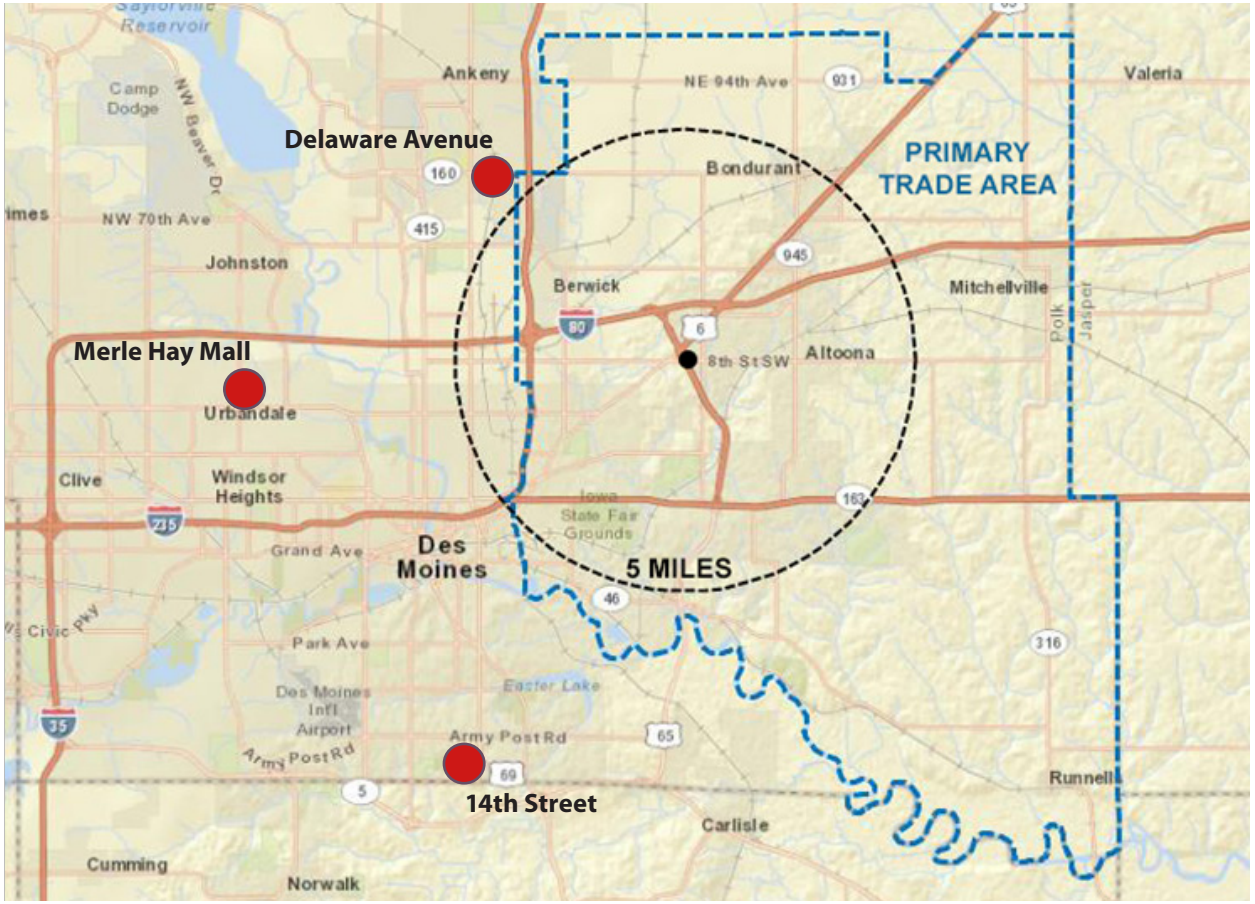


Table 2.1 - Sub-Regional/Big-Box Retail Centers Near Altoona

	Delaware Avenue, Ankeny	14th Street, Des Moines	Merle Hay Mall
Driving Distance from Altoona in Miles	8.3	14.1	14.6
Estimated Amount of Retail Space in Square Feet	1,600,000	1,400,000	1,000,000
Anchor Retailers	Target, Wal-mart, Kohl's, Home Depot, Menard's, Best Buy, Michaels, Petsmart, TJ Maxx, Sportsman's Warehouse	Target, Wal-mart, Younkers, Home Depot, Menard's, Best Buy, Office Max, Petsmart, Marshall's	Target, Younkers, Kohl's, Staples, Old Navy, MC Sports, Ulta

3. The Community Market

The community market services the daily needs of residents of Altoona and those immediately surrounding Altoona. This includes many of the commercial services along 8th Street, such as banks, convenience stores, grocery stores, drug stores, child care centers, coffee shops and more. Some uses, such as Hy-Vee, may fall somewhere in between the community and sub-regional market, but most are primarily serving Altoona residents.

The growth of this market will depend on population growth in the city of Altoona, which is projected to be approximately 15,000 between 2015-2035 (about double the 2010 population)

Current and Future Demand for Retail in the Sub-Regional and Community Markets

- Altoona has approximately 1 million square feet of retail.
- Recent retail absorption rates (340,00 square feet in the past 5 years) suggest that the Northeast Des Moines retail sub-market was overbuilt during the recession, though improving occupancy rates suggest the market is now catching up.
- The sub-regional market trade area is expected to add approximately 7,000 households over the next 20 years, which could translate to approximately 300,000 square feet of new space for retail, based on expected capture rates for Altoona (does not include regional attractions).
- Additional potential growth in Altoona, beyond the 300,000 square feet for the subregional market, lies in providing options that are unique to the Central Iowa region (such as existing regional draws like Bass Pro) that will draw in customers from beyond the sub-regional market area. Altoona has an advantage in having already established itself as a regional draw.

Top: Old Town provides community services such as a barber shop.
Above: Walgreens primarily serves nearby residents.

Above: A new commercial building under construction on 8th Street in Altoona.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Focus infrastructure investments and economic incentives in the strategic growth areas shown in Figure 2.2.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AREAS

Altoona has prime commercial and industrial land, with its visibility and accessibility to the high traffic volumes of Interstate 80, Highway 65, and Hubbell Avenue. The areas adjacent to these corridors are well established as commercial centers and industrial parks, and there is ample commercial and industrial land still available for growth at comparably low prices. Altoona currently has approximately 350 acres of undeveloped commercially zoned land and 300 acres of undeveloped industrially zoned land with easy access to Interstate 80. The areas that make up this acreage are described here and illustrated in Figure 2.2. Land use plans for these growth areas are provided in Chapter 1.

1. Prairie Crossing: Approximately 150 acres are available, under the management of a single developer. This area can offer a mix of entertainment, restaurants, retail, medical, office, civic, and high density residential uses.
2. 34th Avenue and Adventureland Drive: There are approximately 120 acres east of Prairie Crossing that are currently in Agricultural use. Given their location, this area is likely to be developed. A concept for the development of this area is presented in Figure 2.3.
3. Adventureland Drive - East of Hubbell: There are 65 acres of undeveloped land on the north side of Adventureland Drive. This area could host a mix of retail, office and other commercial.
4. Adventureland Drive and 1st: The 50 undeveloped acres here could be used for office development.
5. 1st Avenue Industrial Area: This established industrial area has 230 acres zoned for industrial uses, with an additional 90 acres in agriculture. The parcels in this area that abut residential uses should be lower intensity and use appropriate buffers.
6. NorthEast of Hubbell Interchange: This is an established industrial area with 80 undeveloped acres.
7. Data Center Area: Most of this area is owned by the new data center, however, if annexation occurs this industrial growth area could extend up to 62nd Ave and west to 46th Street. This could be an emerging area for technology businesses. New businesses could take advantage of the infrastructure put in place for the data center.
8. There are a number of infill properties available along 8th Street. These could be developed to provide community based services, as described on the previous page. Infill properties can take advantage of existing infrastructure and proximity to neighborhoods, which makes them well suited for daily retail and services oriented to nearby residents.

Figure 2.2 - Altoona's Commercial and Industrial Growth Areas

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Continue to market Altoona as a regional activity center by leveraging Altoona's existing assets, continuing efforts to be "a development friendly community" and actively working with the real estate community.

REGIONAL CENTER

The market has established a role for Altoona as a regional center. Altoona needs to actively work to continue to meet that role. Altoona can continue to capitalize on its convenient location and ample land by welcoming service and entertainment oriented businesses, office parks, and retail that are unique to the Central Iowa region.

Leverage Existing Assets

As outlined earlier in this chapter, Altoona has a wide range of assets that it can market to new and expanding businesses:

- Accessibility to Interstate 80 and Highway 65
- Established regional attractions, such as Prairie Meadows Race Track and Casino and Bass Pro Shops
- Stable infrastructure with capacity for growth
- Prime available land near Interstate-80

A "Development Friendly Community"

The City of Altoona has adopted the tag-line, "a development friendly community." The City should continue to search for ways to expedite and streamline the development approval process, and provide flexibility when possible.

Reaching out to Developers

Outreach and communication with developers and businesses is an important part of growth for Altoona. Eastern Polk Regional Development, Inc. currently represents Atloona in this regard. However, when Altoona withdraws from the regional development group in 2015, the City will be the primary entity charged with the task of initiating outreach and marketing. If the withdrawl from the regional development group goes through, the city should designate a staff person to head development services.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Encourage more "spillover" from one attraction to another through encouraging connected street design, pedestrian-friendly areas, way-finding signs, and concentration of major commercial centers.

"SPILLOVER" EFFECT

Existing retail space and regional attractions in the community are not well linked together, which reduces the opportunity for "spillover" traffic from one location to another. Altoona can help increase "spillover" through connected street design, way-finding, creating pedestrian-friendly spaces, and concentrating a mixture of commercial uses adjacent to the highway and existing attractions. Larger, well-linked, and more diverse retailing areas will be better able to withstand the impacts of competing locations than smaller retail facilities.

Figure 2.3 shows an example of how this could be achieved in the Adventureland Drive/34th Avenue area. Chapter 5 addresses connected street design.

Concentration and Connectivity

Concentrated shopping areas with good internal circulation promote spillover. Once off the highway, visitors should be able to visit multiple locations in close proximity using internal road circulation and sidewalks. Pedestrian friendly areas encourage visitors to park once, and then visit several locations in close proximity. This concept is similar to that of a traditional mall, in which a larger anchor store or entertainment venue may bring the shopper in, but once there, the easy access to smaller, neighboring shops will keep them there.

Way-finding

Many visitors to Altoona may be unaware of the other attractions nearby, or unsure how to reach them. A singage system to help with way-finding could encourage visitors to go to multiple sites within Altoona.

Diversity of Uses

Adding a mixture of office, civic, entertainment, and high density residential uses to Altoona's commercial areas will draw in more potential customers. For example, a person coming to Altoona for work or a doctor's appointment may then visit retail, particularly if everything is well-linked.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Diversify Altoona's commercial base with office, civic, medical and other commercial uses.

COMMERCIAL DIVERSIFICATION

Altoona lacks a significant office base. Although there are many jobs in Altoona, they are primarily concentrated in the retail and service industry. Throughout the planning process, residents voiced a desire to increase the diversity of job opportunities in Altoona by encouraging growth in non-retail commercial, such as office, medical, and civic uses. At the same time, the proportion of retail expenditures made online is continuing to grow, reducing the need for on-the-ground retail space. A commercial mixture that includes non-retail therefore ensures the best chance for success.

Potential locations for this growth are shown in Figure 2.2. Altoona has a large amount of available land, and a diverse approach will give it the strongest opportunity to fill this space.

An important part of increasing the office base is ensuring that potential workers have housing nearby. Altoona should encourage the development of high density residential (apartments) near commercial areas to provide an accessible workforce for potential new office uses. Figure 2.3 shows a concept for the area east of Prairie Crossing that includes a diverse range of uses, including a mix of office, commercial and high density residential. Figure 1.7, the Future Land Use map, shows additional locations for high density residential and Chapter 4 discusses housing options in more detail.

Altoona should diversify its commercial base beyond retail and entertainment, and encourage uses such as office and medical.

Providing apartments and other reasonably priced housing options for workers is an important part of supporting more office development.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Use the concept in Figure 2.3 to promote the development of office, commercial, and multi-family residential in the 34th Avenue/Adventureland Drive area.

Development Concept: 34th Avenue and Adventureland Drive

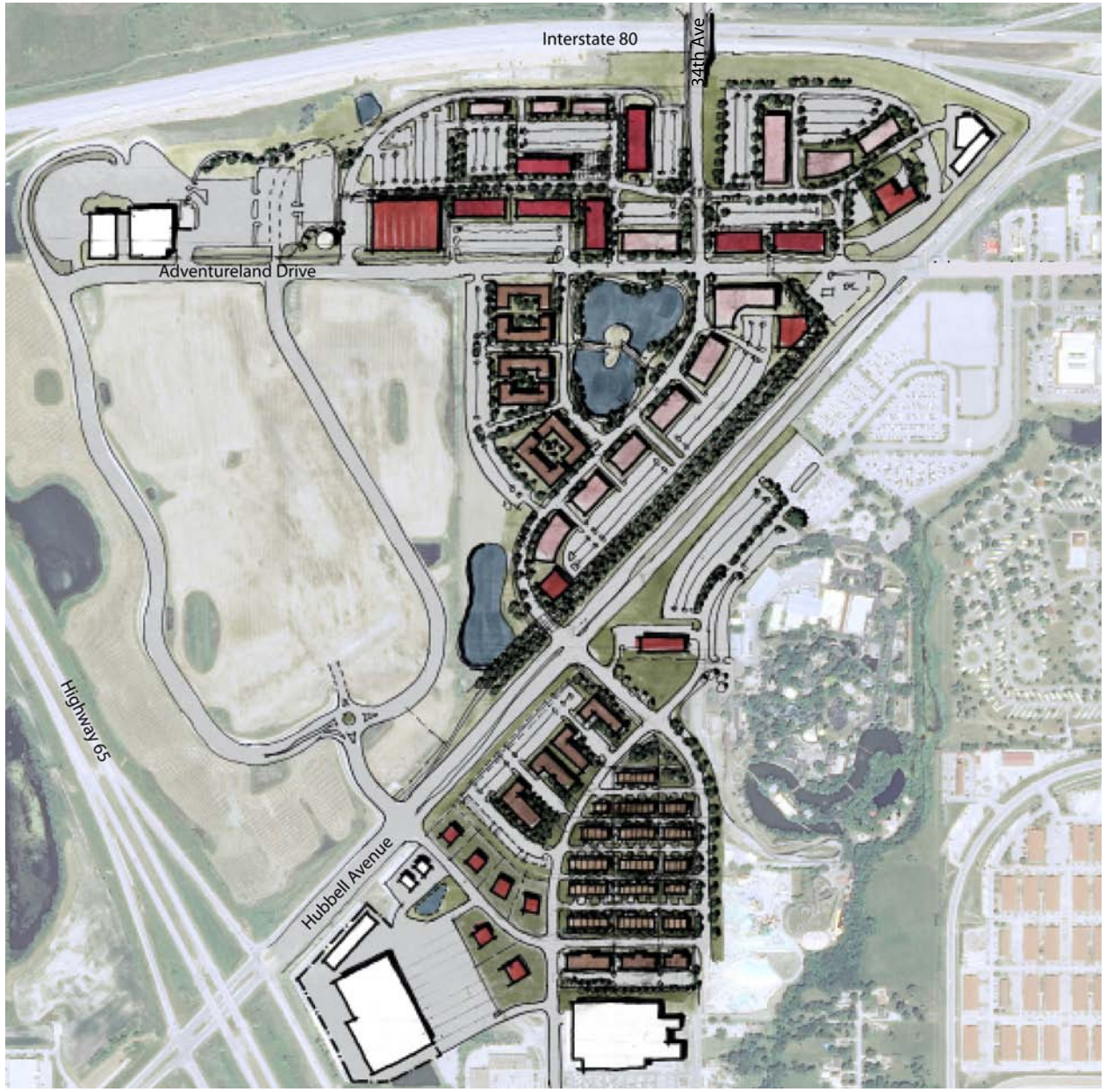
Re-route 34th Avenue: The existing alignment of 34th Avenue and Hubbell Avenue creates a traffic safety hazard. The re-alignment shown at right would not only create a safer, 90 degree intersection, but would also provide access to a development area for office (land in this area is currently on the market). The new route would allow improvements to Hubbell Avenue that would make it a more appealing gateway to the community, including the addition of a green buffer along the west side. This re-alignment would need to be done ahead of any development, before the land is subdivided. The city already has plans to build a new intersection on Hubbell at the location indicated in the drawing.

North Section (North of Adventureland Dr): The north section is dominated by trucking uses. This is not the highest and best use for an area that serves as a gateway to Altoona and neighbor to its biggest attractions (Bass Pro, Adventureland and Prairie Meadows). As demand (and price) for this valuable land rises, some of these businesses may choose to relocate to a more appropriate area. The concept shows a circulation and building pattern that would provide a functional, interconnected neighborhood for commercial and office uses.

Central Section: The re-aligned 34th Avenue provides access to a row of potential office or medical buildings, with parking in the rear. A green buffer separates Hubbell Avenue from the parking areas. Apartment buildings to the west (in brown) would provide nearby, reasonably priced housing options for workers in the new office/medical complex. This housing would also provide customers for retail to the north and west.

South Section (South of Hubbell Ave): A mixture of apartments and townhomes, with some small commercial uses are shown next to Adventureland. The circulation around the hotel would be changed to allow easier access and increased parking around the theme park.

Figure 2.3 - **Development Concept for 34th Avenue and Adventureland Drive Area**



Developing a Regional Center: Insight from "The Tomorrow Plan"

The Tomorrow Plan, the Greater Des Moines region's long-range plan, identifies the Prairie Crossings area as one of seven "regional nodes," that is, one of the region's economic and cultural centers. The recommendations in this chapter support the full realization of this area as a "node," and address the target design features for nodes, as identified in the Tomorrow Plan: creating a safe and inviting pedestrian realm, supporting density, and promoting multiple uses (see pages 40-42).

One important feature of "nodes," as identified in The Tomorrow Plan, is a high level of access to public transportation. The city is currently working with the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) and a developer to add a bus stop in the Prairie Crossing area. The city can continue to support public transportation access by promoting a mix of uses (as shown in Figure 2.3), providing sidewalk connections to existing and planned bus stops, and promoting street design that can support potential future bus stops.

The Tomorrow Plan also recommends that the region's nodes pay special attention to parking. As Altoona's regional node develops, it is important to avoid over-building parking, since excessive parking takes up valuable land, impedes walkability, and creates a disincentive to the "spillover" shopping that Altoona wants to encourage. The city can support this goal with flexibility on the city's parking requirements, support for alternative transportation, on-street parking (where appropriate), and design guidelines for the location of parking lots.

The Tomorrow Plan provides extensive recommendations and implementation tools for supporting the development of Altoona's regional node as described above. The City should use this information as a reference to continue developing a vibrant economic and cultural center that the entire region will visit and enjoy.

Image source: DART. Used with permission.

Above: Excessive parking can impede walkability and lessen "spillover" activity.
Left: Access to public transportation is an important part of developing a regional center.
Top: This mixed-use shopping district in Kansas City demonstrates a walkable environment that is also car-friendly.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Help realize Altoona's population growth potential, and the associated economic growth, by continuing to provide new housing options and a high quality of life for residents.

POPULATION GROWTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE

There is a great deal of household growth potential within Altoona. The Altoona population could potentially double over the next 20 years, if Altoona continues to provide a high quality of life. This population will fuel local commercial growth, and provide a solid workforce base for new office and industrial enterprises.

Although the majority of Altoona's retail sales come from non-residents, about 35-40% of the overall retail sales base is currently supported by Altoona residents. Altoona also benefits from an "east side" customer loyalty that would theoretically make new Altoona residents more likely to want to shop in Altoona, rather than other nearby options.

This potential growth in population is not guaranteed, but will depend on the city's continued support of quality housing options, good schools, and amenities such as parks. Strategies for providing these opportunities are provided in Chapters 1, 3, 4 and 5.

3 QUALITY OF LIFE

GOAL: Preserve Altoona's small town character and invest in features that support a unique community identity.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Altoona has many unique features, but according to residents, it lacks a clear brand or identity. A strong identity is important for supporting a healthy economy and fostering community pride.

In considering its identity, Altoona has three distinct audiences: 1) Residents and Potential Residents; 2) Visitors and Tourists; and 3) Developers. However, while the messaging is different for each, the overall identity should be consistent to avoid confusion or dilution of the message.

Branding efforts are underway as a cooperative effort between the City and the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber currently uses the slogan "Quality of Life Grows Here." Efforts to refine the branding message should continue, focusing on the unique attributes that Altoona brings to the metro area.

This page summarizes several primary attributes that were identified by participants in the comprehensive planning process. These attributes guide this comprehensive plan and should inform future branding efforts.

SMALL TOWN ATMOSPHERE WITH BIG CITY AMENITIES - While Altoona's core neighborhoods feel like a small town, attractions and shopping near the interstate provide amenities that few small towns can match. Altoona also has easy access to all the amenities of the Greater Des Moines area.

HEALTHY COMMUNITY OFFERING A RANGE OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES - The soccer complex serves players from around the region, recreational trails are a prevalent part of Altoona's neighborhoods, and plans for new, unique recreational options, such as a cyclo-cross park, are in the works.

STRONG SCHOOL DISTRICT - The community takes great pride in their schools.

A "GREEN" COMMUNITY - Altoona offers access to preserved natural areas throughout its neighborhoods. Creeks and drainage-ways are preserved to provide both natural stormwater management and a valuable amenity.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Enhance Altoona's city center with expansions to the Prairie Heritage Civic Plaza.

Civic Plaza

One of Altoona's central gathering places is the Prairie Heritage Civic Plaza west of Hy-Vee. This plaza serves a function similar to that of a traditional town square, and therefore carries a heavy influence on the identity of the community.

The city plans to expand the area as shown in the plaza master plan below, including additional plaza space, a shelter or band stand, and restrooms. The bandstand and additional plaza space would provide a larger performance area for events such as the "Music on the Plaza" series.

The City should consider improving signage and visibility of this core area, especially from 8th Street. Visitors could easily drive by on 8th Street and never know that the plaza and adjacent park are just one block away.

Figure 3.1 - **Plan for Prairie Heritage Civic Plaza**

Source: Snyder & Associates

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Enhance the 8th Street Corridor, starting with an update of the 2002 8th Street Corridor Plan.

8th Street Corridor and Other Community Gateways

The 8th Street corridor is critical to Altoona's image. It is one of the primary gateways to Altoona, and for many non-residents, this is the only part of Altoona they see.

A plan for the 8th Street corridor was adopted in 2002, and many components of that plan have been followed, such as the establishment of the civic plaza adjacent to Hy-Vee and decorative monuments along the street. However, much has changed since the plan was adopted, such as the development of the big-box commercial area east of Highway 65.

The 2002 plan should be updated to include additional enhancements that will help reflect Altoona's image as a a healthy, green, small town. The area could be enhanced greatly by street-scape features such as landscaping, public art and street furniture. Traffic calming techniques could help make the corridor safer for motorists and more approachable to pedestrians and bicyclists.

Altoona should also identify and plan improvements for other community gateways, including Adventureland Drive and 34th Avenue.

8th Street is a heavily traveled corridor and provides one of Altoona's best opportunities to make a positive impression on both visitors and residents.

Previous efforts to improve 8th Street include landscaping, sidewalk additions and monument markers, like the one shown above.

Adventureland Drive (right) serves as an entrance to the Bass Pro and Prairie Crossing area. 8th Street and other community gateways should be improved to help communicate the Altoona "brand" of a green, healthy, small town community.

GOAL: Enhance parks and recreation opportunities, including trails, organized recreation, and natural open space.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Parks and recreation are an important part of Altoona's identity and quality of life. Altoona has a quality park system with a wide range of recreational options, such as the soccer complex and Sam Wise Youth Complex.

An analysis of the amount, type, and location of park land provides insight into the level of service provided by Altoona's parks. A descriptive table of the size, location, category and features of Altoona's parks is included in the appendix. Highlights of Altoona's performance in each category are described below:

Amount of Park Land

Altoona offers approximately 250 acres of park land, a high amount for its population.

Altoona's 250 acres of park land amounts to approximately 16 acres per 1,000 residents (based on the 2012 population estimate of 15,409). Although there is no "magic number" for acreage, a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 is a frequently cited rule of thumb. Although Altoona appears to have built ahead of the demand, it's important to note that 150 of the 250 acres is concentrated in two locations: Sam Wise Youth Complex and Spring Creek Sports Complex. As Altoona grows, it should add park land in its growth areas to maintain its current level of service (see following page).

Type of Park Land

Altoona has a good supply of neighborhood parks, but may need another "community" park.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has established a park classification system that helps communities identify categories of parks that it should provide (Table 3.1). Altoona has a good supply of neighborhood parks for its size, but Lions Park and Prairie Heritage Park are the only "community" parks. Sam Wise Youth Complex could be considered a community park, but the majority of the facility is better characterized as a sports complex. As Altoona grows to the south, it could consider creating another Community Park (The planned 80-acre Spring Creek Park could potentially meet this need).

Location

Altoona's parks are well distributed throughout the community.

Figure 3.2 shows a map of Altoona's existing parks, trails and recreational areas. It also shows 1/4 mile and 1/2 mile service areas for each park. Virtually all residential areas are within a half mile of a park and the majority are within a quarter mile. However, the neighborhood at 1st Avenue North and 9th Street is currently under-served.

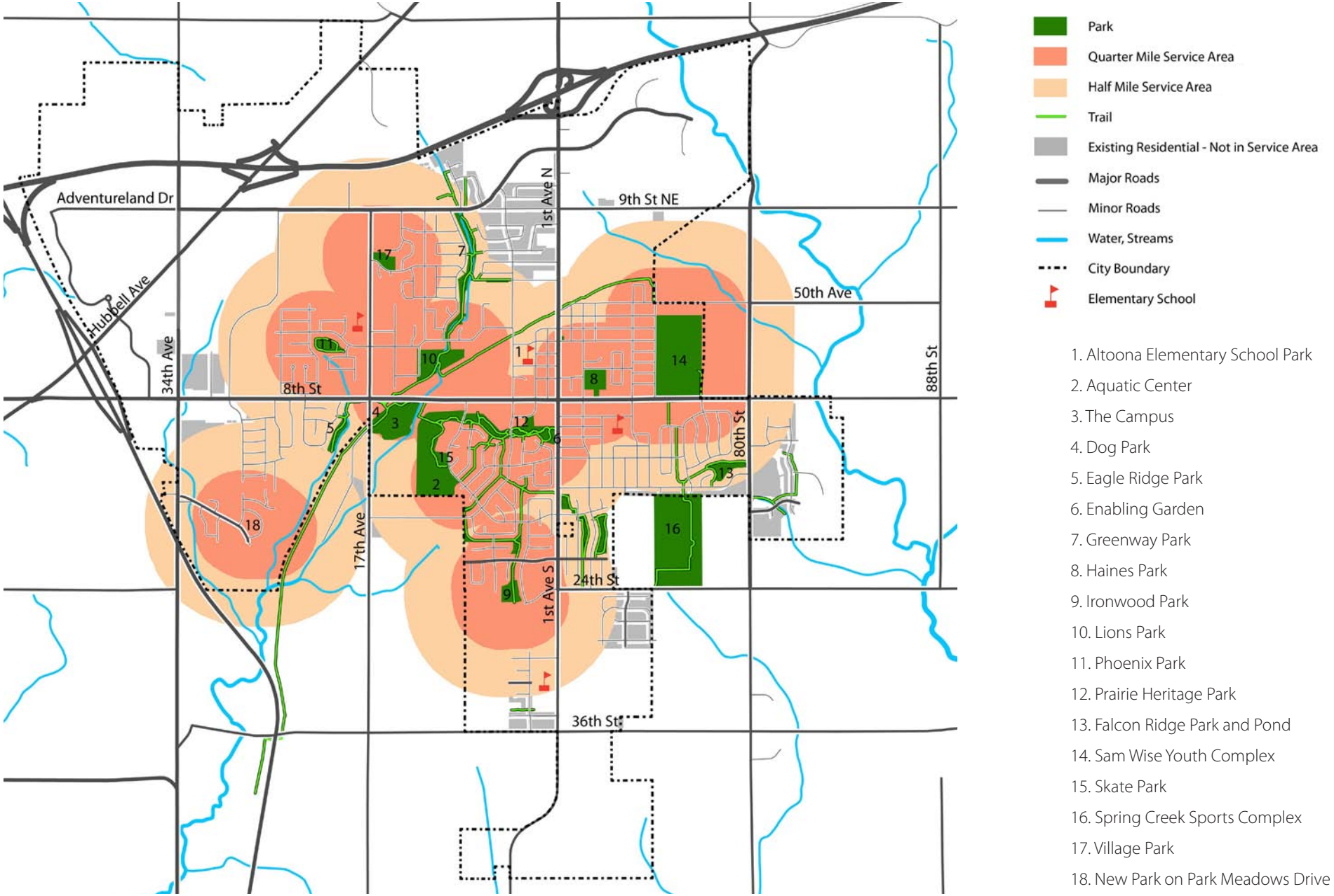
Parks Master Plan

Altoona has both a Parks Master Plan (2005) and Parks Needs Assessment (2007). These plans provide guidance for updates and improvements to existing parks, and proposed new parks and trail connections. The comprehensive plan therefore focuses on new parks and trails in the growth areas of Altoona, incorporating the recommendations of the 2005 and 2007 documents where appropriate. The recommendations of those earlier documents should be considered a part of this comprehensive plan.

Table 3.1 - **Park Classification Descriptions (NRPA)**

Classification	Function	Size	Service Radius	Altoona Example
Neighborhood	Basic unit of a community's park system, providing a recreational and social focus for residential areas; Accommodate informal recreational activities.	5-10 acres	¼ - ½ mile (walking distance)	Village Park, Haines Park, Phoenix Park
Community	Meet diverse community-based recreation needs, preserve significant natural areas and provide space for larger recreation facilities. May include special attraction such as a pool or trails.	30-50 acres	½ - 3 miles	Lions Park
Specialty	Meet a niche recreational need for the community, such as a sports park or wilderness area.	Varies	Varies	Skate Park

Figure 3.2 - Altoona's Existing Parks, Trails and Park Service Areas



Haines Park

Trail north of Ironwood Park

Village Park

Enabling Garden

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Add new neighborhood and community parks as the city grows, with the goal of providing parks within 1/4 mile walking distance of all residential areas.

FUTURE PARKS

Proposed Parks

To maintain its high level of park service, Altoona must add parks and trails as its population grows. Figure 3.3 shows proposed locations for future parks in Altoona's growth areas.

Altoona should consider the following principles when determining locations for future parks:

- Provide a neighborhood or community park within 1/4 mile to 1/2 mile walking distance of all residential areas.
- Use parks as a focal point for new neighborhoods, to provide a community gathering space.
- Use parks to help preserve sensitive natural areas by locating them in areas that are not well-suited for higher intensity development.
- Try to co-locate parks with schools to encourage efficiencies through shared use of facilities.
- Use new parks and trails as a catalyst for encouraging development in desirable areas.

Amount of Future Park Land

If Altoona reaches its projected population potential of 33,700 in 2035, it would need to add approximately 200 acres of park land to maintain its existing level of service (approximately 16 acres of park per 1,000 people). However, the existing service level reflects Altoona's attempt to stay ahead of demand, and may therefore greatly overestimate the amount of new park land needed. The concept in Figure 3.3 shows 225-250 acres of proposed park land, spread across an area that would accommodate approximately double the projected population. If this area is fully built-out as shown in the Future Land Use Map (Figure 1.7), and the proposed parks are added, Altoona should still be above 10 acres of park land per 1,000 people overall.

1. Meadow Vista Neighborhood Park

This 20-acre park has been platted as part of the Meadow Vista subdivision to serve the proposed new neighborhoods in the western part of Altoona. It connects to the existing and proposed trail system.

2. Twin Creeks Park

The city plans to take control of 60 acres of wooded area adjacent to Highway 65, just south of the existing city limits. The park will remain primarily in its current natural state.

3. 17th Avenue Neighborhood Park

A 5-10 acre neighborhood park at the intersection of 17th Avenue and a proposed new street would be needed if this area develops with residential, as shown in the future land use plan (parcel shown is 6 acres). A trail link to the west (approximately 1/2 a mile) would connect it to the existing Vern Wiley trail.

4. Altoona/Pleasant Hill Shared Neighborhood Park

Planned residential growth in the southwest of Altoona, south of 36th Street and west of 1st Avenue, would be adjacent to planned residential growth in Pleasant Hill. To provide the 1/2 mile goal of park service, a park in the indicated area would be appropriate, but given its location on the border, it would probably be used by residents of both communities. As development of this area becomes more imminent, the two communities could discuss an arrangement to share the cost of construction and maintenance of a new park. The parcel shown is approximately 20 acres, but a smaller 5-10 acre parcel would also be appropriate.

5. Clay Elementary Park

3-4 acres of land is currently open on the south end of Clay Elementary, and could be used for a shared recreational/park area for the elementary and the general public. The proposed trail system goes through this land.

6. Spring Creek Park

Approximately 80 acres of passive park land are planned just south of the soccer complex off of 24th Street. The master plan for the park includes two large ponds, trails, two playgrounds, fishing piers, gardens, a picnic area and more. The low impact design and ponds in this area will contribute to the city's natural stormwater management system.

7. 80th Street Neighborhood Park

This park would be centered around Spring Creek, about 1/2 mile south of where it crosses 36th Street. The parcel shown in the concept is approximately 25 acres. This larger size would allow for large open space and natural areas, while 5-10 acres could be developed for more active uses, such as a playground. The proposed site is on the border of the Altoona growth area, but is located in this particular area due to environmental conditions that limits the site's suitability for more intense development. This park could be another candidate for a shared use agreement with Pleasant Hill, if Pleasant Hill were to experience residential growth in this area.

8. East Neighborhood Park

A 5-10 acre neighborhood park will be needed in this location as residential growth occurs between 80th Street and 88th Street. The parcel shown in the concept is approximately 10 acres and is in an environmentally sensitive area.

9. North Side Neighborhood Park

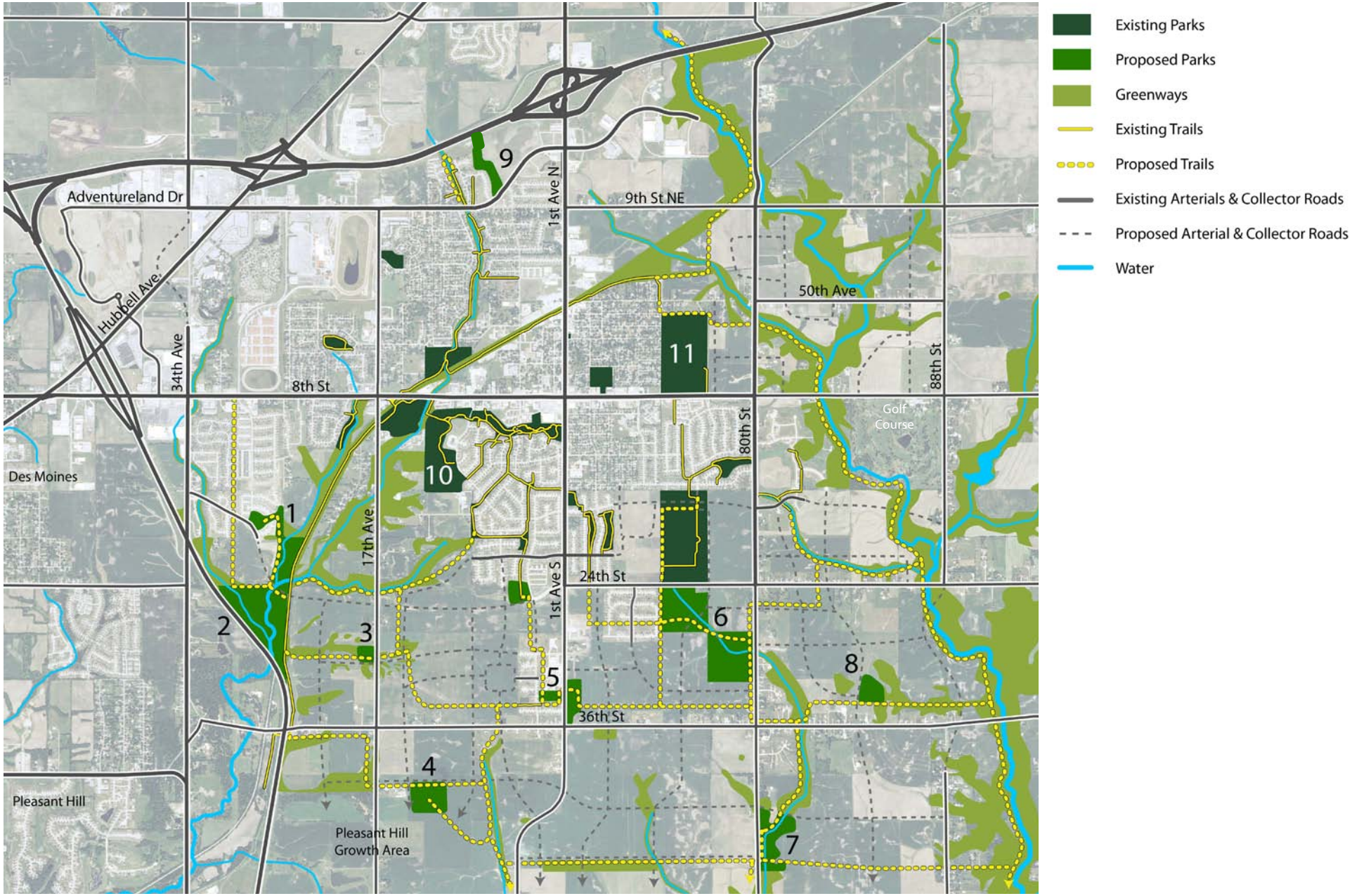
The residential area around 1st Avenue N and 9th Street is currently not within a 1/2 mile service area of a neighborhood park. A new neighborhood park of 5-10 acres should be added as shown.

10. Cyclo-Cross Park

A new park behind the aquatic center will feature a cyclo-cross track that can also serve as a multi-use trail.

11. Upgrades to Sam Wise Youth Complex

Figure 3.3 - **Proposed Parks, Trails and Greenways for Altoona**



RECOMMENDED ACTION: Add new trails as Altoona grows, based on the trails plan in Figure 3.3.

FUTURE TRAILS

Altoona can build on its identity as a recreation-oriented community by expanding an interconnected network of multi-use trails as the community grows. Altoona already has approximately 18 miles of trail, with a regional trail spine running through the heart of the community (the Gay Lea Wilson (GLW) trail and Vern Willey Trail).

Trails include any off-street paths that serve pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation. Proposed trail extensions in Figure 3.3 include:

- Mud Creek Trail: Starting at the eastern terminus of the GLW trail (north of Sam Wise), this trail goes east past the north side of Sam Wise and continues to Mud Creek. The trail then heads south along the west side of the creek, to Pleasant Hill. The Mud Creek trail could be the next premier trail amenity for Altoona and can connect the growing southeast side to the regional trail network.
- Southern Loop: This proposed trail creates a loop around the southern perimeter of Altoona's future growth area. The loop starts at the GLW trail at 36th Street and Highway 65, then runs east past 17th Ave, 1st Ave, and 80th Street, finally meeting up with the proposed Mud Creek Trail.
- Twin Creeks to Mud Creek: This is an east/west trail route that will take users through the heart of Altoona's residential growth area. The trail connection starts in the west at the tip of Twin Creeks park on the GLW trail. It runs east across town, through proposed parks at 17th Avenue and 1st Avenue, crosses 80th Street and Spring Creek, passes by another proposed park, and finally meets up with the Mud Creek Trail.
- Spring Creek: Starting at Spring Creek Sports Complex, this route runs south and then east through the proposed Spring Creek Park, turns south to parallel 80th Street to 36th Street, and then turns east to cross 80th and meet up with Spring Creek. It then follows Spring Creek south until meeting up with the southern loop, and potentially continuing into Pleasant Hill.
- Twin Creeks to Venbury Drive: This link connects the existing neighborhoods in the Venbury Drive area to the north side of the new Twin Creeks Park. This trail segment connects the Gay Lea Wilson trail in the west to the existing trail near Driftwood Drive and 5th Avenue SW in the east.
- 24th Street to Spring Creek: An existing trail currently ends at 24th Street and 3rd Avenue SE. This trail could be continued south and then east to link up with the proposed Spring Creek Park, then continue south to meet the "Twin Creeks to Mud Creek trail" described above.
- Ironwood Park to Clay Elementary: The trail that currently ends at Ironwood Park could be extended south to Clay Elementary, where it would meet up with the "Twin Creeks to Mud Creek" trail. This trail provides a safe walking or biking route Clay Elementary students.
- Gay Lea Wilson Extension: A planned extension of the Gay Lea Wilson trail will extend from the current terminus north of Sam Wise, continuing east and then north to cross 9th Street NE and Interstate 80 before continuing north into Bondurant.

Timing

Trails should be put in as development happens, NOT after it occurs. Trail right-of-way should be reserved as part of development agreements (see following page for detail on trail dedication) and trails should be constructed as houses are being constructed. While trails can add value to a home, if the trail is not put in until after new homes are occupied, it can cause confusion about property lines, especially when trails run along the back yard.

Greenways: An Environmental Opportunity

The route of future trails, as shown in Figure 3.3 follows the natural terrain. Creeks, drainage-ways and floodplains define strips of land that should be preserved for natural stormwater drainage. These "greenways" can provide open space within developed areas, separate incompatible uses, buffer busy roadways, accommodate natural drainage to mitigate flooding, and provide great routes for recreational trails. Chapter 1 provides detail on the function and location of the greenways.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Provide consistent funding for parks and trails, and consider changing dedication requirements, pursuing outside funding opportunities, and forming a "Friends of the Parks" organization.

Funding and Maintenance

Funding the construction and maintenance of parks and trails is often a difficult task. Altoona currently has a system in place to acquire land for parks and trails, but finding the funds to develop the land is difficult. The city has a consistent budget item for parks and trails, but more funding from outside sources, such as grants, would be beneficial. Recommendations regarding park funding include: 1) changes to dedication requirements; 2) increased pursuit of outside funding options such as grants; and 3) considering the establishment of a "Friends of the parks" group.

1. Changes to Dedication Requirements

Altoona currently requires the dedication of land for parks and trails for new developments, through the provisions of its tax abatement ordinance. Dedication requirements can be revised and expanded as follows:

- Standardize dedication requirements, specifically the required Right-Of-Way width for trails.
- Expand park land and trail dedication requirements to be included in the city's subdivision ordinance, so that it is not reliant on the use of tax abatement. Currently, the vast majority of developments in Altoona are using tax abatement, but if this were to change in the future, Altoona would still want to have a mechanism to require dedication. Similar to the current requirement under tax abatement, the dedication in the ordinance would be a function of: Acres in the development, Development density, Number of people per housing unit, and the city's desired level of service of parks.

Notes Regarding Dedication

- Due to the piecemeal nature of development, the required amount of land dedication for any single development is sometimes smaller than the ideal neighborhood park size of 5-10 acres. Altoona can encourage the assembly of larger pieces of land by requesting that developers locate dedicated land at the edges and corners of the development, so that adjacent developments can combine several small parcels of dedicated land to form one larger parcel.
- Some Iowa cities allow payment of cash in lieu of dedication of land by developers, while others prohibit such dedication. The legal precedent on these policies is complex, and the city should always consult with the city attorney when considering these issues.

2. Grant Opportunities

In order to help develop the dedicated land as parks and trails, Altoona should take advantage of available grant funding from local, state and federal agencies and from non-profit foundations. Recent emphasis on healthy lifestyles and tourism in Iowa has made trail funding more available, but highly competitive. Altoona has the advantage of a thorough parks plan and a consistent, established budget for trails and parks, which it can use as a match for grant opportunities.

Table 6.2 in the Implementation chapter provides a list of possible outside funding sources for parks and trails.

3. Friends of the Parks

Altoona should consider establishing a "friends of the parks" organization to support special projects. These organizations typically undertake fund-raising and public awareness for parks projects. Many Iowa communities, such as nearby Des Moines and Urbandale, have a "friends" organization.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Continue to support Altoona's community services, with an annual evaluation and funding plan for short term and long term needs.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community services such as the library and fire service are an important facet of Altoona's quality of life and are critical to public safety. Altoona's goal for community services is to "attract and retain residents by supporting quality community services, such as education and public safety." The city should continue its support of these services by reviewing their needs on an annual basis as part of the CIP process. A general overview of the current conditions and needs of city hall, the library, the police department, the fire department, the Campus, senior services, and the school district are summarized in this section.

City Hall: 407 8th Street SE

Overview of Services

City Hall holds the city council chambers and offices for city departments and officials.

Condition: Under-sized

The 6,000 square foot facility is under-sized for current operations. As Altoona's population grows, space restrictions will become even more problematic.

Long Term Needs: Build Larger Facility

The City plans to build a new, larger facility on Venbury drive, just north of the existing fire station. The existing facility should be re-used and could potentially be rented as office space.

Altoona Public Library: 700 8th Street SW

Overview of Services

The Altoona public library provides materials check-out, computer access, reference services, children and teen programming, meeting space, and many other services.

Condition: Good

The facility, constructed in 1998, is approximately 19,000 square feet and in good condition. The library is limited by the building size - the collection is smaller than recommended due to space constraints, demand for meeting space is higher than what is available, and the children's room is undersized for the volume of use.

Long Term Needs: Expansion

A professional space needs report from 2007 recommended that the library be **expanded to around 43,000 square feet**, more than double the current size (based on a population estimate of 25,000 for 2020). Library staff expect that the library will be able to expand on the existing site, though parking may need to be expanded.

Previous parks plans have recommended the construction of a play space behind the library, near the path.

COMMUNITY SERVICES CONTINUED

Police Department: 700 1st Avenue South

Overview of Services

The Altoona police department's primary function is to enforce laws, protect the community and deter crime. (911 servies are provided by Polk County) The department has 24 sworn officers.

Condition of Facility: Fair and Under-sized

The 5,000 square foot building is in fair condition, but the department has outgrown the facility. Staff report that the building lacks the necessary facilities to operate effectively and safely - prisoner movement is unsafe, victim areas are inadequate, there is no safe area for the public, no room for training, the security system is outdated and administrative space is cramped. The garage is outdated and located several blocks from the department.

Long-Term Needs: A New Facility

Minor remodeling could help with space issues in the short-term, but a new police facility is needed in the long term. Altoona has the potential to nearly double its population in the next decade, which would require a significant number of additional staff and more space to house operations.

Fire Department: 950 Venbury Drive

Overview of Services

The fire department provides fire protection, prevention, and fire safety education.

Condition of Facility: Very Good

The fire station was built in 2001 and is in very good condition. A sleep room was added in 2009.

Long Term Needs: Staffing and Equipment

Given the excellent condition of fire station, short and long term needs are all related to staffing and equipment, such finding volunteer staff and acquiring an aerial truck.

The Campus

Overview of Services

The Campus provides recreational services for the city of Altoona, including a weight room, swimming pool, track, gymnasium, classes and more. The City owns the building and a non-profit operates the Campus using membership fees.

Condition of Facility: At Capacity

The original building was built in 1992, and an addition was added in 2006. The facility is currently around 75,000 square feet and is at capacity.

Long Term Needs: Expansion

The Campus staff expect that a 20,000 square foot expansion will be needed in the next 5-10 years to accommodate the growing population.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Continue to investigate funding options for constructing a community center, and work with the public to determine space and programming needs.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Partner with the school district to coordinate school facilities planning and site selection with city infrastructure and parks planning.

COMMUNITY SERVICES (CONT.)

Senior Services

During the public input process, many participants asked about the possibility of creating a senior center in Altoona. Polk County provides senior centers throughout the county, with the nearest center being the East Senior Center at 1231 E 26th Street in Des Moines (about 7 miles from the center of Altoona). A senior meal is hosted at the shelter house at Lion's Park. There was recent discussion about providing a dedicated space for seniors in the Campus, but the vote did not pass. At this time, there are no plans to create an independent senior center.

Community Center at Ironwood Park

Altoona currently does not have a community center and has only one enclosed park shelter (Lions Park). The 2005 Parks Comprehensive Plan identified a need for a year-round community center, and listed this as one of the top ten priorities for further evaluation. Over the past several years, there has been discussion of putting the community center in Ironwood Park, however funding has not been available. The city should continue to investigate funding options for constructing a community center, and work with the public to determine space and programming needs for the center. During the comprehensive plan process, several needs were expressed that could potentially be housed in a community center, including the need for a dedicated space for seniors, indoor recreational activities, and spaces to rent for events.

Other City Buildings

As Altoona grows, it will need to continually evaluate the need for expansion and additions for all public buildings, such as public works buildings and storage areas. Building needs and conditions should be evaluated on an annual basis as part of the CIP process.

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Overview

Altoona is part of the Southeast Polk Community School District, which serves more than 6,000 Preschool-12th grade students. Altoona is home to four middle schools: Altoona Elementary, Centennial Elementary, Clay Elementary, and Willowbrook Elementary. The Junior High School and High School are both in Pleasant Hill.

Long-Term Plans

The school district is growing quickly, at about 220 students per year. There are approximately 1,000 spaces available for new students to accommodate short term growth. The district expects to create a long-term facility plan during the 2014-2015 school year. This plan will determine how the district will accommodate long-term growth, through both expansions to existing schools and new facilities.

The City of Altoona and the School District should work together to determine the location of any new schools in Altoona. As mentioned in Chapter 1 of the plan, schools provide a focal point for neighborhoods, and have tremendous potential to spur residential growth. It is important that any new schools are built in preferred growth areas (as established in Chapter 1) where they can be efficiently served with city infrastructure and where they encourage residential growth in logical and desirable locations. Plans for new parks should be coordinated with school facility planning, to allow for the possibility of co-location and shared facilities.

4 HOUSING

HOUSING TODAY

17,000
potential new residents (2015-2035)

6,500
new housing units

Large Potential Demand

Altoona's population has the potential to nearly double from 2015-2035, to around 30,000 residents. This would create a need for approximately 6,500 new housing units.

Figure 4.1 shows potential locations for that residential growth and page 61 provides a recommended mix of housing types for future growth.

Strong Market

Altoona has a strong housing market with high home values and a low vacancy rate. A strong market helps support consumer confidence that a house in Altoona is a good investment.

- Altoona has higher home values than the state and the Metro area, yet home values in those areas rose more quickly than Altoona's from 2000-2010.
- Altoona has a relatively low vacancy rate, at 4.3%. While a high vacancy rate (over 10%) is a negative, it is good to have some vacancy, as Altoona does, to allow market flexibility.

Table 4.1: **Median Home Value Comparison, Altoona, Des Moines-West Des Moines Metro Area, Polk County, Iowa**

	2000	2010	% Change
Altoona	$115,600	$159,900	38.3%
Metro	NA	$151,100	--
Polk County	$103,100	$149,700	45.2%
Iowa	$82,500	$119,200	44.5%

Missing Market Segments

Altoona has a mix of housing types, ranging from single family detached homes to apartments (see pie chart on following page). Altoona also has a good balance of owner occupied and renter, with a 75% / 25% split.

However, Altoona may still be missing some segments of the market. While Altoona is providing many options for mid-range housing, it is under-served for both the lower and higher ends of the spectrum.

More budget-friendly "workforce housing" could help accommodate young people and those who work in Altoona's abundant service industries. This is not just the lowest income residents - in Altoona, the under-served population includes households making up to $50,000 per year (see appendix for detailed affordability analysis). Housing types such as apartments and townhomes can help provide more options for this group.

At the same time, higher range options ($300,000+) are also in short supply relative to the number of people who live in Altoona who could afford such a home. (About 8% of Altoona households make more than $150,000 per year.)

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Follow the Neighborhood Principles in Chapter 1 to help encourage a diverse mix of housing types at a range of prices. (See pages 13-15)

Housing Goal: Provide a Mix of Housing Types

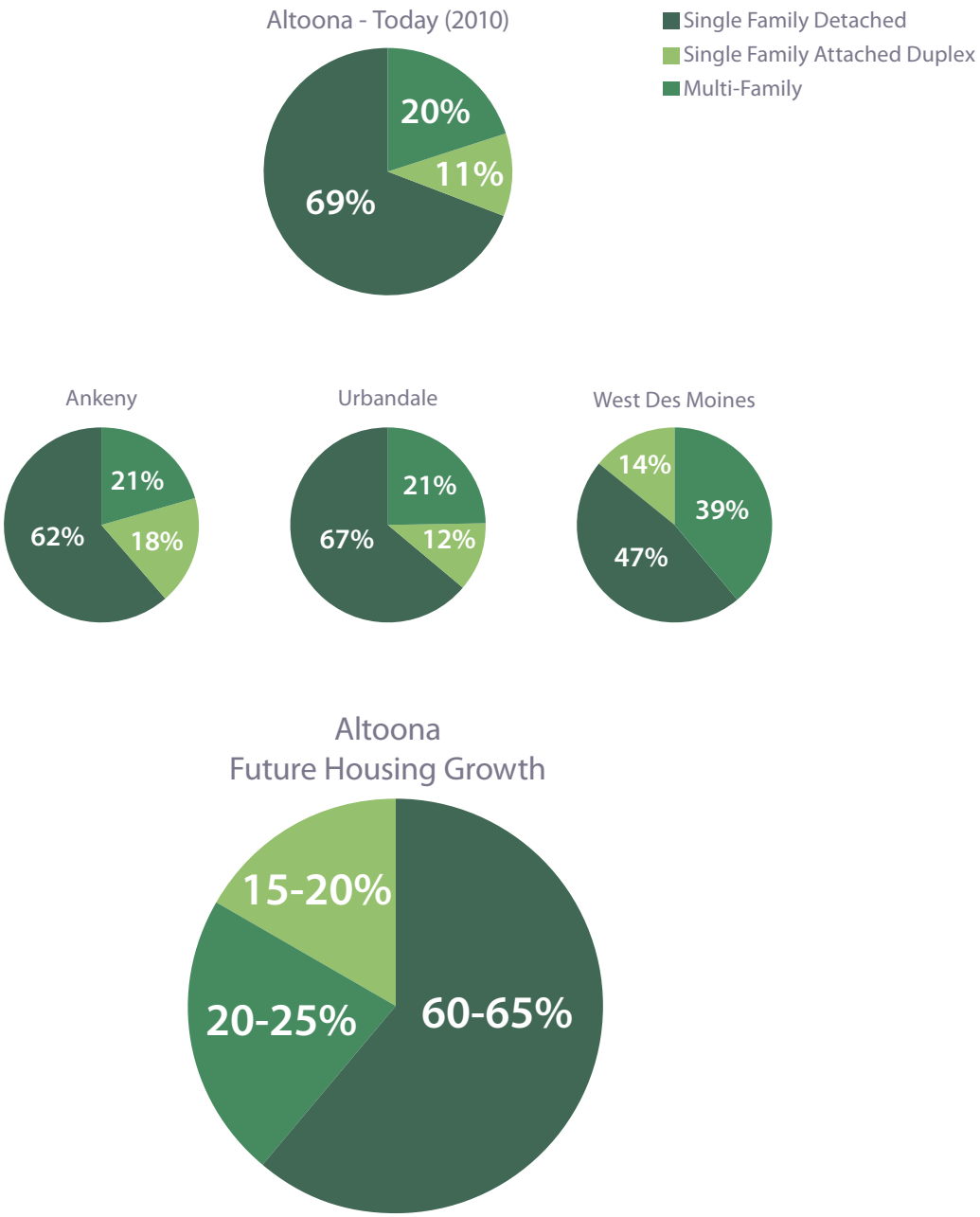
Altoona's goal for housing is to "Encourage a variety of quality housing, including moderately-priced single family homes, quality multi-family options, and high-end homes, to attract and retain residents at all stages of life." As shown in the graphic on this page, Altoona currently has approximately 20% multi-family housing, 11% single-family attached housing (e.g. - townhomes, condos) and the remainder single family detached. Compared to some other suburban communities in the Des Moines metropolitan area, Altoona has a greater percentage of single family detached housing.

Across the country, more people, especially members of the Millenial and baby boomer generations, are looking for alternatives to large single family homes for many reasons: lower costs, reduced maintenance, and the ability to live in a higher density neighborhood where services and entertainment are within walking distance. The Altoona market is already responding to this trend by constructing several recent apartment and condo projects.

Additional multi-family and single-family attached housing could help Altoona attract more young professionals and other workers, and can provide housing options that allow residents to stay in Altoona through all phases of life. For example, a young resident or couple could live in an apartment or townhome when first starting their career, then move to a single family house while raising children, and finally transition to a four-plex in retirement, all within Altoona.

Different housing types should be connected to each other to form cohesive neighborhoods, rather than isolated by type (e.g. - avoid pods of apartment buildings with only one entrance). The box on page 63 provides guidelines for mixing housing types within neighborhoods.

The neighborhood principles in Chapter 1 describe how to plan for a variety of housing types within Altoona's new neighborhoods.



HOUSING TYPE PHOTO GUIDE

Low Density (Single Family Detached, Some Single Family Attached)

Single Family Detached Homes in Altoona

Eagle Creek Boulevard Duplex
(Duplexes are included in Low Density Residential)

Single Family Detached Homes on 15th Street SE

Medium Density (Single Family Attached, Some Multi-Family)

Four-plex on 13th Avenue SW

Ironwood Village Condos

Row-houses with rear garage (Des Moines)

High Density (Multi-Family)

Apartments near Centennial Elementary in Altoona

New Senior Apartments on 1st Avenue

Apartments on 5th Avenue SW

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Allow a mixture of housing types within neighborhoods with appropriate transitions, and avoid isolating different housing types from each other.

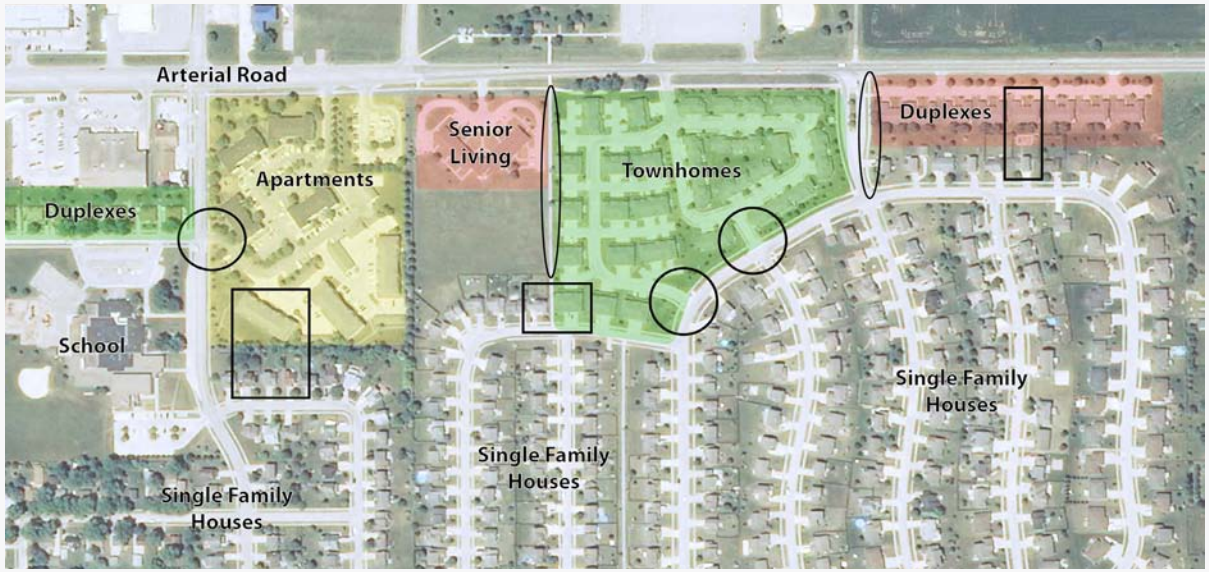
MIXING HOUSING TYPES

Different types of housing should be interconnected in one cohesive neighborhood, not isolated from each other. Developers often specialize in one type of home, and will build in clusters of one type. However, good neighborhood unit planning (see Chapter 1) provides different housing types that are interconnected through the street system and walking paths, and centered around a common focal point, such as a school or park.

Transitions from one type to another are typically made at rear or side lot lines. In some cases, limited transition is needed, such as including medium density options like duplexes or four-plexes in single family areas.

The graphics at right show several approaches to mixing of housing types, ranging from relatively isolated, to completely integrated. For example, in the top right, the red areas are isolated from the interior neighborhood, with street connections leading only to the arterial road (although sidewalk connections are present). The green and yellow areas are clusters of higher density housing types that have better connection to the interior neighborhood. On the lower right, all housing types are completely integrated, with little clustering and transitions at the lot line. Altoona should stive for neighborhood patterns that avoid isolation and provide good connections.

A transition from single family homes to apartments at the rear lot line. Ames, Iowa.



This Altoona neighborhood shows a range of approaches to mixing (or not mixing) housing types.

The neighborhood at left (Ames IA) shows a completely integrated approach to mixing housing types. There is little separation between type, and transitions are made at rear and side lot lines.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Infrastructure and other city investments should be focused on existing neighborhoods and the residential growth areas shown in Figure 4.1, starting with areas adjacent to existing development.

The Future Land Use Map in Chapter 1 shows the proposed mix of land uses in each of the residential growth areas.

RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AREAS

Figure 4.1 shows the preferred residential growth areas for Altoona. All have the capacity to be served by city sewer and water, though extensions will be required. Areas that are adjacent to the existing city should be developed before outer areas. Given market trends and infrastructure availability, the South and Northeast areas are likely to develop first. Annexation would be required to develop many of these areas - refer to Chapter 1 for annexation policy recommendations.

South: 1st Avenue Corridor

- Land already in City limits
- Primary street infrastructure in place (1st Ave)
- Close to existing neighborhoods and services, including the new Clay Elementary
- Access to Interstate 80 and Highway 163 via 1st Avenue.

Northeast

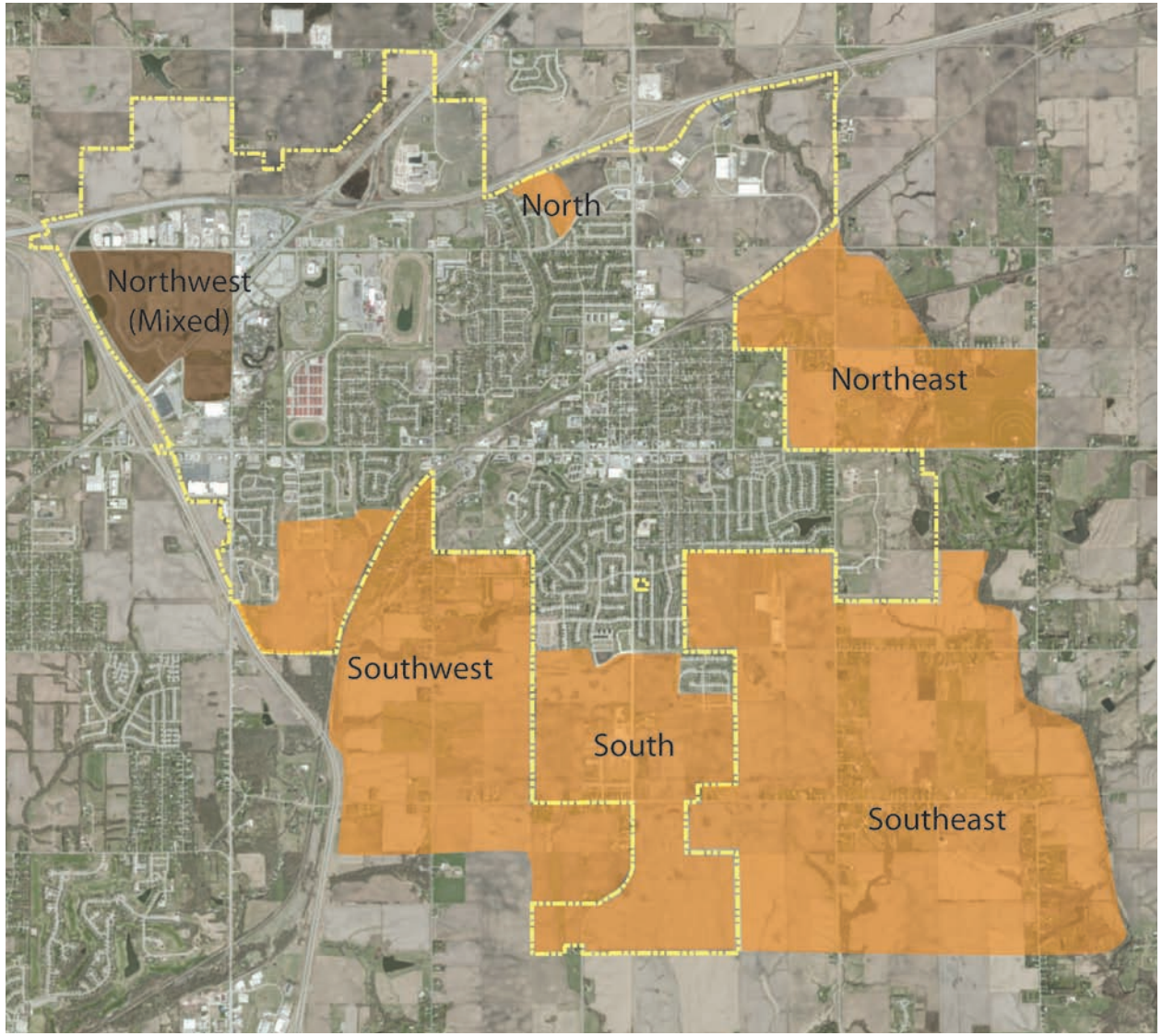
- Likely to develop soon, given its location along 8th Street and proximity to existing neighborhoods and amenities such as the golf course and Sam Wise Complex.

Southeast

- New sewer main along Mud Creek provides service potential for this area.
- The area around Mud Creek is environmentally sensitive, due to floodplains and steep slopes. This provides a tremendous opportunity for a natural amenity by preserving these sensitive areas as a greenway with a multi-use trail. This can improve property values of nearby homes.
- There are many existing homes in this area. The detailed concept for this area in Chapter 1 shows a way to develop that does not displace any homes.

(Continued on following page...)

Figure 4.1 - **Preferred Growth Areas for Residential Development**



RECOMMENDED ACTION: Follow the neighborhood principles in Chapter 1 to create interconnected residential neighborhoods that reflect the character of our community. (See pages 13-15)

(...Residential Growth Areas continued)

Southwest

- Similar to the southeast area, the Southwest has a number of existing homes, including the cluster of homes south of 8th Street and 17th Avenue. As areas to the west, south and east of these homes develop and are annexed into the city, the city will need to discuss annexation with the property owners, to avoid creating an unincorporated island (which is not allowed by state law).
- The land that is in city limits is already under development.
- The land outside city limits will likely develop later than other areas such as the South and Northeast. It will require significant transportation investments to provide access.

North

- Adjacent to existing residential and has easy access to the interstate.
- Could be well suited for multi-family/high density residential.

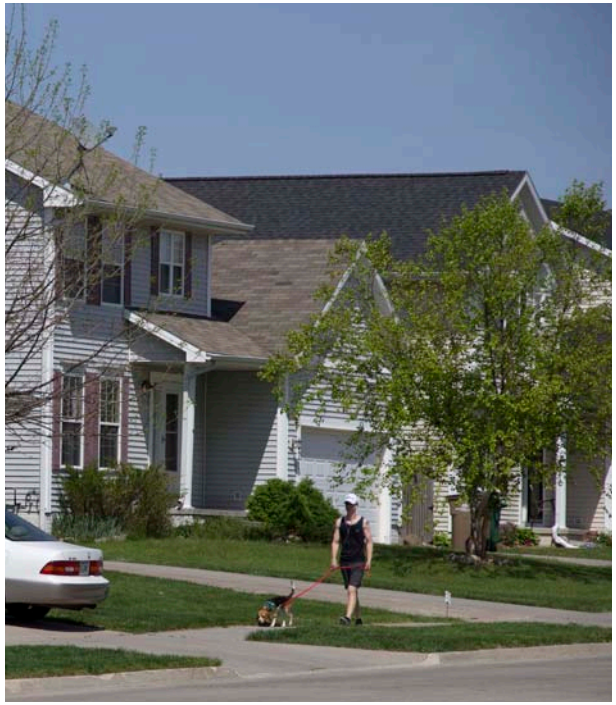
Northwest (Mixed with Commercial)

- This area will be primarily commercial, but some high density residential could be appropriate. Residential development in this area would provide customers for growing retail and convenient housing options for workers of nearby businesses.
- Chapter 2 provides a concept for the eastern portion of this area that shows how high density and medium density housing could be integrated into the development.

Housing Goal: Create Neighborhoods

As development occurs, the community should encourage developers to create new ***neighborhoods***, not just new houses. Neighborhoods have focal points such as a park or a school, are interconnected with the rest of the community through streets and trails, preserve important natural areas, and reflect the unique character of the community.

Chapter 1 explains the principles of neighborhood development in more detail.



RECOMMENDED ACTION: Reach out to the private housing market to understand the barriers to building workforce housing and explore policy options to help fill the gap in the market (such as the options listed on pages 66-67).

WORKING WITH PRIVATE MARKET

In Altoona and around the state there is a perpetual need for workforce housing, that is, housing for households that are below and around the median income (In Altoona, the median income is around $63,000). This income group may sometimes make too much money to be eligible for state-funded affordable housing programs, but may still find it difficult to afford market prices.

A gap exists where the market is under-providing workforce housing. Altoona is already doing a good job of providing reasonably priced mid-range housing. However, Altoona could benefit by doing even more to provide housing to lower and moderate income buyers, since this includes young professionals just starting their careers, individuals who work in and support Altoona's large service and entertainment industries, and potential workers for the office base that Altoona wishes to attract.

Altoona should work with developers to find out what the barriers are for building workforce housing, and explore ways to help reduce those barriers. The following policies and programs are potential tools that the city could use to encourage the construction of housing for this important workforce group.

(Note: Any city monetary support for development should include stipulations to ensure quality construction and neighborhood development, according to the principles in Chapter 1 and in this Chapter.)

Program Options for Supporting Workforce Housing

Programs to Reduce Developer Costs

Infrastructure Bank

An infrastructure bank provides front-end financing for public improvements by reimbursing the home-builder or developer for these costs. The value of these improvements then becomes a subordinated mortgage, due only on sale of the property.

This technique is primarily a private market program that finances items in the public domain and provides a payback to the city at the point of sale.

Tax Abatement

The City of Altoona already has an established tax abatement program. This program could be modified to specifically encourage the construction or rehabilitation of houses and apartments for workforce housing.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing provides the opportunity to use the increase in property tax revenue to make improvements on the land, thereby bringing down developer costs. TIF should only be used if development would not otherwise be possible.

Expedited Development process

Provide expedited "fast track" zoning and building permit processes for development projects proposed to include workforce housing.

Land Write-Down

In areas where land is publicly owned, the city could write-down the cost of the land for developers that agree to build workforce housing.

Programs to Reduce Developer Risk

Private home-builders are often unable to absorb the risk involved in building an inventory of moderately-priced speculative homes. Financing can be difficult to obtain due to the risk involved.

Lender's Consortium

Through a lender's consortium, local lenders come together to share the risk of lending to higher risk or unconventional projects. The city can use dedicated housing funds to insure the projects as well. Several communities in Iowa have already generated local funds in support of housing rehabilitation through the establishment of Lender's Consortium. The central missions of the consortium could include:

- Construction and long-term financing of key housing types that are identified as high priorities for the community.
- Construction lending to private builders of workforce housing.
- Mortgage financing to low and moderate-income buyers who fall outside of normal underwriting standards for institutions.

The consortium and its programs can be funded by a combination of:

- Proportionate funding by lenders (proportional to overall assets).
- Corporate contributions and investments.
- State Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and other housing funding programs (for projects benefitting low income households)

Loan Guarantee

The city could mitigate risk by partnering with homebuilders to guarantee loans for workforce housing.

Review Codes to Remove Barriers

One of the barriers to building workforce housing can be city codes. Altoona should review the zoning code to make sure that there are no unnecessary restrictions to multi-family and medium density housing. For example, minimum lot sizes can prevent the construction of housing options that would otherwise be desirable. As a general rule, at least 10% of land should be zoned for relatively high-density multi-family housing. A cursory review of the subdivision ordinance and zoning code was performed as part of the comprehensive plan update. A memo of recommended changes was provided to city staff for review.

Higher-End Housing

There appears to be a shortage of higher-end housing in Altoona, as indicated in the housing affordability analysis and throughout the public participation process. (That is, there are people who could afford higher priced homes above $300,000, but homes in that price range are limited). It is not necessary for the city to implement policies or programs to directly address this, as the private market can take care of higher end housing. However, the key to supporting higher end housing in Altoona will be to promote the other objectives of this plan: a high quality of life (Chapter 3), ensuring prime land and infrastructure availability (Chapter 1 and Chapter 5), and attracting professional jobs (Chapter 2).

5 TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL: Provide quality infrastructure and streets by planning extensions in strategic growth areas, building an inter-connected street system, and investing in upgrades to existing streets, sewer, water and stormwater systems.

TRANSPORTATION TODAY

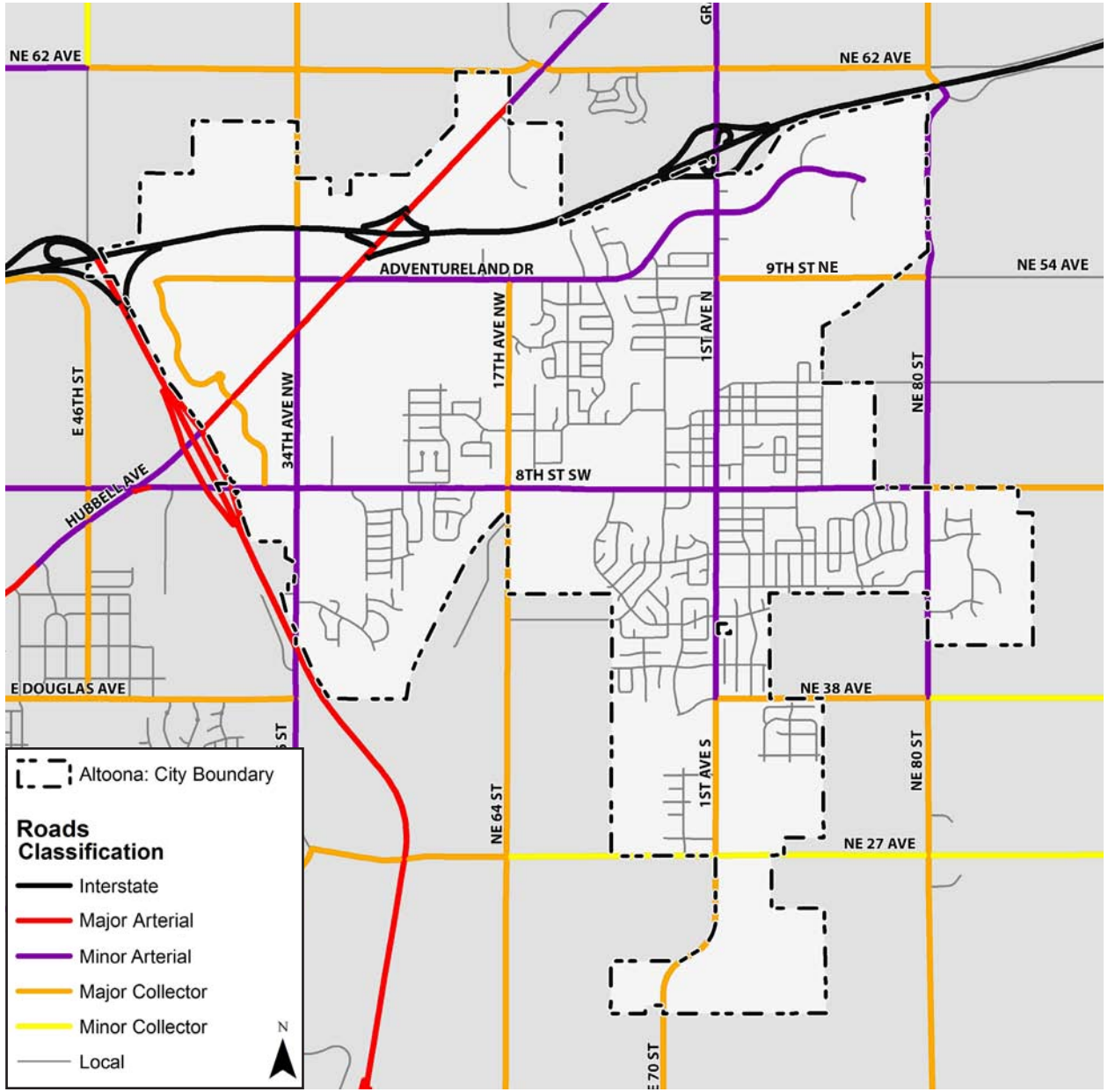
Figure 5.1 is a map of the streets of Altoona. The streets are classified by the Federal Functional Classification system, which divides roadways into five categories, based on traffic levels, access, and intended speed of travel.

1. Interstates - Connect cities and allow travel over multiple states at high speeds. Example: Interstate 80
2. Major Arterials - Connect regional activity centers and allow long distance travel at high speeds with minimal interference. Examples: Highway 65, Hubbell Avenue
3. Minor Arterials - Connect with major arterials at 0.5 to 1.0 mile intervals to connect parts of a city together. Examples: 8th Street, 1st Avenue
4. Collectors (Major and Minor) - Connect with arterial system to link neighborhoods together at relatively low speeds (<35 mph). Examples: 17th Avenue, 9th Street NE
5. Local - Link individual properties to higher order streets at low speeds. Designed for short trips.

Street classification is important for a number of reasons.

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

Figure 5.1 - Altoona Streets, Categorized by Federal Functional Classification



Street Level of Service

Figure 5.2 summarizes the level of service of Altoona's streets, according to the ratings described in Table 5.1. These ratings are derived from a capacity analysis that compares the traffic volumes on a street segment with the design capacity of that segment. The ratings provide a rough estimate of traffic flow and help identify potential problem areas. Several street segments in Altoona have higher volume of traffic than is recommended for the size of the road:

- 1st Avenue North, between 8th Street and 9th Street
- West 8th Street, both east and west of 34th Avenue
- Interstate 80 and Highway 65 (managed by DOT)

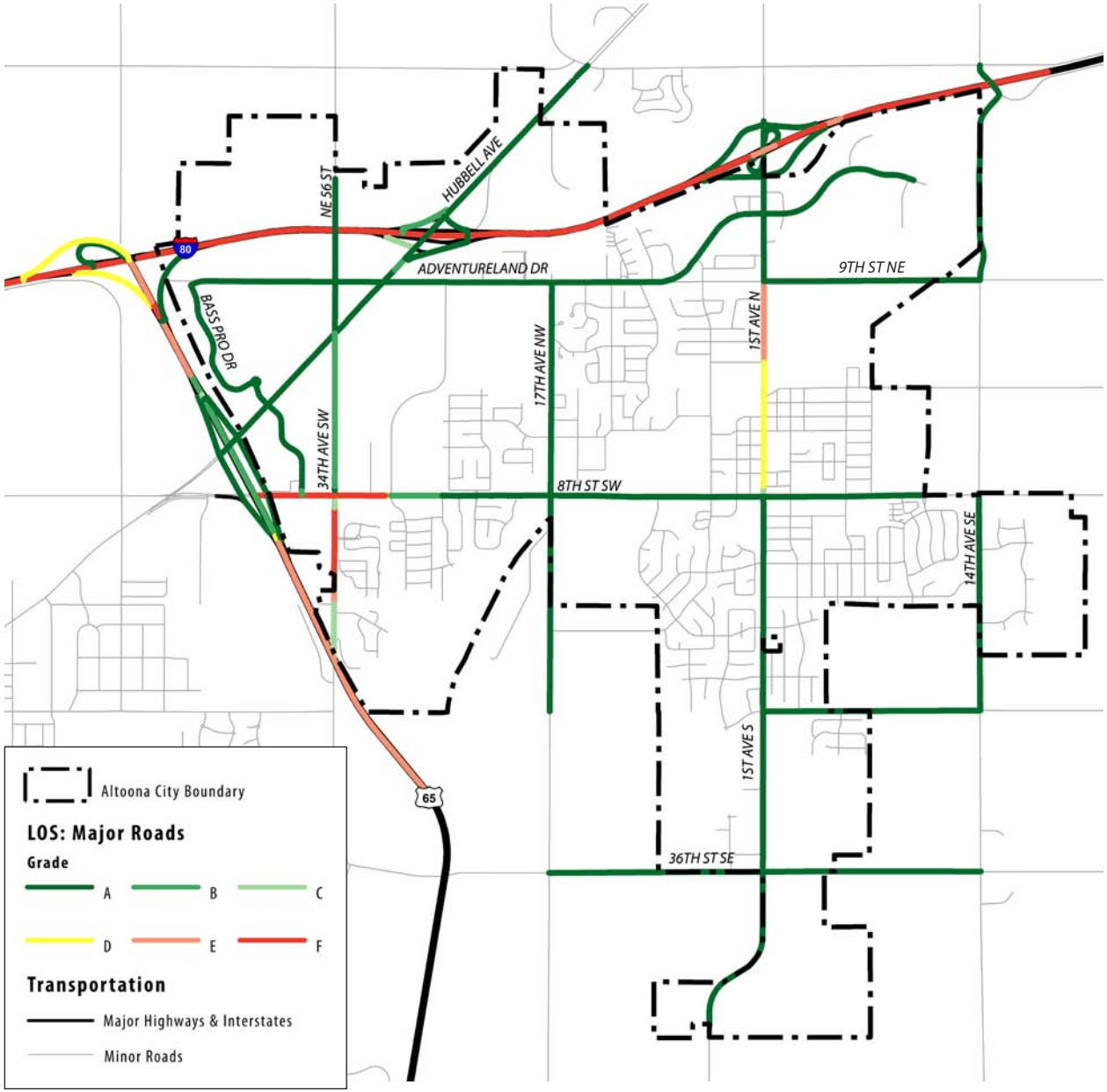
All other street segments are at a level C or higher, which is considered optimal.

Limitations of Level of Service

Although the LOS system gives a rough measure of street performance, it does not account for a variety of factors that are important to overall street performance, such as pedestrian accommodations or traffic signaling.

Table 5.1 – Level of Service (LOS) Categories	
A	Free-flowing. Vehicles face few impediments to maneuvering.
B	Reasonably free-flowing. Maneuvering ability is slightly restricted, but ease of movement remains high.
C	Stable. This level is often a target for service, since it provides safe operation without being overbuilt. Road is below capacity but ability to maneuver is somewhat restricted due to higher traffic flow.
D	Borders on unstable. Maneuverability is limited and small traffic increases produce deteriorated service.
E	Traffic at full design capacity of street. Operations are unstable because there is little margin of error in the traffic stream.
F	Breakdown in system. Traffic exceeds the design capacity of the street. Travel is significantly slowed and maneuverability is extremely low.

Figure 5.2 - Level of Service for major Streets in Altoona (2012)



RECOMMENDED ACTION: Provide multi-modal, interconnected road extensions for new development, based on the proposed street network shown in Figure 5.3 and the principles of connectivity, complete streets, and character.

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION

Basic Principles for Building Streets

As Altoona grows it will need to extend the street and trail system. Figure 5.3 shows the proposed transportation network that will accommodate Altoona's preferred growth areas. As the proposed streets are constructed, three basic principles should guide the process:

1. Enhance Connectivity

New streets should line up with existing streets and connect new development to existing neighborhoods using multiple entrances. Single access cul-de-sacs should be avoided unless environmental factors preclude other options.

2. Build Complete Streets

Streets should accommodate multiple modes of transportation, including public transit, walkers and bikers. Multi-modal features include: sidewalks, bike lanes, bike pavement markings, bike signage, or traffic calming. Streets should provide sidewalk on at least one side of new local streets, and on both sides of new arterial and collector streets.

The city should work with DART to ensure that future streets accommodate bus service, with adequate space for bus travel and bus stops/shelters. Street design should support safe access to bus stops via sidewalks and crossings and allow space for waiting areas.

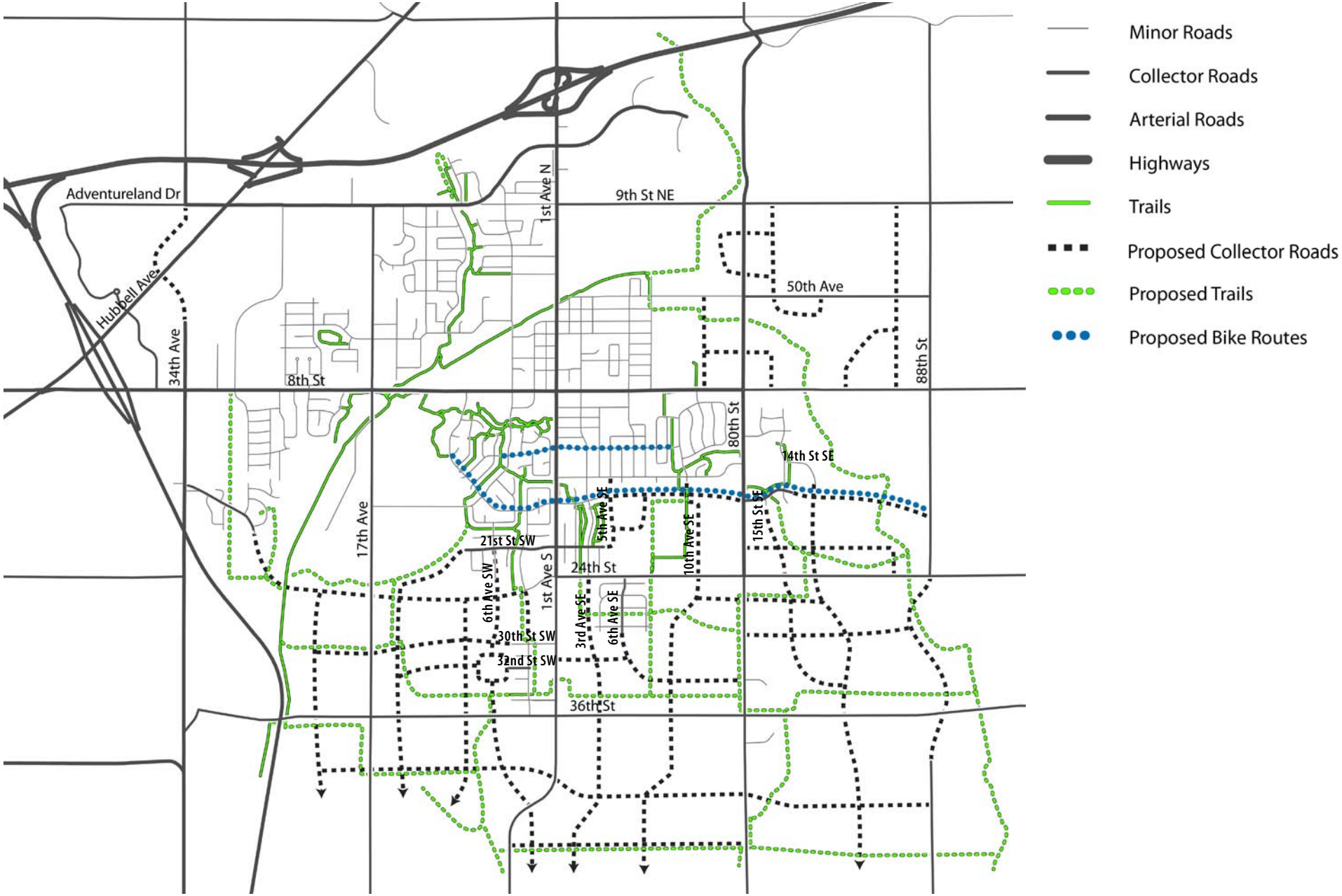
Complete Street design also involves traffic calming techniques, to keep traffic at a level that is appropriate for the context. Examples of calming devices include landscaped islands, speed bumps and tables, crosswalks, changes in paving surfaces, and slower speed limits.

3. Promote Character

Streets are Altoona's largest public space, and should be designed to reflect the pride that Altoona residents feel in their community, and highlight Altoona's identity as a green, healthy, small town. Streets provide the first impression for many visitors, and have a daily impact on how residents view their community. Landscaping, street furniture, public art, green boulevards and other attractive street features should be considered an investment in community character and a tool to promote economic development.

Image source: DART. Used with permission.

Figure 5.3 - Proposed Streets, Trails and Bike Routes



Descriptions of Proposed Streets (Figure 5.3)

SOUTHWEST (Hwy 65 to 1st Ave)

21st Street SW
21st Street would extend west for approximately half a mile, then turn south and continue to Pleasant Hill's growth area.

24th Street/38th Avenue
24th Street would extend west from its current dead end at 3rd Avenue SW to connect to 34th Avenue SW via Rutherford Drive.

30th Street SW and 32nd Street SW
30th Street SW and 32nd Street SW would both extend west from Clay Elementary, into the southwest growth area.

32nd Street/6th Avenue Loop
The loop street that creates the intersection of 6th Avenue SW and 32nd Street SW is shown as an optional alternative to a standard 4-point intersection, as a way to maintain connectivity while discouraging cut-through traffic.

6th Avenue SW
6th Avenue SW would extend south from the 21st Street SW intersection, cross 36th St and 1st Avenue South to connect to the Pleasant Hill growth area.

2 additional north/south streets
Two additional north/south streets would complete the collector system in the southwest area, both starting from the 24th Street western extension and heading south. The first begins west of 17th Avenue and the second begins west of the 6th Avenue SW extension.

SOUTH (1st Ave to 80th St)

3rd Avenue SE
The proposed extension of 3rd Avenue SE goes south from 24th Street to the Pleasant Hill growth area boundary.

6th Avenue SE
From its current dead end at 28th Street, 6th Avenue SE would continue south for a short distance, then split to go east and west. The east segment would connect to the intersection of 30th Place and 80th Street, and the west segment to 1st Avenue South at Clay Elementary.

10th Avenue SE
10th Avenue SE would extend south along the east side of the sports complex, continuing to Pleasant Hill's growth area.

17th Street
From the current dead end near 3rd Avenue SE, 17th Street could extend east, running through undeveloped land and along the north edge of the soccer park until meeting up with 80th Street

2 East/West Connections South of 36th Street
South of 36th Street, there are two proposed east/west connections in the southern growth area, the upper connection running the length of Altoona's growth area, from 17th Avenue to 88th Street, and the lower connection from 1st Avenue South to 80th Street.

SOUTHEAST (80th St to Mud Creek)

14th Street SE to Pleasant Hill: North/South Connector
Starting from the stub off of Tuscany drive, 14th Street SE would continue south past 24th Street, 36th Street, to the border of the Altoona and Pleasant Hill growth areas.

15th Street SE
Starting from the stub off of 17th Street, 15th Street would extend south. North of 36th Street, it would loop to the east to meet up with the 14th Street SE extension.

88th Street
The proposed extension bridges the gap in 88th Street between 38th Avenue/24th Street and 27th Avenue/36th Street.

17th Street
From the existing 17th Street segment in the Tuscany development, 17th could continue east past Tuscany, to connect with 88th Street.

80th Street to Mud Creek: East/West Connector
A new east/west street would start at 80th Street, north of 24th Street, and run east to Mud Creek, then loop south to meet up with 24th Street just west of the Creek.

Spring Creek Park to 14th Street: East/West Connector
A new east/west street would start at the proposed Spring Creek Park (southwest of intersection of 24th Street and 80th Street) and go east until meeting up with the 14th Street extension (described above).

80th Street to 88th Street: East/West Connector
A new east/west connection links 80th Street (south of 24th Street) to the proposed 88th Street extension.

NORTHEAST (North of 8th St)

50th Avenue to 8th Street
A new north/south street is proposed just east of Sam Wise Youth Complex, connecting 50th Avenue to 8th Street. North of 8th Street, a loop street splits off to the east, crosses 80th Street and turns south to meet up with 8th Street.

9th Street to 50th Avenue
From 9th Street, east of the 80th Street intersection, a new street runs south to 50th Avenue and creates a loop south of 50th to open up a small residential development area. The street also has a loop that splits off between 50th Avenue and 9th Street, providing access to another residential development area on both sides of 80th Street.

9th Street to 8th Street
From 9th Street, west of the 88th Street intersection, the proposed street runs straight south to connect to 8th Street. South of 50th, the street splits and makes a half loop to the west and south to meet 8th Street.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Ensure street connectivity by reserving street Right-of-Way in advance of development, and requiring developers to leave room for future street connections.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Build new roads in conjunction with development agreements, to share the costs of construction with developers.

Implementation of Streets Plan

To implement the recommended extensions shown in Figure 5.3, Altoona should follow three guidelines:

1. Reserve Right-of-Way in advance

The city should work with developers and property owners to reserve Right-of-way for major streets in advance of development. Developers should leave room to extend streets to future adjacent development by leaving stub streets or empty lots where extensions are planned.

2. Build with Development

Altoona should work with developers to extend new roads as development demand arises, in conjunction with development agreements. The city can coordinate with developers to share the cost of street construction.

3. Collaboration

Several of the proposed street connections will need to link up to future streets in Pleasant Hill, requiring coordination between the two entities. Altoona will also need to coordinate with the county as annexation occurs and the city takes over existing county roadways.

Understanding the Proposed Street Map (Figure 5.3)

Big Picture

The map does not show every street that would be needed for future development, only major arterial and collector streets. The local street pattern should be determined as development occurs, using the basic principles described on p. 72.

Flexible

While the routes in Figure 5.3 have been carefully analyzed, the exact path of these streets may vary depending on the details of development as it occurs. The priority is to maintain the principle of connectivity, to provide access to the key connecting points, and to follow the general path shown in the map. Minor modifications can be made as needed on a case-by case basis. Detailed engineering studies will be needed before undertaking any new road construction.

Working with Property Owners

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

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Enhance the Altoona bicycle and pedestrian network by building an interconnected system of trails and designating bicycle routes, as shown in Figure 5.3, and by identifying priority streets to be retrofitted with sidewalk.

Walking and Biking

Proposed Bike Routes and Trails

The proposed trails shown in Figure 5.3 are described in detail in Chapter 3.

Bike routes help complete the bicycle system by providing links between off-street trails. Figure 5.3 identifies two existing streets that can provide good, safe east/west connections for bicyclists, due to their relatively low traffic. These bike routes should be designated using "sharrows" and signs (see photos at right).

The two proposed bicycle routes are on Venbury Drive/17th Street and 13th Street.

Sharrow

Bike Route Sign

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are the central piece of pedestrian infrastructure. Altoona has a fairly well connected sidewalk network, and this should be maintained as the city grows. New streets should provide sidewalks on both sides of the street, especially collectors and arterials. Altoona requires sidewalks in new development as part of its subdivision ordinances.

Existing streets should provide sidewalk on at least one side of the street. Altoona should identify existing streets for sidewalk retrofitting and construct new sidewalks over time in conjunction with other street or infrastructure improvement projects. Priority areas for retro-fitting are:

- Arterial and collector streets
- Streets within a quarter mile radius of schools and parks
- Connections to DART bus stops.
    - Better connection is needed between the Wal-Mart bus stop and Altoona's major employers to the north – Adventureland and Prairie Meadows. As the area in and around Prairie Crossings develops more with housing and retail in the coming years, those sidewalk connections will become increasingly important to provide public transportation access for workers, residents and customers.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Continue to partner with DART to maintain and expand bus service in Altoona.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Today

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) provides bus service to Altoona, including the following:

- Route #17 Hubbell Ave/Altoona – A fixed route operating 7 days a week from the Altoona Wal-mart Park & Ride. Weekday service is every 30 minutes during the day and every hour in the evenings. Weekend service is hourly.
- Route #99 Altoona Express – Express service to downtown Des Moines operating weekdays every 30 minutes during peak hours. The route stops in several locations in Altoona, including the Altoona Wal-Mart Park & Ride.
- Paratransit services for approved users 7 days a week.
- Regional on-call services on specified weekdays for residents of Bondurant, Mitchelville and Carlisle to travel to and from Altoona.

In the summer of 2014, DART is extending the service of route #17 to operate longer hours in Altoona. In combination with the continued express route service, Altoona will now have 15 minute peak hour service.

Planning for Public Transportation

Public Transportation helps provide access to jobs, shopping, and entertainment for Altoona's residents and workers. Bus service in Altoona provides local workers with direct access to major employers such as Adventureland and Prairie Meadows. As the Prairie Crossings retail area develops, it can also provide service for customers to the district. By providing easy transportation access to downtown Des Moines, bus service can support the development of proposed housing areas near 34th Avenue & Adventureland (Figure 2.3) by helping to attract residents that frequent downtown for work or entertainment. Overall, increased public transportation use can help reduce strain on Altoona's roads by decreasing the number of vehicles, and can help preserve our environmental quality through reduced pollution. Supporting public transportation can therefore help save money on road construction and repair, and can help keep up Altoona's identity as a green, healthy community (see Chapter 3).

DART is currently working with the City of Altoona and the developer of the new Prairie Crossing Outlet Mall to extend service to that location. This initiative will help implement recommendations of The Tomorrow Plan, the Greater Des Moines region's long-range plan. The Tomorrow Plan identifies the Prairie Crossing area as a "regional node," that is, one of the economic and cultural focal points of the region. The plan states that nodes should be well connected to the rest of the region via "corridors," such as Hubbell Avenue, that include good public transportation service.

The City should continue to work with DART to maintain and expand bus service in Altoona by supporting new bus stops in growing areas, providing convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes to bus stops, preserving safe waiting areas for bus users, and supporting high density residential development in target areas near transit stops, as shown in the concept for the Adventureland Drive & 34th Avenue area (Figure 2.3).

Image source: DART. Used with permission.

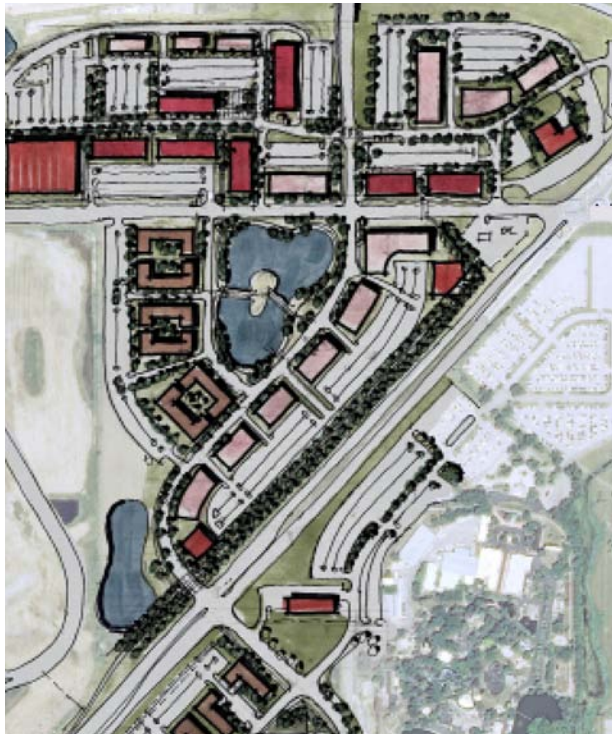
Image source: DART. Used with permission.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Maintain a quality street system by continuing to invest in Altoona's street improvement program. Based on the goals established in this plan, 1st Avenue North and 8th Street SW should be priorities.

IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING STREETS

Altoona's streets require on-going funding and maintenance. City staff is continually monitoring the condition of streets in Altoona to identify priority improvement projects. The city should continue to prioritize projects, establish a funding schedule on an annual basis, and pursue financial support from the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. Among the many proposed street improvements, the following three would directly address issues identified as priorities in this plan:

1. Widening of 1st Avenue North, between 8th Street and 9th Street. This will address the traffic congestion in this area, as identified in Figure 5.2 (Expected Timeline: 2020-2030)
2. Reconstruction of 8th Street SW from US 65 to Venbury Drive to improve traffic flow and aesthetics. This initiative will address the importance of 8th Street as the face of Altoona, and contribute to the goals for identity in Chapter 3 and economic development goals in Chapter 2 (Expected Completion: by 2020)
3. Re-routing 34th Avenue as shown in Figure 2.3 (and at far right), to improve safety and open up land for development. This project would contribute to the economic development goals of Chapter 2. Due to the safety implications of this project, Altoona could have access to more funding options from the State. Unlike the other improvements listed here, this change is new as part of the comprehensive plan, and does not yet have cost estimates or a time frame.



Lane Diets

Altoona should consider lane diets for streets that are overbuilt. A lane diet involves reducing the number of lanes on a street, from 4-lanes to 3-lanes, for example. Lane diets can improve traffic safety and provide right-of-way for sidewalks or bike lanes.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Implement the recommendations of the Water System Master Plan, including expansion of water treatment plant #3 and replacement of under-sized pipes.

WATER SYSTEM

OVERVIEW

Source

Jordan Aquifier.

Components of System

Four wells, three treatment plants, three storage facilities, and an additional storage tank shared with Des Moines Water Works (DMWW).

Capacity

Maximum supply capacity of 3.9 million gallons per day (mgd), plus access to up to 1 mgd of additional capacity from DMWW, for emergency and/or supplemental purposes.

ISSUES AND NEEDS

The city commissioned a Water System Master Plan (2013) to identify long-range needs and improvements for the water system.

Lack of Supply for Times of High Demand

Based on a 2030 population projection of around 27,000 residents (roughly consistent with the projections of this plan), the study determined that the City would be able to fulfill the demand for average day conditions. However, during periods of increased demand, such as in the summer months, the City will require additional supply beyond their current capacity.

Small Pipes Limit Fire Flow

The plan determined that the existing distribution system is capable of fulfilling demand through the year 2030, however it identified several areas of concern where small pipes would limit fire flow.

RECOMMENDED UPGRADES

Purchase Supply from DMWW

In order to meet the demand for water, the Water System Master Plan recommends that the City maintain the existing 1 mgd capacity from DMWW and buy additional supply from DMWW when needed. This recommendation was contingent on performing a detailed water quality evaluation.

Expand Water Treatment Plant

The plan recommends expansion of water treatment plant #3. Expected time frame: 2020. Expected cost: $4.5 million

Replace Small Distribution Pipes

The plan recommends 10 water main improvement projects to replace distribution system pipes smaller than 6-inches in diameter (to address fire flow concerns)

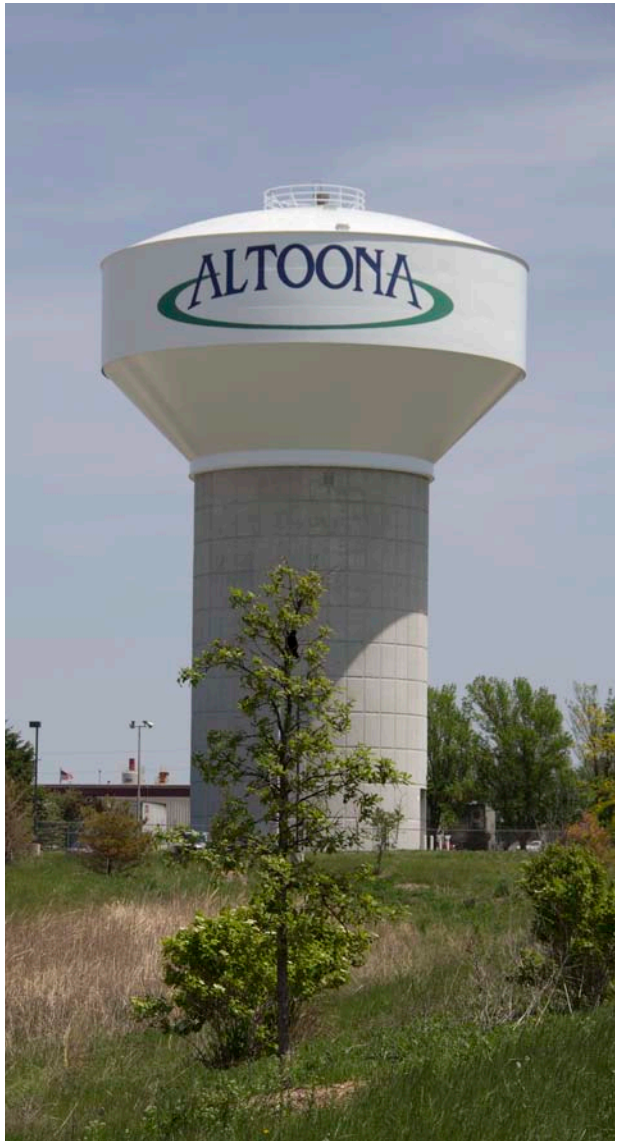
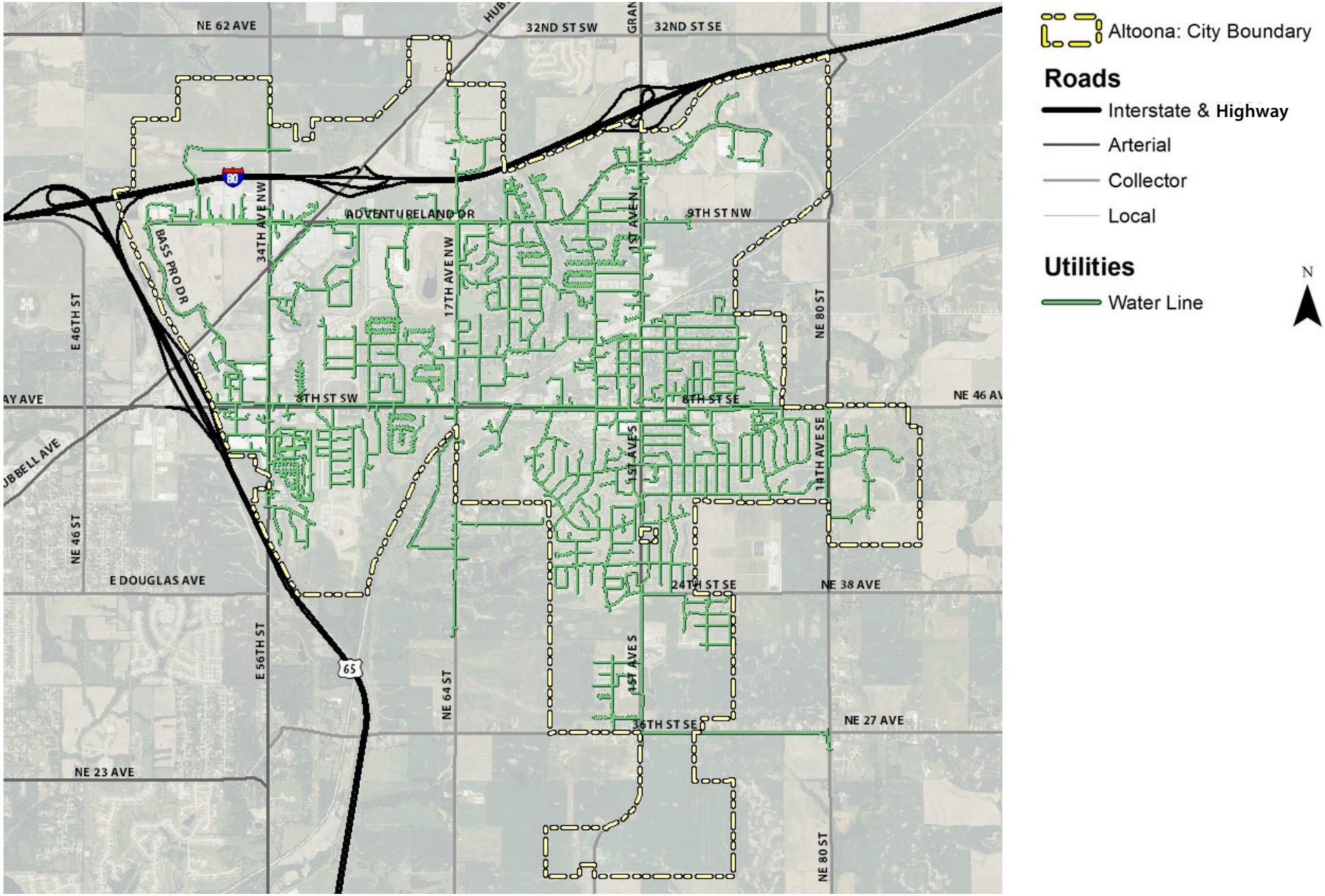


Figure 5.4 - Altoona Water Lines



SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

Overview

Altoona is part of the Des Moines Metropolitan Wastewater Reclamation Authority (WRA), which serves 17 municipalities, counties and sewer districts in the metropolitan area. The system includes a wastewater treatment facility and a conveyance system that connects each of the participating communities to the plant, through a system of 125 miles of sewer lines. The WRA serves around 500,000 people and treats an average of 59 million gallons per day.

Figure 5.5 shows Altoona's sewer lines. Altoona has no known combined sewers (sanitary sewer and storm sewer).

Issues and Needs

The WRA facility plan update (2012) addresses future improvements to the system. The City does not require its own sewer master plan, but is responsible for monitoring pipes and pump stations and performing required maintenance.

Some of the recent maintenance issues in Altoona include problems with the northeast pump station, and the need for slip-lining in existing pipes, both of which have been addressed.

Staff expect that there will be an eventual capacity issue between the railroad and 8th Street (east of 17th), due to the limited pipe width in this area.

The city is currently working in several neighborhoods to add secondary sewers and disconnect footing drains from the sewer in order to lessen undue stress on the system.

Capacity for Growth

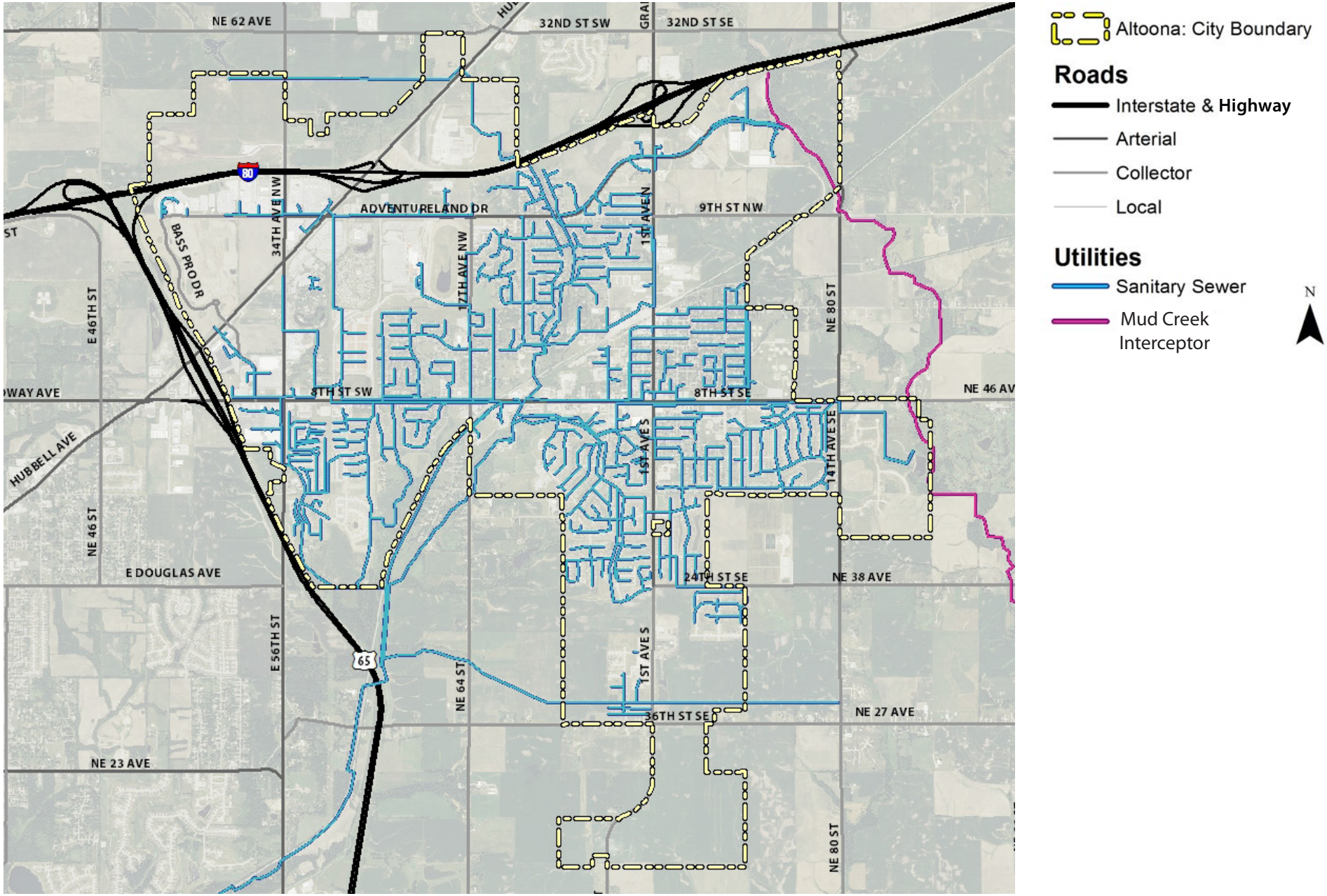
The Mud Creek sewer interceptor was recently completed (see Figure 5.5). The interceptor will provide 4.74 mgd of capacity for Altoona, allowing for accommodation of expected development in the south and east growth areas.

In the long term (approximately 2025), updates to the Mud Creek Pump Station and a future parallel sewer to the Little Four Mile Interceptor would increase Altoona's capacity to 9.45 mgd.

SOLID WASTE SERVICE

Altoona is part of the Metro Waste Authority (MWA), an independent agency that provides waste management for cities and other entities in the metropolitan area. MWA manages trash, recycling, and yard waste collection for residents in Altoona. MWA operates two landfills, a compost center, a transfer station, a hazardous waste drop-off center and recycling drop-off sites. It also operates programs for waste reduction, composting, and recycling.

Figure 5.5 - Altoona Sewer Lines



STORMWATER SYSTEM

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Stormwater System

The stormwater system manages the water runoff produced by rain or melting snow. This water is collected into storm sewer lines and conveyed, untreated, to natural waterbodies or detention ponds.

Management of Altoona Stormwater System

The city maintains the storm sewer lines, shown in Figure 5.6. Detention ponds are primarily maintained by the city, though some are managed by private homeowners associations. Altoona has a stormwater utility fee to provide funding for system operations and upgrades.

Watershed Management Authority

Stormwater management is heavily influenced by the natural environment. Altoona is a part of many different watersheds (see Figure 5.7), areas of land in which all water drains to the same place. Representatives from city and county entities in the Mud Creek, Camp Creek and Spring Creek watersheds (including representatives from Altoona) recently came together to form a Watershed Management Authority (WMA). WMAs provide a way for multiple jurisdictions to cooperate on watershed planning, such as assessing flood risk, improving water quality, and funding water quality and flood mitigation projects. The Mud, Camp and Spring Creek WMA is currently investigating funding options to move forward. Since the 2010 State legislation enabling WMAs, several have taken shape across the state, incuding in the nearby Four Mile Creek Watershed.

Mud Creek Study

Altoona recently commissioned a Mud Creek watershed study to assess flooding issues, predict consequences of upstream development (Bondurant area), and identify management strategies and stormwater funding as Altoona grows.

A Natural Approach to Stormwater

Stormwater systems have traditionally focused on collecting rainwater into networks of pipes that transport water off-site quickly to detention basins and creeks (or where combined with sanitary sewer pipes, to the wastewater treatment plant). These systems can be costly to maintain and have negative side effects such as stream bank erosion and contaminated streams. Traditional development patterns, with a high degree of impervious surfaces, can result in an overwhelming amount of runoff, causing flash flooding during rain events.

Many communities, including Altoona, have started taking a more natural approach to stormwater, by preserving natural areas that help mimic pre-development drainage patterns. These preservation areas are located strategically, where water already naturally drains. Instead of running directly into the streams or overflowing pipes, more stormwater is absorbed into the soil or stored in ponds, then released gradually into waterways. A natural system requires fewer and/or smaller costly pipes, and the gradual infiltration results in less erosion and contamination in the waterways.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: 1) Preserve sensitive natural areas to allow natural stormwater drainage by banning development in the 500-year floodplain and adopting a stream buffer ordinance. 2) Review subdivision ordinances to ensure that stormwater-conscious site design is allowed.

STORMWATER RECOMMENDATIONS

Preserve Natural Areas

Altoona should protect flood plains, wetlands, streams, dry runs and flow paths from development, to allow the natural drainage system to manage stormwater runoff. This preservation effort is critical to prevent floods, by helping to balance out the on-going development of new impervious surfaces (streets and parking lots) that create runoff. The development suitability map in Figure 1.2 identifies areas for preservation.

There are several policy options for implementing this preservation approach. Altoona should:

- Ban development in 100-year and 500-year floodplains. This would be done through updates to the subdivision ordinance.
- Adopt a Stream Buffer ordinance that requires preservation of areas around streams. Many communities use a minimum buffer around the streams, such as 50 feet. Alternatively, Altoona could use the development suitability map in Figure 1.2 to determine the required buffer area. This map includes consideration of floodplains, wetlands, drainage areas and steep slopes.

Allow Flexibility in Subdivision Regulations

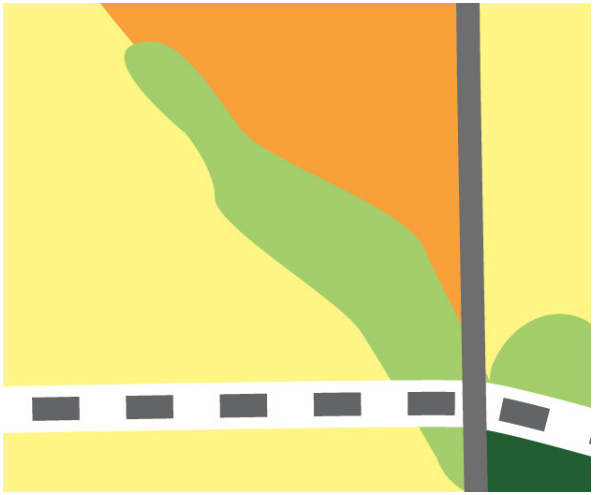
Altoona should review its subdivision ordinance and make changes to ensure that the following practices are allowed:

- Conservation Development: Site design that clusters homes closer together to preserve more natural area (Figure 1.8 shows an example of this technique).
- Impervious Cover Reduction: Reducing impervious surface requirements, such as streets and parking lots, through site design or use of pervious pavement.

Encourage Best Management Practices (BMP)

Altoona currently requires developers to look at best management practices for stormwater as part of the post-construction process. Altoona should continue to encourage developers and individual property owners to adopt BMPs such as: Bioswales, Permeable Pavement, Green Roofs, Rain Gardens, and Native Landscaping.

The aerial photo above shows a wetland area on an undeveloped piece of land. This area should be protected from development to prevent flooding and allow natural stormwater management.



This is a possible land use plan for the area at left. The green area shows the preservation area. The yellow and orange areas show potential housing (if the current owner chooses to develop).

Above: A stream corridor with a preserved natural buffer helps manage stormwater from adjacent development.

Above: A stormwater detention pond with a native vegetation buffer can manage strormwater and provide an amenity.

Figure 5.6 - Altoona's Stormwater Lines

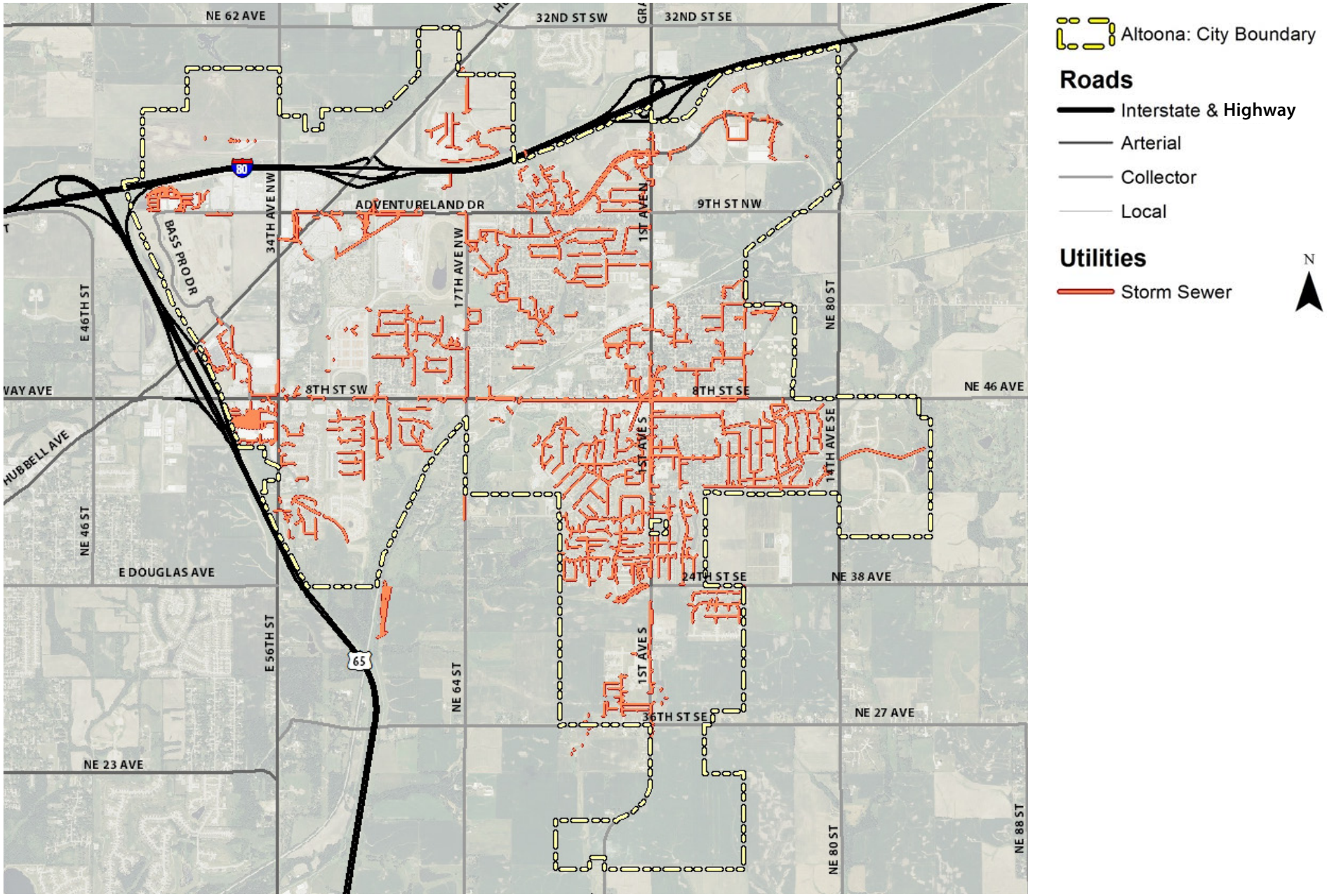
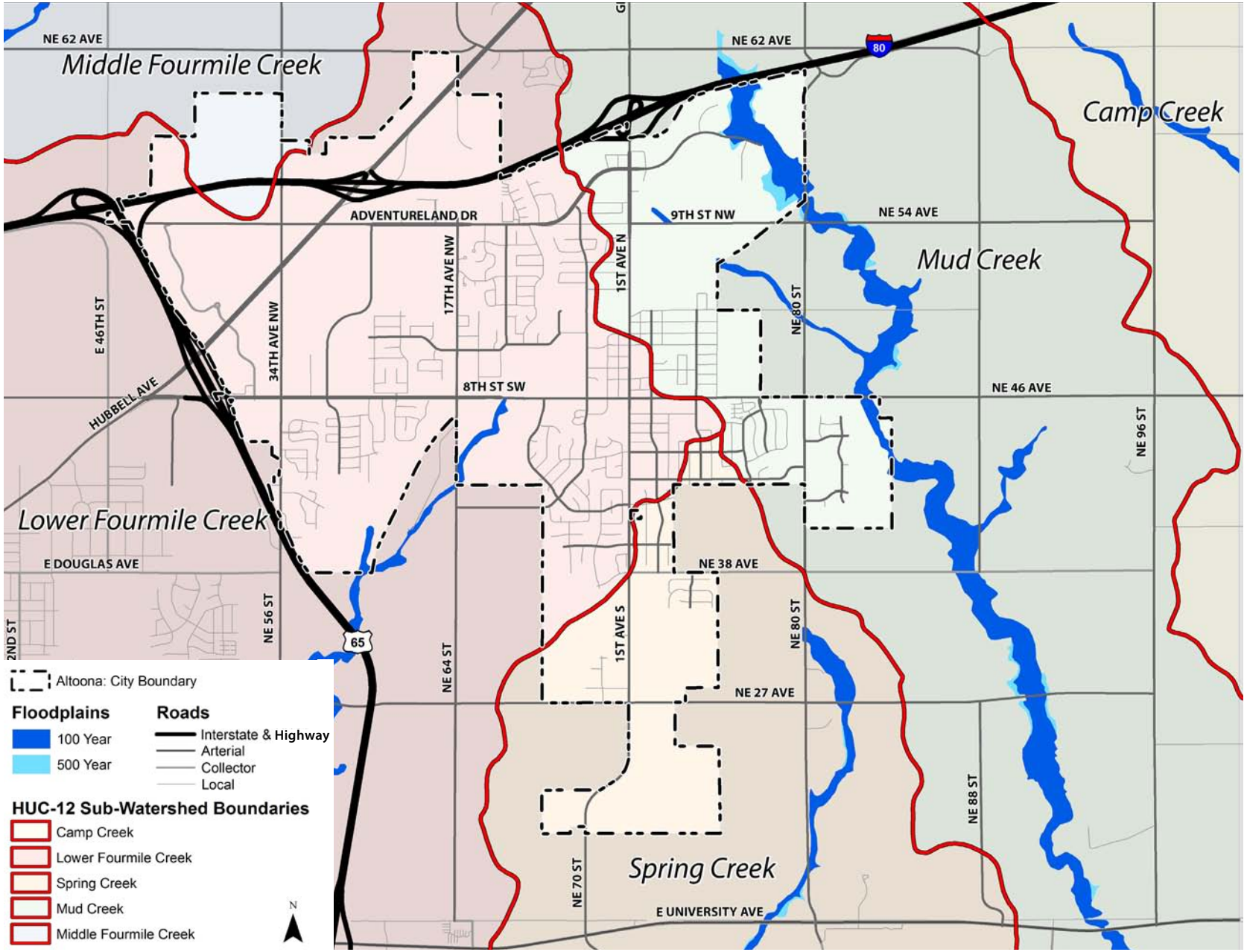


Figure 5.7 - Watersheds in Altoona and surrounding area



GOAL: Keep Altoona a safe community by maintaining sound infrastructure, providing quality police and fire protection, and protecting against hazards, such as flooding, through strategic stormwater and floodplain management.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND HAZARDS

Public safety and protection against hazards are critical parts of a comprehensive plan, and are integrated throughout this document. Recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan that are most relevant to safety and hazard mitigation are summarized below:

Interconnected, Multi-Modal Transportation (Chapter 5)

Recommended Actions

- Provide multi-modal, interconnected road extensions for new development, based on the proposed street network shown in Figure 5.3 and the principles of connectivity, complete streets, and character (p72)
- Enhance the Altoona bicycle and pedestrian network by building an interconnected system of trails and designating bicycle routes, as shown in Figure 5.3, and by identifying priority streets to be retrofitted with sidewalk (p76)
- Maintain a quality street system by continuing to invest in Altoona's street improvement program (p78)

Safety and Hazard Mitigation Effects

- Connected system allows more efficient provision of emergency services and increases options for evacuation in case of emergency
- Provision of sidewalks keeps pedestrians out of roadways
- Trail and bike route plan provides safe routes for bicyclists
- Improved road quality provides safer driving conditions
- Street extension plan directs development to safe locations, outside of floodplains

Stormwater Management and Environmental Preservation (Chapters 1 and 5)

Recommended Actions

- Preserve sensitive natural areas to allow natural stormwater drainage by banning development in the 500-year floodplain and adopting a stream buffer ordinance (p16, 84)
- Review subdivision ordinances to ensure that stormwater-conscious site design is allowed (p84)

Safety and Hazard Mitigation Effects

- Reduces flooding and flash flooding
- Keeps new development out of the path of floods
- Improves water quality by allowing natural filtering, rather than channelling runoff pollutants and eroded soil straight into the waterways

Strategic and Safe Land Use Plan (Chapter 1)

Recommended Actions

- Use the neighborhood unit principles as criteria for making land use decisions, such as reviewing new subdivision proposals (p13)
    - Principle #6: Enhance public safety and minimize hazard risk (p15)
- Preserve sensitive natural areas from development, using the development suitability map (Figure 1.2) as a guide (p 17)

Safety and Hazard Mitigation Effects

- Directs development away from hazardous areas such as floodplains, thereby preventing flooding, property damage, and water quality deterioration
- Identifies areas that are safe for development and areas that are unsafe
- Discourages development of polluting uses (such as heavy industrial) next to residential, park or school uses

Support for Police and Fire Protection (Chapter 3)

Recommended Action

- Continue to support Altoona's community services with an annual evaluation and funding plan for short term and long term needs (p56)

Safety and Hazard Mitigation Effects

- Provides effective fire and police service to help protect residents from bodily harm and property loss/damage

Water Quality (Chapter 5)

Recommended Action

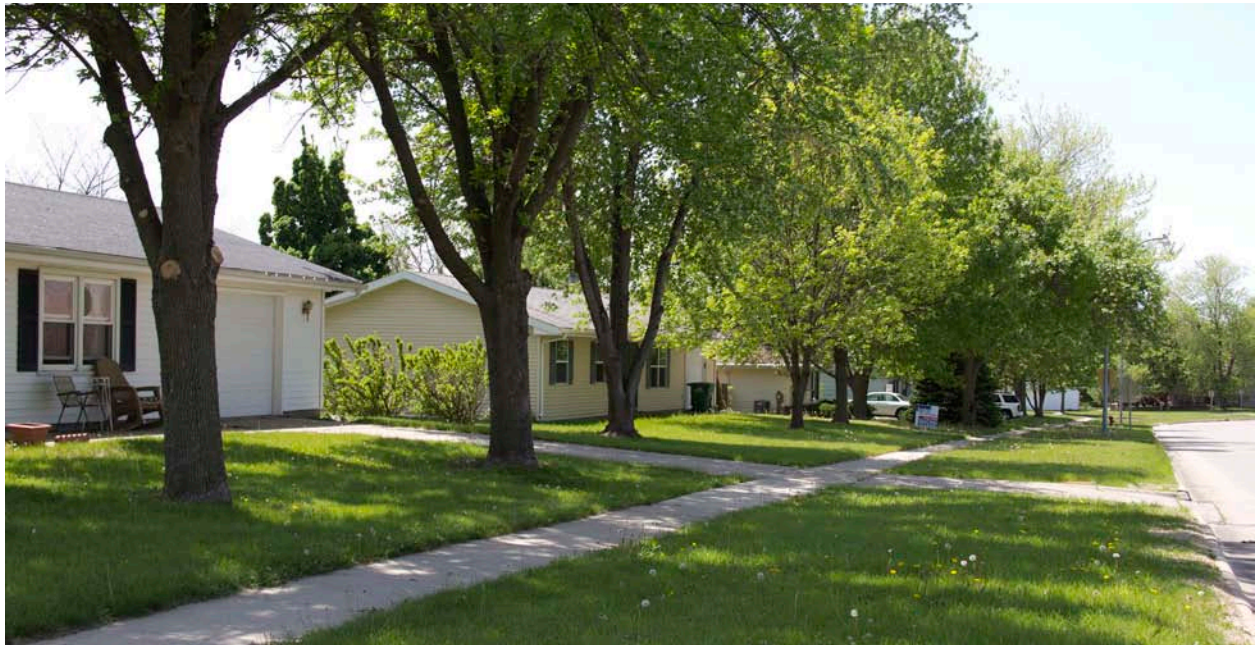
- Implement the recommendations of the Water System Master Plan, including expansion of water treatment plant #3 and replacement of under-sized pipes (p79)

Safety and Hazard Mitigation Effect

- Ensures a consistent, safe source of water for Altoona residents

Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Polk County Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan sets priority hazard mitigation actions for Polk County and its municipalities. At the writing of this plan, an update to the 2009 hazard plan is underway and approval is expected in mid 2014. Altoona should work with the county and neighboring jurisdictions to implement the recommendations of the updated hazard plan.



ALTOONA

6 IMPLEMENTATION

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS: 1) Define an annual action and capital improvement program that implements the recommendations of this plan. 2) Undertake an annual evaluation of the comprehensive plan, with a full update every 6-8 years. 3) Review zoning and subdivision codes for any unnecessary impediments to the implementation of this plan.

ANNUAL ACTION PROGRAM

The Altoona Comprehensive Plan is ambitious and long-range, and its recommendations will require funding and other continuous support.

City staff should work with the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council to define an annual action and capital improvement program that implements the recommendations in this plan.

This program should be coordinated with Altoona's existing capital improvement planning and budgeting process, even though many of the Plan's recommendations are not capital items. This annual process should be completed before the beginning of each budget year and should include:

- A 1-year work program for the upcoming year that is specific and related to the City's financial resources. The work program will establish which plan recommendations the City will address during that year.
- A 3-year strategic program that provides for a multi-year perspective, aiding the preparation of the annual work program.
- A 6-year capital improvement program that is merged into Altoona's current capital improvement program.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

City staff should undertake an annual evaluation of the comprehensive plan. This evaluation should include a written report that:

- Summarizes key land use developments and decisions during the past year and relates them to the Comprehensive Plan.
- Reviews actions taken by the City during the past year to implement Plan recommendations.
- Defines any changes that should be made in the Comprehensive Plan.

The City should undertake a full update of the comprehensive plan every 6-8 years.

CHANGES TO THE PLAN

This Plan should be viewed as a dynamic document that can adapt in response to changing conditions, resources, and opportunities. This plan was created through a public process, and therefore, any official changes to the plan should be made through a public process. The city has an established amendment process. The criteria for approval of an amendment should be whether it complies with the spirit of the goals and principles of this plan, as articulated in the Introduction and in Chapter 1.

CODE REVISIONS

Some of the recommendations in this plan may require changes to the zoning and subdivision codes. As part of the comprehensive plan process, the project consultants provided staff with a memo listing potential changes to the zoning code and subdivision ordinances that would help remove any unnecessary impediments to development and the implementation of this plan. The Planning and Zoning commission should work with city staff and the public to review and implement these potential changes.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Table 6.1 presents a summary of the recommendations of the Altoona Comprehensive Plan. Recommendations are categorized by their place in the plan. Each recommendation is characterized according to several categories:

Type

- Policy: Continuing efforts over a long time period. In some cases, policies include specific regulatory or administrative actions.
- Action: Specific efforts or accomplishments by the city or community.
- Capital: Investments and public capital projects that will implement features of the Plan.

Timing

- On-going: Most of the recommendations fit into this category. These are matters related to general policy and operations, and have no completion date.
- Short Term: Implementation within 5 years
- Medium Term: Implementation in 5-10 years

Priority

- Priority 1: Moving Altoona Forward
  - Addresses a particularly strong need in the community and/or provides a unique opportunity. These recommendations relate directly to the "big ideas" summarized in vision section of the introduction.
- Priority 2: Supporting and Maintaining
  - Supporting recommendations that are pivotal to the achievement of priority 1 recommendations, and/or help maintain quality systems and amenities already in place.

This basic level of prioritization can help the community determine where to focus its limited resources. Priorities may change as conditions change. Reflection on priorities should be part of the annual evaluation of the plan.

Although prioritization can help with the question of "where to start," it should not dictate the order of implementation. The city should be open to implementing any of these recommendations if/when the opportunity arises or conditions are right.

Responsibility and Leadership

The primary audience of this plan is the City Council, City Staff, the Planning & Zoning Commission, and the Parks Board. However, it is important for the City to partner with other entities who have an interest in implementing the recommendations of the plan. Columns in Table 6.1 recommend which group should take the lead in carrying out the recommendation and who the potential partners are. This designation of "leadership' is not an exhaustive list, and is not intended to exclude any group that would like to take the lead on a project or policy.

The entities named in Table 6.1 are listed below, followed by the abbreviated name used in the table.

- City Entities:
  - City Council (Council)
  - Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z)
  - Parks Board (Parks)
  - Staff (Staff)
- Polk County (County)
- Altoona Residents or Resident Groups (Residents)
- Private Land Developers (Developers)
- Private Property Owners (Owners)
- Chamber of Commerce and/or Business and Industry Leaders (Business)
- Southeast Polk Community School District (Schools)

Table 6.1: Implementation Schedule						
		Type	Timing	Leadership	Partners	Priority
Chapter 1 - Land Use and Environment						
1	Use the neighborhood unit principles as criteria for making land use decisions, such as reviewing new subdivision proposals and rezoning requests.	Policy	On-going	P&Z	Staff, Council, Developers	1
2	Preserve sensitive natural areas from development, based on the sensitive areas identified in the development suitability map (Figure 1.2).	Policy	On-going	P&Z	Staff, Council, Developers	1
3	Use the future land use map (Figure 1.7), along with tables 1.2 and 1.3, as the basis for all land use decisions, such as subdivision review or re-zoning.	Policy	On-going	P&Z	Staff, Council, Developers	1
4	Base all annexation decisions on the six-point annexation strategy and the annexation map (Figure 1.9).	Policy	On-going	Council	Staff, Owners, Developers, County	2
Chapter 2 - Economic Development						
5	Focus infrastructure investments and economic incentives in the strategic growth areas shown in Figure 2.2.	Policy	On-going	Council	Staff	2
6	Continue to market Altoona as a regional activity center by leveraging Altoona's existing assets, continuing efforts to be "a development friendly community" and actively working with the real estate community.	Action	On-going	Staff	Business, Developers	1
7	Encourage more "spillover" from one attraction to another through encouraging connected street design, pedestrian-friendly areas, way-finding signs, and concentration of major commercial centers.	Policy Action	On-going	Staff	Developers	1
8	Diversify Altoona's commercial base with office, civic, medical and other commercial uses.	Action	On-going	Business	Staff, Developers	1
9	Use the concept in Figure 2.3 to promote the development of office, commercial, and multi-family residential in the 34th Avenue/ Adventureland Drive area.	Action	Medium	Staff	Business, Developers	2
10	Help realize Altoona's population growth potential, and the associated economic growth, by continuing to provide new housing options and a high quality of life for residents.	Action	On-going	Staff	Council, Parks, Developers	2
Chapter 3 - Quality of Life						
11	Enhance Altoona's city center with expansions to the Prairie Heritage Civic Plaza.	Capital	Short	Council	Staff, Parks	1
12	Enhance the 8th Street Corridor, starting with an update of the 2002 8th Street Corridor Plan.	Action	Short	Staff	Residents	1
13	Add new neighborhood and community parks as the city grows, based on Figure 3.3, with the goal of providing parks within 1/4 mile walking distance of all residential areas.	Policy Capital	On-going	Parks	Staff, Developers, Council	1
14	Add new trails as Altoona grows, based on the trails plan in Figure 3.3.	Policy Capital	On-going	Parks	Staff, Developers, Council	1
15	Provide consistent funding for parks and trails, and consider changes to dedication requirements, outside funding opportunities, and formation of a "Friends of the Parks" organization.	Policy Capital Action	On-going, Short	Parks	Staff, Council	2
16	Continue to support Altoona's community services, with an annual evaluation and funding plan for short term and long term needs.	Action Capital	On-going	Council	Staff	2

Table 6.1: Implementation Schedule						
		Type	Timing	Leadership	Partners	Priority
17	Partner with the school district to coordinate school facilities planning and site selection with city infrastructure and parks planning.	Action	On-going	Staff	Schools, Parks	2
18	Continue to investigate funding options for constructing a community center, and work with the public to determine space and programming needs.	Action Capital	Short	Staff	Parks, Residents	2
Chapter 4 - Housing						
19	Follow the Neighborhood Principles in Chapter 1 to help encourage a diverse mix of housing types at a range of prices, and to create interconnected neighborhoods that reflect the character of our community. (See pages 13-15)	Policy	On-going	Staff	P&Z, Developers, Council	2
20	Allow a mixture of housing types within neighborhoods with appropriate transitions, and avoid isolating different housing types from each other.	Policy	On-going	P&Z	Developers, Staff, Council	2
21	Infrastructure and other city investments should be focused on existing neighborhoods and the residential growth areas shown in Figure 4.1, starting with areas adjacent to existing development.	Policy	On-going	Council	Staff, Developers	2
22	Reach out to the private housing market to understand the barriers to building workforce housing and explore policy options to help fill the gap in the market (such as the options listed on pages 66-67).	Action	Short	Staff	Developers	2
Chapter 5 - Transportation and Infrastructure						
23	Provide multi-modal, interconnected road extensions for new development, based on the proposed street network shown in Figure 5.3 and the principles of connectivity, complete streets, and character.	Capital Policy	On-going	Staff	P&Z, Developers, Council	1
24	Ensure street connectivity by reserving street Right-of-Way in advance of development, and requiring developers to leave room for future street connections.	Policy	On-going	P&Z	Staff, Developers	1
25	Build new roads in conjunction with development agreements, to share the costs of construction with developers.	Capital Action	On-going	Council	P&Z, Staff, Developers	2
26	Enhance the Altoona bicycle and pedestrian network by building an interconnected system of trails and designating bicycle routes, as shown in Figure 5.3, and by identifying priority streets to be retrofitted with sidewalk.	Capital Action	On-going	Parks	Staff, Council, Developers, Owners	2
27	Continue to partner with DART to maintain and expand bus service in Altoona.	Capital Action	On-going	DART	Staff	2
28	Maintain a quality street system by continuing to invest in Altoona's street improvement program.	Capital	On-going	Council	Staff	2
29	Implement the recommendations of the Water System Master Plan, including expansion of water treatment plant #3 and replacement of under-sized pipes.	Capital	Medium	Staff	Council	2
30	Preserve sensitive natural areas to allow natural stormwater drainage by banning development in the 500-year floodplain and adopting a stream buffer ordinance.	Action	Short	P&Z	Staff, Council	1
31	Review subdivision ordinances to ensure that stormwater-conscious site design is allowed.	Action	Short	P&Z	Staff, Developers	2
Chapter 6 - Implementation						
32	Define an annual action and capital improvement program that implements the recommendations of this plan.	Action	On-Going	Staff	Council, P&Z	2
33	Undertake an annual evaluation of the comprehensive plan, with a full update every 6-8 years.	Action	On-Going	Staff	Council, P&Z	2
34	Review zoning and subdivision codes for any unneccessary imediments to the implementation of this plan.	Action	Short	P&Z	Staff, Council	2

FUNDING SOURCES

In order to implement many of the objectives described in the Plan, the City will need to consider outside funding sources. Table 6.2 presents possible funding sources available to the City of Altoona for projects recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. This list is not exhaustive and should be reviewed and modified each fiscal year.

Table 6.2 uses the following acronyms: Department of Natural Resources - DNR ; Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization – MPO; Federal Department of Housing and Economic Development - HUD ; Iowa Economic Development Authority - IEDA ; Iowa Department of Transportation - IDOT ; United States Environmental Protection Agency – EPA

Table 6.2 Potential Funding Sources

SOURCE AND ADMINISTRATOR	DESCRIPTION	POSSIBLE USES	DEADLINE	AVAILABLE FUNDS	REQUIRED MATCH
Community Attraction and Tourism Program; Vision Iowa, IEDA	Funding for the development and creation of multiple purpose attraction or tourism facilities.	New tourism amenities and attractions.	Quarterly; Jan 15, April 15, July 15, Oct 15	$5 million was available for 2013-2014	Encouraged
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG); HUD and State of Iowa	Federal funding for housing, public facilities, and economic development to benefit low-and moderate income residents.	Rehabilitation and infill projects, directed to projects that benefit low-and-moderate-income households or eliminate blighted areas. Water and wastewater projects.	Varies by funding area	Varies by funding area	No
DOT/DNR Fund; IDOT, DNR	Roadside beautification of primary system corridors with plant materials.	Landscaping improvements along key corridors in the city.	Open	Maximum of $100,000 per applicant per year	Encouraged

Table 6.2 Potential Funding Sources

SOURCE AND ADMINISTRATOR	DESCRIPTION	POSSIBLE USES	DEADLINE	AVAILABLE FUNDS	REQUIRED MATCH
Federal Transportation Enhancement Program; IDOT through MPO	Funding for enhancement or preservation activities of transportation related projects.	The following projects are funded: facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists; safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists; scenic or historic highway programs; acquisition of scenic or historic sites; landscaping and scenic beautification; historic preservation; rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation facilities; preservation of abandoned railway corridors; control and removal or outdoor advertising; archaeological planning and research; mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff; or transportation museums.	Typically October 1 for statewide applications; Check with local MPO for regional deadlines.	Dependent on allocation as part of reauthorization of TEA-21. Funding has historically been $4.5 million annually statewide. Funds available vary by region.	Varies by region; Contact MPO.
Recreational Trails Program (Federal); IDOT through MPO	Funding for creation and maintenance of motorized and non-motorized recreational trails and trail related projects.	Recreational trail extension.	Typically October 1	Varies each year	20%
Recreational Trails Program (State); IDOT	Funding for public recreational trails.	Trail projects that are part of a local, area-wide, regional, or statewide trail plan.	Typically July 1	Varies each year	25%
Highway Bridge Program; IDOT	Funds for replacement or rehabilitation of structurally deficient or functionally obsolete public roadway bridges.	Bridge rehabilitation or replacement.	Typically October 1	$ 1 Million per bridge (one bridge per city per year)	20%
Housing Fund (HOME); IEDA, Iowa Finance Authority	Funds to develop and support affordable housing.	Rehabilitation of rental and owner-occupied homes; new construction of rental housing; assistance to home buyers; assistance to tenants; administrative costs. HOME funds may be used in conjunction with Section 42 Low Income Housing Tax Credits. They may also be used for innovative project approaches, such as rent-to-own development.	Varies - Usually January	Varies annually	NA
Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP); IDOT	Funding for highway/street, transit, bicycle/ pedestrian or freight projects or programs which help maintain Iowa's clean air quality by reducing transportation related emissions.	Projects which will reduce vehicle miles traveled or single-occupant vehicle trips; Transportation improvements to improve air quality.	Typically October 1	Approximately $4 million annually; Minimum $20,000 total project cost	20%

Table 6.2 Potential Funding Sources

SOURCE AND ADMINISTRATOR	DESCRIPTION	POSSIBLE USES	DEADLINE	AVAILABLE FUNDS	REQUIRED MATCH
Land and Water Conservation Fund; Iowa DNR	Federal funding for outdoor recreation area development and acquisition.	Improvements to existing recreation facilities and development of new facilities.	March 15, or closest working day	Varies annually	50%
Living Roadway Trust Fund; IDOT	Implement integrated Roadside Vegetation Management programs (IRVM) on city, county, or state rights-of-way or areas adjacent to traveled roads.	Roadside inventories, gateways, education, research, roadside enhancement, seed propagation, and special equipment.	Typically June 1	Varies	No
Pedestrian Curb Ramp Construction; IDOT	To assist cities in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Action primary roads.	Construct curb ramps to ADA standards.	Accepted all year	Maximum of $250,000 per city per year	45%
Public Facilities Set-Aside Program (PFSA); IEDA	Financial assistance to cities and counties to provide infrastructure improvements for businesses which require such improvements in order to create new job opportunities.	Provision or improvement to sanitary sewer systems, water systems, streets, storm sewers, rail lines, and airports. For Iowa Cities under 50,000 populations. 51% of persons benefitting must be low or moderate income.	Accepted all year	Varies	50%; Additional points for higher percentage
Transportation and Community and System Preservation Program (TCSP); IDOT	Funding for planning and implementing strategies that improve the efficiency of the transportation system, reduce the environmental impacts of transportation, reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure investments, ensure efficient access to jobs, services and centers of trade, and examine private sector development patterns and investments that support these goals.	Innovative transportation improvements that address stated goals.	Established yearly	Varies annually (have awarded $50-$60 million in prior years)	No
Urban-State Traffic Engineering Program (U-STEP); IDOT	Funding to solve traffic operation and safety problems on primary roads.	Extension of a primary road; spot improvements or linear improvements.	Accepted all year	$200,000 for spot improvements $400,000 for linear improvements	45%
Watershed Planning Grant; IDNR for EPA (Clean Water Act Section 319)	Watershed planning grants for impaired waters in <50,000-acre watersheds.	Watershed management plan (for addressing TMDLs).	April	$10,000 to $50,000 per project	50% local match, with at least 20% in cash

Table 6.2 Potential Funding Sources

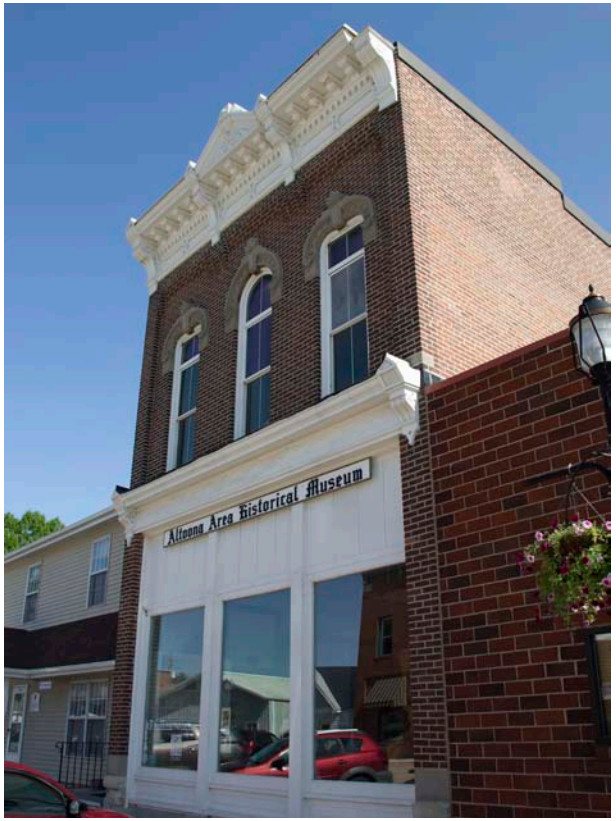
SOURCE AND ADMINISTRATOR	DESCRIPTION	POSSIBLE USES	DEADLINE	AVAILABLE FUNDS	REQUIRED MATCH
Watershed Implementation Grant; IDNR for EPA (Clean Water Act Section 319)	Funding to put a watershed management plan into action.	Stream improvement projects; natural stormwater system improvements	Typically October	Varies, $1.7 million for 2013	Not required but encouraged
Five-Star Restoration Program; EPA	Focuses on partnerships to provide environmental education and training through restoration projects; the goal is to engage 5 or more partners	Wetland and stream restoration.	Late fall	Typically $10,000 to $40,000 per project	Minimum 50% match recommended; larger matches are more competitive
Wetland Program Development Grants (WPDG); EPA	Assists with implementing and accelerating water pollution reduction projects.	Research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution.	Available every 2 years, starting in 2013; Check with EPA Region 7 office for deadline	Varies according to project needs	Check with EPA, Region 7 office
Historical Resource Development Program; State Historical Society of Iowa	Assists with enhancement of local historical resources	Acquisition and development of historical resources; preservation and conservation of historical resources; interpretation of historical resources; professional training and educational programs regarding any of the above	Typically Spring (2014 deadline was April 25)	$50,000 maximum request recommended (up to $100,000 permissible)	For government entities - $0.50 match per $1 requested
State Historic Preservation and Cultural and Entertainment District Tax Credit Program; State Historical Society of Iowa	Provides state income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic buildings	Rehabilitation of properties listed or eligible to be listed on the National Register; rehabilitation of properties designated as a local landmark by city or county ordinance; rehabilitation of barns constructed prior to 1937	Small Projects Fund applications accepted year-round; Other fund applications: Early July	Income tax credit of 25% of qualified rehabilitation costs	NA
General Obligation Bonds ; City of Altoona	Allows the City to secure funding by pledging future tax revenues to repay the bond.	Capital improvements, such as street projects	NA	Varies	NA
State Revolving Fund Loan ; Iowa Finance Authority, Iowa DNR	State funding source for low-interest loans for water, wastewater, and stormwater projects	Water, Sewer and Stormwater improvements and planning	Applications taken year-round	NA	NA

Table 6.2 Potential Funding Sources

SOURCE AND ADMINISTRATOR	DESCRIPTION	POSSIBLE USES	DEADLINE	AVAILABLE FUNDS	REQUIRED MATCH
Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP); Iowa DNR	Funding for projects that enhance and protect natural and cultural resources. Grants available in categories such as: City Parks and Open Space, County Conservation and Roadside Vegetation	Parkland expansion, multi-purpose recreation developments, management of roadside vegetation.	Varies by grant category	Varies; authorized for up to $20 million annually until 2021	Varies by grant category; many require no match
Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE); IDOT	Funding to promote economic development through construction or improvement of roads and streets.	Construction or improvement of roadways that will facilitate job creation or retention, such as a street system for additional business or industrial development.	Typically Feb 1 and Sept 1 for local projects; Immediate opportunities accepted all year	$11 million for cities and $5.5 million for counties (annually)	Local Development: 50% Immediate Opportunity: 20%
Safe Routes to Schools; IDOT	Funding for infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements that will result in more students walking or bicycling to school.	Sidewalk installation and improvements, pedestrian safety improvements.	Typically Oct 1	Varies: In 2013, awarded approximately $800,000	No
Section 42 Low Income Housing Tax Credit; HUD	Tax credits for affordable housing developers through the State. Developments can utilize either a 4% or 9% credit, depending on the mix of low-income residents.	Multi-family housing development for low and moderate-income families.	NA	NA	NA
Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID); Local Business/Downtown Association	Contributions by business owners used for various business district enhancements.	Physical improvements to business district, upper-story restoration of downtown buildings.	NA	NA	NA
Surface Transportation Program (STP); MPO	Funding for road or bridge projects on the federal aid system.	Road or bridge projects. Trails improvements. Bicycle facilities.	Check with MPO	Check with MPO	Check with MPO

Table 6.2 Potential Funding Sources

SOURCE AND ADMINISTRATOR	DESCRIPTION	POSSIBLE USES	DEADLINE	AVAILABLE FUNDS	REQUIRED MATCH
Tax Abatement; City of Altoona	Reduction or elimination of property taxes for set period of time on new improvements to property granted as an incentive to do such projects.	Available for commercial, industrial, or residential developments.	NA	NA	NA
Tax Increment Financing (TIF); City of Altoona	Use added property tax revenues created by growth and development to finance improvements within the boundaries of a redevelopment district.	New residential, commercial, or industrial developments, including public improvement, land acquisition, and some development costs.	NA	NA	NA
Traffic Safety Improvement Program (TSIP); IDOT	Traffic safety improvements or studies on any public road.	Traffic safety and operations at specific site with an accident history. New traffic control devices. Research, studies or public information initiatives.	Typically summer (2014 deadline: August 15)	$500,000 maximum per project (Total available annually: 0.5% of Road Use Tax Fund, Approximately $6 million)	No
Federal Transportation Bill, Federal Highway Administration, through MPO	Federal transportation funding, including matching grants for major street improvements, enhancements funding for corridor design, streetscape, trail development, and transit.	Improvements to arterial and major collector streets and trail development.	TBD	TBD	TBD


Altoona Area Historical Museum

NE 96 ST
NE 46 AVE

Enabling Garden
created by
Iowa State University Extension
Polk County Master Gardeners
and many volunteers
partnership with
Altoona

APPENDIX

Population Comparison

- Altoona has grown more slowly than several other suburban communities in the Des Moines metro area over the past 50 years, such as Ankeny, Johnston, Waukee, Pleasant Hill and Grimes.
- Altoona's rate of growth over the past 50 years has been comparable or higher than communities such as Urbandale, Clive, and West Des Moines
- The predicted population increase for Altoona (10-15,000 new residents in 15-20 years) is similar to the growth experienced in Ankeny from 1980-2000.

Table A1 - Population Change for Altoona and Other Iowa Towns, 1960-2010

COMMUNITY	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	% CHANGE 1960-2010	% CHANGE 2000-2010
ALTOONA	1,458	2,883	5,764	7,242	10,345	14,541	897.3%	40.6%
ANKENY	2,964	9,151	15,429	18,482	27,117	45,582	1437.9%	68.1%
JOHNSTON	NA	222	2,526	4,702	8,649	17,278	NA	99.8%
URBANDALE	5,821	14,434	17,869	23,500	29,072	39,463	577.9%	35.7%
WAUKEE	687	1,577	2,227	2,512	5,126	13,790	1907.3%	169.0%
CLIVE	752	3,005	6,064	7,462	12,855	15,447	1954.1%	20.2%
PLEASANT HILL	397	1,535	3,493	3,671	5,070	8,785	2112.8%	73.3%
GRIMES	697	834	1,973	2,653	5,098	8,246	1083.1%	61.7%
DES MOINES	208,982	201,404	191,003	193,189	198,682	203,433	-2.7%	2.4%
WEST DES MOINES	11,949	16,441	21,894	31,702	46,403	56,609	373.8%	22.0%
MARION	10,882	18,028	19,474	20,403	26,294	34,768	219.5%	32.2%
IOWA	2,757,537	2,824,376	2,913,808	2,776,755	2,926,324	3,046,355	10.5%	4.1%

Sources on this page: U.S. Census 2013, RDG Planning & Design 2013

Age Distribution

- Altoona has a lot of families, but relatively fewer young adults (20-24) and seniors.
  - Figure A1: Altoona's largest age groups are children 14 and under, and adults 30-44 (likely the parents of those children).
- Figure A2: From 2000 to 2010, Altoona experienced in-migration in almost every age group, with the highest increases among children 14 and under and adults 25-44.
  - Figure A2 shows a comparison of the actual population in 2010 vs. the population that would be predicted if there had been no migration between 2000 and 2010 (i.e. - natural population change based on birth and death rates).
- Table A2: Altoona is a young community, with a Median Age that is lower than both the State and the Metro Area

Figure A1 - Altoona Population by Age - 2000 and 2010

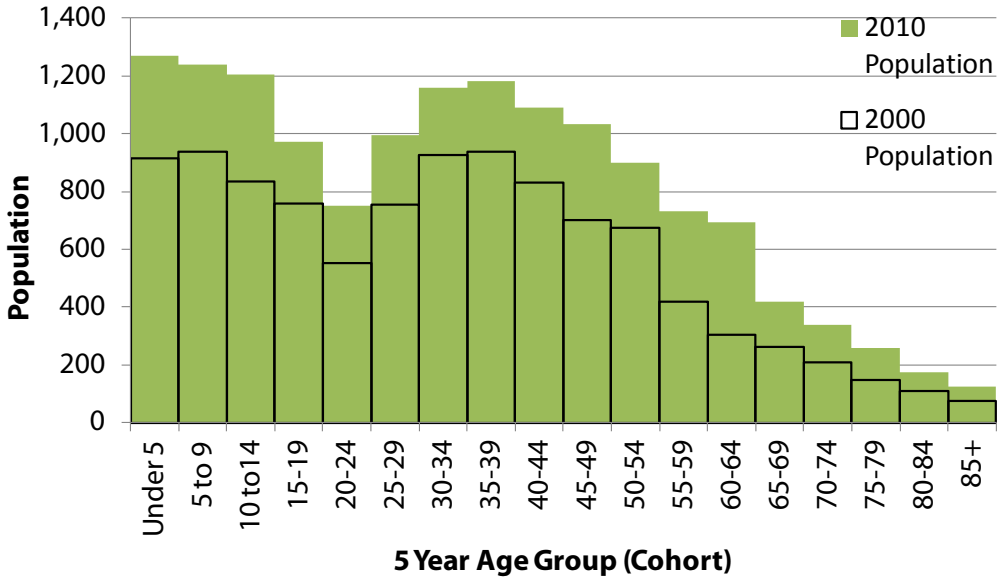
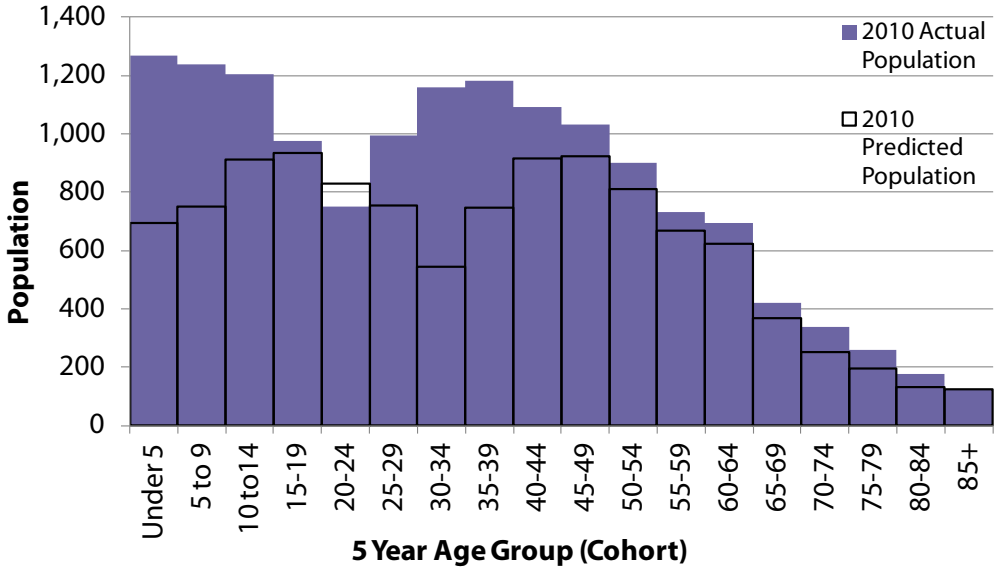


Table A2 - Median Age for Residents in Des Moines/ West Des Moines Metro and State of Iowa, 2010

GROUP	MEDIAN AGE
Altoona Residents	33.7
Metro Residents	35.2
Iowa Residents	38.1

Sources: U.S. Census 2013; RDG Planning & Design 2013

Figure A2 - Predicted and Actual Age Distribution, Altoona - 2010



Race and Ethnicity

- Altoona has limited racial and ethnic diversity, with more than 95% of residents identifying as White and Non-Hispanic.
- As compared to the state as a whole, Altoona has fewer racial and ethnic minorities.

Table A3 - Race and Ethnicity for Altoona and Iowa

	ALTOONA			IOWA		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
RACE						
WHITE	95.9%	95.1%	-0.8%	93.9%	91.3%	-2.6%
BLACK	0.9%	1.1%	0.2%	2.1%	2.9%	0.8%
ASIAN	0.5%	1.1%	0.6%	1.3%	1.7%	0.4%
HAWAIIAN / PACIFIC ISLANDER	0.4%	0.2%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE	0.3%	0.1%	-0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%
SOME OTHER RACE	0.8%	0.9%	0.1%	1.3%	1.8%	0.6%
TWO OR MORE RACES	1.2%	1.5%	0.3%	1.1%	1.8%	0.7%
ETHNICITY						
HISPANIC/LATINO	1.7%	2.9%	1.2%	2.8%	5%	2.2%
NOT HISPANIC/LATINO	98.3%	97.1%	-1.2%	97.2%	95%	-2.2%

Sources: U.S. Census 2013; RDG Planning & Design 2013

Education and Income

- Figure A3: Altoona has a higher percentage of residents with Bachelor's and Graduate/Professional Degrees than the State as a whole
- Figure A4: Altoona has a significantly higher median income than the state of Iowa. Median income grew by about 25% in both Altoona and the State from 2000 to 2010.

Figure A3 - Educational Attainment for Population 25 years and older, Altoona and Iowa

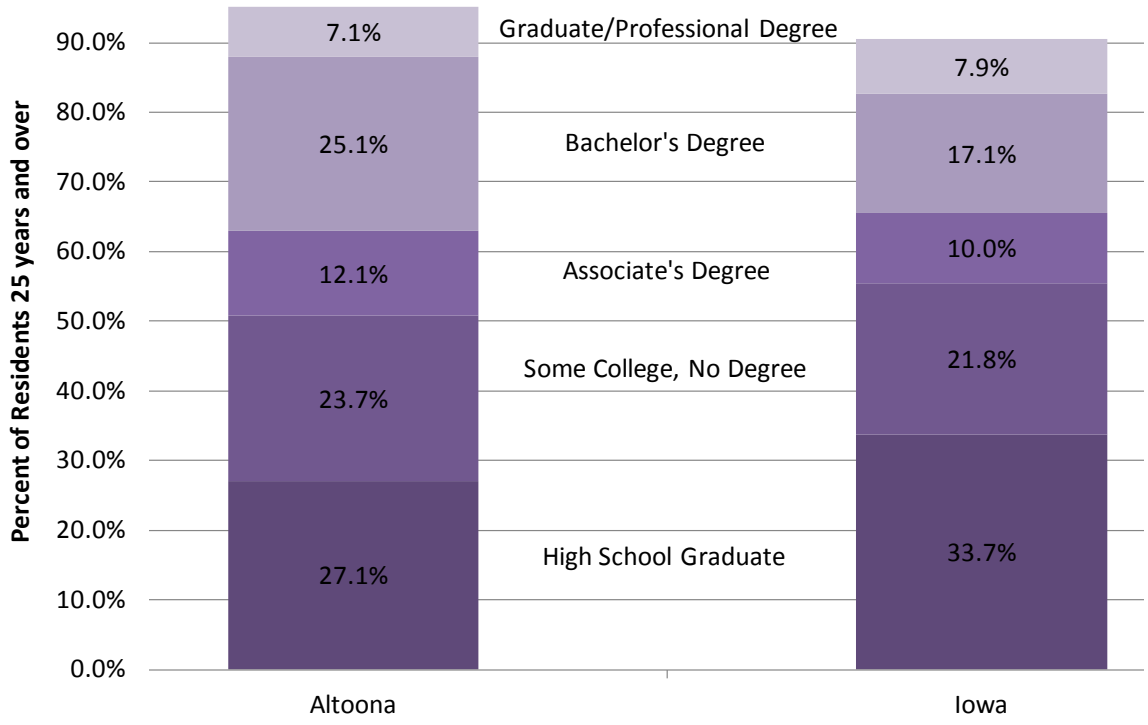
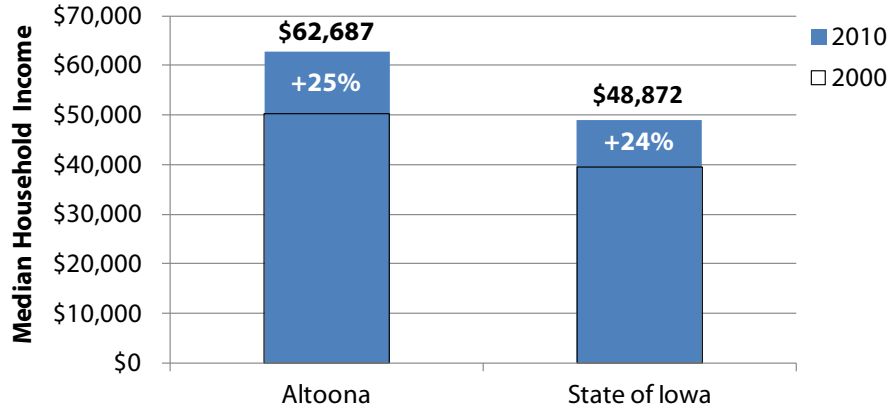


Figure A4 - Median Income for Altoona and Iowa, 2000 and 2010



Sources this page: U.S. Census 2013; RDG Planning & Design 2013

Housing

- Altoona has a good balance of owner occupied and renter occupied housing, with a 75/25 split. This is in the range that is considered optimal to allow a diverse range of options for residents.
- Altoona has a relatively low vacancy rate, at 4.3%. While a high vacancy rate (over 10%) is a negative, it is good to have some vacancy, as Altoona does, to allow market flexibility.
- Altoona has relatively high home values as compared to the state, yet state home values rose more quickly than Altoona's from 2000-2010.

Figure A5 - Housing Type Distribution, Altoona 2010

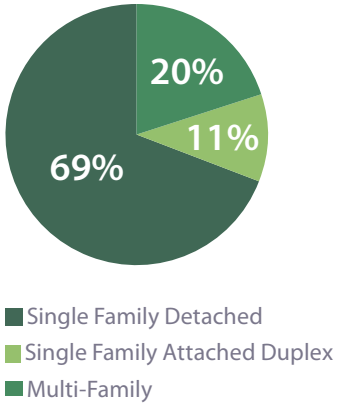


Table A4: Key Housing Indicators, Altoona, 2000 and 2010

	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	% Change 2000-2010
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	3,959	5,702	1,743	44.0%
TOTAL OCCUPIED UNITS	3,850	5,459	1,609	41.8%
OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS	2,729	4,099	1,370	50.2%
% OWNER OCCUPIED	70.9%	75.1%	4.2%	x
RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS	1,121	1,360	239	21.3%
% RENTER OCCUPIED	29.1%	24.9%	-4.2%	x
VACANT UNITS	109	243	134	122.9%
VACANCY RATE (%)	2.8%	4.3%	1.5%	x
- HOMEOWNER	1.2%	2.0%		
- RENTAL	4.1%	4.6%		
MEDIAN VALUE (OWNER-OCCUPIED)	$115,600	$159,900	$44,300	38.3%
MEDIAN RENT	$559	$675	116	20.8%
PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD	2.66	2.64	-0.02	-0.8%

Table A5: Median Home Value, Altoona and Iowa

	2000	2010	% Change (2000-2010)
ALTOONA	$115,600	$159,900	38.3%
IOWA	$82,500	$119,200	44.5%

Sources this page: U.S. Census 2013; RDG Planning & Design 2013

Figure A6 - Altoona Environmental Conditions: Wetlands, Floodplains and Hydric Soils

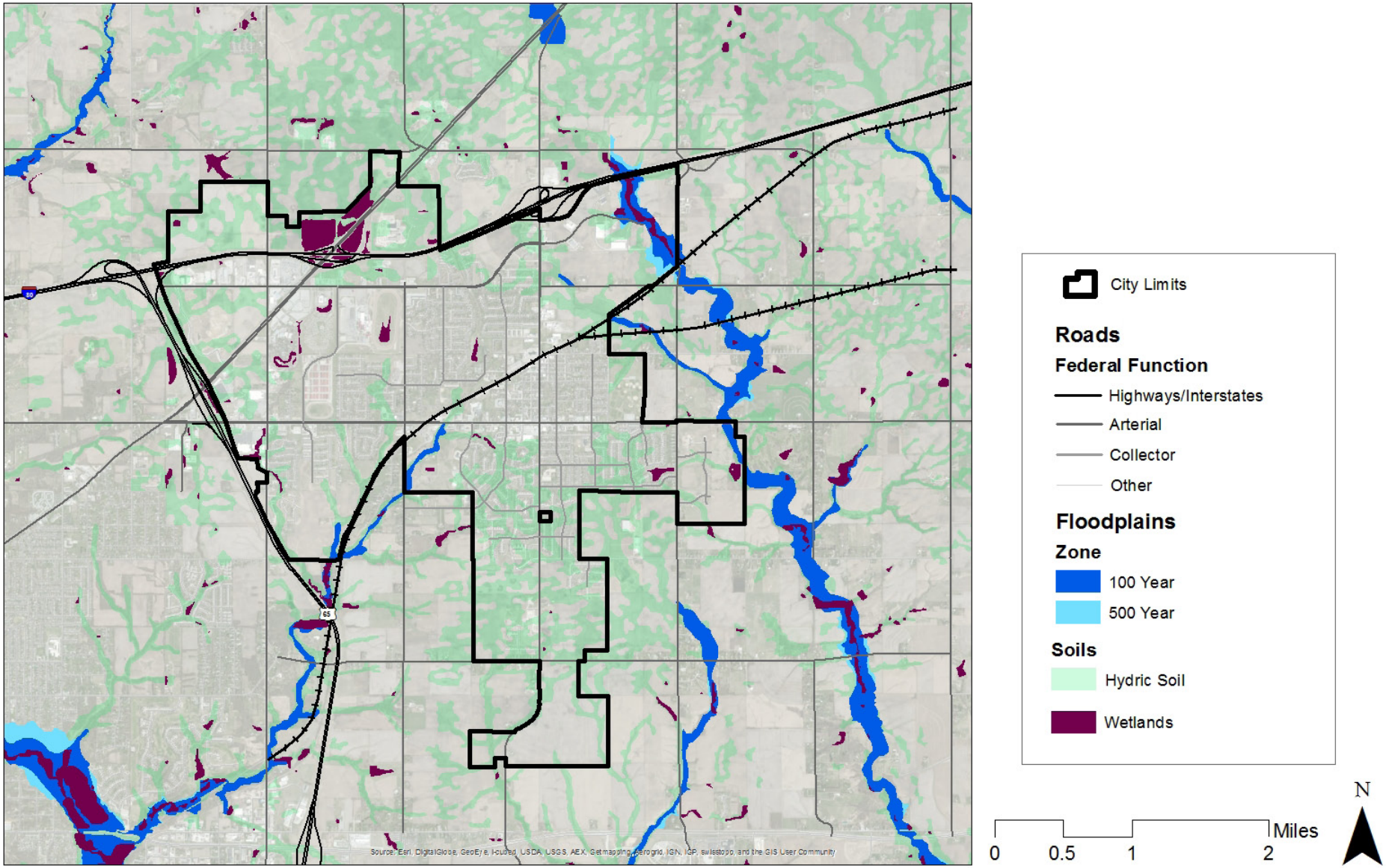


Figure A7 - Altoona Environmental Conditions: Slopes

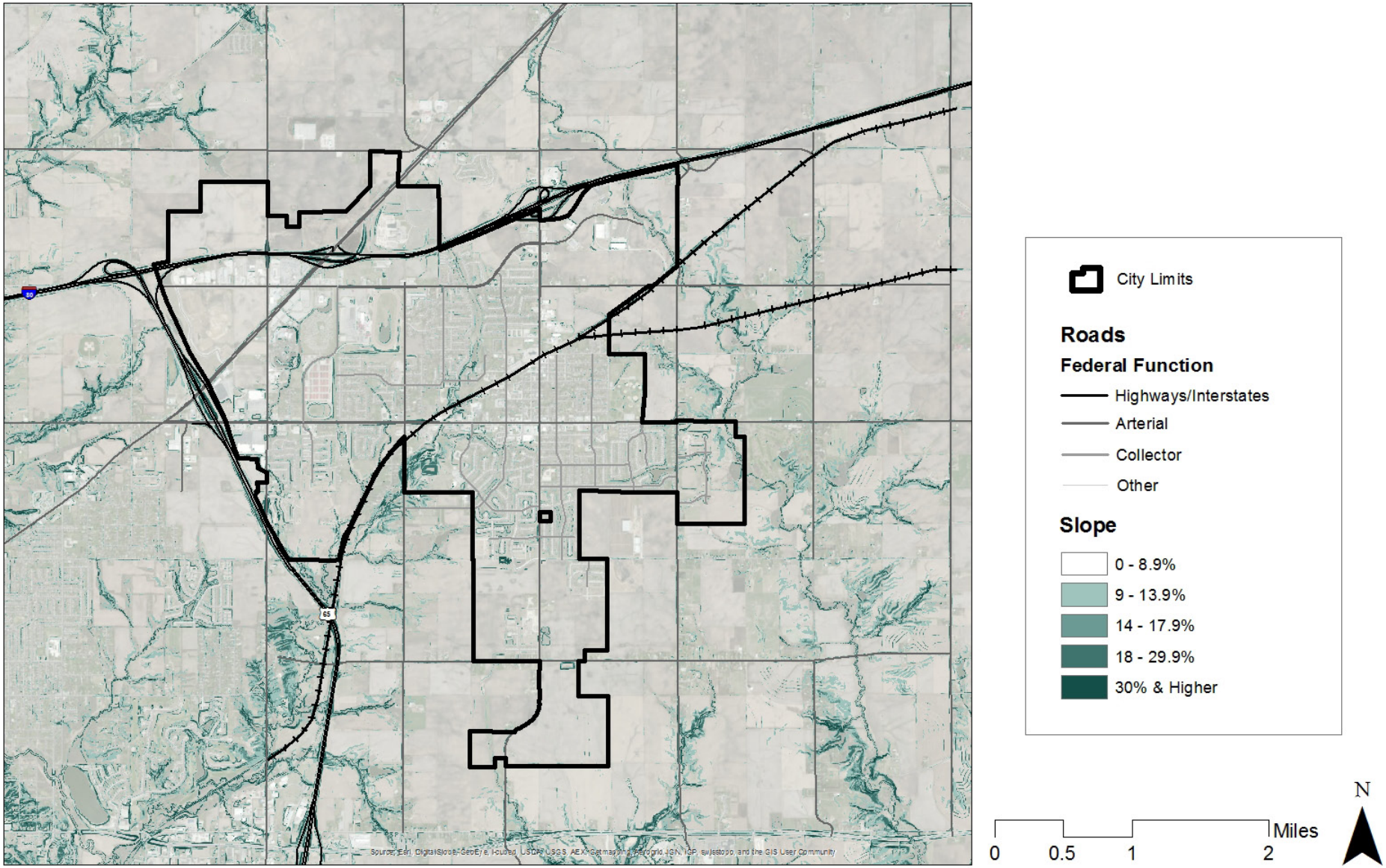


Figure A8 - Altoona Environmental Conditions: Land Cover

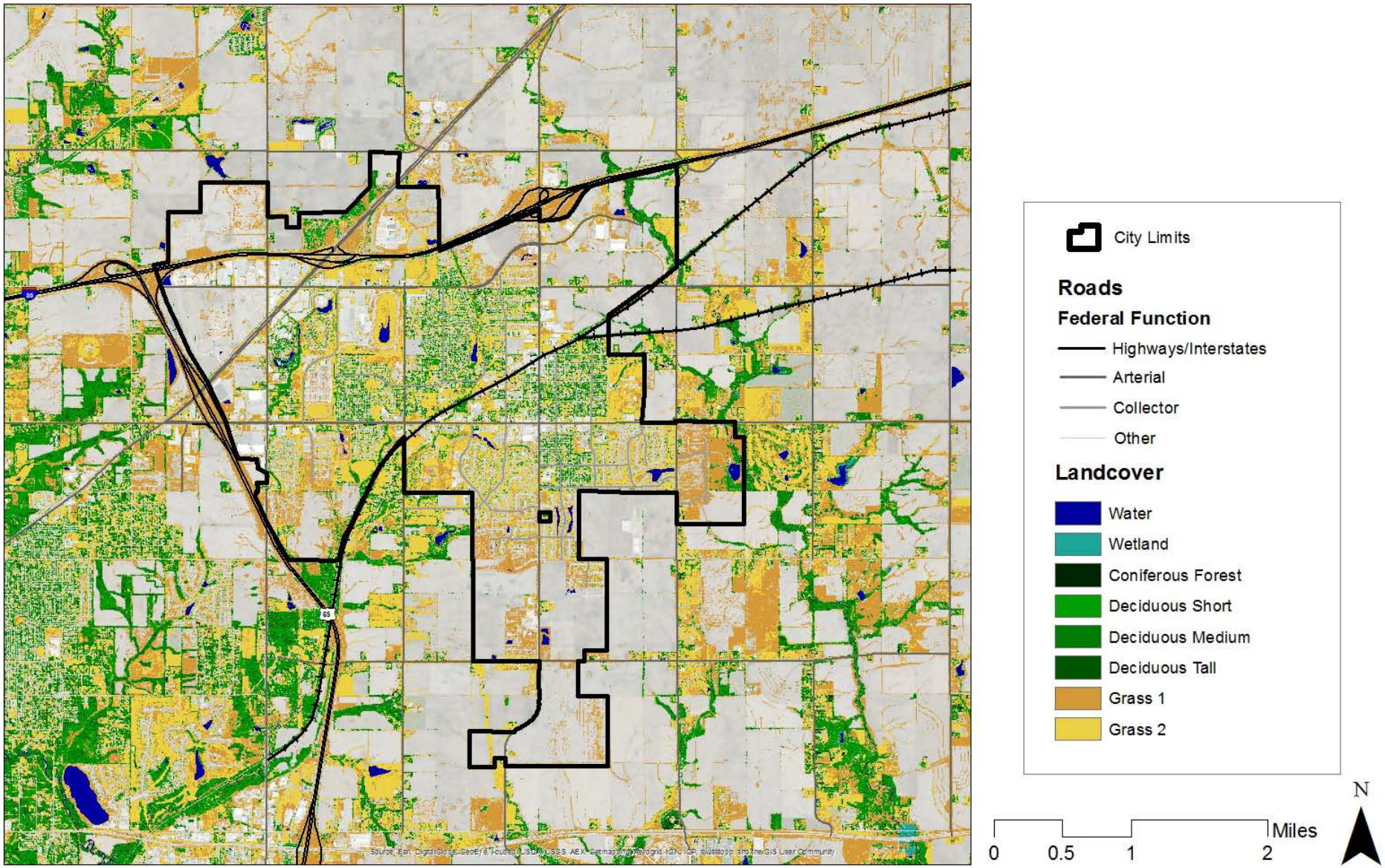


Table A6: Altoona Parks

FACILITY	LOCATION	TOTAL ACRES	FEATURES
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS			
Village Park	17th Ave NW & 4th St NW	5.3	Shelter, sand volleyball courts (2), picnic tables, playground, tennis courts (2), basketball court, restrooms
Phoenix Park	4th St SW & 19th Ave SW	5.4	Walking trail, picnic shelter, benches, picnic tables, playground, open field with backstop
Haines Park	3rd Ave SE & 6th St Place SE	8.7	Playground, shelter, restrooms, gazebo, stage, tennis courts (2), basketball court
Ironwood Park	NE 38th Ave and 3rd Ave SW	5.0	Playground
Subtotal Neighborhood Parks		24.4	
COMMUNITY PARKS			
Lions Park	13th Ave & 4th St SW	21.4	Softball fields (2), Concessions, 5 kiddie fields, frisbee golf, Shelters (3), Playgrounds (2), Trail access
Prairie Heritage Park and Civic Plaza	Between Venbury Dr and 1st Ave S, South of 8th St SW	29.6	Trail, Enabling Garden, War memorial, Ponds (2), Prairie and Wildflowers, Picnic tables/benches
Subtotal Community Parks		51.0	
SCHOOL PARKS			
Altoona Elementary School	6th St SW and 5th Ave SW	1.0	Playground, open fields
SPECIAL USE PARKS			
Sam Wise Youth Complex	8th St SE & 8th Ave SE	67.8	Little league fields (7), Softball fields (6), Flag football fields (2), Soccer Fields (7), Picnic Shelters (3), Playground, Ice skating wink, War memorial
Falcon Ridge Park	10th Ave SE & 15th St SE	1.0	Pond (not included in acreage), Playground equipment
Eagle Ridge Park	Brookview Dr & Timberline Ln	5.0	Open space, trail connection
Skate Park	Venbury Drive and Lindsay Ct	2.0	
Greenway Park & Trail	Between Adventureland Dr and 4th St SW, east of 10th Avenue NW	19.0	Trail, picnic tables, pond
17th Avenue Dog Park	17th Ave SW, south of 8th St SW	1.0	
Spring Creek Sports Complex	24th St SE, W of NE 80th St	79.0	Soccer fields, Football field
Subtotal Special Use Parks		174.8	
TOTAL PARKS & RECREATION		251.2	
Park Acres per 1,000 residents		16.3	

Table A7: Altoona Housing Affordability (2010)

INCOME RANGE	% OF CITY MEDIAN	% OF HOUSEHOLDS	# HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH RANGE	AFFORDABLE RANGE FOR OWNER UNITS	# OF OWNER UNITS	AFFORDABLE RANGE FOR RENTER UNITS	# OF RENTER UNITS	TOTAL AFFORDABLE UNITS	BALANCE
$0-25,000	40%	13.06%	713	$0-50,000	158	$0-400	85	243	-470
$25,000-49,999	80%	26.29%	1,435	$50,000-99,999	336	$400-800	1,050	1,386	-49
$50,000-74,999	120%	22.36%	1,221	$100,000-149,999	1,290	$800-1250	188	1,478	258
$75-99,999	160%	16.63%	908	$150,000-200,000	1,279	$1250-1500	0	1,279	372
$100-150,000	239%	13.25%	723	$200-$300,000	842	$1500-2500	37	880	156
$150,000+		8.41%	459	$300,000+	193	$2500+	--	193	-266

Table A8: Altoona Existing Land Use - 2013 (within city limits)

LAND USE	ACREAGE
Agriculture and Ag Residential	1,694
Civic and Public	78
Commercial	743
Industrial/Light Industrial	373
Park and Recreation	304
Residential, Single Family	1,137
Residential, Duplex	45
Residential, Mobile Home	55
Residential, Multi-Family	121
School	61
Utility	49
Platted, Single Family	116
Platted, Duplex	16
Platted, Multi-Family	20
Platted, Commercial	220
Platted, Industrial	24

Sources this page: U.S. Census 2013; RDG Planning & Design 2013