



RE-ENVISION 2030

A Comprehensive Plan for the City of Fort Dodge

Adopted July 25, 2016



Acknowledgments

The City of Fort Dodge Comprehensive Plan is the result of City staff, officials, and the hundreds of community members dedicated to making Fort Dodge a great place to live and work.

City Council

- Matt Bemrich, Mayor
- Neven Conrad, At Large
- Jeffrey Halter, At Large
- Andy Fritz, At Large
- Terry Moehnke, Ward 1
- Dean Hill, Ward 2
- David Flattery, Ward 3
- Kim Alstott, Ward 4

Plan & Zoning Commission

- Lisa Wilson, Chair
- Steve Kersten, Vice Chair
- Dennis Crimmins
- Mike Doyle
- Jim Kesterson
- Kim Motl
- Jo Seltz

Staff

- Dennis Plautz, Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance
- Chad Schaeffer, City of Fort Dodge
- David Fierke, City of Fort Dodge
- Maggie Carlin, City of Fort Dodge
- Vickie Reeck, City of Fort Dodge
- Carissa Harvey, City of Fort Dodge
- Lori Branderhorst, City of Fort Dodge

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

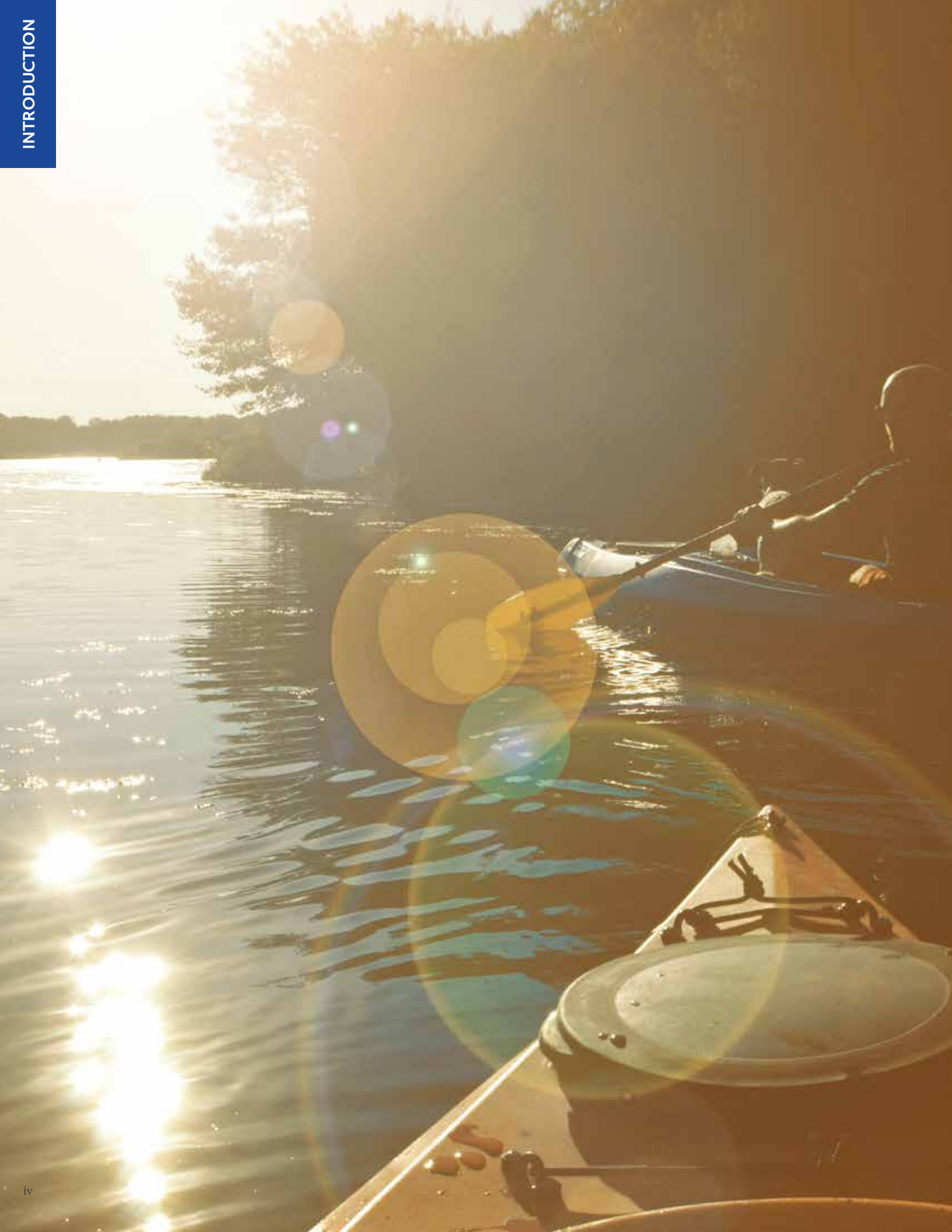
- Robert Allen, Retired/Resident
- Kraig Barber, First State Bank
- Jason Beckman, CJ Bio America
- Jim Bird, SSMID Board Member and Local Business Owner
- Cory Buscher, Nestle Purina
- Jen Crimmins, Citizens Community Credit Union
- Mary Gibb, St. Edmond Schools
- Sharon Hickey, Substitute Teacher/Resident
- Jim Kersten, Iowa Central Community College
- Dan Kinney, Iowa Central Community College
- Randy Kuhlman, Fort Dodge Community Foundation and United Way
- Steve Kersten, Plan and Zoning Commission
- Troy Martens, Unity Point - Trinity Regional Medical Center
- Jen Pederson, Resident
- Mark Taylor, Resident
- Clarice Thompson, Resident
- Julie Thorson, Friendship Haven
- Doug Van Zyl, Fort Dodge Community School District
- Bob Wood, Bob Wood Photography

Prepared by



CONTENTS

Introduction	1	Transportation & Mobility Plan.....	67
Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan	1	Roadway Network.....	67
Update to Envision 2030	1	Bike, Pedestrian & Transit Mobility.....	74
Planning Process	2	Air & Rail Facilities.....	80
Planning Boundary	2	Open Space &	
Jurisdiction.....	2	Environmental Features.....	85
Vision.....	5	Existing Open Spaces & Environmental	
Community Profile	9	Features.....	85
Regional Setting	9	Goals, Objectives & Recommendations.....	90
Community History	10	Community Facilities &	
Past Plans & Studies	10	Infrastructure.....	103
Market & Demographic Analysis	13	Existing Community Facilities &	
Existing Land Use & Development	18	Infrastructure.....	103
Community Outreach.....	25	Goals, Objectives & Recommendations.....	110
Public Outreach Activities.....	25	Implementation.....	119
Priority Issues & Concerns.....	26	Implementation Action Matrix.....	128
Projects & Actions.....	29	Appendix	143
Strengths & Assets.....	30		
Web-based Outreach.....	31		
Land Use Plan	35		
Land Use Categories	35		
Growth & Annexation	38		
Housing & Residential Neighborhoods	43		
Commercial & Industrial Areas	51		



INTRODUCTION

In 2014, the City of Fort Dodge began a process to update *Envision 2030* (the community's visioning document) and develop a Comprehensive Plan titled *Re-Envision 2030*. *Re-Envision 2030* is the culmination of a robust planning process that engaged nearly 500 community members to develop a collective vision for Fort Dodge. This effort synthesizes previous community input and recommendations and will guide the City of Fort Dodge for the next 15-20 years.

Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

Re-Envision 2030 serves as the Fort Dodge Comprehensive Plan and sets forth the City's long-range plan for community improvement, development, and growth. It is the official policy guide for physical improvement and development. The Plan includes goals, objectives, and policies to guide both short- and long-range planning initiatives aimed at improving quality of life in the community.

This policy guide is intended to be flexible and adaptive over time. It sets the basic framework to guide activities and manage change, allowing room for adjustment as conditions and public preferences change. *Re-Envision 2030* serves as a foundation for decision making, acting as the City's legal policy document, and a reference for City officials, staff, residents, and stakeholders as they consider development proposals, capital improvements, infrastructure investments, policy changes, and other actions in the years to come. The implementation actions within the Plan support the desired vision of the community, providing more tangible strategies to support policies of the Plan.

Fort Dodge can point to several successes in the past decade that demonstrate its position as a community poised to grow. These include the development and implementation of several planning efforts including *Envision 2030*, the Downtown Plan, 5th Avenue South Corridor Plan, and others. The City reinvested in historic structures in the downtown, implemented the Cross-town Connector on 1st Avenue South, made streetscape improvements along 5th Avenue South, and made other positive improvements. *Re-Envision 2030* will help the community build upon these recent improvements and implement others that will strengthen Fort Dodge as a leader in industry, culture, and quality of life in northern Iowa.

Update to *Envision 2030*

Re-Envision 2030 updates and replaces the City's former visioning document: *Envision 2030*. As part of the planning process, relevant policies and strategies from *Envision 2030* were reviewed and integrated within this Plan where appropriate. *Re-Envision 2030* will now serve as the City's primary policy document and Comprehensive Plan.

Planning Process

Re-Envision 2030 is the result of a year-long planning effort guided by City staff, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC), and members of the public who participated in the process. Public outreach efforts included several public meetings and workshops, stakeholder interviews, and web-based applications. This community input, along with information provided by the City, reconnaissance, surveys, inventories, and analyses, was used to develop the foundation for plan recommendations. The result of the process is this Comprehensive Plan that includes recommendations and a series of implementation strategies to guide growth and development in the City and its planning area.

Planning Boundary

Iowa Code Section 414 allows local municipalities to plan for areas within a two-mile radius of their corporate boundaries. This “extraterritorial jurisdiction” or ETJ, cannot include land that is incorporated by other municipalities or areas designated as under the jurisdiction of another

community through a formal boundary agreement. The Planning Boundary on the opposite page demonstrates the Fort Dodge planning area.

Jurisdiction

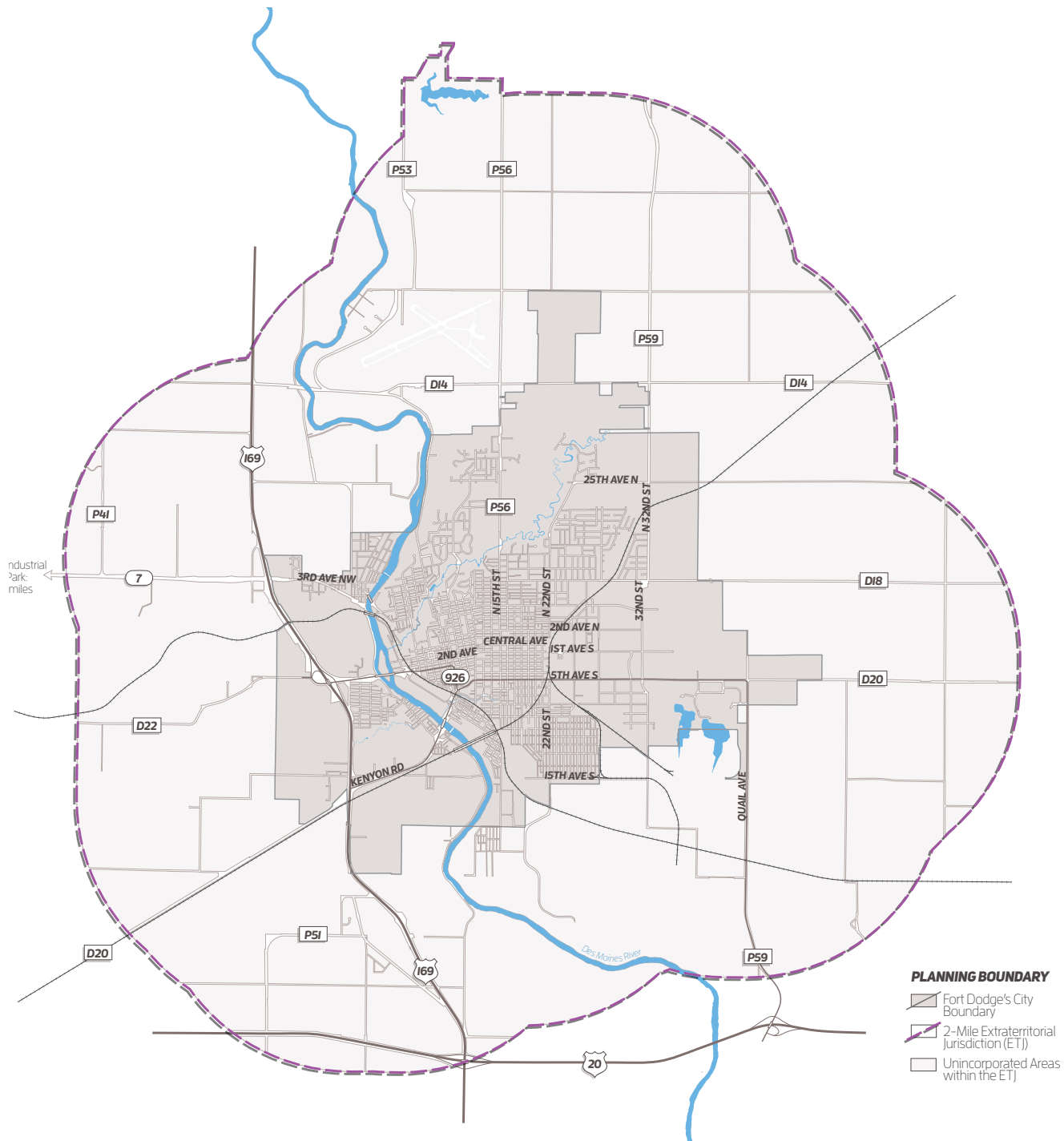
Re-Envision 2030 is considered the official policy guide for the community. While its adoption does not result in amended development regulations or require specific capital investments on behalf of the City, it should be used to guide regular updates to zoning and subdivision ordinances and development of an annual Capital Improvement Program. Re-Envision 2030 will often be used as the measuring stick to determine whether specific local actions – including but not limited to zoning text or map amendments, capital expenditures, grant pursuits, etc. – are in-line with adopted municipal policy. In the case of development approval, as a Comprehensive Plan, Re-Envision 2030 provides the most relevant legal basis for zoning and subdivision decisions. In areas within two miles of the City’s municipal boundary, state legislation establishes extraterritorial jurisdiction through which the City can conduct subdivision review for proposed developments in conjunction with Webster County.

Iowa Smart Planning Principles

In response to the susceptibility of many communities to natural disasters, economic disinvestment, and other trends, the Iowa State Legislature enacted a series of Smart Planning principles in 2010. They include ten strategic principles that local municipalities are encouraged to integrate into their Comprehensive Plans in order to be competitive for state funding for certain improvements. The principles are aimed at improving economic development and maintaining a high quality of life for Iowa residents and businesses. The Iowa Smart Planning Principles include:

- Collaboration
- Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency
- Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy
- Occupational Diversity
- Revitalization
- Housing Diversity
- Community Character
- Natural Resources & Agricultural Protection
- Sustainable Design
- Transportation Diversity

The Fort Dodge Comprehensive Plan, Re-Envision 2030, addresses these principles in terms of both the process undertaken to develop it and the goals, objective, and recommendations included herein.





Carol J. Husske

VISION

In the year 2030...

The City of Fort Dodge is the leader in industry, culture, and quality of life in northern Iowa.

Fifteen years following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, Fort Dodge has emerged as a center for industry and commerce in northcentral Iowa and is the anchor for arts and culture in Webster County. The community's image and reputation have grown thanks to its unique natural environment, events, neighborhoods, shopping, and entertainment. People are drawn to Fort Dodge for a number of reasons, whether it's the prospect of a well-paying job and good neighborhood, a day trip to the historic downtown or Eastside Commercial District, or to enjoy the recreational and scenic beauty of the Des Moines River.

Fort Dodge originally developed around the Des Moines River, which is a centerpiece of activity and a character-defining element. Modifications to the Hydroelectric Dam and Little Dam have increased the natural integrity of the river and provided new recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Throughout the year, hikers, anglers, kayakers, snowmobilers, skiers, and others can be seen enjoying the river and its surrounding banks. New development on Central Avenue provides a destination for events and entertainment, and supports the historic downtown and users of the riverfront.

The revitalization of the riverfront has spurred new development in Downtown Fort Dodge. Between 1st Street and the Library, Central Avenue has transformed into an attractive multi-modal space that links the Des Moines River with the City Square and the historic heart of the community. The remainder of Central Avenue has carried forward its momentum established in the 2000's with continued rehabilitation of historic buildings, active storefronts, and new housing. Surrounding blocks include shops and housing that create a seamless transition to old neighborhoods with rehabilitated houses. The south edge of Downtown has seen the greatest level of investment due to the installation of the Cross-town Connector. This corridor serves as the primary gateway to Downtown, and includes commercial uses and a community center that are easily accessible to all residents.

The Cross-town Connector has brought new energy to the east side of Fort Dodge as well. Between 22nd Street and 42nd Street, 1st Avenue South hosts national retailers, recreational activities, and businesses that employ Fort Dodge residents. 5th Avenue South has thrived as a local business corridor, and its character has continued to be improved through landscaping and the continued development and redevelopment of attractive commercial buildings. An example of the progress in this area is the rejuvenated Crossroads Mall. Once an aging commercial mall, it is now a destination on the east side where people can enjoy a "Main Street" feel while they stroll, eat, and shop.



The eastern edge of Fort Dodge is building upon the opening of the Aquatic Center in 2010 and the Fort Dodge Middle School in 2013. New neighborhoods have emerged around the school and Aquatics Center, and a new business park takes advantage of the local and regional access provided by 1st Avenue South and 42nd Street. Along 5th Avenue South, new businesses have been developed, resulting in an attractive gateway for residents and visitors arriving from throughout Webster County, Des Moines, Minneapolis, and other metropolitan areas.

A noticeable feature of development is the trail system and the number of people using it. The city-wide multi-modal trail system links all areas of Fort Dodge. These trails are often used by families to get to the various parks and waterfronts including the Des Moines Riverfront, Lizard Creek and Soldier Creek; local schools; and the Library from neighborhoods throughout Fort Dodge.

The City's expanded trail system provides a critical link to the Northwest River District, which is highlighted by 3rd Ave NW, a thriving mixed-use corridor. Commercial and residential redevelopment projects line the corridor, which features an improved streetscape, while active commercial nodes serve nearby residents who have benefited from home rehabilitation programs.

One of the main reasons Fort Dodge is thriving is the community's ability to balance its industrial past and economic future. Gypsum mining, agriculture, and agri-business remain important aspects of the local economy, but new industries are broadening the city's role in the state and Midwest. The clustering of high-tech agriculture and industrial businesses anchored by the Iowa Crossroads of Global Innovation, among others, as well as partnership with local colleges and state universities, has made Fort Dodge the state leader in biotechnology and biochemistry research and innovation.

The City's strong industrial base is also attracting young professionals, corporate staff, and their families to Fort Dodge based on the City's growing reputation as a leader in innovation. This reputation is supported by easy access to other metropolitan centers provided by the Fort Dodge Regional Airport. Services at the airport have increased to accommodate growing corporate and professional traffic, and industry and office development around the facility demonstrate its importance to the modern economy.

New residents are drawn to Fort Dodge's thriving local economic base, as well as the quality educational programs offered by the City's local schools. The Fort Dodge Community School District ranks among the top educational providers in the state, while private schools give residents high-quality alternatives to public school curricula. Iowa Central Community College remains both a community asset and partner, providing educational and workforce development programs.

All portions of Fort Dodge have benefited from new growth. West of the Des Moines River, UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center and Iowa Central Community College continue to attract professionals and students to the area. These residents value the quality housing and range of activities available to families. New residential neighborhoods on the west side of the river, as well as the redevelopment of areas within the Northwest River District, have strengthened the community and have made possible new commercial services along US 169. In this way, this part of Fort Dodge meets the desires of those who wish to be part of the community, yet live close to the rural landscape that defines much of its character.

All of these areas—the Des Moines River, Downtown Fort Dodge, the Northwest River District, the east side, industrial areas, major institutions, etc.—are stitched together by strong and thriving neighborhoods. Over the past 15 years, Fort Dodge has seen two important shifts. First, established neighborhoods have become stronger. This has happened because of the rehabilitation of existing homes, emerging subdivisions that have filled in gaps, as well as new residents being attracted to the community. Secondly, Fort Dodge offers a variety of housing that meets the needs of everyone. Young professionals and students can find housing close to activities and entertainment. Workers in every sector can find safe and affordable housing in stable neighborhoods for their families. Older residents can “downsize” and stay in the neighborhood they have spent decades maintaining.

The Fort Dodge community has taken great strides to balance growth and development with the preservation of its unique environmental assets. The Des Moines River, Lizard Creek, and Soldier Creek are important greenways that support wildlife, help manage flooding, and add to the overall character of Fort Dodge. New neighborhoods and commercial areas have been designed to include parks and preserve trees, and development has taken advantage of Fort Dodge's terrain to provide dramatic views of its natural features.

All of this progress over the past 15 years has dramatically improved Fort Dodge's local reputation and image within the Midwest. Residents have tremendous pride in Fort Dodge and are its greatest advertisers, describing its charm and high quality of life to people from other communities. Residents from surrounding counties and throughout Iowa and the Midwest recognize Fort Dodge as a place that offers everything residents want, from youth to retirement. Fort Dodge has truly become a place where people want to be.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

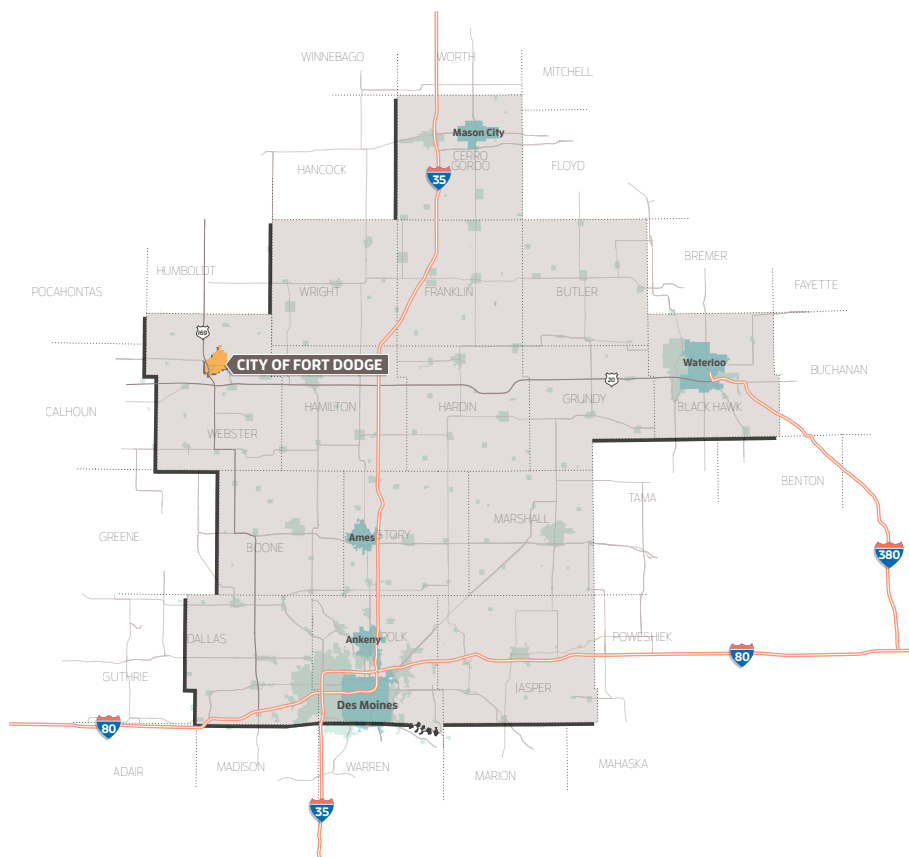
A firm understanding of the existing land use, demographics, community history, and past plans and policies provide the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter provides a summary* of the influences that have shaped and will continue to shape Fort Dodge.

**The complete Existing Conditions Report, developed during the first phase of the Comprehensive Plan process, is available at the City's Department of Business Affairs and Community Growth.*

Regional Setting

Located in the center of Webster County, Fort Dodge serves as the County Seat and its most populous city. The City is located approximately 92 miles northwest of Des Moines and 65 miles southwest of Mason City. It encompasses 16 square miles along the banks of the Des Moines River and is bordered by unincorporated Webster County.

Fort Dodge is accessible via US Highway 20 Business and US Route 169. The Fort Dodge Regional Airport, which is located north of the city limits, includes commercial and passenger air service. Just beyond the planning jurisdiction to the west of Fort Dodge, the Iowa Crossroads of Global Innovation industrial park hosts major agricultural and distribution-related industry.





Community History

Fort Dodge was originally established as Fort Clark by the US Army in 1850. It was renamed Fort Dodge and later platted by Henn, Williams & Company, the firm of Major William Williams, who also served as the city's first mayor. Fort Dodge became a freight center after two railroads were built through the community in 1869. These rail lines were used to transport coal, clay, and gypsum, which were mined from several local quarries. Today, the city remains a leader in gypsum production, but has diversified its economy to include animal pharmaceuticals and agricultural-based manufacturing.

Past Plans & Studies

Fort Dodge has done a significant amount of planning over the past 15 years. The role of the Comprehensive Plan is not to replace these plans, rather it is to provide them with the proper context for local improvements within the broader community-wide vision. The following plans were reviewed and assessed to determine which actions could be brought forward, modified in order to align with the community's vision, or deemed no longer applicable based on market realities, a change in local priorities, or other factors.

Fort Dodge Riverfront Master Plan (1999) that presents recommendations for significant investment along the Des Moines Riverfront, transforming it from an underutilized asset into a park-rich recreational corridor.

OHV Park Master Plan (2003) analyzed ownership, topography, vegetation, water features, and overall suitability for an off-highway vehicle park. The master plan outlines the park in two-phases. The first phase includes riding trails, parking, conservation areas, and clubhouse/restrooms, among other amenities. The second phase increases the size of the park and plans for additional riding trails.

OHV Park Character & Identity Study (2003), which aimed to brand the unique recreational park and includes recommendations for the integration of shelters, use of stone, timber, and corrugated roofs for architectural interest, and the integration of native plants.

A Master Plan for Loomis Park (2005) that includes an analysis of issues affecting Loomis Park, identifies key goals based on community input, and highlights a preferred scenario that includes a phased approach to increase accessibility and safety through improved parking, trails, and lighting.

Envision 2030 (2006), which is a strategic planning document that presents a total of 206 policy statements and 202 strategies under 14 categories.

Business Highway 20/5th Avenue South Corridors of Commerce Action Plan (2008) that provides recommendations to improve 13 miles of roadway on Business Highway 20/5th Avenue through streetscaping, redevelopment, and walking and biking infrastructure.

Fort Dodge Downtown Plan (2008) that includes strategies related to enhancing the image of Downtown, preserving historic features, and diversifying the land use and economy.

Webster County Comprehensive Plan (2008) that provides guidelines for orderly growth and development in unincorporated areas of Webster County related to demographics, housing conditions, agriculture, county facilities, land use, and the environment.

Fort Dodge Community Needs Assessment and Parks Master Plan (2009), which focuses on three key themes – sustain, enhance, and expand – in order to ensure existing and future facilities maintain sufficient, if not optimal levels of performance and maintenance.

Webster County Trail Plan (2009) that provides recommendations to increase trail connectivity throughout Fort Dodge and Webster County through a multi-phased trail extension program.

Fort Dodge Downtown Design Guidelines (2010), which divide Downtown into three character areas, each with unique instructions for building architecture, design, scale, and access.

Fort Dodge Hydroelectric and Whitewater Passage Feasibility (2010) that analyzed the feasibility of several alternative scenarios for the Hydroelectric Dam at Hydroelectric Park, finding that the benefits of recommissioning the dam for functional hydroelectric use does not justify the investment, and keeping the dam and replacing the gates for flood control is also considered a costly investment.

Cross-town Connector Impact and Implementation Plan (2010), which includes analysis and design recommendations that served as the foundation for the implementation of the Cross-town Connector in 2014.

Fort Dodge Regional Airport Master Plan (2011), which serves as the framework needed to guide future airport development that will cost-effectively satisfy aviation demand, while considering potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts. The master plan is a comprehensive study specific to the Fort Dodge Regional Airport, describing the short-, medium-, and long-term development plans for capital improvement projects and enhancements.



Region V Long Range Transportation Plan 2012-2032 (2012) that provides an assessment of current and future multi-modal transportation needs for a six county region including Webster, Calhoun, Pocahontas, Humboldt, Wright, and Hamilton.

Webster County and City of Fort Dodge Wayfinding Design Guidelines (2012), intended to create a directional signage program that guides visitors to the City’s assets and points of interest.

Fort Dodge Parking Study (2014) that provides an analysis of parking enforcement, management, supply, and demand within a 33-block study area of Downtown Fort Dodge.

Economic Development in the North Central Iowa Growth Region: Bioenergy Impacts (2014), which was commissioned by the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance to understand the impact of the bioenergy industry with regard to the attraction of additional businesses, effects of Iowa’s Crossroads of Global Innovation (ICGI), tax revenue implications, and “brain gain.”

Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance 2012 Residential Housing Market Assessment (updated in 2014) that provides information for prospective residential developers, home builders, and lenders, and stresses the need for new construction multi-family products and middle-income single family housing.

Webster County, Iowa Primary Sector Company Research Targeted Industries Analysis (2007, updated in 2015), which was commissioned by Webster County Development to assess the existing business climate of Webster County and understand challenges and potential opportunities. The analysis was updated in 2015 through a re-surveying of the same group by the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance, which supported the findings of the initial study.

Northwest River District Revitalization Plan (2015), which focuses on the enhancement of the 3rd Avenue NW/Hawkeye Avenue corridor, through four key focus areas. Potential improvements include enhanced gateways, pedestrian crossings, recreational amenities, and streetscaping, among others.

Market & Demographic Analysis

An analysis of demographic and market conditions within Fort Dodge was conducted to guide the planning process and provide the necessary background information for developing market-viable policy recommendations. This information provides a snapshot of the City’s current and projected competitive position within the region.

Data for this study were acquired from a variety of sources, including: the City of Fort Dodge, 2010 U.S. Census, the 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS), the Iowa State University Webster County Retail Trade Analysis Report Fiscal Year 2014, and ESRI Business Analyst, a nationally recognized provider of business and market data. It should be noted that this data differs from local analyses that take into account commercial, housing, employment, and/or population growth based on local initiatives. Further, as the City continues to make progress through efforts relative to workforce development, economic development, and quality of life, these numbers may change, potentially indicating an increase in population.

The following is a summary of key findings of the Market and Demographic Analysis.

Population, Age, Income & Race

- Fort Dodge’s current (2015) population is estimated at 24,881 people, and between 2010 and 2020, the city is projected to lose a small amount of population, decreasing to 24,611.
- The median age of the Fort Dodge population is projected to rise to 38.6 by 2020, up from 36.8 in 2010.
- Age cohorts gaining in share of the population are age 55 and above.
- Generation X and Millennials comprise 56.8% of the population (2014).
- The (2015) average household income in Fort Dodge is estimated at \$52,902. By 2020, it is projected to rise to \$59,992. Between 2015 and 2020, the percentage of households earning greater than \$100,000 is projected to rise from 11.7% to 14.8% of the population.
- Between 2010 and 2020, the current racial composition is projected to remain relatively unchanged, with white residents currently (2015) comprising the overwhelming majority of the city’s population (89.1%).
- The city’s Hispanic population is currently estimated at 5.7%. Between 2010 and 2020, the Hispanic population’s share of the population is projected to grow to 6.8%.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE			
Fort Dodge, IA			
Summary	Census 2010	2015	2020
Population	25,206	24,881	24,611
Households	10,275	10,232	10,163
Average Household Size	2.21	2.22	2.21
Owner Occupied Housing Units	6,728	6,646	6,607
Renter Occupied Housing Units	3,547	3,580	3,554
Median Age	36.8	38.2	38.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Esri Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

Market Implications

- While the projections show a slight decrease, the population has remained relatively stable, which is an indication that there are positive elements that are keeping people in the City and should be leveraged for further investment.
- A projected increase in the 25 to 44 age cohort is a positive indicator in that it provides new buyers for homes of those that are aging and seeking other housing options. At the same time, the aging of the population and growth of the senior population will require more senior-friendly housing stock of multi-family, townhome, and senior living options.
- Rising incomes may lead to higher demand for retail goods and services, facilitating small business growth. Additionally, higher income levels increase the ability to market Fort Dodge to national retailers and developers.

Employment

- The most recent estimates from the State of Iowa's Workforce Information Network indicate job opportunities within the region will grow by 9% between 2012 and 2022.
- In 2011, the city contained 13,287 jobs, which represents an increase of roughly 400 jobs from 2010 levels, and the first year since the 2007-2010 recession that increases occurred.
- The major occupational groups for projected job growth include healthcare; office and administrative; construction; food prep and serving; transportation and material moving; and biotech and biochem.

HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME Fort Dodge, IA

	2015	2020
<\$15,000	16.1%	15.4%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	15.6%	12.3%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	12.9%	11.2%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	16.9%	16.2%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	16.6%	18.1%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	10.2%	12.0%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7.8%	9.9%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	2.4%	3.2%
\$200,000+	1.5%	1.7%
Median Household Income	\$38,772	\$44,102
Average Household Income	\$52,902	\$59,992
Per Capita Income	\$22,777	\$25,884

Source: Esri Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates

- Nearly half of the city's jobs are either in the Healthcare and Educational Services and Retail Trade industries.
- Based on 2011 data, on any given day, nearly 3,200 residents commute to jobs elsewhere in the region (38% of the workforce). At the same time, nearly 7,800 non-residents commute into the city for work.

Market Implications

- A large percentage of area jobs are located within Fort Dodge as evidenced by the number of people that commute into the City each day from other locations as well as those that live and work locally. In that the region is expected to experience job growth over the next several years, Fort Dodge should be well positioned to capture a proportionate share of this growth.

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT Fort Dodge, IA

	2011		2010		2009		2008	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	13,287	100.0%	12,858	100.0%	13,531	100.0%	13,874	100.0%
\$1,250 per month or less	3,403	25.6%	3,240	25.2%	3,540	26.2%	3,745	27.0%
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	5,552	41.8%	5,448	42.4%	5,870	43.4%	5,849	42.2%
More than \$3,333 per month	4,332	32.6%	4,170	32.4%	4,121	30.5%	4,280	30.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2011)

Housing

- The predominant home type in Fort Dodge is a single-family detached home which represents 69% of the total housing stock. The City's current housing stock is not meeting existing and potential demand with regard to diversity of product, type, and price points.
- There is an inadequate supply of multi-family units that are desired among young professionals and seniors.
- Housing demand exceeds supply in the \$100,000 to \$175,000 price range.
- As of the end of 2014, there were only 13 housing sites with infrastructure in place and ready for development.
- The asking price of available lots in Fort Dodge is reportedly significantly higher than those in adjacent communities or the County.
- Many single family homes have been converted to rental to meet market demand.

Market Implications

- The lack of supply of mid-level housing is a critical constraint to attracting prospective residents to Fort Dodge.

Retail Market

- Based simply upon Fort Dodge's resident population and amount of retail square footage, there appears to be an excess of retail space.
- Fort Dodge and Webster County have a high retail pull factor, meaning that it draws spending from the surrounding rural areas and from its higher daytime population. In 2014, Webster County had a 1.22 pull factor, indicating its retail customer base is 22% larger than its population.
- Even though the total amount of retail square footage may exceed demand in certain sectors, opportunities exist to replace obsolete or under-performing retail space through focused redevelopment.

Market Implications

- Downtown Fort Dodge, 5th Avenue S, and 1st Avenue S are all retail destinations for both local residents and visitors.
- Recent retail development indicates the City's strong potential for future investment. This is in part reflective of an aging retail core that is beginning to undergo reinvestment and modernization. It is also an indication of investors recognizing Fort Dodge's role in the regional economy.

Retail Marketplace Profile: 10 Minute Drive Time

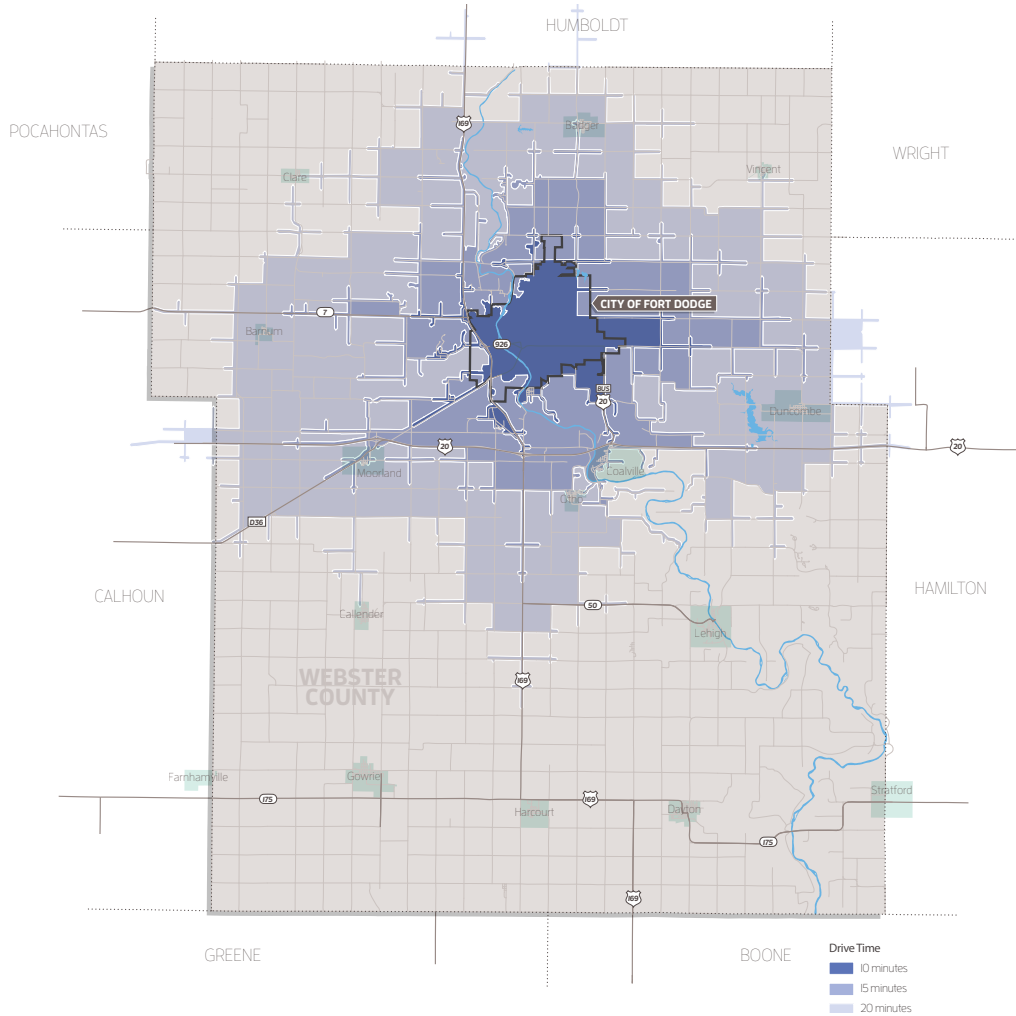
Summary Demographics

2014 Population	26,002
2014 Households	10,670
2014 Median Disposable Income	\$31,795
2014 Per Capita Income	\$21,399

Industry Summary	Demand/ Retail Potential (\$M)	Supply/ Retail (\$M)	Retail Gap (\$M)	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$227.8	\$466.0	-\$238.3	263
Total Retail Trade	\$20.9	\$420.3	-\$214.5	211
Total Food & Drink	\$21.9	\$45.7	-\$23.8	52

The Fort Dodge retail market was assessed through a 10-, 15-, and 20-minute drivetime from Downtown. The retail gap analysis compares sales and square footage ("supply") with what consumers spend ("demand"). When consumer expenditures exceed supply, that means consumers are spending dollars outside of the area, which is referred to as "leakage." When businesses earn more than consumers spend (supply > demand) in a market area, the market is saturated with consumer expenditures from both within and outside the area. This is referred to as a "surplus," and is depicted in red on the accompanying tables. Surplus, however, does not translate to lack of opportunities. The market area may contain a large amount of space in a particular category that is technically meeting the demand of the market.

Source: Esri and Dun & Bradstreet



Drive Time
 10 minutes
 15 minutes
 20 minutes

Retail Marketplace Profile: 15 Minute Drive Time

Summary Demographics

2014 Population	29,127
2014 Households	11,970
2014 Median Disposable Income	\$32,302
2014 Per Capita Income	\$21,618

Industry Summary	Demand/Retail Potential (\$M)	Supply/Retail (\$M)	Retail Gap (\$M)	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$261.1	\$541.1	-\$280.0	293
Total Retail Trade	\$236.2	\$490.2	-\$254.0	238
Total Food & Drink	\$24.9	\$50.9	-\$26.0	58

Source: Esri and Dun & Bradstreet

Retail Marketplace Profile: 20 Minute Drive Time

Summary Demographics

2014 Population	31,904
2014 Households	13,086
2014 Median Disposable Income	\$33,273
2014 Per Capita Income	\$22,058

Industry Summary	Demand/Retail Potential (\$M)	Supply/Retail (\$M)	Retail Gap (\$M)	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$294.3	\$550.1	-\$255.8	313
Total Retail Trade	\$266.5	\$498.4	-\$231.9	252
Total Food & Drink	\$27.7	\$51.7	-\$23.9	61

Source: Esri and Dun & Bradstreet



Industrial/Office Market

- The 447+ acre Crossroads of Global Innovation is and will have a significant impact on the Fort Dodge and regional economy, driving growth and impacting everything from industrial development to residential and retail.
- Fort Dodge has a diverse mix of industries that extend beyond the Crossroads of Global Innovation development, including Nestle Purina PetCare, Boehringer Ingelheim, Silgan Containers, Koch Nitrogen, and others.
- While the Fort Dodge office market contains several professional and medical uses, large scale office development is not significant. Reinvestment in existing properties and build-to-suit development for specific end users will likely be the focus of future redevelopment within the City.

Market Implications

- The City of Fort Dodge is well positioned to capitalize on and realize the residual benefits of biotech investment, with the potential to be a state leader in the bio-chem/bio-tech industry.
- Future success will be contingent on the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance, the City, and other regional partners to build off of the community's foundation and continue to improve in other areas.
- Improvements in housing, commercial options, and community amenities are integral components of attracting business, industry, and jobs to Fort Dodge.
- Fort Dodge and Webster County are well positioned with a significant global footprint which will provide a competitive local economy in an increasing global marketplace.

Existing Land Use & Development

The existing land use and development patterns in Fort Dodge are largely shaped by zoning and development regulations. Having a firm grasp on the existing land use establishes the basis for the functional framework of the City in terms of what uses exist, and where and how current development regulations might impact future development. It also sets the stage for recommendations related to annexation, growth management, revitalization, and transformation.

Existing Land Use

Fort Dodge's growth pattern has been shaped by several key characteristics:

- The Des Moines River, Lizard Creek, and other waterways have historically supported regional commerce and development.
- Dramatic contours have resulted in undeveloped portions of the community and areas that are isolated from surrounding development.
- Rail corridors and gypsum mines have supported the economic growth of the community, helping to create a historic downtown and traditional neighborhoods.
- Many institutional and industrial uses are located west of the Des Moines River, creating an opportunity for the expansion of supporting goods and services for the existing medical and educational entities.
- The Fort Dodge Regional Airport and US Highway 20 create development potential in both the north and south directions from the city center.

Land Use Categories

The Fort Dodge planning area is comprised of a variety of land uses. For purposes of establishing the existing land use analysis for the Comprehensive Plan, every parcel has been designated as one of thirteen (13) land use categories. Generally, the land use categories include residential, commercial, industrial, public, and open space uses.

Agricultural/Rural Residential

Agricultural/rural residential areas include single family homes that are set on large lots, as well as lands dedicated to farming or crop production. These areas are generally located in unincorporated Webster County or on the fringe of the Fort Dodge corporate boundary.

Single-Family Detached

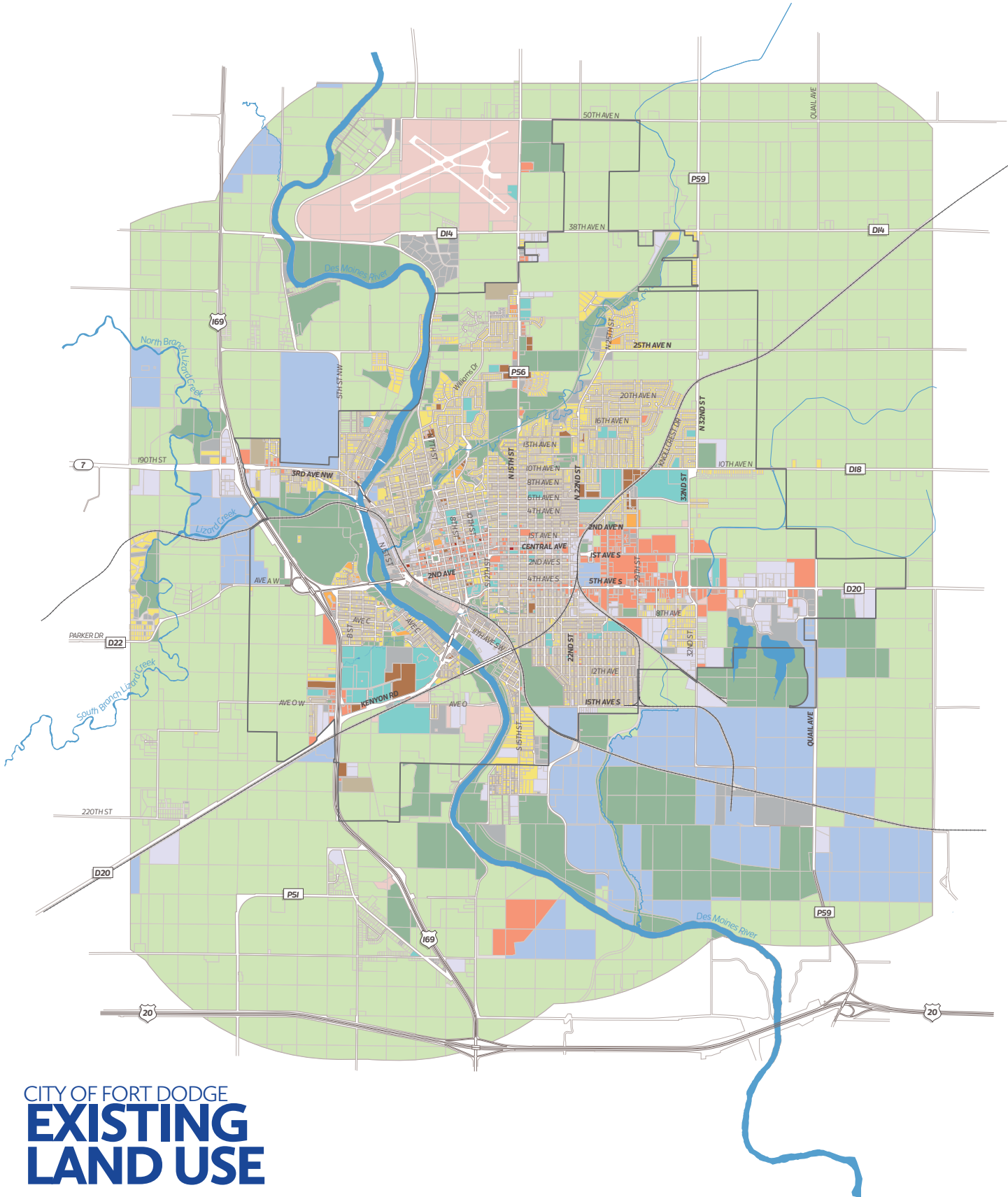
The Single-Family Detached land use category includes detached, single-unit residential structures. This is the predominant residential land use in Fort Dodge, including both older traditional neighborhoods and more contemporary subdivisions on the fringe of the city's developed area.

Single-Family Attached

This category includes homes that are typically connected horizontally and have dedicated entrances from the outside. Examples of single-family attached units include duplexes on Williams Drive and 9th Street, and townhomes on 29th Street north of 2nd Avenue North.

Multi-Family

This category includes structures that contain multiple dwelling units that can be stacked horizontally or vertically and share common amenities such as hallways and entrances. Examples include small traditional apartment buildings surrounding the downtown core, larger apartment complexes on Avenue M, west of the Des Moines River, and contemporary senior housing facilities on the east side of the community.



CITY OF FORT DODGE
**EXISTING
LAND USE**

KEY

Agricultural / Rural Residential	Multi Family	Public / Semi-Public	Light Industrial
Single-Family Detached	Mobile Homes	Parks / Open Space	Heavy Industrial
Single-Family Attached	Commercial	Transportation / Utilities	Vacant
	Mixed use		

Mobile Homes

Mobile homes include residential units built on a semi-permanent chassis that can be transportable. Fort Dodge contains five mobile home developments. Three are located on the edge of the urbanized area, while the smallest is located on a single cul-de-sac street off 8th Avenue South near South 29th Street.

Commercial

Commercial land uses include service businesses and retail stores, restaurants, entertainment venues, professional offices and services. Commercial uses in Fort Dodge are generally clustered along Central Avenue, 1st Avenue S and 5th Avenue S east of 12th Street; though smaller clusters exist along Hwy 169, 3rd Avenue NW, N 15th Street, and at several neighborhood intersections.

Mixed Use

Mixed uses include structures or sites that host a combination of residential, retail, office, restaurant, or service uses. These are most prevalent in the downtown area along Central Avenue, 1st Avenue N, and 1st Avenue S.

Public/Semi-Public

The Public/Semi-Public category includes governmental, educational, health-related, and religious land uses. Educational uses include elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, other local K-12 educational institutions, colleges, the Fort Dodge Public Library, and Blanden Museum. Health-related uses include UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center and local clinics or satellite offices.

Transportation/Utilities

Transportation/Utility uses include sites and facilities that accommodate critical infrastructure, rail corridors, airports, wastewater treatment sites, water towers, power generation and substations, and electrical support towers.

Parks/Open Space

Parks/Open Space uses include sites that are open to the public and include either passive or active recreational amenities. These include parks that are operated by the City of Fort Dodge and trail right-of-ways. It also includes open space areas that, although not designated as an official park, contain features such as woods, wetlands, bodies of water, challenging topography, etc.

Light Industrial

The Light Industrial category includes assembly, storage and distribution, and intense commercial service uses. Uses tend to generate limited impacts to surrounding uses, but may create visual impacts. This category includes development along N 21st Street between 1st Avenue N and 5th Avenue S, 5th Avenue S between 32nd Street and Quail Avenue, 3rd Avenue NW and Hwy 169, and on small lots along rail corridors.

Heavy Industrial

Heavy Industrial land uses are generally larger scale and may include the processing of food or medical products, distribution and shipping, mineral extraction, or other high-impact activities. The City's heavy industrial areas tend to be on the outskirts of the urbanized areas and are often secluded from other development by large buffers or natural areas.

Vacant

Vacant land includes parcels that contain empty lots that can reasonably be considered available for redevelopment. There are several vacant lots scattered throughout the Fort Dodge planning area, with the largest contiguous areas being residential or industrial subdivisions awaiting full build out.

Zoning & Development Controls

Development within the City of Fort Dodge is regulated by 15 zoning districts and four overlay districts. The zoning districts, originally drafted in 1978 and since incrementally updated, govern permitted uses, building bulk and scale, parking, and site design requirements. Additional site elements, such as fencing, landscaping, and signage are addressed through regulations applicable to all districts.

The residential and downtown zoning districts include subdistricts that account for nuances related to lot size or density within the parameters of the overall district. The base zoning districts include:

- AG – Agricultural
- CN – Conservation
- RS – Residential Single Family
- RM – Residential Multi- Family
- RR – Residential Redevelopment
- MH – Mobile Home
- HM – Hospital Medical
- OC – Office Commercial
- AC – Arterial Commercial
- D-1 – Downtown Core
- D-2 – Downtown Corridor
- SC – Shopping Center Commercial
- LI – Light Industrial
- HI – Heavy Industrial
- PD – Planned Development
- RH – Residential Historical

The four overlay districts establish special building and site design requirements, in addition to the standards of the base zoning district. The districts cover the 5th Avenue S corridor and portions of the downtown area. Their intent is to require a higher level of architecture and landscaping appropriate of the city's most visible and character-defining areas. The overlay districts include:

- O-CG – Corridor Gateway Overlay
- O-CR – Corridor Residential Overlay
- O-CC – Corridor Commercial Overlay
- O-DG – Downtown Gateway Overlay

Economic Development Incentive Districts

Tax Increment Financing Districts

Fort Dodge has two Urban Renewal Areas established. The largest covers the industrial parks and primary sector business areas throughout the City, as well as the riverfront and portions of downtown. The second area is dedicated to housing development. TIF Districts throughout the City allow for the collection of incremental taxes that can be used within the Urban Renewal Areas. Depending on the parameters established when an Urban Renewal Area is formed, improvements can include property acquisition, demolition, infrastructure, or other improvements intended to support development.

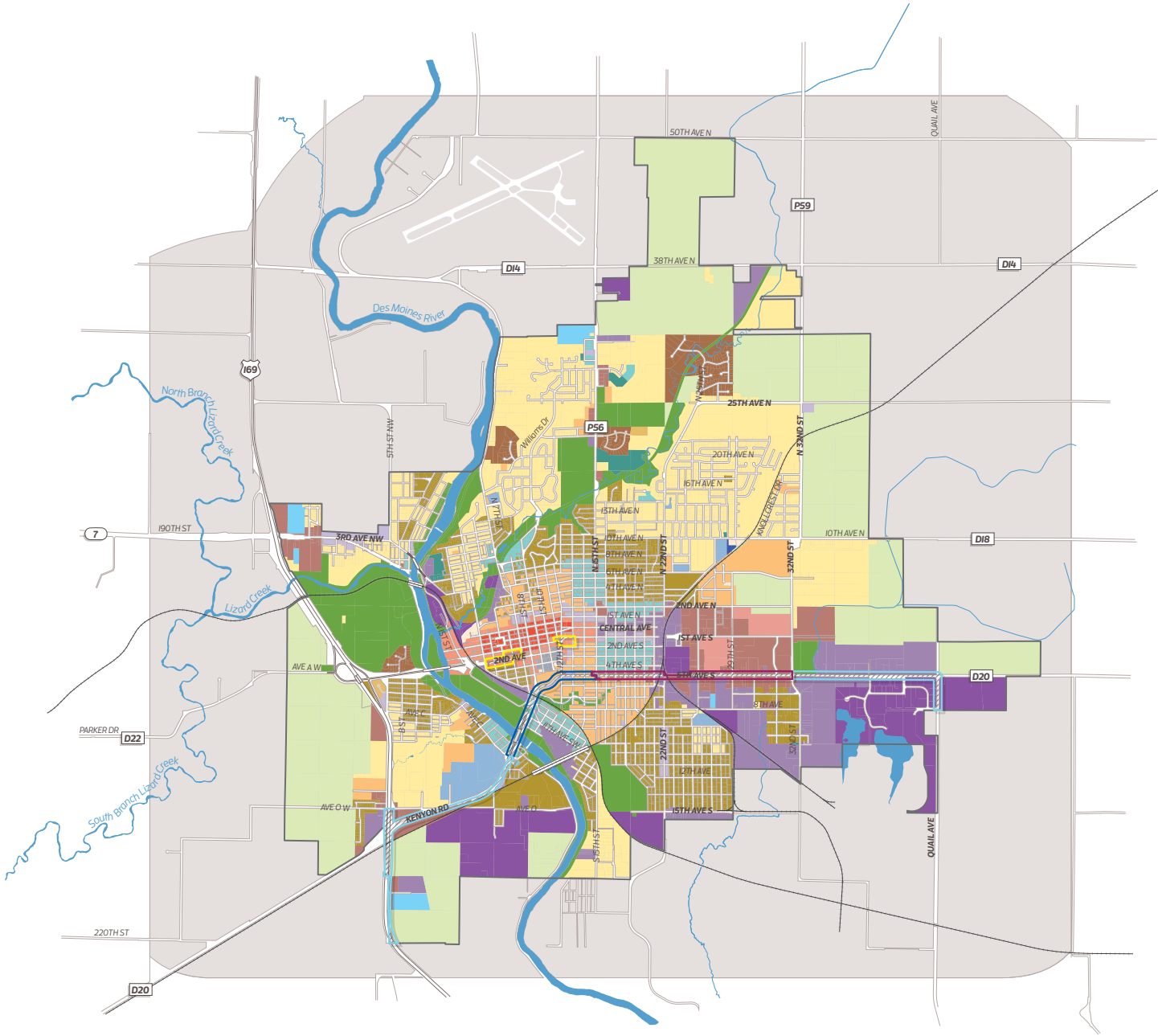
Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District

A Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) was established in downtown Fort Dodge in 1982 through a petition submitted to City Council by Fort Dodge business owners. The SSMID is a self-taxing district that uses funds for public improvements in the downtown. Historically SSMID has funded infrastructure, streetscape improvements, a recent street realignment, sidewalk improvements, pedestrian and sidewalk features, and other similar improvements. The SSMID seeks to maintain and build on the character and function of the downtown in order to draw residents and visitors into the city center.

Historic Districts

Fort Dodge contains two historic districts and nine properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many of the sites are in proximity to Downtown.

The Downtown Design Guidelines are used by the City to guide the design of structures in the downtown area and maintain compatibility with the historic precedent established by the area's traditional architecture.



CITY OF FORT DODGE CURRENT ZONING

ZONING DISTRICTS

- AG : Agricultural
- CN : Conservation
- 6RS : Residential Single-Family
- 6RS-ZL : Residential SF - ZLL
- 4RS : Residential Single-Family
- RH : Residential Historic
- MH : Mobile Homes

- RM-ZL : Residential MF - ZLL
- 4RM : Residential Multiple-Family
- 3RM : Residential Multiple-Family
- 2RM : Residential Multiple-Family
- 1RM : Residential Multiple-Family
- HM : Hospital Medical

- SC : Shopping Center Commercial
- AC : Arterial Commercial
- OC : Office Commercial
- D1 : Downtown Core
- D2 : Downtown Corridor
- LI : Light Industrial
- HI : Heavy Industrial
- PD : Planned Development

ZONING OVERLAYS

- O-CC
- O-CG
- O-CR
- O-DG



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The planning process provided several in-person and web-based opportunities for public input that garnered a great deal of insight from residents, students, business owners, and stakeholders. This chapter presents various viewpoints and ideas shared during community outreach events as they were expressed by residents, business owners and representatives, and other community stakeholders. This is intended as a summary of community input and should not be interpreted as City policy.

Public Outreach Activities

The Comprehensive Plan outreach process included both traditional “face to face” events and online outreach opportunities. They include the following:

- **Steering Committee Workshop** in December 2014, to begin the planning process and identify initial issues and opportunities.
- **Community Workshop** in February 2015, that was attended by 65 Fort Dodge residents and provided an opportunity for citizens to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, issues, and challenges facing the city.
- **Fort Dodge Business Workshop** in February 2015, that was attended by more than 40 business owners and stakeholders to discuss issues and opportunities related to the business community.
- **Key person interviews and focus groups** that were held over the course of three days with nearly 50 individuals that could provide unique insight to the Fort Dodge community.
- **Visioning Workshop** in May 2015, attended by 35 Fort Dodge residents who engaged in small group discussions and presentations regarding their vision for Fort Dodge.
- **Working groups** that were designed to tap into local expertise and build upon public outreach to establish goals and objectives related to housing; commercial areas; economic development; parks and recreation; environment and sustainability; public facilities and local government; transportation; and the Des Moines Riverfront.
- **Comprehensive Plan website** that included web-based outreach tools, meeting announcements, and a documents library.
- **Online questionnaires** that allowed residents and business owners to provide feedback regarding key issues and challenges facing Fort Dodge. This also included an update to the Envision 2030 survey administered in 2007, allowing the City to determine how attitudes and priorities may be shifting.
- **sMap**, an interactive mapping application that allowed residents to identify the location of specific issues or opportunities throughout Fort Dodge. Citizens generated 86 unique maps with a total of 1,879 data points pertaining to problematic intersections, development opportunities, public safety concerns, and several other categories.

Priority Issues & Concerns

Over the course of all public outreach events and activities, participants were asked to identify issues and challenges facing the Fort Dodge community. Throughout the many discussions and outreach activities, several key themes emerged, which are summarized here.

Community Image

The most discussed topic was the challenge of changing the perceived negative image of Fort Dodge. Participants indicated that the City is viewed in a negative light both externally and internally. While it was acknowledged that the City has made great strides to improve its image over the course of the past several years, the negative image of the community persists. Despite major improvements along 5th Avenue South, which resulted in a 50% property value increase along the corridor, the appearance of the arterial roads that lead into the City, with their mix of land uses, poor property maintenance, and lack of streetscaping, presents a poor image of the community. In addition, the outside perception of Fort Dodge is dated and does not reflect the current condition of the city, which includes recreational trails, historic preservation, plentiful employment opportunities, and a family-friendly atmosphere. Most respondents agreed that continued marketing of the community's assets will create a positive image for the City that is reflected with continued streetscape improvements and stronger code enforcement to increase property maintenance.

Neighborhood Deterioration & Housing Maintenance

Fort Dodge residents were quick to identify the deterioration of residential neighborhoods, indicating that the condition of the city's housing stock has declined. While a portion of houses remain in pristine condition, others have deteriorated due to a lack of maintenance. A lack of code enforcement, absentee landlords, unmotivated homeowners, and infrastructure conditions were noted as factors that contribute to the City's neighborhood deterioration.

Crime

Crime in Fort Dodge was considered a priority issue for a large number of participants. Residents were concerned with the safety of certain neighborhoods and areas of the city, recounting past criminal incidents.

Quality of Life

The Business Workshop participants noted the strides Fort Dodge has taken to increase the number of trail miles and improve the aesthetics of the 5th Avenue South corridor. However, businesses owners identified the city's overall "quality of life" as a deterrent to employee recruitment. Threats to the city's quality of life discussed by participants included a lack of housing options, the perception of safety, and the availability of recreational opportunities and entertainment options.

Recruitment of Qualified Labor

Fort Dodge is home to several large businesses and organizations; however, several employers face the challenge of finding qualified employees to fill the many positions. Open job positions range from entry-level operations to highly-skilled technical professionals. Business owners cited a need to recruit a qualified employment base to maintain the existing businesses and help them expand.



Community Recreational Facility

Coupled with quality of life is the community desire for a new recreational facility. Participants identified the need for a community recreational facility that would provide health, fitness, and sports activities for all ages. While the location of a potential facility varied among participants, the key factor included the need to construct a state-of-the-art facility that can accommodate various recreational and community events and activities.

Downtown Revitalization

Downtown is considered the heart of the community and its revitalization is seen as a priority. Many attendees of the public outreach events would like to see more retail shops, restaurants, and activities that would draw visitors to the existing businesses. The Cross-town Connector and the reconstruction of downtown streets brings excitement and prospects of future development and business growth to the neighborhood. The downtown farmers' market, Market on Central was noted on several occasions as a positive event that should be continued and built upon to bring residents and visitors to Downtown.

Expansion of Housing Opportunities

Housing surfaced as a key issue among most interviewees. Most residents and business owners recognized that the city has an aging housing stock and there is a need for new construction homes. Local builders generally construct less than a dozen new homes per year, which is not meeting the demand for a market that desires new single family homes at a price point that caters to first time home buyers (\$125,000 - \$175,000). Participants cited a need for housing opportunities that offer affordable, market-rate units to serve as starter homes for new employees and families.

Zoning & Approval Process

Several business owners identified the Fort Dodge zoning regulations and approval process as an area that is in need of improvement. The process to start a business is considered cumbersome with "too many hoops to jump through." More specifically, some participants indicated that the signage regulations are too restrictive, as are some of the zoning and design requirements.



Continued Communication & Collaboration

Historically, communication among the City of Fort Dodge, Webster County, state agencies, and local organizations has been less than optimal; however, community stakeholders and leaders are sensing a tide change. Newer leadership has begun to strengthen relationships between the City, municipal agencies, and service providers. The continued strength of these relationships is seen as the cornerstone for sustained improvement throughout the Fort Dodge community.

Riverfront Access & Utilization

The Des Moines River serves as a defining characteristic of the Fort Dodge community; however, participants at the public outreach events noted that there is limited access to the riverfront. The river is considered an underutilized asset that has the potential for recreational and commercial activity. While the expansion of the trail system has increased access, additional access points and increased riverfront development is needed to bring residents and visitors to the riverfront.

Trails

The Fort Dodge trail system is considered a community asset, which can be attributed to providing enhanced access to the Des Moines River and other portions of the community. There is a desire to further extend the trail system north and south along the River, as well as to destinations within the City. Trails are generally utilized for recreational purposes; however, should they reach destinations such as Downtown and commercial areas along 1st Avenue South, some feel that trail utilization would increase, serving both recreation and transportation needs.

Projects & Actions

During several outreach events, participants identified specific projects or actions that they would undertake to improve Fort Dodge. Similar to the issues identified by the public, several key projects and actions emerged from the various outreach events. These are categorized and summarized here:

New & Diverse Housing

Participants suggested several projects and strategies aimed at increasing the number and variety of housing units in the City. These include changing zoning to allow for a variety of housing types; utilizing tax incentives to build state-of-the-art housing for middle-income families; and the use of other City incentives to build multi- and single-family units.

Housing Maintenance

In response to neighborhood maintenance, participants suggested the City demolish abandoned homes and administer more strict housing regulations and code enforcement. For renter-occupied housing units, some participants felt renters should create a union or work with the City to force action of landlords to maintain their property. In addition, some participants suggested using incentives or funds for property maintenance that gets replenished through fines and liens, as well as providing funds for low-income and elderly residents for housing maintenance.

Downtown Revitalization

Suggestions to create a more vibrant Downtown included the continued renovation of downtown buildings, creating a “draw” for Downtown, and building more downtown housing through the use of incentives. More specific projects included the rehabilitation of Warden Plaza and repair and maintenance of the brick crosswalks and concrete sidewalks in Downtown.

General Retail & Commercial Development

Participants had many suggestions for retail and commercial development; however, the desire to have a greater variety of shopping and restaurants emerged on several occasions. Suggestions to have “shopping and restaurants beyond chains and fast food” included creating a new corridor of commerce extending from Highway 169 and 3rd Avenue NW to Downtown, developing the hydroelectric dam building into a restaurant, and modernizing and expanding the Crossroads Mall.

Roadway & Infrastructure Improvements

Suggestions to improve Fort Dodge’s streets included a range of actions. In general, participants would like more regular maintenance of roadways and sidewalks, which should be completed in a timely manner. This includes being strategic about roadway improvement priority projects and having a purposeful, actionable, and funded plan to address infrastructure, streets, sewer, and maintenance.

Increased Recreational Activities & Facilities

Participants would like to increase the number of facilities available for recreation throughout the City. This includes the construction of a new community recreation center that can be used for sports activities, events, and concerts; establishment of a “recreational area” near Harlan Rogers Sports Complex or increased recreational activities in general; and expansion and improvement of the trail system.

Parks & Natural Features Maintenance

Residents take great pride in the City's many parks; as such, participants recommended continued support of the Parks and Recreation Department. This includes having the budget to install new trees and maintain parks.

Industrial & Workforce Development

With the success of the Iowa Crossroads of Global Innovation, participants would like the City to continue to expand on the agriculture park and continue to actively recruit businesses. Participants also suggested the City utilize incentives to recruit businesses near the airport and other manufacturing districts. To aid in employee recruitment, several participants suggested the creation of a citywide initiative to grow and develop skilled labor, which could include the development of a training center, support of high school and college programs, and opening opportunities to apprentice in City departments and local businesses.

Fort Dodge Image

As the image and reputation of Fort Dodge continues to improve, participants would like the City to be recognized in a positive light at the local and state levels. One recommendation for achieving this was the implementation of a marketing campaign that highlights the positive growth and opportunities available in Fort Dodge. Several participants supported the creation of a Public Relations Department or dedicated staff to focus on image and marketing the community.

Strengths & Assets

Participants were asked to identify the key assets and valued strengths that should be preserved, enhanced, and celebrated moving forward. These include:

Location & Access

Fort Dodge is at the center of one of the most productive agricultural areas in the state. The City is easy to access from throughout the region and has great multi-modal transportation options.

Cultural, Educational & Recreational Amenities

Fort Dodge is home to several facilities that instill pride within the community. These include the Des Moines River, the many city parks and trails, Harlan Rogers Sport Complex, Iowa Central Community College, Downtown Historic District, Oak Hill Historic District, Blanden Museum, and many others.

Economic Development Initiatives

Fort Dodge continues to improve through the recruitment of new businesses and transformation of commercial corridors. Growth and development that has occurred within the Iowa Crossroads of Global Innovation, improvements made through the Cross-town Connector, as well as support from the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance, has sparked positive growth and change.

Community Members

The most valuable and greatly noted community strength includes the community members of Fort Dodge. Residents were noted as "caring and compassionate," highlighted by progressive and forward-thinking leadership and passionate young professionals that have returned to the community. Fort Dodge community members were noted for their community involvement and volunteerism, which contributes to the City's "small town," friendly feel.

Web-based Outreach

Resident Questionnaire

Over 130 Fort Dodge residents completed an online questionnaire. Many respondents (43%) have lived in Fort Dodge for more than 30 years and those who have lived in the community for less than ten years either moved from another central Iowa community (29%), another part of Iowa (26%) or from out of state (24%). A majority of the recent transplants moved to the City for an employment opportunity.

Respondents ranked the advantages and disadvantages of living in Fort Dodge. The highest ranked advantages include the religious/community institutions, followed by parks and recreational programming and the friendliness of community residents. The biggest disadvantages from the community include the quality of the roads, image of the community, and quality of the sidewalks. The quality of community services were ranked fairly high, including the levels of fire and police protection.

The City's housing stock is considered fair by a majority of respondents; however, poorly maintained property is considered the biggest threat to the quality of life in the community. Respondents would like to see the existing housing stock better maintained with increased investment in older parts of town, as well as the construction of single family homes, townhomes, and quality apartment buildings.

The majority of respondents (61%) believe that Fort Dodge will be a better place in five years. People feel well informed about what is happening in the community and feel that local government is effectively dealing with local issues and concerns.

Business Questionnaire

The majority of the 29 business questionnaire respondents (84%) both live and work in Fort Dodge. The majority of businesses represented are located in Downtown or along the 1st Avenue South corridor. Nearly 80% of the respondents have been in business for more than ten years. Respondents represent businesses that range from professional offices to retail and restaurant establishments, and non-profit organizations.

Business respondents noted the need for major remodeling, new façade or storefronts, new equipment, and new signage. Visibility, parking availability, and infrastructure are the greatest advantages to having a business in Fort Dodge. Conversely, taxes, local regulations, and traffic circulation are the biggest disadvantages. Respondents rated community services as good, but gave the condition of sidewalks and local streets poor ratings. Furthermore, some businesses noted that the municipal permitting and approval process could be improved.

Respondents would like more support for local businesses, as well as improved infrastructure. They noted that the greatest weaknesses of the City that affect the business community are the local workforce and quality of city infrastructure. Several respondents expanded on their questionnaire answers to emphasize the need for a better relationship with city government. Several respondents feel there are too many restrictions, which deter growth. Other respondents felt that increased marketing and residential development will further bolster the commercial business industry.

sMap

sMap is an interactive, online mapping tool that allows participants to identify location-specific issues, challenges, and assets. As individuals create their respective maps, points can be shown in aggregate to illustrate consensus around specific issues or parts of the community. It should be noted that sMap serves as one of several public input tools. Input is anecdotal and, as such, is used to identify potential issues, but does not drive recommendations from a statistically valid perspective.

Fort Dodge citizens generated 86 unique maps with a total of 1,879 points. These points are categorized by topic and summarized here.

Community Assets: 750 points

These points are considered assets to the community that should be maintained or enhanced. The majority of points centered on the City's parks and community facilities. Popular points include Oleson Park, Snell-Crawford Park, Iowa Central Community College, Fort Dodge High School and Middle School, Rosedale Rapids, and Fort Frenzy. Additional points indicate that the City's existing retail, restaurants, and commercial businesses are positive aspects of the Fort Dodge community.

Development Priority Site: 371 points

Development Priority Sites are intended to locate areas within the City that should be developed or redeveloped. Several points identified the existing Skate Park west of Snell-Crawford Park as needing to be redeveloped, and one participant referenced a skate park in Lakeland, Florida as an example of a potential improvement. Nearly a dozen points were clustered at the former Sunkissed Meadows Golf Course as a potential development site for a business district, new park, or casino. Additional clusters of points identified Fort Dodge Senior High as a site in need of redevelopment, indicating a need for updates at the school. The majority of points recommending development priority sites were centered on the Crossroads Mall, identifying a need to redevelop this retail center.

Problematic Intersection: 124 points

This category of points was used to identify intersections that pose safety concerns or impact the smooth flow of traffic. The primary concentrations occurred at the intersections of 6th Avenue North and North 22nd Street, 2nd Avenue North and North 22nd Street, and 1st Avenue South and North 15th Street. These intersections were noted to have high traffic volumes and long delays, especially for left hand turns at 1st Ave S and 15th St. Suggestions included adding a roundabout to keep traffic moving.

Public Safety Concerns: 100 points

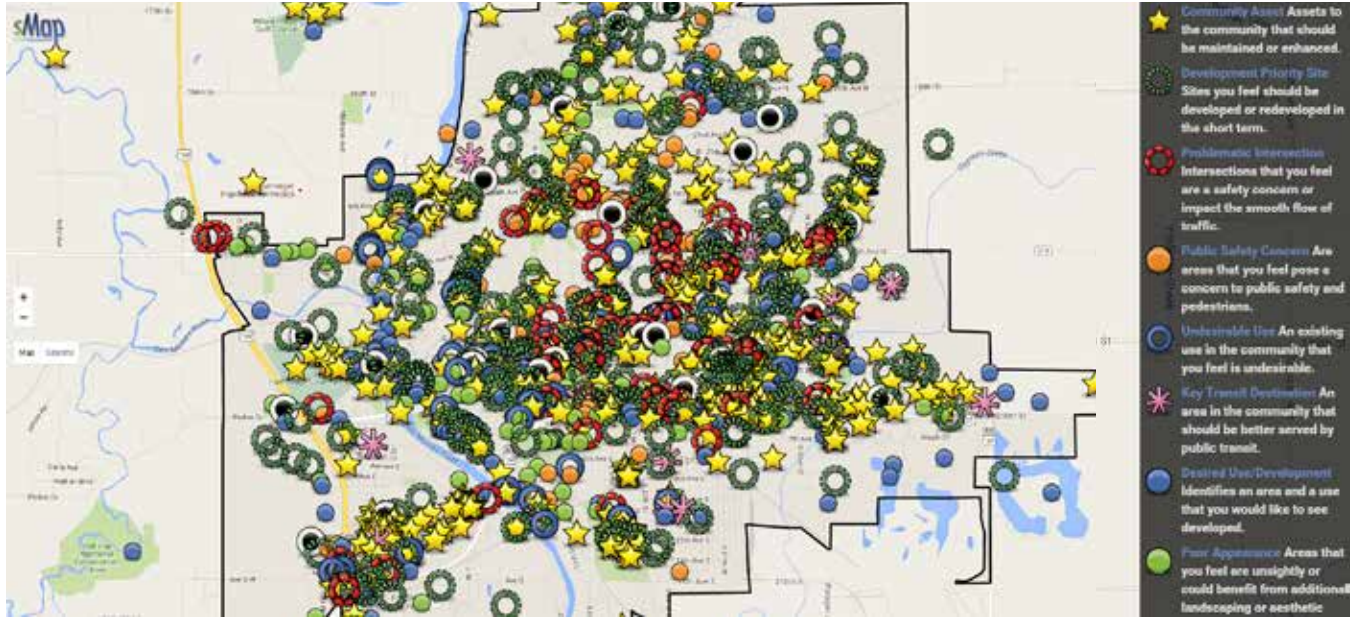
The majority of public safety concern points that participants identified related to roadway conditions. Potholes, maintenance, and roadway design were commonly identified safety issues, as was speeding. Additional points related to transportation included the need for safer trail crossings and bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Other points noted neighborhoods that were perceived by participants to be areas where crime may occur.

Poor Appearance: 200 points

These points were used to identify areas that are unsightly or could benefit from additional landscaping or aesthetic improvements. A concentration of points followed the Mason Drive corridor, citing constant trash and dumping. Residential areas and homes with poor property maintenance were also noted.

Key Transit Destination: 23 points

Community members identified several areas that should be better served by public transportation. Fort Frenzy received six of the 23 points, while other points called for increased DART service to the neighborhood near the area of 12 Avenue South and S 23rd Street, and the neighborhood west of the Des Moines River, just south of 2nd Avenue South.



Desired Use/Development: 236 points

sMap users identified uses that they would like to see developed. Similar to the Development Priority points, community members overwhelmingly identified Crossroads Mall as an area that is need of redevelopment. Suggestions included redeveloping the mall in general and recruiting more businesses such as Panera, Texas Roadhouse, and Cold Stone Creamery. Suggestions for the development of Sunkissed Meadows included a boardwalk, riverfront development, and a community garden. Community members also identified Oleson Park as needing increased programming for the Band Shell.

Undesirable Use: 46 points

These points were used to identify developments or land uses that are undesirable. Community members identified the former Phillips Middle School, skate park, and the gas station at 2nd Street NW near 3rd Avenue NW.

Other: 36 points

The Other category provides an opportunity to identify issues, assets, or other areas of concern. These points identified a wide number of issues and topics. A large number of points referred to poor road conditions, while another point noted the need for more parking Downtown.



LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan identifies appropriate land uses and policies for the future development of the City of Fort Dodge and its growth areas. It builds upon the existing land use pattern in Fort Dodge, and is guided by market and demographic analysis and input provided by the Fort Dodge community.

In addition to general land use policies, the Land Use Plan contains more detailed recommendations for residential, commercial, and industrial areas. These policies and recommendations are intended to be a flexible guide for growth and development that adapts to changing market conditions and public preferences in order to achieve the community vision for Fort Dodge.

Land Use Categories

All parcels in Fort Dodge and the planning area are categorized under one of the following eleven land use categories. Supporting policies for each type of land use are found in subsequent chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

Agriculture/Rural Residential

This category includes land dedicated to the raising, cultivating, and harvesting of crops and livestock. It also includes single-family homes as a component of a farmstead, and large-lot single-family residences in a generally rural setting.

Single-Family Detached

This category includes detached, single-unit residential structures. This land use should remain the predominant residential land use in Fort Dodge; however, the density of single-family detached neighborhoods and parcels can vary. In more dense neighborhoods, single-family detached areas may also include scattered duplexes, townhomes, or small multi-family buildings that are generally compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Single-Family Attached

This category includes homes that are typically connected horizontally, such as townhomes and duplexes. Units have dedicated entrances from the outside and can be multiple stories, but units are not stacked vertically. These areas may also include scattered detached residences or multi-family buildings.

Multi-Family

This category includes structures that contain multiple dwelling units such as apartment buildings and condominiums. Units are stacked horizontally and vertically, sharing common hallways and entrances from the outside. In Fort Dodge, these areas should be clustered around key focal points, such as Downtown, Iowa Central Community College, the Northwest River District, and the Corridor of Commerce; among other areas.

Mixed Use

This category includes structures that host a combination of residential, retail, office, restaurant, or service uses. Typically, commercial uses are located on the ground floor with office or residential uses on the upper floors. Mixed Use areas are most appropriate for Downtown Fort Dodge and the Northwest River District, where increased residential or office density could complement ground floor retail, restaurants, and entertainment.

Commercial

This category includes a wide variety of commercial uses including services, retail stores, professional offices, restaurants, and entertainment venues. These activities may be located along major corridors, or at nodes throughout the community.

Parks & Open Space

This category includes both public parks owned by the City of Fort Dodge or Webster County, private open spaces, and public and/or private natural areas generally not suitable for development due to the presence of woods, wetlands, bodies of water, challenging topography, etc. These include the Des Moines River corridor, Lizard Creek and Soldier Creek corridors, and other important natural areas.

Light Industrial/Business Park

This category includes activities related to product assembly, storage and distribution, low intensity fabrication, and intense commercial service uses. These uses tend to generate limited impacts to surrounding uses compared to heavier industry. This category also includes professional office or administrative functions related to industrial activities.

Heavy Industrial

This category includes land uses intended for large-scale production and manufacturing that may have significant visual, noise, or environmental impacts on adjacent areas. The City's heavy industrial uses include the regional landfill, larger manufacturing facilities with chimneys, cooling towers, storage tanks, and furnaces, as well as businesses requiring significant areas dedicated to the storage of materials or whose operations are performed in the open-air. These land uses are located in areas that tend to be located near the edge of Fort Dodge and away from its urban core.

Public/Semi-Public

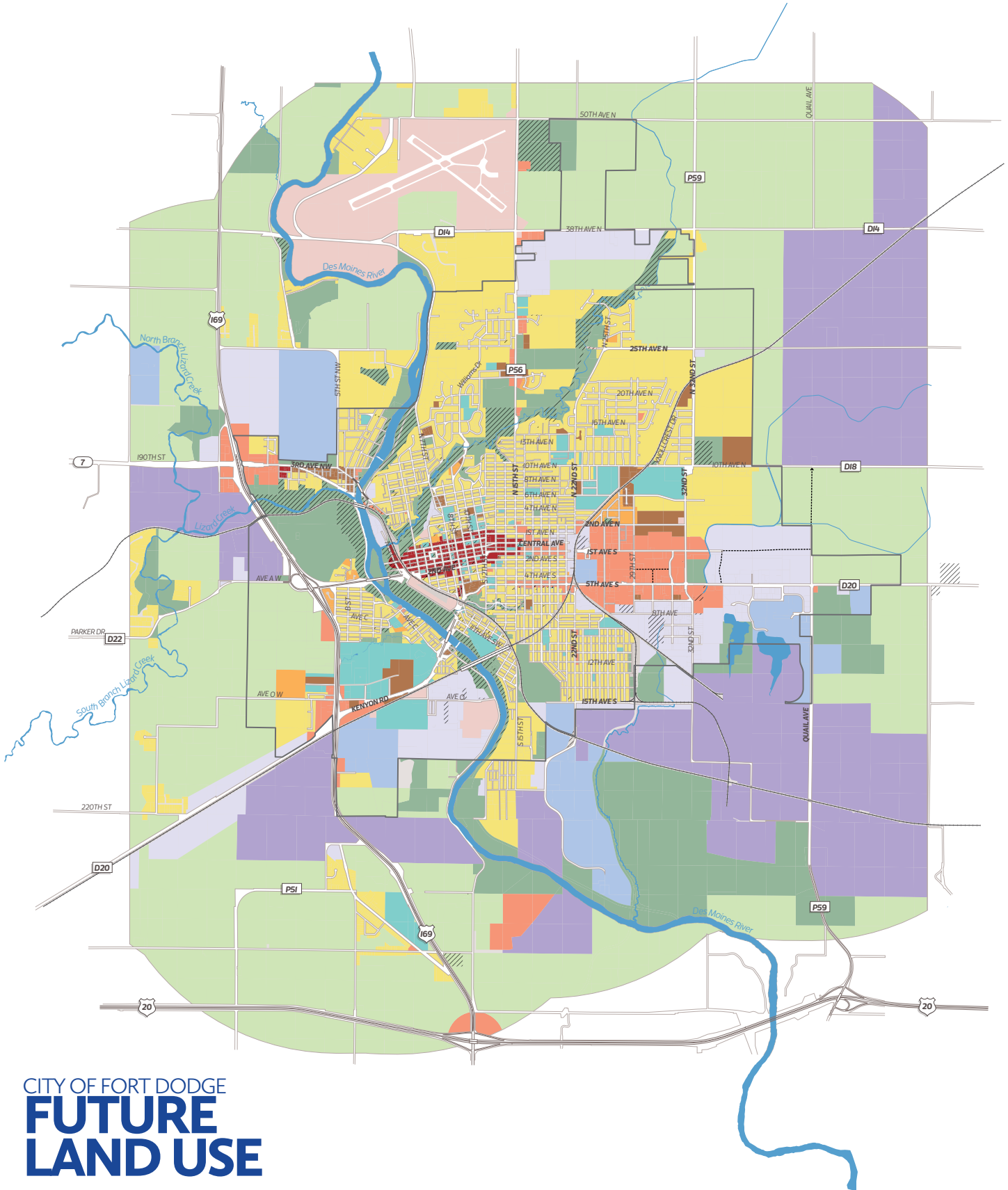
This category includes governmental, educational, health-related, and religious land uses. Government uses include offices and facilities that are publicly-owned and relate to the operation of the City and other agencies or forms of local government. Educational uses include public schools, private educational institutions, Iowa Central Community College (ICCC), and the Fort Dodge Public Library. Health-related uses include UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center and local clinics or satellite offices. Religious uses include facilities used by a congregation for gathering and worship.

Transportation/Utilities

This category includes sites and facilities that accommodate critical infrastructure such as wastewater treatment sites, water towers, power generation and substations, and telecommunications. Rail corridors and the Fort Dodge Regional Airport are significant transportation infrastructure within this land use category.

Mining

Mining uses include land where rock or minerals are extracted in open-pit operations. There are several active mining operations within the planning area. Mining uses are generally well-separated from residential areas; however, they may affect surrounding neighborhoods through noise, dust, vehicle traffic, and other factors.



CITY OF FORT DODGE
**FUTURE
 LAND USE**

KEY

Agricultural / Rural Residential	Multi-Family	Public / Semi-Public	Light Industrial
Single-Family Detached	Commercial	Parks / Open Space	Heavy Industrial
Single-Family Attached	Mixed use	Transportation / Utilities	Mining



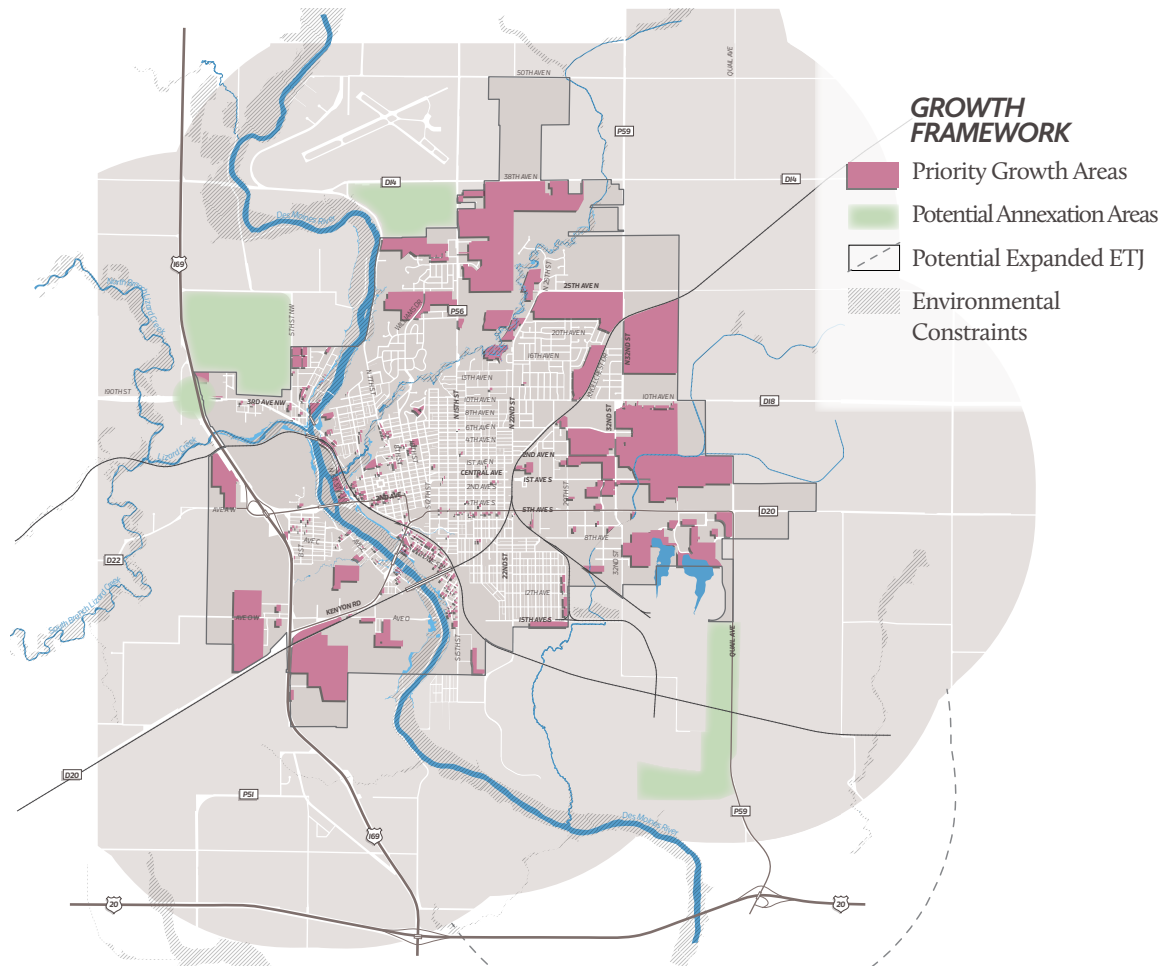
Growth & Annexation

The availability of land is a key asset to the Fort Dodge community. However, the way in which growth is managed will impact investment in infrastructure and services, the character of the community, and the ability to attract new investment to the area.

The following goals and objectives build on the continued implementation of the City's Annexation Policy. The Annexation Policy encourages future growth within the City's existing corporate limits and in areas where utilities and services can be sufficiently provided.

GOAL 1

Create long-term growth that builds upon existing investment, maximizes the efficiency and performance of municipal infrastructure and services, and reflects the community's vision for Fort Dodge.



OBJECTIVE
1

Encourage infill development in areas already within the City's boundaries.

The Future Land Use Plan identifies areas of the community where emerging employment and industrial growth can be accommodated. Based on reconnaissance conducted in December 2014, Fort Dodge was found to include more than 300 acres of vacant land. Many of these vacant parcels are within or adjacent to established areas, and do not include agricultural or designated open space area. Some areas can easily be served by extensions of existing infrastructure and services.

The City should prioritize infrastructure investment in these areas in order to support responsible growth that accomplishes the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan related to community and economic development, character, and housing.

OBJECTIVE
2

Plan for and prioritize annexation to ensure development in areas where it is most effective and efficient.

While growth should be concentrated within existing City boundaries, it should not be precluded from unincorporated areas. As such, the City should consider areas that are best suited for growth and annexation. Potential unincorporated growth areas are identified within the Growth Framework Map on the previous page. These areas may accommodate future growth based on the presence of existing infrastructure service and/or a firm understanding of the required infrastructure necessary to support future growth. The City should continue to require annexation agreements for parcels where city-sponsored infrastructure extensions occur outside of existing municipal boundaries. This prevents leapfrog development, ensures orderly growth, and provides for adequate delivery of services. As growth occurs, the City should ensure new development within its 2-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction meets established City infrastructure regulations (i.e. stormwater, sanitary sewer, water, streets, etc.).

OBJECTIVE
3

Utilize existing anchors as catalysts for new development.

Fort Dodge has several anchor institutions and business districts, such as ICGI, ICCG, Downtown Fort Dodge, the Des Moines River, UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center, and the 5th Avenue S/1st Avenue S commercial area, which have a regional draw.

The City should leverage these areas as catalysts for new development that complements the anchor use. For example, development near the Fort Dodge Regional Airport should be well-coordinated with the Airport Commission to attract businesses that have a need to be in close proximity to an airport or locate on airport property to access the airfield. Areas near Downtown and the Eastside Commercial District should have dense residential housing options within walking distance and land uses near ICCG could include research facilities or commercial service uses that cater to students, faculty, and staff.

OBJECTIVE
4

Continue to coordinate closely with Webster County to assess the impacts of proposed development in unincorporated parts of the planning area.

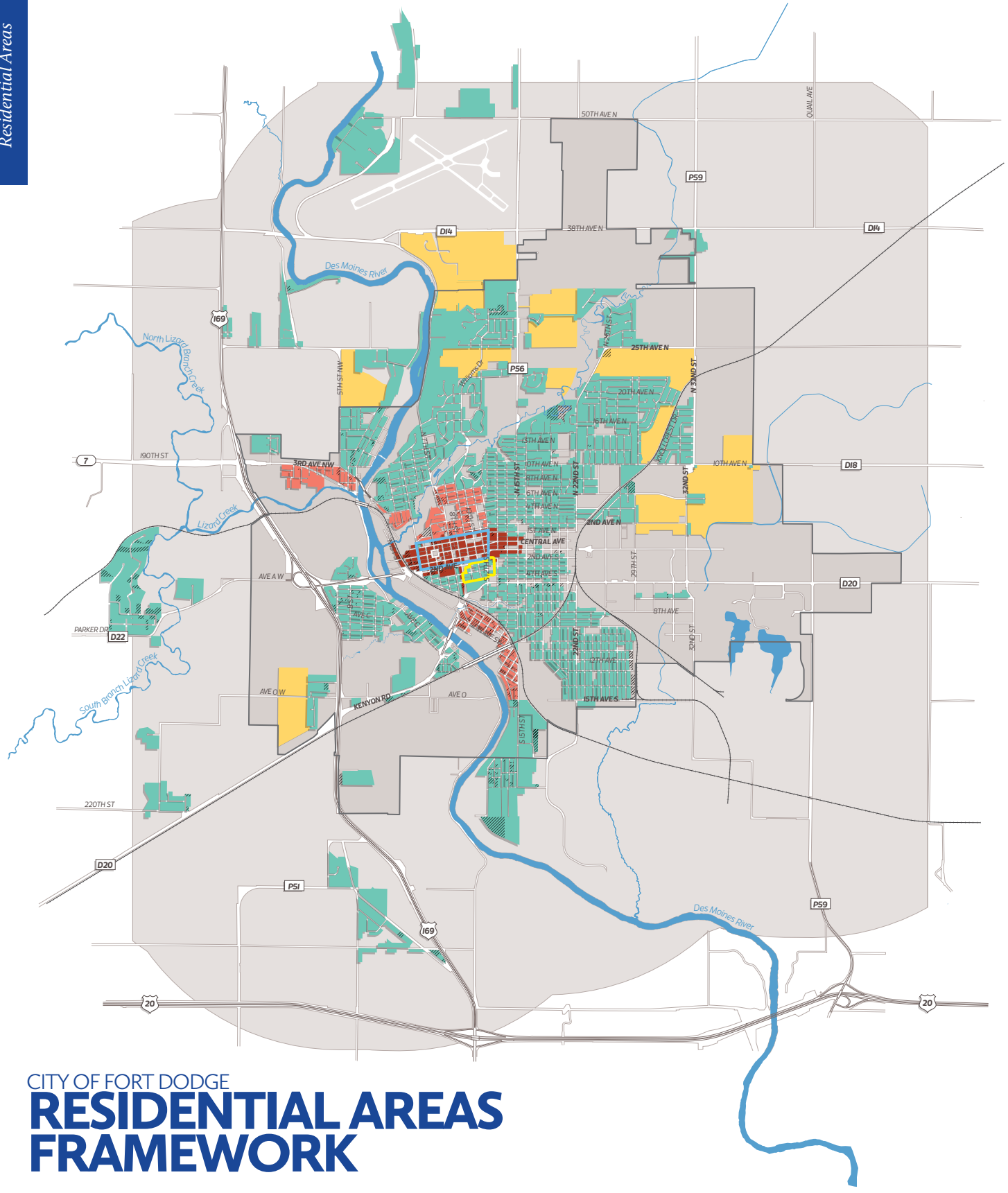
Much of the anticipated future growth in Fort Dodge can be accommodated in infill areas within the City's boundaries; however, the City and County should continue to work closely to review development proposals for industrial sector businesses via inter-jurisdictional agreements. Inter-jurisdictional agreements should identify roles of each jurisdiction and continue to provide the City the opportunity to review subdivision proposals in order to determine impacts relative to infrastructure and growth patterns. This may include a cost-benefit analysis of development proposals, potential installation of utility infrastructure for future connection to City utilities, as well as working with the County to provide City control of zoning within the 2-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction boundary.

OBJECTIVE 5 Utilize zoning and subdivision regulations to require development to respect critical natural features that support natural habitats, help manage stormwater, and define the unique character of the community and region.

The City’s existing zoning ordinance includes a Conservation District that prohibits active development on designated parcels and a Site Plan Ordinance that establishes greenspace area minimums for non-residential properties. The Conservation Districts tend to be located along the Des Moines River corridor and local waterways and the Site Plan ordinance does not regulate where special care should be taken for protecting the natural environment. The City should protect natural features on all lots by amending its subdivision and zoning regulations to support cluster development for new subdivisions, requiring buffers against natural features as a component of site design and reduction of stormwater runoff. City-owned lands that contains natural features should be preserved, except where useful for development that is in accordance with the Land Use Plan.

OBJECTIVE 6 Review and update the entire extent of the City’s Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to ensure predictability for future development.

The City’s existing zoning and subdivision ordinances have undergone a number of changes since their adoption in 1978 and 1984, respectively; resulting in redundancy, conflicts, etc. To ensure predictability in the development review process and clarity in the requirements, both ordinances should be reviewed and updated to reflect the Future Land Use Plan and community’s goals, identified within this Plan.



CITY OF FORT DODGE
**RESIDENTIAL AREAS
FRAMEWORK**

- KEY**
- Residential Growth Areas
 - Maintenance & Stabilization Areas
 - Fort Dodge Downtown Historic District
 - Revitalization Areas
 - Downtown
 - Oak Hill Historic District

Housing & Residential Neighborhoods

Fort Dodge has a mix of housing in terms of age, size, and condition. With a growing economy and the potential for new employment, the maintenance of neighborhoods and the development of new market-responsive housing is a critical component to the long-term growth of the community. The recommendations in this section address three general categories of neighborhoods in Fort Dodge; older neighborhoods that require investment in maintenance and rehabilitation (Revitalization Areas), stable neighborhoods that should be maintained and strengthened over time (Maintenance and Stabilization Areas), and future residential growth areas (Growth Areas) that should reflect the character of the community. (Goals 1-3 below and their respective objectives correspond to the Residential Areas Plan map.) A fourth set of objectives addresses the community’s need to provide housing that will accommodate a variety of emerging demands, including young professionals, Millennials, and senior citizens.

Housing & Residential Neighborhoods: Revitalization Areas

GOAL 2

Create walkable and attractive neighborhoods in Fort Dodge’s urban center through reinvestment in older housing stock and Downtown living.

OBJECTIVE 1 **Adopt new zoning regulations that remove barriers to reinvestment.**

Many of the areas in the most need of reinvestment are older neighborhoods near Downtown or those along the Des Moines River that used to be more isolated before urban expansion occurred. These areas include lots that are in the 6RS (Residential Single-Family), 2RM (Residential Multi-Family), or 3RM (Residential Multi-Family) zoning districts. The City should review the standards for these and other residential districts and, where necessary, amend them to allow for characteristics that can enhance the quality of the housing and its competitiveness within the City’s residential market. This could include amendments to lot coverage standards that limit horizontal additions, height standards that inhibit vertical additions, parking standards, or others.

OBJECTIVE
2

Develop programs and incentives to support housing rehabilitation and maintenance.

Many of Fort Dodge’s older homes may be difficult to maintain due to the level of deterioration over time and the cost of properly rehabilitating them according to their original character. To help offset these costs, the City should consider the development of incentives or programs to support home owner renovation. Potential programs include:

- Matching grants for exterior façade repair and rehabilitation;
- Continue to offer property tax abatements for more substantial renovations that upgrade infrastructure, structural components, or home layouts;
- Partnerships with local material retailers and craftsmen to volunteer materials or expertise to assist senior citizens or disabled residents with basic home repair projects;
- Partnerships with schools to encourage students to volunteer time to assist residents with basic maintenance tasks;
- Neighborhood pride programs, such as annual garden walks, historic tours, or awards of recognition for residents who have invested in the maintenance of their homes; and,
- Distribution of educational information that details how to maintain older homes.

OBJECTIVE
3

Grow the population of residents in Downtown Fort Dodge through the development of attractive and diverse multi-family housing.

Over the past several years, Downtown Fort Dodge has seen an influx of new residential units; however, the larger redevelopments have targeted senior citizens. The City should continue to support residential investment in the community’s core through the reuse of mixed-use buildings.

These buildings provide the opportunity for a variety of housing types – from small apartments to larger luxury units – that would appeal to senior citizens, young professionals, and students.

OBJECTIVE
4

Establish a residential infill program that supports investment in new housing that is compatible with the surrounding context.

Throughout the residential revitalization areas identified in the Residential Areas Plan, there are several vacant lots or homes that are dilapidated beyond reasonable repair. The City should establish a neighborhood infill program that fosters quality new housing investment by continuing to assist with property acquisition and demolition of compromised structures, supporting infrastructure upgrades, and property tax abatements for infill housing that meets design requirements related to setbacks, scale, style, materials, and other defining characteristics.

OBJECTIVE
5

Utilize code enforcement as a means of improving housing conditions and encouraging rehabilitation.

The City of Fort Dodge Code Enforcement Division is tasked with ensuring local building codes and regulations are met. However, residents often feel that enforcement is related to regulatory control rather than maintenance of the quality of life of all citizens. The City should enhance code enforcement practices through the development of informational brochures that demonstrate the benefits of code compliance for the violating property and surrounding properties, by providing follow-up information to home owners regarding appropriate solutions to attain compliance, and by establishing and structuring fines to return some portion of paid citations once compliance is achieved. Special attention should be given to multi-family housing developments; ensuring their trash receptacles are properly stored and screened.



*Housing & Residential
Neighborhoods: Maintenance
& Stabilization Areas*

GOAL 3

Sustain the long-term vitality and character of Fort Dodge’s thriving neighborhoods through proactive policies and support for property owners.

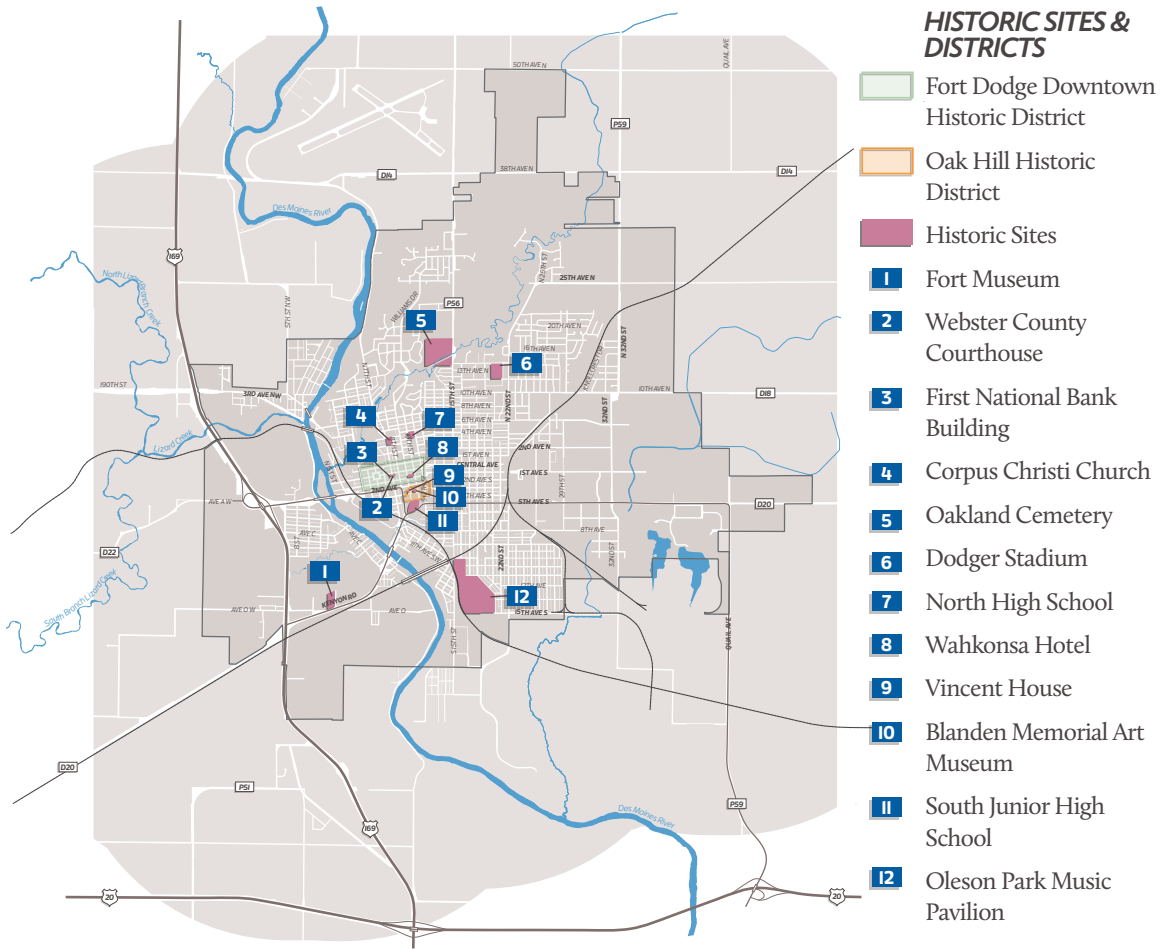


Work with property owners to maintain historic properties, districts, and residential structures.

Fort Dodge has several sites registered as historic places or contributing structures that help establish the character and identity of the community. The City should work with property owners to ensure they are properly maintained over time. This includes continuing to enforce

the Downtown Design Guidelines for projects in the downtown receiving incentives. The City should also provide incentives such as a tax abatement program for qualifying improvements, expedited review and approval for improvements that enhance historic character, and collaboration in seeking outside grant funding for restoration and rehabilitation.

In order to expand on existing historic preservation efforts, the City should consider other areas that could be established as future historic district(s), and consider additional zoning regulations in existing and new historic districts to ensure viability of said districts through implementation of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. The City should support and educate property owners about historic tax incentives and the benefits of historic preservation.



FORT DODGE HISTORIC STRUCTURES & DISTRICTS
Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Site Name	Location
Corpus Christi Church	416 N. 8th St.
First National Bank Building	629 Central Ave.
Fort Dodge Downtown Historic District*	1st Ave N, Central Ave, and 1st Ave S from 3rd St on West to 12th St on East
South Junior High School	416 S 10th St.
North High School	1015 5th Ave. N
Oak Hill Historic District*	8th-12th St., 2nd-3rd Ave.
Oakland Cemetery	1600 N. 15th St.
Oleson Park Music Pavilion	1400 Oleson Park Ave.
Vincent House	824 3rd Ave. S.
Wahkonsa Hotel	927 Central Ave.
Webster County Courthouse	701 Central Ave.

* Indicates the historic district includes a number of individually eligible and contributing structures



OBJECTIVE
2 **Ensure the maintenance of public spaces, neighborhood cleanup, and senior assistance programs and events through interdepartmental coordination, capital programming, public service agencies, and other organizations.**

The types and condition of public spaces—streets, alleys, parks, etc.—varies throughout Fort Dodge’s neighborhoods. The condition of these spaces helps define the character of a neighborhood and establishes a standard for the maintenance of private properties. The City should continue to coordinate closely among Public Works, Parks Recreation and Forestry, and other municipal departments to ensure neighborhood maintenance is addressed through both annual capital programs and as-needed responsiveness to resident requests.

Fort Dodge’s population is experiencing an increase in older age cohorts, resulting in more residents who may have a hard time maintaining their homes or properties over time. The City should foster coordination among local schools, neighborhood associations, and others to establish a student volunteer program to support senior citizens in undertaking basic home maintenance, such as lawn care, fence repair, and exterior washing.



*Housing & Residential
Neighborhoods: Growth & Diversity*

GOAL 4

Create new neighborhoods that reflect the character and identity of Fort Dodge and provide a variety of housing options that appeal to different demographics, socioeconomics, and consumer preferences.



Support future development that provides a variety of housing types and designs.

Fort Dodge’s existing neighborhoods—including traditional residential areas and more contemporary subdivisions—provide a variety of lot sizes, housing types, and architectural styles. At the same time, residential market trends are providing the demand for a variety of housing types (such as townhouses and small lot single-family.) As new housing development occurs, subdivisions should include lot and housing styles that are both contextually appropriate compared to surrounding neighborhoods and responsive to the market in terms of housing type and sale price. Within a subdivision, housing design should vary to avoid “cookie cutter” neighborhoods. The City should encourage varied housing types, contextual design, and anti-monotony.

OBJECTIVE 2 Encourage new neighborhoods to meet high standards for maintenance and design.

New subdivisions throughout the country often use Homeowners Associations as a means of funding shared amenities and ensuring a high level of maintenance. As new subdivisions are approved and developed, the City should encourage developers to establish Homeowners Associations with bylaws that include high standards for property maintenance and housing design.

OBJECTIVE 3 Utilize subdivision standards to create attractive public spaces in new neighborhoods

Title 16 of the Fort Dodge Municipal Code includes regulations related to the subdivision of land. Several standards relate to the design of the public realm, including street right-of-way width, the requirement to bury utilities, and the provision of sidewalks. However, there are no requirements for parkways, trees, or other elements that help define neighborhood character. There are also no requirements for the preservation of open space or provision of trails. The City should amend the Subdivision Ordinance to include standards related to these elements in order to ensure that future neighborhoods reflect the character of Fort Dodge's existing neighborhoods, and provide the types of amenities being sought by potential home buyers considering Fort Dodge as a location to live.

OBJECTIVE 4 Utilize Planned Development to support subdivisions with varying housing types.

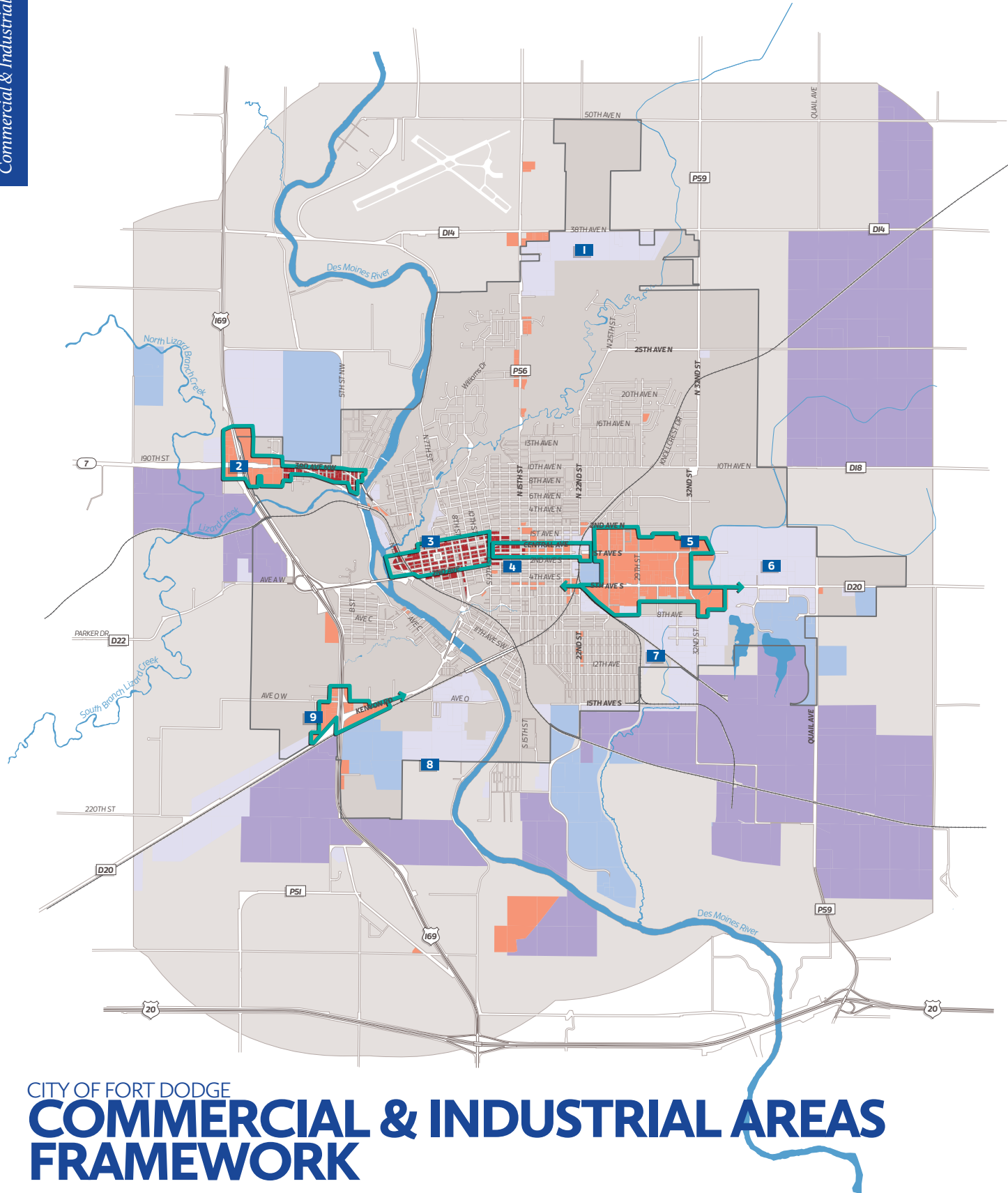
Section 17.07.15 of the City's Zoning Ordinance provides for Planned Development (PD). PD allows for flexible and creative development through an approval process that allows an applicant to work with the City to agree upon characteristics that are mutually beneficial. The City should encourage and/or require Planned Development review for future subdivisions, and consider amending standards for review to be less cumbersome and consider including provisions for housing variety in accordance with the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

OBJECTIVE 5 Establish a short-term incentives program to bolster mid-range housing development.

Many of Fort Dodge's employers report challenges in recruiting young professionals to the community. Much of this, as demonstrated in the 2014 Residential Housing Market Assessment, is due to a lack of housing options that appeal to this group. In Fort Dodge, land costs are driving such housing to an unaffordable price point. The City has begun working with the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance, Webster County Improvement Corporation and others to support development of housing along Williams Drive in an area known as the Theiss Property. The City should continue to support this housing development and others. To further promote housing development, the City should establish a short-term incentives package to reduce the cost of the development of housing in the \$125,000-\$175,000 market-rate price range. Reductions in cost could be provided through municipal infrastructure development, land acquisition assistance, and/or reduced permitting fees. This package should be implemented with the intent that it can be eliminated once the market-driven supply and demand balance for such housing are realized.

OBJECTIVE 6 Continue to work with local employers and the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance to identify target housing markets.

In 2014, the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance (GFDGA) released an update to its Residential Housing Market Assessment. The document provides information to City staff and officials, prospective developers, builders, owners, lenders, and other parties about the existing market conditions and housing demand in the community. The GFDGA also regularly surveys local employers to assess their ability to attract a professional workforce to Fort Dodge based on housing, municipal services, safety, culture, and other characteristics of the community. The City should continue to work closely with the GFDGA and local employers to assess local housing demand and attract developers who can effectively provide specific housing products.



CITY OF FORT DODGE
**COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS
FRAMEWORK**

KEY

- | | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Commercial | Heavy Industrial | 1 Airport Business Park | 6 Cross-town Industrial Park |
| Mixed use | Mining | 2 Northwest River District | 7 Industrial Transition |
| Light Industrial | Commercial Character Areas | 3 Downtown | 8 West Industrial Park |
| | | 4 Cross-town Connector | 9 Westside Commercial |
| | | 5 Eastside Commercial District | |



Commercial & Industrial Areas Plan

The Commercial & Industrial Areas Plan provides more detailed and site-specific recommendations for the City's many commercial and industrial districts. It provides a framework for the improvement, development, and revitalization of each commercial and industrial district, and establishes clear policies for the City of Fort Dodge moving forward.

The Commercial & Industrial Areas Framework Map shown on the previous page demonstrates future areas for industrial and commercial land uses, as well as key districts for growth and development. The Map also outlines specific Character Areas, which are expanded upon within Commercial & Industrial Areas: General Commercial Objective 3.

Commercial & Industrial Areas: General Commercial

GOAL 5

Create attractive and vibrant commercial areas that demonstrate distinct design characteristics and positively contribute to the identity of Fort Dodge.

OBJECTIVE
1

Consider and amend existing commercial design standards to create consistent and attractive development.

Fort Dodge uses design standards and overlay zoning to address building and site design in the Downtown and along the 5th Avenue S corridor. This approach should be considered for other commercial areas in the City, especially on the US 169 corridor, Cross-town Connector, 1st Avenue South Corridor, and East Retail Area. Such design standards should clearly and concisely address building scale, siting, orientation, access and circulation, materials, massing, transparency, awning and canopies, and signs.

Within Downtown Fort Dodge, the Downtown Design Guidelines ensure new development is compatible with historic structures by reflecting traditional building components and characteristics. Similarly, design guidelines within other commercial districts will serve to reinforce their desired character and support attractive and active places. The City should continue to support existing design guidelines, as well as develop commercial design standards to create consistent and attractive development within its other commercial districts.

OBJECTIVE
2

Integrate public gathering and open space areas into the commercial environment.

Many successful commercial areas include open space that allows patrons to gather and enjoy a unique atmosphere. In Downtown Fort Dodge, the City Square and the Central Avenue Pavilion provide space for events, gatherings, and outdoor commerce. As other commercial areas evolve, the City should work with developers to integrate open spaces that foster activity. They could be implemented through public acquisition and development, or through planned development agreements with property owners.

OBJECTIVE
3

Distinguish commercial areas through varying streetscape designs to create unique and recognizable districts, and establish maintenance of such.

Fort Dodge has generally well-defined commercial areas that provide a significant contribution to the identity of the City. For example, the streetscape improvements on 5th Avenue South not only improved the appeal of local businesses that line the corridor, but it also gave the street a unique identity. The character of Fort Dodge’s commercial areas varies, and therefore, each should have a distinct streetscape program in order to provide a unique sense of place for each district. Commercial character areas include:

- Cross-town Connector (1st Avenue South)
- Corridor of Commerce (5th Avenue South)
 - » Westend Mixed-Use District
 - » Eastend Commercial District
 - » Eastend Service/Business District
- Downtown
- Westside Commercial District (Kenyon Road & US 169)
 - » West Gateway District
 - » Westend Institutional District
- Northwest River District (3rd Ave NW & US 169)
- Eastside Commercial District
 - » Eastend Business/Service District
 - » East Gateway District
- Crossroads Mall



OBJECTIVE
4 **Ensure commercial properties provide safe multi-modal access throughout commercial areas and to individual commercial uses.**

Vibrant commercial areas require not only vehicular access, but must also safely accommodate bicycles and pedestrians. The City should continue to require sidewalks along the right-of-way as redevelopment occurs through its zoning regulations. The City should also require on-site pedestrian access from the right-of-way to building entrances. Regulations should also continue to require commercial development to install bicycle parking, using standards established by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals as a basis for local requirements.

OBJECTIVE
5 **Continue to work with the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance and Small Business Development Center to support small businesses.**

Small businesses contribute greatly to the identity of Downtown Fort Dodge. New and existing small businesses should be supported and given assistance in order to thrive. The City should work in conjunction with the GFDGA, the Small Business Development Center (SMDC), and others to host small business assistance workshops that would serve as educational resources to help small business owners and entrepreneurs navigate the city permitting process and understand various local design requirements. In addition, these workshops should provide information and application assistance for available local, state, and federal small business financing assistance programs.



*Commercial & Industrial
Areas: Downtown*

GOAL 6

Support a Downtown that includes a variety of activities and businesses while maintaining its historic character and role as the heart of Fort Dodge.

OBJECTIVE
1

Support a variety of community-based events that center on cultural, arts, entertainment, and recreational activities to promote Downtown business development.

Market on Central and Ladies' Night Out are examples of successful events that bring people Downtown during different times of the year. In addition to these events, the City should work with local partners to host events in Downtown that occur year-round and are open to the public such as street festivals, holiday events, art walks, and local artisan markets. Events should be hosted in locations that highlight specific areas of Downtown, such as the City Square or the Des Moines Riverfront.

OBJECTIVE 2 **Support outdoor commerce activities such as markets, sidewalk displays, and café seating.**

Downtown Fort Dodge has the potential to be a vibrant urban space filled with people and vibrant activity. To foster this environment, the City should continue to encourage local businesses to provide outdoor café seating and sidewalk commerce. The City should amend zoning regulations for outdoor retail and café seating (Section 17.07.11.C.3.h of the zoning ordinance) by eliminating the provision that requires Downtown businesses to provide parking for temporary outdoor seating areas.

OBJECTIVE 3 **Continue to support the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and façades.**

The Development Corporation’s Façade Improvement Forgivable Loan Program and Façade Renovation Loan have been used to restore and improve the façades of several downtown storefronts. In addition to these programs, the Downtown Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) provides a brochure on available funding and resources for downtown businesses. The City should work with the SSMID to increase awareness of available local, state, and federal programs, as well as consider the use of local incentives for historic preservation and adaptive reuse projects. As historic buildings are rehabilitated and new development occurs, the City should work with property owners to apply the Downtown Design Guidelines and Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation to maintain the historic character of the neighborhood.

OBJECTIVE 4 **Utilize strategic parking management to ensure adequate capacity, access, and turnover.**

There is a perception that Downtown has insufficient parking for local businesses; however, the 2014 *Downtown Parking Study* found that Downtown has a surplus of parking based on current occupancy rates. The study recommends minor changes and improvements to increase parking availability and management. The City should continue to implement the recommendations of the Downtown Parking Study, including the addition of signage, parking lot improvements, and land banking future parking areas to accommodate Downtown growth and development.

OBJECTIVE 5 **Support redevelopment and revitalization throughout the Downtown with a focus on the Cross-town Connector, through incentives targeted at vacant lots and blighted buildings.**

The Cross-town Connector serves as the primary east-west corridor through Downtown, and the increased traffic and visibility of businesses along 1st Avenue S could lead to significant reinvestment in vacant and underutilized lots. The City is currently working with a consultant to identify sustainable uses of the Warden Plaza, a historic structure that spans one half of a city block along the Cross-town connector. All the while, the City has been coordinating with potential private developers to support the acquisition and rehabilitation of the historic structure. In addition to supporting redevelopments such as these that will enhance the vitality and character of the corridor, the City should utilize financial incentives, land acquisition assistance, development bonuses, and expedited review for projects that exceed basic zoning requirements and achieve broader community goals, such as the development of a community recreation center.

OBJECTIVE
6

Integrate community and residential uses in Downtown.

Downtown Fort Dodge has historically been the centralized area for business, civic, and community uses and events. To reinforce Downtown as the heart of Fort Dodge, the City should utilize publicly-owned properties to encourage the development of a recreation and/or community center and other community-focused uses. The City should also support the development of new multi-family housing units in Downtown, especially when improvements include the adaptive reuse of historic structures.

OBJECTIVE
7

Provide connections to the Des Moines Riverfront.

Downtown Fort Dodge and the Des Moines River are perhaps the two most character-defining aspects of the community. Yet, despite their proximity, there is little connection between the two. To strengthen this relationship, the City should continue to implement the recommendations of the Downtown Plan, including:

- **Enhanced gateways & wayfinding.** The City’s wayfinding program provides a well-designed plan for the use of wayfinding signage throughout the community. The City should increase the frequency and location of signage to the Des Moines River and nearby access points from Downtown and vice versa.
- **Streetscape Improvements.** The City should implement a streetscape improvement project to enhance Central Avenue from the Fort Dodge Public Library to the River’s edge. Streetscape improvements include the use of decorative pavers or concrete, lighting, banners, and landscaping to transform the corridor into an inviting promenade.

- **Development & Redevelopment.** The Des Moines Riverfront and Central Avenue present several opportunities for riverfront development. A consistent streetwall along Central Avenue would provide a vibrant street connection from Downtown to the Des Moines River. New structures should take advantage of the steep slope and sweeping valley views.

OBJECTIVE
8

Review and adjust the Downtown District boundaries.

The Fort Dodge Downtown Plan outlines the District’s boundaries and served as the base for boundary of the Downtown Design Guidelines. However, the construction of the Cross-town Connector altered Downtown’s roadway pattern and will have an effect on the City’s land use and development pattern. As such, the City should work with the SSMID and the City Council to review and adjust the Downtown District boundaries relative to Downtown Design Guidelines, Urban Renewal, Zoning and the SSMID. Changes to the Downtown District boundaries should be reflected within the City’s zoning and amendments to both the Downtown Plan, Urban Renewal, and Downtown Design Guidelines. Special attention should be taken for the west end relative to zoning (connection between Downtown and riverfront). Zoning and development modifications should consider removing barriers to development relative to permitted uses, materials, and others to encourage development that reflect the goals of the *Des Moines River and Lizard Creek Riverfront Master Plan* and support downtown activities.



*Commercial & Industrial Areas:
Eastern Retail*

GOAL 7

Establish an attractive destination commercial district that builds upon existing businesses and the strength of 1st Avenue S and 5th Avenue S.

OBJECTIVE
1

Prioritize commercial redevelopment on the Cross-town Connector with a focus on abandoned buildings and vacant sites.

The Cross-town Connector serves as a direct route through Fort Dodge, passing from east to west through Downtown and connecting several neighborhoods on either side. The City should leverage the increased traffic and visibility and use it to prioritize commercial redevelopment on the corridor by assisting in acquiring and clearing lots for redevelopment between 15th Street and 21st Street, and enhancing the 1st Avenue South streetscape to provide a connection between Downtown and the east side of the community.



OBJECTIVE
2 **Continue to enhance 5th Avenue South as the Corridor of Commerce.**

5th Avenue South is known as the Corridor of Commerce, serving as the business route for US 20. Streetscape improvements have greatly improved the corridor’s character; however, this treatment should be carried further east and west to better tie 5th Avenue South to Downtown Fort Dodge and to its entrance from Quail Avenue (US 20). Streetscape improvements should extend the length of the corridor with potential design modifications that cater to adjacent commercial and residential land uses. The City should also continue to implement the recommendations within the *Business Highway 20/5th Avenue S Corridors of Commerce Action Plan* related to land use, redevelopment, and development character.

The City should work with property owners along the Corridor of Commerce to consider the establishment of an Improvement District similar to the Downtown SSMID. A SSMID would promote streetscape improvements, maintenance, and other improvements in the public right-of-way. The City of Fort Dodge should work with property owners and the

GFDGA to define potential boundaries and assist in the creation of the Improvement District, which may also include 1st Ave S, and local cross streets.

OBJECTIVE
3 **Redevelop the Crossroads Mall as a new town center between 5th Ave S and 1st Ave S.**

The Crossroads Mall is the centerpiece of the Eastside Commercial District. It was renovated in 2000 after a change in ownership. Although the Mall reported a vacancy rate as low as 9% in early 2014, it is in need of repositioning to align with contemporary market demand and shopper preferences. The City should work with the owners of the Crossroads Mall to explore potential redevelopment of the site as a pedestrian-oriented “town center” that serves as the hub of the Eastside Commercial District. In the short-term, the City should work with property owners to increase on-site landscaping, bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian connections.



Wayfinding & Informational Signage

Wayfinding and informational signs serve as directional guides and define places of interest. The City of Fort Dodge can build upon the foundation established by the *Webster County Conservation & City of Fort Dodge Wayfinding Design Guidelines* to provide motorists wayfinding signs that are consistent with the design palette used elsewhere in the community. Wayfinding signs should be located as indicated in the *Webster County Conservation & City of Fort Dodge Wayfinding Design Guidelines*, highlighting local assets such as Downtown, Iowa Central Community College, the Blanden Art Museum, riverfront access points, and other key sights and destinations. As commercial districts in Fort Dodge become more defined and begin to establish their own brand and identity, the City should integrate commercial district names into wayfinding signage.

OBJECTIVE
4 **Increase safety and traffic efficiency through enhanced site access management and circulation.**

Multiple curb cuts and parking lots along the Cross-town Connector and Corridor of Commerce reduce the efficiency of the roadway network and result in a high number of conflict points. Access management principles can be used to enhance access to local uses and support multi-modal mobility. The City should work with property owners to consolidate or remove excessive curb cuts and encourage the use of cross-access between adjacent lots that would enhance circulation without reliance on turning movements on major corridors. Where larger-scale redevelopment occurs, properties should integrate on-site circulation to multiple tenants.

OBJECTIVE
5 **Increase housing density around east side commercial uses.**

The Future Land Use Plan identifies areas of new multi-family development along the northern edge of the Eastside Commercial District. The City should work with developers to design the multi-family sites to provide for easy bicycle and pedestrian access to commercial areas. The character of these developments should create an appropriate transition between commercial uses and adjacent single-family neighborhoods through building massing, landscaping, and buffering.

**Commercial & Industrial Areas:
West Commercial Districts**

GOAL 8

Develop the US 169 Corridor as a multi-use commercial area that caters to local residents, regional visitors, and employment hubs.

OBJECTIVE 1 **Concentrate commercial development on the City’s west side to prominent nodes.**

The intersections of US 169 and Kenyon Road, US 169 and 3rd Avenue NW, and 3rd Avenue NW and 12th Street NW provide potential commercial development and growth opportunities. Commercial development should be concentrated at these nodes rather than strung along the US 169 corridor. This will create a greater sense of vibrancy and character.

As recommended within the *Northwest River District Plan*, the 3rd Avenue NW and 12th Street NW intersection, and 5th Street NW and Hawkeye Avenue intersection should receive enhancements to increase pedestrian safety and mobility. In addition, commercial areas should integrate pedestrian pathways and trails that connect to Lizard Creek.

Future development at the intersection of US 169 and Kenyon Road should provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to ICCC and Trinity Regional Health Center. Land uses should include retail and service commercial businesses, with a focus on hospitality businesses that cater to students, faculty, and staff at ICCC and UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Health Center.

OBJECTIVE 2 **Utilize private development and public investment to make the US 169 corridor an attractive gateway to Fort Dodge.**

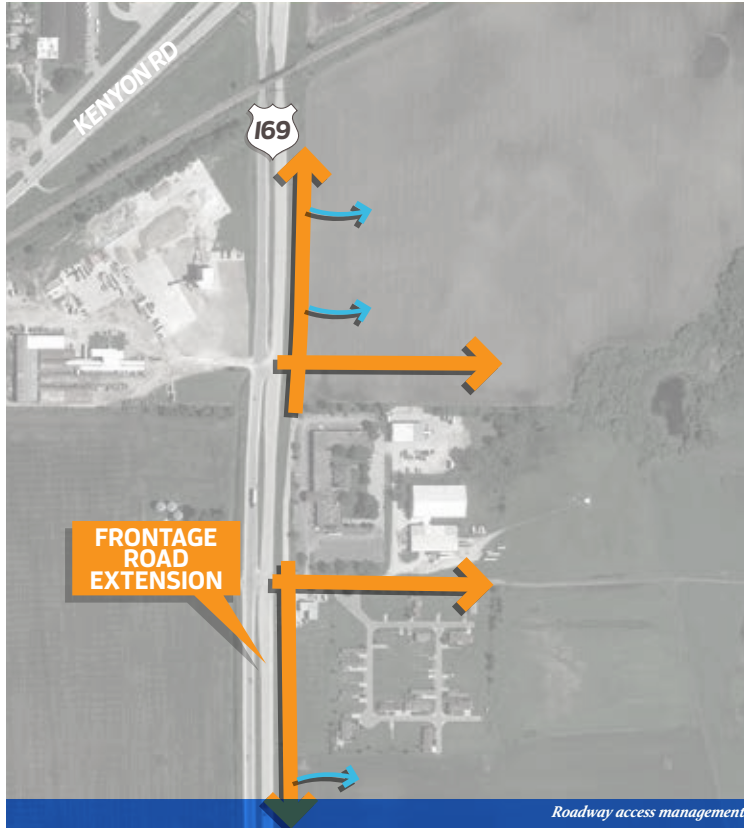
US 169 carries between 5,700 and 8,400 cars each day, and the Westside Commercial District is the first developed area as motorists enter Fort Dodge on US 169 from the north and south. As such, these areas should serve as attractive gateways to the community. The City should incorporate community gateways, wayfinding, and streetscaping near the commercial nodes to establish the character of the community and advertise local destinations. The City should also amend zoning regulations to require attractive building design, signage, and landscaping in these areas, recognizing that the US 169 corridor operates at higher speeds, and therefore warrants different standards than other commercial areas in Fort Dodge.

Northwest River District Plan

In 2015, the Community underwent an extensive planning process to revitalize the Northwest



River District, located between the intersection of US 169 and 3rd Avenue NW, and the Des Moines River. The Revitalization Plan resulting from this public planning process identifies a number of actions the City can take to revitalize the Northwest River District, including streetscape enhancements such as landscape improvements, wayfinding signage, art, and gateway features; as well as parks, trails, and other recreation improvements that can be made. The Plan also identifies tools to promote residential and commercial development and redevelopment. This Plan supports the goal to develop the US 169 Corridor as a multi-use commercial area that caters to local residents, such as those living in the Northwest River District, and should be referenced when planning for the northwest part of Fort Dodge.



OBJECTIVE 3 Create planned commercial site access off of US 169.

Existing commercial development along US 169 is accessed by frontage roads with limited intersections to the highway. Emerging commercial areas at the northeast corner of 3rd Ave NW and US 169 and the southeast corner of Kenyon Road and US 169 access existing development via limited roadways. New development should extend frontage roads and create a unified means of access. This would allow for more convenient access to businesses while limiting driveways and signals on US 169.

OBJECTIVE 4 Expand hospitality-related uses near employment anchors on the west side of the City.

ICCC and UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center are significant employment anchors along Kenyon Road. The intersection of US 169 and Kenyon Road provides an opportunity to develop hospitality uses that cater to the students, faculty, medical professionals, and visitors, as well as residents of Friendship Haven. The City should also work with ICCC and UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center to assess land needs for institutional development and the potential demand for supporting uses.

Commercial & Industrial Areas: Local Commercial

GOAL 9

Strengthen neighborhood commercial areas that provide for the retail and commercial service needs of Fort Dodge residents and contribute to local character.

OBJECTIVE 1 Consider the use of building design standards to ensure local commercial development is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

Local commercial development in Fort Dodge is often closely related to surrounding homes and an integral part of the neighborhood character. The location and size of local commercial lots means they are easily visible from residential streets. The City should consider the benefits and constraints to amending the Zoning Ordinance to require local commercial development to integrate residential design elements (such as pitched roofs, masonry or siding, residential style windows, etc.) that are compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. Potential regulations should continue to expand upon provisions for parking lot screening and landscaping that hides unsightly components of commercial development.

OBJECTIVE 2 Require pedestrian connections to surrounding residential areas.

Many local commercial lots are too small to accommodate on-site parking and, as a result, turn an entire block face into a continuous curb cut that provides access to individual parking spaces. This disrupts the public sidewalk network and creates unclear circulation patterns, putting pedestrians at risk. The City should require local commercial development to manage access through designated curb cuts, and restore the sidewalk through aprons that extend across driveways and clearly defined parking lot edges.



OBJECTIVE 3 Support the creation of larger local commercial lots in order to accommodate more functional development and buffering against residential areas.

Some local commercial lots in Fort Dodge are as shallow as 55', limiting the potential building size to as little as 1,000 square feet. This results in development that is "shoehorned" onto the lot and immediately adjacent to residential structures. Such lots are not attractive for new investment since they cannot accommodate the requirements of contemporary development. The City should support the expansion of commercial lots, where necessary, to create sites with adequate depth to accommodate a larger commercial building, appropriate parking and site access, parking lot screening, and buffering against residential uses.

*Commercial & Industrial Areas:
Employment & Innovation Districts*

GOAL 10

Create well-planned and attractive professional office and industrial parks that provide quality employment and convey a sense of innovation in Fort Dodge.

OBJECTIVE 1 **Build upon existing employment and industrial anchors.**

Fort Dodge has a burgeoning industrial sector anchored by several large employers including Nestlé Purina; companies such as Cargill, CJ Bio America and Valero Renewables at Iowa’s Crossroads of Global Innovation; Boehringer Ingleheim (BI); ICCG; UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center; and Fort Dodge Regional Airport. These anchors can provide the foundation for other development that would create centers of innovation and industry. The City should support development that complements existing anchors through targeted economic development initiatives, collaboration with anchor tenants, and land use and infrastructure planning that ensures land and services are available to support investment. For areas near the Fort Dodge Regional Airport, the City should work with the Fort Dodge Airport Commission to establish a capital program to install necessary infrastructure to support research and industrial uses, as well as market industrial development opportunities, highlighting the benefits of the Fort Dodge Regional Airport and the surrounding regional transportation system.

OBJECTIVE 2 **Support the development and expansion of the Cross-town Industrial Park on the 1st Avenue South and 5th Avenue South corridors, between Gypsum Creek and Quail Ave.**

The east side of Fort Dodge has available land, few development constraints, and easy access to US 20. These advantages make it a competitive location for a light industrial business park. The City should invest in infrastructure and/or provide incentives to support future industrial growth in this area. The City should work with the GFDGA to actively market available industrial sites to potential developers and tenants, including those already located in Fort Dodge. As these area develop, planned development concepts should:

- Include circulator streets providing access between 5th Avenue South and the proposed 1st Ave S extension;
- Identify opportunities for community detention facilities that would enhance development intensity and sense of place;
- Provide for campus-wide trails and greenways that would allow for employee amenities and connect to the regional trail network; and,
- Integrate gateway signage from Quail Avenue for motorists entering Fort Dodge from the east.

Neighborhood Gateway Signs

Gateway signs announce entry into a community and contribute to the identity of a neighborhood. Fort Dodge has existing community gateways at the main entrances to the City (Quail Avenue, US 169, NW River District, and near the Fort Dodge Regional Airport) as well as some along 5th Avenue S; however, its commercial and residential neighborhoods could be enhanced through the installation of neighborhood gateways. Residential neighborhoods and commercial character areas should have unique signage that embodies the desired image for that area. In addition, signs should incorporate design elements of the Fort Dodge community gateway to ensure they continue to be associated with the City of Fort Dodge. This may include use of the City's logo, City logo color palette, and/or inclusion of the City's name.



OBJECTIVE
3 **Require heightened streetscape design and signage along prominent corridors.**

The eastern portion of 5th Avenue South includes several small industrial uses that are detrimental to the image of Fort Dodge as people enter the community from Quail Avenue. As redevelopment of this area occurs over time, the streetscape concepts illustrated in the *Business Highway 20/5th Avenue Corridors of Commerce Action Plan* and implemented elsewhere along the corridor should be installed. The City should continue to require development fronting on 5th Avenue South and 1st Avenue South to include a higher level of design in terms of building materials, landscaping, and signage.

Commercial & Industrial Areas: General Industry

GOAL 11

Promote industrial business growth and the attraction of quality jobs while limiting negative impacts to the Fort Dodge community.

OBJECTIVE 1 **Transition residential areas near South 31st Street to industrial uses.**

The area south of 5th Avenue South between 29th Street and 32nd Street includes some residential blocks isolated by existing or planned industrial activities. With rail access and proximity to US Business 20 and existing mining activity, this area could thrive as a new industrial or professional office park. The City should utilize land use planning and zoning district boundaries to support the transition of this areas to industrial uses over time as properties become available for purchase.

Industrial/mining areas that may transition into other land uses is addressed in the *Open Space & Environmental Features Plan*.

OBJECTIVE 2 **Mitigate impacts of industrial land uses to surrounding neighborhoods and prominent roadways.**

Industrial uses, which include mining activity, can create significant noise, light, vibration, and other environmental impacts. The City should require substantial development buffers between industrial and non-industrial land uses, as well as landscaped screening or berming along prominent roadways and along roadways that include industrial uses across from residential uses, such as S 22nd Street between 6th Ave S and 8th Ave S.

OBJECTIVE 3 **Support industrial growth through the development of a positive community image, partnerships, and high quality of life.**

Fort Dodge is home to several organizations and institutions that can serve as key partners and assets to economic growth and development. ICCC, Buena Vista University, and local businesses can serve to create a direct link between Fort Dodge’s local workforce and emerging industries. The City should support communication between ICCC, Buena Vista University, and local employers to align curricula with the skills required to fill the needs of established and emerging industries in Fort Dodge. This could also include mentorship or internship opportunities that specifically tailor students for local employment and help develop local industrial leaders.

To promote a positive image of Fort Dodge, the City should continue to work closely with the GFDGA to develop a comprehensive marketing and promotional campaign that leverages the City’s assets and sends a clear and consistent message about what Fort Dodge has to offer. A promotional campaign should highlight local employers, community and workforce development assets such as ICCC and Buena Vista University, as well as focus on all aspects of business and employee recruitment, including infrastructure and market capacity, education, housing, arts and culture, the unique natural environment, and other aspects of the community.



TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY PLAN

The Transportation and Mobility Plan establishes a series of recommendations for Fort Dodge's multi-modal system of roadways, trails, sidewalks, transit, railways, and the airport. It builds upon a system that has evolved over the last several decades, including more recent improvements like the Cross-town Connector. Recommendations in this chapter should be implemented in close coordination with new development, municipal infrastructure improvements, and investment in other community facilities and services.

Roadway Network

The roadway network serving the planning area is governed by the Iowa DOT, Webster County, and the City of Fort Dodge. Within the City limits, IDOT controls US 169 and Fort Dodge has jurisdiction over all other roadways. In order to implement the recommendations included in this chapter, the City will need to maintain close coordination with these agencies.

Functional Classification

For planning and design purposes, roadways are classified in a hierarchical structure by function to define their role in the transportation system and their eligibility for certain types of federal transportation funds. Four general functional classifications are used, including freeways, arterials, collectors, and local roads. Arterials are commonly subdivided into major (principal) and minor designations based on location, service function, and design features (i.e. right-of-way, road capacity, continuity within system, speed limits, parking controls, traffic signal spacing etc.). Each roadway classification serves as a collecting/distributing facility for the next higher classification in the system. The following summarizes the roadway functional classification system serving the City of Fort Dodge as defined by Iowa DOT.

Principal Arterials

Principal arterials provide a high degree of mobility and function as the primary travel routes through urban areas. These roadways are continuous and serve the broader region, connecting freeways with the local system of minor arterials and collector roads. Principal arterials are higher capacity facilities that carry high volumes of traffic and require more stringent access controls and traffic signal spacing.

In the Fort Dodge planning area, the principal arterials include US 169, 2nd Avenue South, Kenyon Road, South 8th Street, 5th Avenue South, and Quail Avenue. The principal arterials are generally four-lane roadways with sections including a center left-turn lane at key intersections. The right-of-way width of these principal arterials generally ranges from 80-120 feet.

Minor Arterials

Minor arterials augment the principal arterials by accommodating somewhat shorter trips to and from residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, employment centers, and recreational activity areas. As such, operating speeds and road capacity may be less than that of principal arterials, with less stringent controls on property access. Minor arterials in Fort Dodge are generally two-lane roadways, with or without a center median, with right-of-way widths generally ranging from 80 to 100 feet.

Collectors

The collector system is designed to support the arterial network. Collector roads consist of medium-capacity roads that have limited continuity and serve to distribute traffic between the higher level arterials and the lower level local roads. Collectors provide some direct land access but to a lesser degree than local roads. In Fort Dodge, the collectors are maintained by the City and are two-lane roadways with right-of-way widths generally ranging from 66-80 feet.

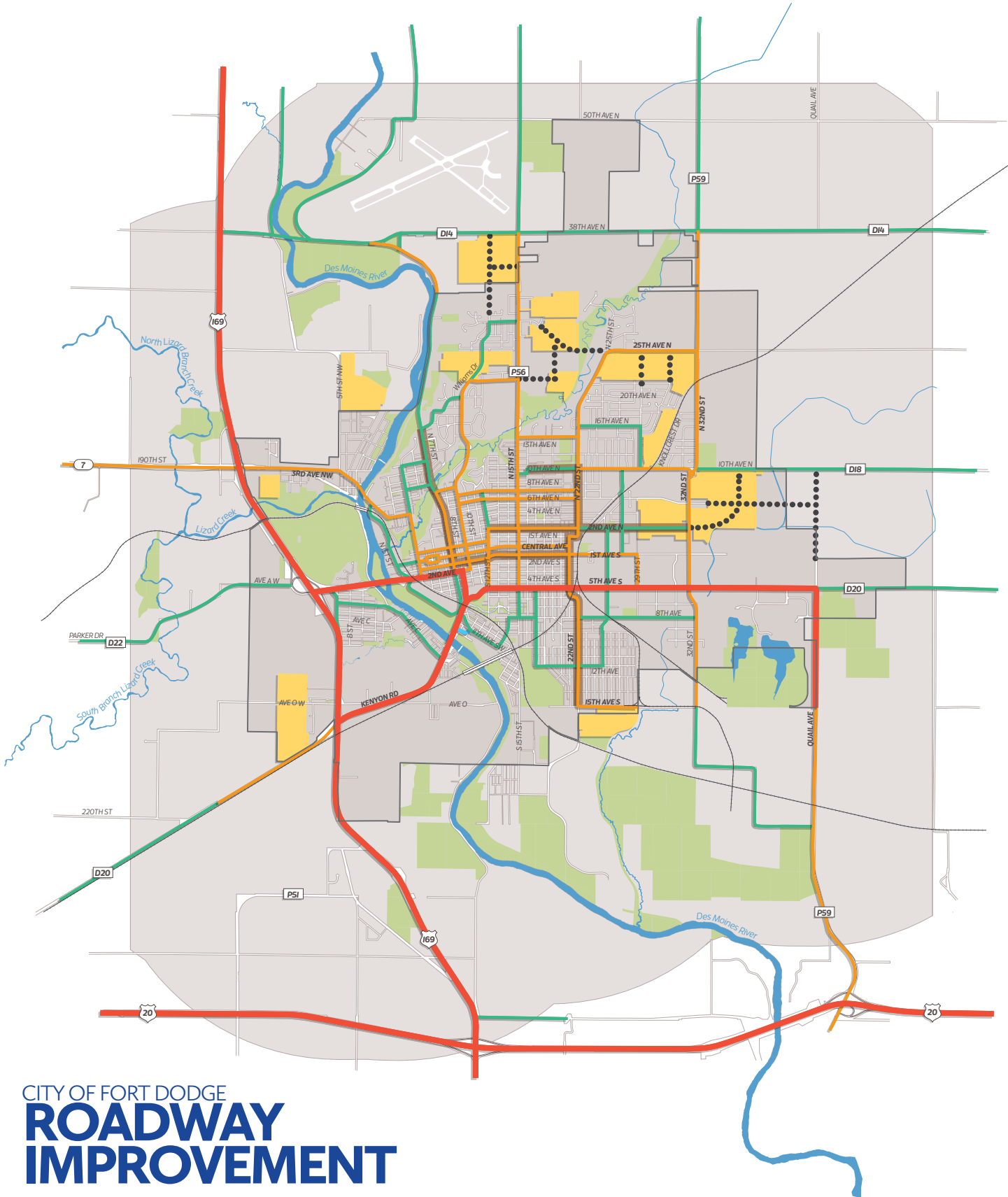
Local Roads

Local roads provide direct access to private property and are accessed from arterial and collector roads. Trip lengths on local roads are typically short and volumes and speeds are low. All remaining roadways in Fort Dodge not classified as an arterial or collector are classified as local roads. These are generally two-lane roadways with a right-of-way width of 60 feet.

Programmed Improvements

Fort Dodge's roadway network is largely established, with very few substantial changes anticipated outside of maintenance. Changes to existing roadways include, most recently, the realignment and roundabout construction of the Downtown Cross-Town Connector and realignment of the 10th Avenue N and N 16th Street intersection. In addition, the City should implement the roadway improvements proposed in the Northwest River District Plan. Other maintenance projects programmed by Iowa DOT, Webster County, and Fort Dodge include:

- Rehabilitation of several roadways and bridges
- Replacement of several bridges on Highway 175, D18, and P33
- Reconstruction of several intersections



CITY OF FORT DODGE ROADWAY IMPROVEMENT

- KEY**
- Principal Arterial
 - New Residential Growth Areas
 - Priority Multi-Modal Streets
 - Minor Arterial
 - Connections to Future Growth Areas
 - New Roadways
 - Collector

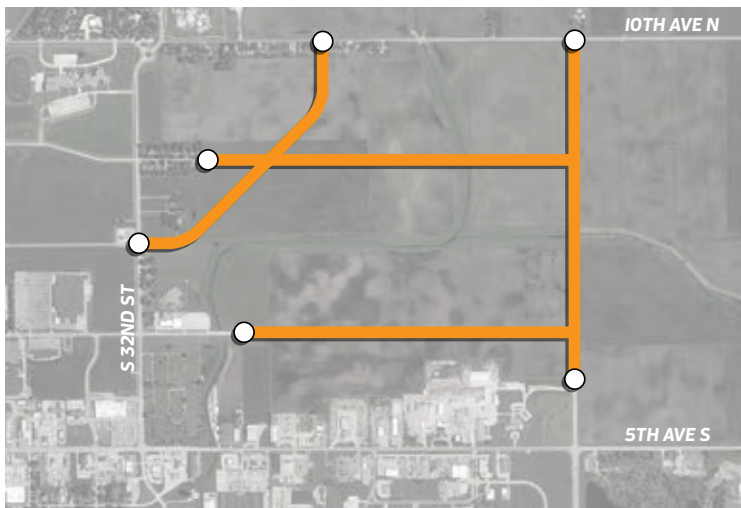
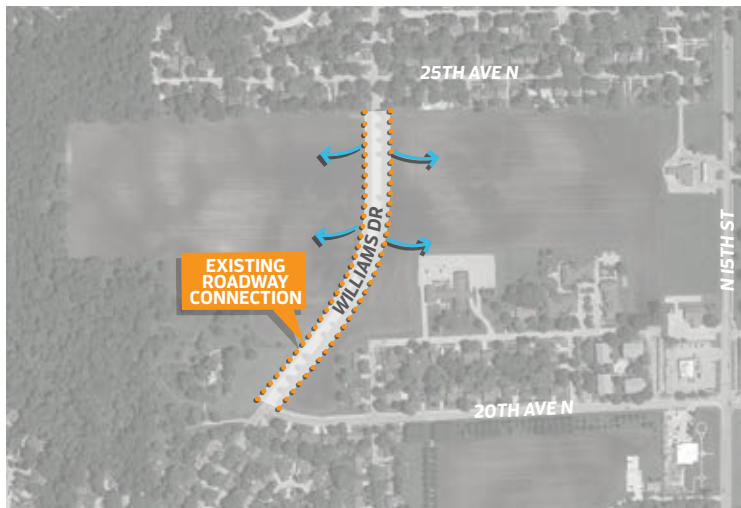
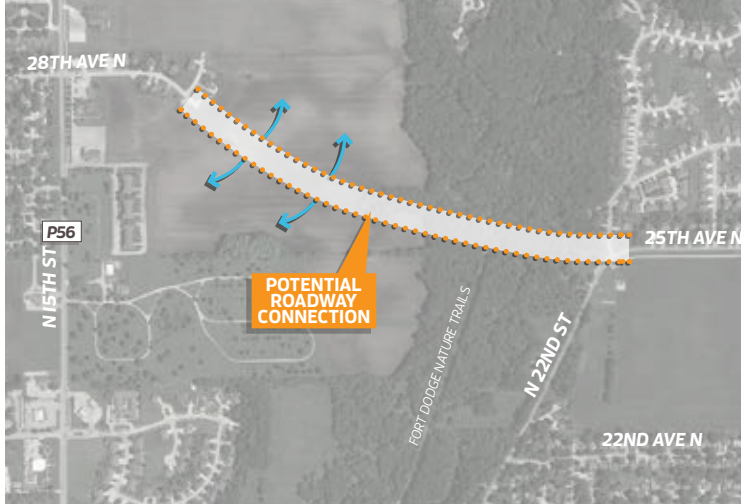


Roadway Network
GOAL 12

Strengthen the roadway network to better foster mobility throughout Fort Dodge, provide connections across river and rail corridors, maintain the safety and attractiveness of residential areas, and support local community and economic development in targeted growth areas.

OBJECTIVE 1 Utilize roadway design to balance multi-modal mobility of specific corridors.

For many decades, roadways have been used to serve the primary function of moving vehicles. However, in an urbanized community like Fort Dodge, they often must serve several purposes. As roadways are improved or installed, consideration should be given to bike lanes, on-street parking, expanded greenways or medians, transit facilities and wider sidewalks, depending upon the surrounding land uses and role within the larger multi-modal transportation system. The Cross-town Connector is a good example of a multi-modal transportation system. While the roadway realignment supports east-west movement across the city, it also supports businesses in the Downtown area. As a result, on-street parking has been preserved in most areas.



OBJECTIVE 2 Provide roadway connections to areas separated from surrounding parts of Fort Dodge by railroads, rivers, and other terrain.

Some neighborhoods in Fort Dodge are isolated from the rest of the community due to transportation corridors or natural features. In some cases, this has resulted in difficulties providing public safety services and the perception by members of the Fort Dodge community that some neighborhoods are not part of the City. The City should identify opportunities to connect existing and future neighborhoods to other portions of the roadway network. An example of an improvement that does this is the extension of Williams Drive between 20th Avenue N and 25th Avenue N. The improvement opened up new land for residential development and provided a connection to neighborhoods that otherwise had limited access to the north side of the community. Other recommended roadway improvements to enhance connectivity are:

- Extension of 25th Avenue N between 22nd Street and Rolling Hills Drive;
- Extension of 15th Avenue S between Oleson Park Avenue and 15th Street; and,
- Extension of 42nd Street between 5th Avenue S and 10th Avenue N.

OBJECTIVE 3 Ensure that future development provides logical connections to the existing roadway network.

The future land use component of this Comprehensive Plan establishes several areas for anticipated residential, commercial, or industrial growth. As these areas are developed, local roadways should create logical extension from the existing grid. The Roadway Improvement Plan shows conceptually where some of the future roadway connections may go.



OBJECTIVE
4 **Continue to monitor and enforce truck traffic restrictions.**

Designated routes – including US 169, Business 169, Business 20, and several minor arterials – funnel commercial and industrial truck traffic through Fort Dodge to local businesses. Many of these streets go through or adjacent to residential areas with small industry within them. The City should continue to strictly enforce local truck routes to minimize industrial traffic impacts on neighborhoods. As industrial and commercial areas develop or come off line in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan, truck routes should be assessed and modified to respond to the needs of businesses but minimize impacts on residents.

OBJECTIVE
5 **Continue to work with Iowa DOT and Webster County to monitor traffic patterns and modify traffic controls as appropriate.**

The Cross-town Connector and future development associated with this roadway improvement could have a significant impact on traffic patterns and volumes throughout Fort Dodge. The City should work closely with the Iowa DOT and Webster County to ensure that future land use planning is considered as investments in new or modified traffic controls are made. As new development comes on-line, local traffic projections should be updated and traffic volumes monitored.



OBJECTIVE
6 Continue to implement a long-term roadway maintenance and reconstruction program.

With anticipated community and economic development in the next two decades, Fort Dodge will likely be investing in new roadway infrastructure. However, the City should also ensure adequate annual funding to repair and maintain existing streets. The City should continue to use its 5-year Capital Improvement Program to allocate funding for regular roadway repairs that respond to the anticipated life cycle of various roadway surfaces.

OBJECTIVE
7 Coordinate roadway improvement projects with other capital investments.

Roadway improvements will likely impact the Iowa DOT, Webster County, utility providers and private development; therefore, the City should coordinate with impacted parties prior to establishing plans to ensure that all improvements are made concurrently. Coordination among entities will likely minimize overall project cost and the length of time the community will be impacted by construction.

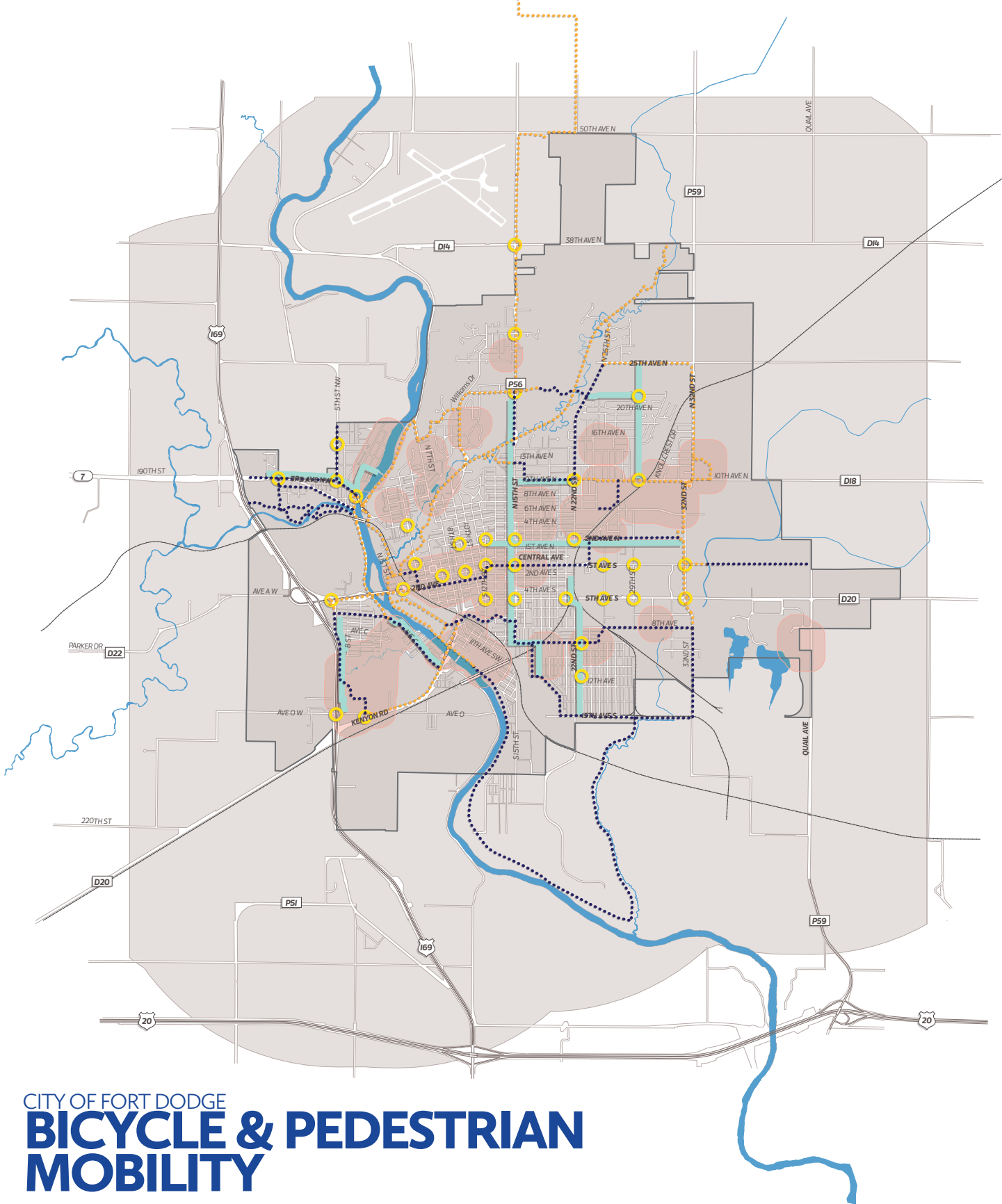


Bike, Pedestrian & Transit Mobility

Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit mobility is an important part of how residents access neighborhoods, jobs, schools, and other destinations in Fort Dodge. The City has a generally comprehensive sidewalk network, and recent investment has resulted in a trail network that extends to destinations on the outskirts of the community. As the community’s population continues to age and institutions and employers try to attract young educated residents, transit services, provided by Dodger Area Rapid Transit (DART), will be a growing need. This section provides a series of recommendations related to these aspects of the City’s transportation network.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Mobility **GOAL 13**

Create a community-wide, fully accessible system of sidewalks and trails that provides access between residential neighborhoods and Downtown Fort Dodge, the Des Moines River, the Harlan Rogers Sports Complex, Iowa Central Community College, and other destinations throughout the City.



CITY OF FORT DODGE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY

KEY

-  Existing Trails
-  Proposed Trails
-  Bicycle Network Expansion
-  Pedestrian Crossing Improvement Area
-  Priority Pedestrian Shed Improvement Area



Example of a complete street that provides facilities for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.



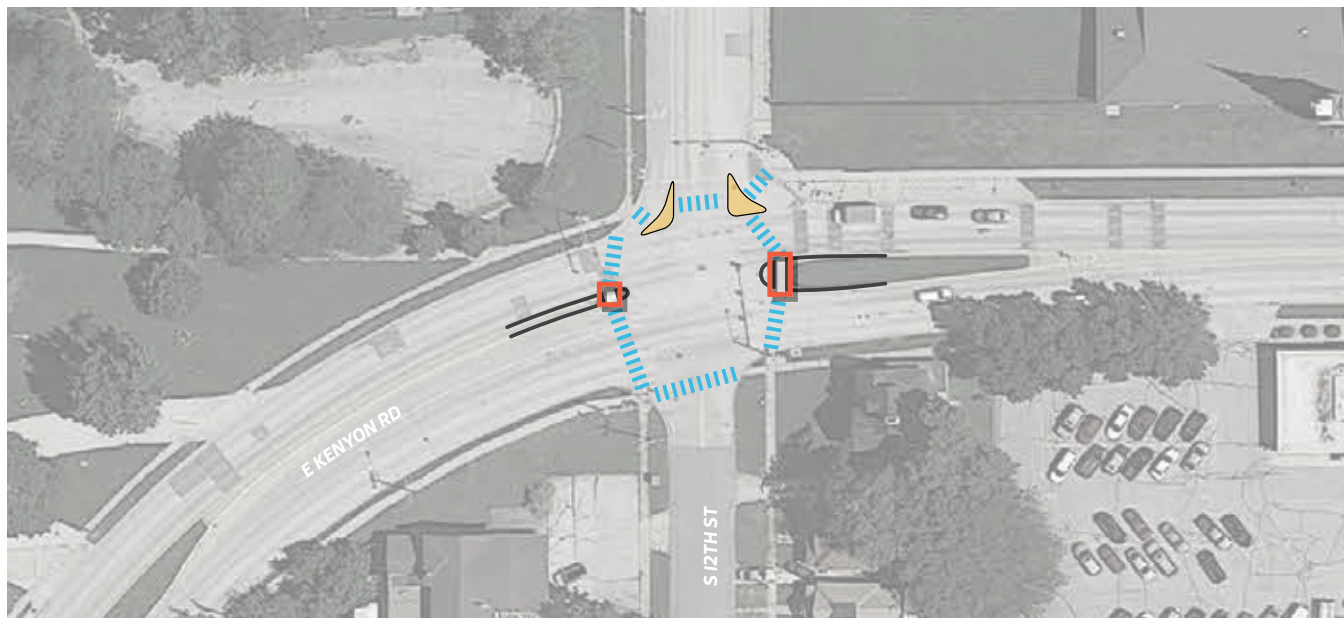
Integrated trail network in Altoona, IA

OBJECTIVE 1 **Strengthen the City’s Complete Streets policy and implement it through design standards and zoning and subdivision regulations.**

In 2007, Iowa DOT adopted design and policy changes in response to the Complete Streets state legislation that requires the agency to construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of urban roadway construction, reconstruction, or widening. In 2009, the City of Fort Dodge adopted a limited Complete Street policy. The City should strengthen this policy and implement its intent through modified municipal design standards that include provisions for bike trails or on-street bike lanes as a component of roadway improvements on designated corridors. The City should also amend zoning and subdivision regulations to ensure they appropriately address Complete Streets through roadway network cross-section design, sidewalk provisions, trail dedications, on-site pedestrian access, bicycle parking, and other aspects of development.

OBJECTIVE 2 **Require all new residential subdivisions to provide dedicated trails or designated bike lanes that connect to the community-wide trail network.**

The Future Land Use Plan identifies several areas for new residential growth in Fort Dodge. Several of these areas are close to regional trail segments. The City should amend its subdivision regulations to require these and other future subdivisions to provide dedicated trails or on-street bike lanes that provide mobility throughout the neighborhood and connections to the community-wide trail system.



OBJECTIVE
3 **Ensure that all signalized intersections include appropriate amenities and technologies to support pedestrian crossing movements.**

While most of Fort Dodge's neighborhoods have sidewalk networks, several of the City's arterials are difficult to cross. This inhibits access to schools, parks, jobs, commerce, and other destinations beyond individual neighborhoods. Potential pedestrian crossing improvements could include enhanced crosswalk striping, pedestrian countdown signals, vehicular warning signs, curb bump outs or refuge islands, and modified signal phasing to provide adequate time for crossing for various ages and levels of mobility. For intersections at US 169, the City should work with Iowa DOT to redesign heavily used intersections to promote pedestrian safety and mobility. Potential intersections for pedestrian improvement are identified on the Pedestrian & Bicycle Mobility Map as Pedestrian Crossing Improvement Areas. Potential improvements should be identified and prioritized.

OBJECTIVE
4 **Establish a sidewalk improvement program that prioritizes investment near common pedestrian destinations and pedestrian routes with the potential for high pedestrian traffic counts.**

Fort Dodge has a robust system of sidewalks. However, sidewalks in some areas of the City are becoming difficult to navigate. The City should establish an annual sidewalk improvement program that would prioritize sidewalk replacement and maintenance in areas adjacent to high-traffic destinations often accessed by foot, such as schools, commercial areas, and parks.

OBJECTIVE
5 **Designate and mark a network of on-street bike lanes that would complement the system of dedicated trails.**

While the City's system of trails continues to expand, much of the older areas of the community lack designated bicycle facilities. Retrofitting dedicated trails into these established areas is extremely difficult. However, several streets may offer the curb-to-curb width and cross-town connectivity to accommodate on-street bike lanes.

OBJECTIVE
6

Ensure that the bicycle and trail network includes amenities that enhance rider safety, comfort, and usability.

As the bicycle network is expanded throughout Fort Dodge, the City should establish standards and an annual improvement program for characteristics that will enhance the safety and comfort of the system. This includes creating a well-maintained and connected system that links the City’s many parks and community destinations with one another as well as with residential neighborhoods. In order to enhance pedestrian and bicycle mobility, the City should do the following:

- Enhance pedestrian crossings along collectors and arterials located between parks and neighborhoods in their respective service areas;
- Designate local bike lanes on local streets connecting regional trails to parks;
- Amend subdivision regulations to require designated trails or bike lanes between the edges of a subdivision and parks and open spaces within the new development area;
- Establish standards for on-street bike lane signage and striping;
- Upgrade existing trail facilities with wayfinding signs and mileage markers, benches, lighting, and water fountains, among others; and,
- Continue to partner with the Webster County Conservation Board (WCCB) for trails maintenance and the creation of a trail management plan.

OBJECTIVE
7

Make the Fort Dodge trail network a destination.

As the Fort Dodge trail system continues to expand, the City should consider making connections to regional trail systems where feasible. Nevertheless, given the distance to the nearest regional trail system (the Three River Trail is more than six miles north of Kennedy Park), the City should prioritize improving its local trails, making the Fort Dodge system a regional trail destination in and of itself.

Transit Mobility

GOAL 14

Ensure that all residents have access to efficient transit service that provides access to destinations throughout Fort Dodge and Webster County.

OBJECTIVE
1

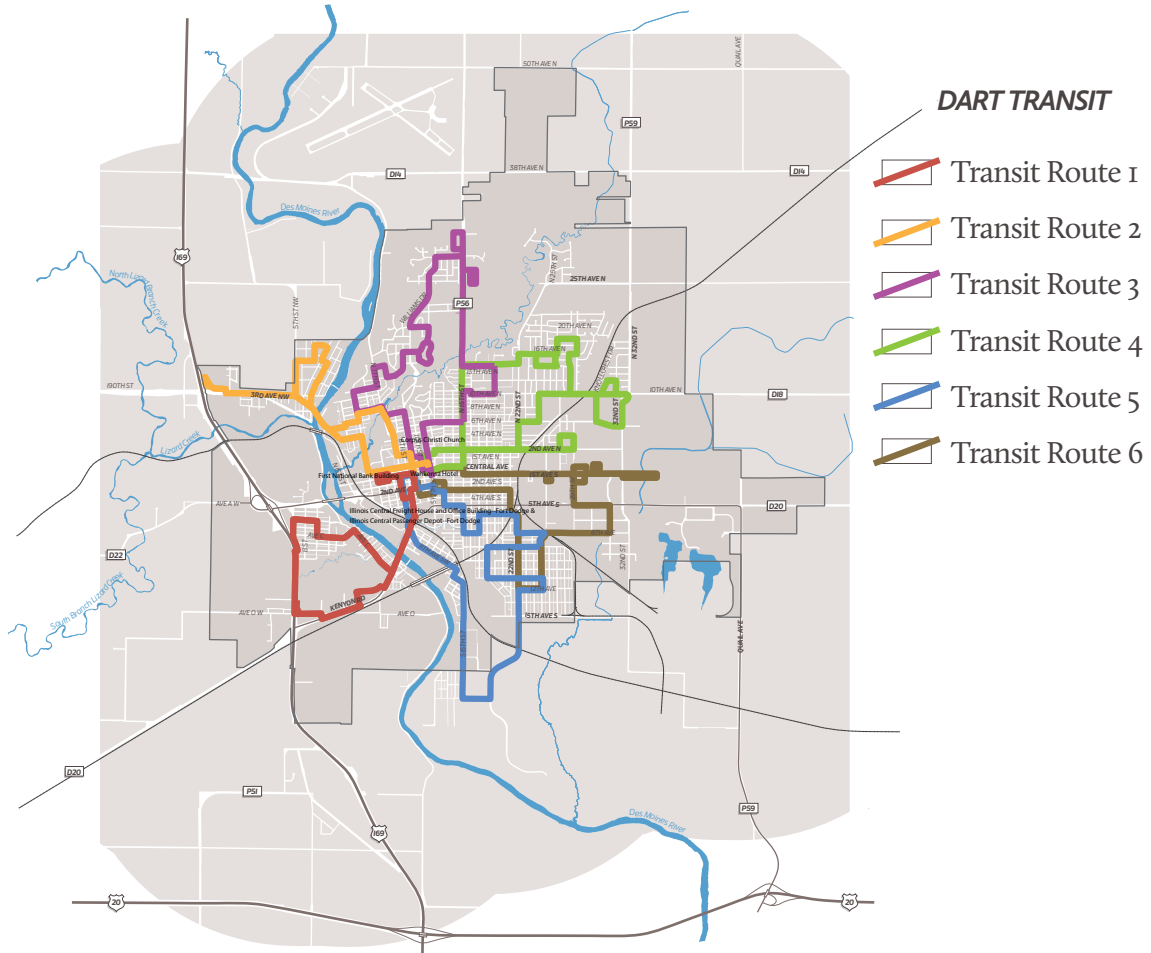
Work with DART to monitor socioeconomic and demographic trends that may influence potential transit ridership demand.

Aging residents, college students, and young professionals’ preference for alternative transportation has the potential to drive additional transit demand in the future. The City should support DART in assessing socioeconomic and demographic data for the community, and surveying the community regarding public transit preferences and attitudes.

OBJECTIVE
2

Work with DART to advertise services and encourage transit as an alternative during special events.

Often, the lack of information about transit services is a barrier that keeps people from using it. The City should work with DART to advertise its transit services. This could include a quick reference link on the City’s website, coordination with senior housing complexes, commercial centers, institutions, and others to display system maps and schedules, and marketing of special services as a component of special events throughout Fort Dodge and Webster County.



OBJECTIVE 3 Support coordination among the City, DART, and Fort Dodge employers and institutions to provide services that support local access to employment and education.

As students, new employers, and young professionals relocate to Fort Dodge, special consideration should be given to transit services that meet their needs. The City should support coordination among DART, local employers, and institutions to design a comprehensive transit system that fills its service gaps. Solutions could include redesigned DART routes or service models, or privately-supported transit services that meet targeted ridership demand.

OBJECTIVE 4 Work with DART to install bike racks on transit vehicles.

Fort Dodge’s expanding bicycle network intersects with several DART transit routes. In order to support multi-modal trips, the City should work with DART to implement the installation of bike racks on transit vehicles.



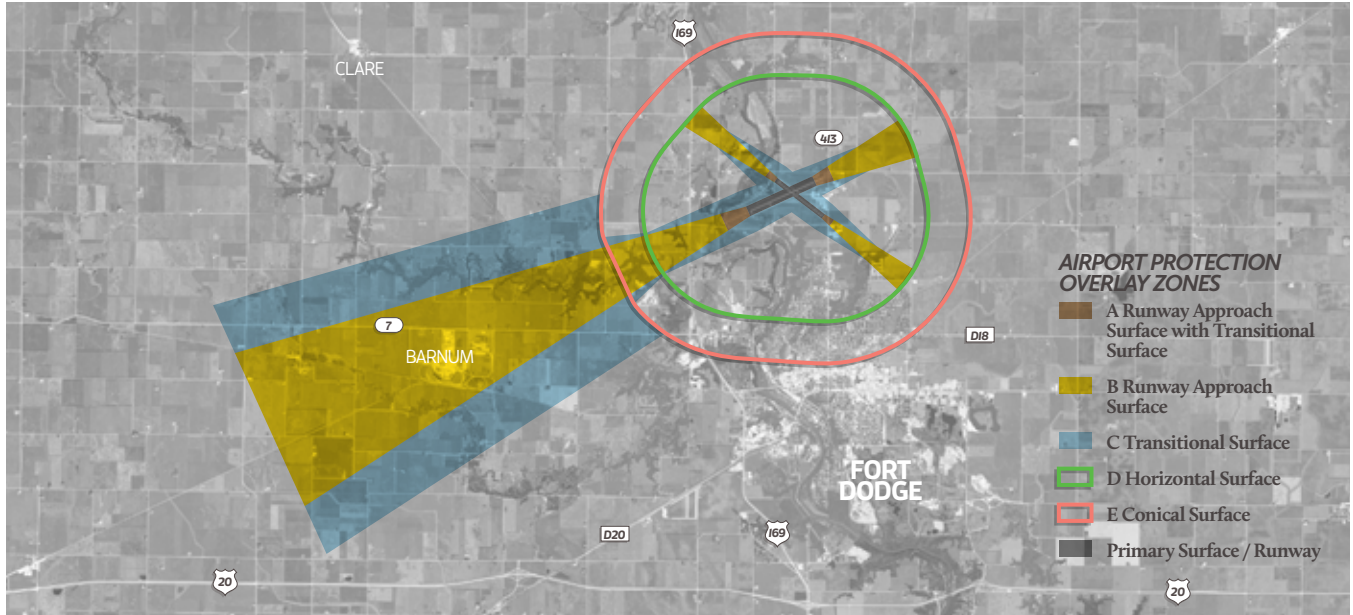
Air & Rail Facilities

The Fort Dodge Regional Airport and various rail lines are critical facilities for providing regional and national access to the community for both people and goods. The following recommendations describe ways that these elements can support the broader objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

Airport & Rail Facilities

GOAL 15

Maximize the potential for the Fort Dodge Regional Airport and network of rail corridors to support economic growth and access to Fort Dodge from throughout the Midwest and United States.



OBJECTIVE 1 Establish and enforce development regulations that align with the FAA Overlay Zones.

In addition to City or County zoning regulations, development around the airport property is encouraged to follow Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Overlay Zones, which include runway protection zones and approach protection zones. The City should continue to work closely with the Airport Commission to review any development proposals in these areas to ensure they conform with the FAA Overlay Zones. Furthermore, the City should consider applying an airport overlay zoning district to areas around the airport to regulate land use and height, among others, to minimize incompatible uses and uses that may interfere with airport operations.

OBJECTIVE 2 Support the on-going maintenance and upgrade of the Fort Dodge Regional Airport.

The Fort Dodge Regional Airport adopted a Master Plan that establishes a series of facilities or operational needs in order to sustain the airport’s role in the community and Midwest. The City should work closely with the Airport Commission to support the implementation of the Master Plan through development regulations, infrastructure improvements, and, where possible, the pursuit of grant funding that supports improvements aimed at achieving economic development objectives.



OBJECTIVE
3 Support coordination among the City, Fort Dodge Regional Airport, and the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance to ensure facilities and infrastructure support economic development.

The airport provides a unique opportunity to support corporate air travel and companies who own/lease aircraft. The City should support collaboration among the Airport Commission and the GFDGA to ensure that the airport facility meets the needs of targeted industries and potential investors.

OBJECTIVE
4 Work with the Union Pacific and Canadian National rail companies to determine opportunities or needs related to the existing rail network.

Fort Dodge’s rail network supports local commerce and industry but also impacts several neighborhoods and commercial areas. As land and rail corridor uses evolve over time, the City should work with railway operators to assess opportunities for rail consolidation or abandonment. Where this is possible, vacated corridors should be used for trails, greenways, or other community amenities.



OBJECTIVE 5 Support coordination to provide rail spur access to key economic development sites.

The Future Land Use Plan identifies several tracts of land for future industrial development. The City should support coordination among rail operators, the GFDGA, and potential industrial investors to identify potential rail spur locations that could serve rail-dependent industry sectors.

OBJECTIVE 6 Work with rail companies to ensure that all at-grade rail crossings have appropriate warning lights and gates to increase public safety.

Several at-grade rail crossings on local or collector streets in Fort Dodge lack full traffic control and safety devices. The City should work with rail operators to inventory existing at-grade crossings and establish a program for upgrading warning devices over time.

OBJECTIVE 7 Work with rail companies to establish and enforce curfews or quiet zones in residential portions of Fort Dodge.

Rail corridors in Fort Dodge have significant impacts on surrounding development due to noise and vibration. While zoning regulations can ensure future development provides adequate buffers along rail corridors to mitigate many of these impacts, existing development is far more vulnerable. The City should work with rail operators to institute operational curfews or quiet zones in order to reduce the negative impacts on adjacent neighborhoods and commercial districts.



OPEN SPACE & ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Fort Dodge is home to approximately 470 acres of parkland, greenways, and natural areas. These areas provide recreational opportunities for residents, support natural ecosystems, and help define the aesthetic character of the community. This chapter includes recommendations intended to strengthen the open space and environmental features of Fort Dodge, and support the City’s goal of becoming a destination for businesses, residents, and visitors.

Existing Open Spaces & Environmental Features

The Fort Dodge Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department is responsible for the operations and maintenance of 30 parks, trails, and recreational facilities throughout the city. It is also charged with tree trimming and removal on city-owned property and public rights-of-way. Although the Parks Department oversees a great number of parks and facilities, it also relies on local schools and churches that allow public use of their facilities to increase access to recreational opportunities.

Park Facilities, Classification & Service Standards

Fort Dodge’s parks and recreational facilities are classified according to facility type. These classifications are used to measure appropriate levels of park service, service coverage, and development standards. The *Fort Dodge Community Recreation Needs Assessment and Recreational Master Plan* establishes thresholds for levels of service based on the amount of land and types of facilities required for various types of parks. Based on the 2014 population of 24,956, Fort Dodge should have 225 acres of parkland. Given the nearly 464 acres of city-owned community, neighborhood, and mini parks, as well as city-owned greenways and open space areas such as the Fort Dodge Nature Trail and McCarville Park, the City of Fort Dodge not only meets, but exceeds its service standard in every category of open space type. The 464 acres of parks do not include local school grounds, special use facilities, or other properties outside the purview of the Department.

PARK SERVICE STANDARDS			
City of Fort Dodge Park Facility	Service Standard (ac/1,000 residents)	City of Fort Dodge (ac/1,000 resident)	Total Acres
Mini & Neighborhood Parks	1.5	2.2	39.0
Community Parks	2.5	7.0	175.8
Open Space	6.0	9.6	249.1
Total	9.0	18.8	463.9



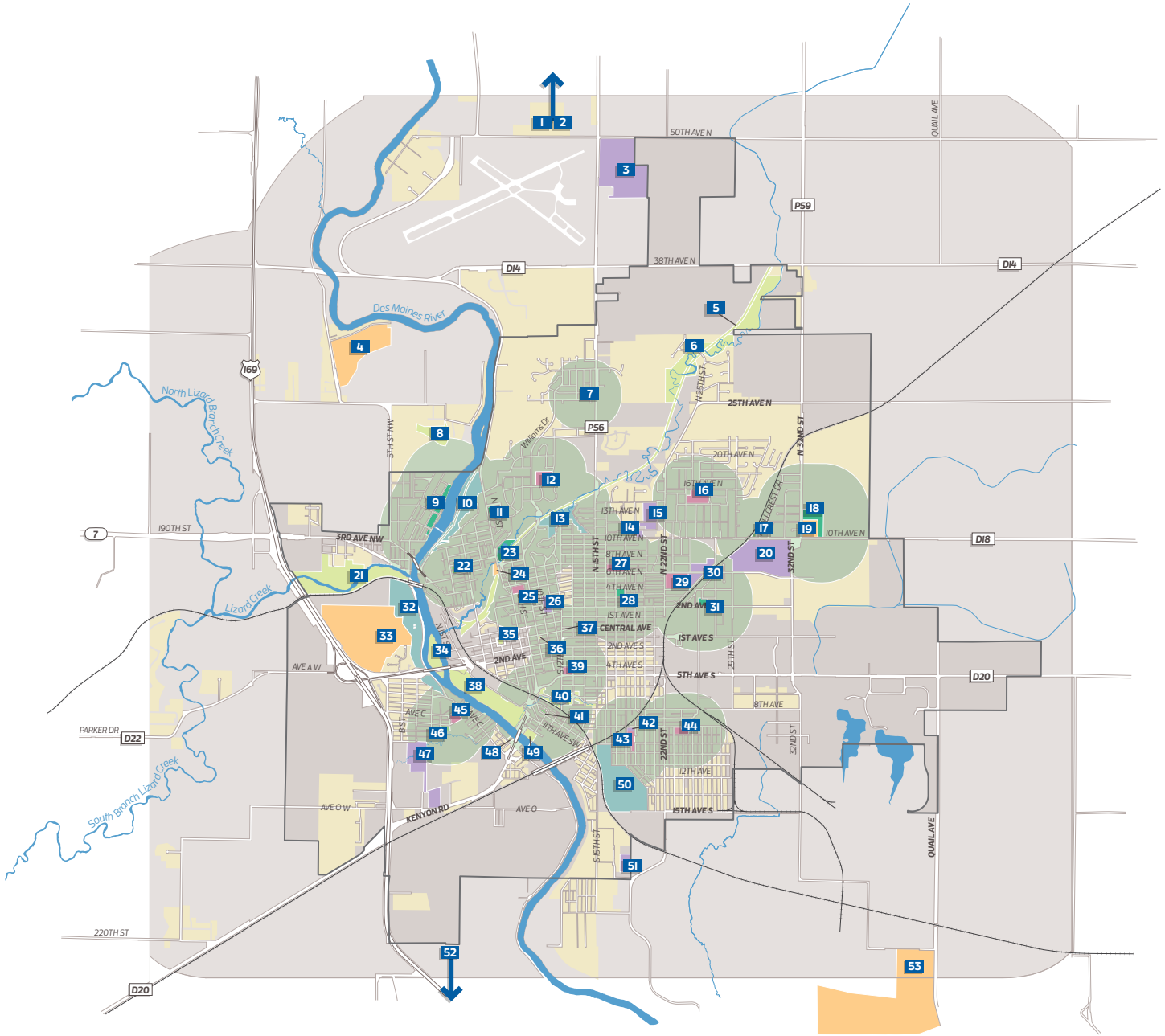
The park classifications also determine service coverage areas. Coverage areas provide a geographically-based indicator of community park access. The *Fort Dodge Community Recreation Needs Assessment and Recreational Master Plan* establishes service areas for mini-parks (1/4 -mile radius), neighborhood parks (1/3-mile radius), school parks (1/4-mile radius), and all other park facilities (community-wide).

Ideally, all residential areas would be captured within a park service area; however, many neighborhoods do not fall within a park service area. The 1/4 and 1/3-mile buffers assigned to local parks indicates a typical 5-7 minute walk; yet many residents must walk further or drive to access a local park due to environmental or infrastructure constraints such as topography and railway tracks.

Recreational Programming & Facilities

The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department offers a range of programs and recreational activities for all age groups. An online portal makes registration and event space reservations easy and convenient. Programmed recreation and school athletics such as basketball, volleyball, tennis, softball, and others are primarily held at the St. Edmond Arena, Dodger Courts and Stadium, and Harlan Rogers Sports Complex. The department also provides activities specifically directed towards the community’s senior population, with most events held at Citizen’s Central. Programming provided by the Department is complemented by the following:

- Private recreational facilities, including Fort Dodge Community REC with Downtown and ICCC locations, and several privately operated gyms.
- Athletics for Education & Success (AFES), a non-profit organization founded in 2004 that provides youth athletic programs as well as supplies and sportswear to families on a sliding fee basis.



CITY OF FORT DODGE PARKS, OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

KEY

- Community Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Mini-Park
- Open Space
- Special Use
- Sports Complex
- School Parks
- Park Service Areas
- Underserved Existing & Future Residential Areas

PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Kennedy Park 2 Lakeside Golf Course 3 Harlan Rogers Sports Park 4 Willow Ridge Golf Course 5 Mors Park 6 Soldier Creek Nature Trail 7 Kennedy Brown Park 8 McCarville Park 9 Hydro-Electric Park 10 Loomis Park 11 Expo Park 12 Feelhaver Elementary School 13 Snell-Crawford Park 14 Dodger Tennis Courts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Dodger Stadium 16 Cooper Elementary School 17 Knollcrest Park 18 Schmoker Family Park 19 Rosedale Rapids Aquatic Center 20 Fort Dodge Middle School 21 Lizard Creek Acquisition 22 Hawley-Lions Park 23 Armstrong Park 24 Skateboard park 25 Corpus Christi 26 Holy Trinity Gym & Field 27 Duncombe Elementary 28 Reynolds Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29 St. Edmond Schools 30 Ford Dodge Practice Fields 31 R.D. Mitchell Park 32 Phinney Park 33 Fort Dodge Country Club 34 Duck Island 35 City Square 36 Central Avenue Plaza 37 Veterans Memorial Park 38 Sunkissed Meadows Disc Golf 39 St. Paul Lutheran School 40 Mason Memorial Park 41 Mini Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 42 Bob Anderson Tennis Courts (Butler School) 43 Butler School 44 Community Christian School 45 Riverside Elementary 46 Lief Erikson Park 47 Iowa Central Community College 48 Riverside Park 49 Volunteer Park 50 Oleson Park 51 Patterson Fields 52 Webster County Fairgrounds 53 Gypsum City OHV Park |
|---|---|--|---|

Environmental Features

Des Moines River & Riparian Corridors

The Des Moines River is the natural centerpiece of Fort Dodge. The Des Moines River, Lizard Creek, Soldier Creek, and other tributaries provide a wealth of active and passive recreational opportunities and serve as the primary floodways within the City.

Hydroelectric Dam & Little Dam

The Hydroelectric Dam, located just north of 4th Avenue NW, and the Little Dam, located just south of the Kenyon Road bridge, were used for hydroelectric power generation. However, both have been decommissioned. The *Fort Dodge Hydroelectric and Whitewater Passage Feasibility* report, released in June 2010, found that reuse of the dam for power generation is infeasible, while the Little Dam is considered a significant safety hazard for river users. The future of both dams is being explored in the *Des Moines Riverfront Corridor Master Plan*. It is anticipated that each of these dams will require modification or removal in order to mitigate health and safety risks and create benefits for the Fort Dodge community.

Floodplains

Fort Dodge has a significant amount of land that is within the 100-year floodplain, especially along the Des Moines River, Lizard Creek, and Soldier Creek. However, the development pattern of the City has, for the most part, successfully avoided areas within floodplains. Developed areas susceptible to flooding include the AML Riverside site on East Riverside Drive.

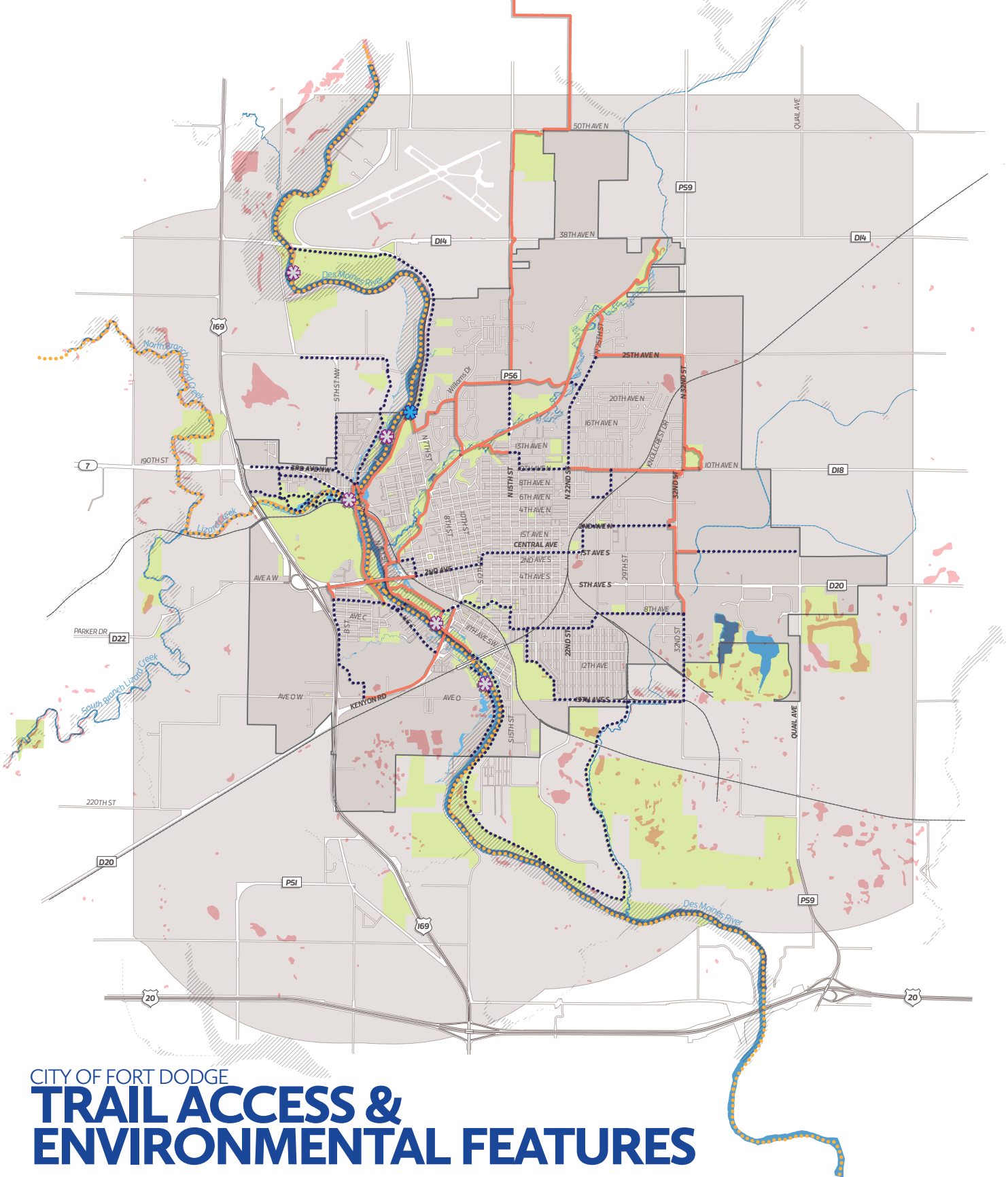
Wetlands

Fort Dodge has a variety of wetlands throughout its landscape. Riverine wetlands lie within the City's floodplains along the Des Moines River and its tributaries. Riverine wetlands are wetlands that are part of river and stream channels that contain moving water.

The City also includes both Palustrine and Lacustrine wetlands. Palustrine wetlands are substantially covered in vegetation and include swamps, and marshes. Lacustrine wetlands include inland water bodies such as lakes, larger ponds, and sloughs with little vegetation cover. Palustrine and Lacustrine wetlands can be found along the banks of old quarries sites that have since filled with water.

Open Space

Fort Dodge includes several open space areas that contain features such as woods, wetlands, bodies of water, and challenging topography. These are important components of the local environment and may be unsuitable for development where certain constraints exist.



CITY OF FORT DODGE TRAIL ACCESS & ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

- KEY**
- Bodies of Water
 - Existing Trail
 - Existing Water Trail
 - Existing Water Access Points
 - 100-Year Floodplain
 - Proposed Trail
 - Planned Water Access Points
 - Wetlands
 - Parks / Open Space



Goals, Objectives & Recommendations

The parks, open spaces, and environmental features in Fort Dodge are a critical component of the community’s character and vibrancy. The following goals, objectives, and recommendations describe ways the City can work with various partners to ensure they remain a long-term asset.

Parks & Recreation

GOAL 16

Create a comprehensive, community-wide system of parks and recreational programming accessible to all Fort Dodge residents.

OBJECTIVE
1

Maintain existing park and recreational facilities, and improve them based on the standards defined in the *Fort Dodge Community Recreation Needs Assessment and Recreational Master Plan*.

The City’s current network of parks, open spaces, and natural areas exceeds the standards set aside in the *Recreation Needs Assessment and Recreation Master Plan* according to its 2014 population. As a result, there is little need for the development of new parks. Instead, such investment should focus on the expansion of specific amenities and the need for parks should be evaluated as new growth occurs. In addition, the City should review and amend its Zoning Map to ensure all existing parks are protected under the CN zoning designation. Short-term priorities should focus on the maintenance of existing parks and facilities in order to bring them up to the standards identified in the *Recreation Master Plan*. These standards are summarized in the accompanying table.

FORT DODGE PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

Facility/Classification	Description	Size	Service Area	Required Amenities	
Mini-Park	Addresses limited, isolated, or specialized recreational needs at small sites in heavily developed areas and as sites with unique recreational opportunities.	10,000 SF to 2 acres	1/4 mile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play equipment • Open space area/field • Bike racks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking fountains • Benches
Neighborhood Park	Serves as the recreational focus of the neighborhood, offers a balance of active and passive recreation activities to neighborhood residents, and provides facilities within walking distance of their homes.	2 to 10 acres	1/3 mile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play equipment • Picnic facilities (shelter) • Open space area/field • Multi-use courts • Multi-purpose trails • Public telephone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-street parking • Bike racks • Drinking fountains • Benches • Picnic Tables • Restrooms
Community Park	Provides for active and passive recreational needs of several neighborhoods on a 15 to 100-acre site that is easily accessible by automobile or public transit. This category allows for group activities and other recreational opportunities not feasible at the neighborhood park level.	15 – 100 acres	Community-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Neighborhood Park 	
Regional Park	Provides for active and passive recreational needs of the greater region. Typically special use. Most often owned by county or state.	>50 acres	Region-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Neighborhood Park 	
School Park	Park associated with an educational facility.	5 to 10 acres	1/4 mile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play equipment • Open space area/field • Multi-use courts • Multi-purpose trails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-street parking • Bike racks • Drinking fountains • Benches
Special Use Facility	Includes both areas where games are held and practices are held.	Variable	Community-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-street parking • Bike racks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking fountains • Benches
Sports Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic facilities and associated fields at larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community. These include school complexes.	Variable	Community-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public telephone • Off-street parking • Bike racks • Drinking fountains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benches • Picnic Tables • Restrooms
Open Space - Greenway	Natural area that consists of forest, greenspace, prairie, and usually associated with a water body (river or creek), natural resource, and/or trail. Often used for preservation and passive uses.	Variable	Community-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike racks • Benches 	
Open Space - Natural Park	Natural area that consists of forest, greenspace, prairie; with defined boundaries or barriers. Often used for preservation and passive uses.	Variable	Community-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike racks 	
Open Space - Public Gathering	Natural area that consists of forest, greenspace, prairie. Used for events or public gatherings.	Variable	Community-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-street parking • Bike racks • Drinking fountains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benches • Picnic Tables • Restrooms



OBJECTIVE
2

Prioritize improvements to neighborhoods parks.

Some parts of the City are served by small neighborhood or mini-parks. As stated within the *Fort Dodge Community Recreation Needs Assessment and Recreational Master Plan*, “The City must look for opportunities to develop new neighborhood parks or improve ‘school parks’ in proximity to these areas. All new neighborhood parks should be developed to minimum park standards.” To support this effort, while ensuring residential growth areas are adequately served by neighborhood parks, the City should consider the following:

- Partner with schools to improve ‘school parks’ in proximity to areas not adequately served by small neighborhood or mini-parks.
- Establish guidelines and/or regulations that accommodate for changes in land ownership to ensure former park sites are well-maintained.
- Update the City’s Subdivision Ordinance to require parkland or provide a fee-in-lieu to be used towards parks elsewhere in the community.
- Encourage Homeowners Associations to establish bylaws that include standards for park maintenance.
- Create a plan for the vacation of small, ineffective neighborhood and mini-parks once they are replaced by newer neighborhood parks.

FORT DODGE PARKS & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Facility	Ownership	Classification	Size (ac)
Armstrong Park	City of Fort Dodge	Neighborhood Park	6.0
Bob Anderson Tennis Courts	Fort Dodge Community School District	Sports Complex	1.0
Butler Elementary School	Fort Dodge Community School District	School Park	1.0
Central Avenue Plaza	Greater Fort Dodge Development Corporation	Open Space - Public Gathering Space	0.3
City Square	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Public Gathering Space	0.9
Community Christian School	Community Christian School	School Park	3.6
Corpus Christi	Holy Trinity Parish	School Park	1.6
Dodger Stadium	Fort Dodge Community School District	Sports Complex	3.0
Dodger Tennis Courts	Fort Dodge Community School District	Sports Complex	5.5
Duck Island	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Greenway	13.0
Duncombe Elementary School	Fort Dodge Community School District	School Park	2.5
Expo Park	City of Fort Dodge	Neighborhood Park	3.5
Feelhaver Elementary School	Fort Dodge Community School District	School Park	3.0
Fort Dodge Country Club	Fort Dodge Country Club	Special Use	135.8
Fort Dodge Middle School	Fort Dodge Community School District	Sports Complex	3.5
Fort Dodge Senior High	Fort Dodge Community School District	Sports Complex	6.0
Fred N Cooper Elementary School	Fort Dodge Community School District	School Park	5.0
Gypsum City OHV Park	OHV Association	Special Use	198.0
Harlan Rogers Sports Complex	City of Fort Dodge	Sports Complex	61.9
Hawley Lions Park	City of Fort Dodge	Mini-Park	1.9
Holy Trinity Gym and Field	Holy Trinity Parish	Sports Complex	1.3
Hydro-Electric Park	City of Fort Dodge	Neighborhood Park	9.4
ICCC	ICCC	Sports Complex	1.7
Kennedy Brown Park	City of Fort Dodge	Mini-Park	0.5
John F. Kennedy Memorial Park	Webster County	Regional Park	250.0
Knollcrest Park	City of Fort Dodge	Mini-Park	0.5
Lakeside Golf Course	City of Fort Dodge	Special Use	117.4
Leif Erickson Park	City of Fort Dodge	Mini-Park	1.6
Lizard Creek Acquisition	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Greenway	76.0
Loomis Park	City of Fort Dodge	Community Park	30.8
Mason Memorial Park	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Greenway	11.4
McCarville Park	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Natural Park	14.9
Mini Park	City of Fort Dodge	Mini-Park	0.7
Mors Park	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Natural Park	25.7
Oleson Park	City of Fort Dodge	Community Park	69.4
Patterson Field	Private	Sports Complex	3.0
Phinney Park	City of Fort Dodge	Community Park	56.9
R.D. Mitchell Park	City of Fort Dodge	Neighborhood Park	2.1
Reynolds Park	City of Fort Dodge	Neighborhood Park	2.11
Riverside Elementary School	Fort Dodge Community School District	School Park	1.6
Riverside Park	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Greenway	0.4
Rosedale Rapids Aquatic Center	City of Fort Dodge	Special Use	9.1
Schmoker Family Park	City of Fort Dodge	Neighborhood Park	10.7
Skateboard Park	City of Fort Dodge	Special Use	2.0
Snell-Crawford Park	City of Fort Dodge	Community Park	18.7
Soldier Creek Nature Trail	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Greenway	61.0
St. Edmond Schools	St. Edmond Catholic School	School Park & Sports Complex	8.3
St. Paul Lutheran School	St. Paul Lutheran School	School Park	0.5
Sunkissed Meadow	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Greenway	42.0
Veteran's Memorial Park	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Public Gathering Space	0.1
Volunteer Park	City of Fort Dodge	Open Space - Greenway	3.4
Webster County Fair Grounds	Webster County	Special Use	58.6
Willow Ridge Golf Course	Iowa Central Community College	Special Use	63.4



OBJECTIVE 3 Continue to build on existing relationships with local recreational providers and organizations to share facilities, programs, and services.

Fort Dodge is home to several private and non-profit recreational facilities and organizations that include gyms, fitness classes, and child enrichment programs. Organizations such as the Webster County Conservation Board (WCCB), UnityPoint Health - Trinity Medical Center, Friendship Haven, Athletics for Education and Success, and others also provide an opportunity for continued partnerships for shared employment, equipment, and facilities. These relationships serve to reduce costs and improve efficiencies. The partnership between the Fort Dodge Community REC and ICCB serves as an example of a collaborative relationship that helps expand programming and facility access to members. The partnership with WCCB allows for Fort Dodge’s trail system to be well-maintained for the benefit of the community and region. The City should continue to build upon existing relationships and modify agreements as the park, recreation, and trail system expands and evolves.

OBJECTIVE 4 Expand the City’s recreation amenities.

The City of Fort Dodge is a unique recreational destination that is highlighted by its trail system, the Des Moines River, and the OHV Park. The City should consider expanding its recreational amenities by establishing designated OHV and mountain bike routes. Through increased promotion of the OHV park and other recreational amenities, as well marketing the City as an OHV-friendly community, Fort Dodge will support the growth of recreational tourism.



Natural Environment **GOAL 17**

Strengthen Fort Dodge's natural environment and ecosystems through the proactive use of planning, regulations, and partnerships.



Adopt regulations within the City's subdivision ordinance that promote conservation design in areas with sensitive environmental features.

The Future Land Use Plan identifies long-term growth areas that include floodplains, wetlands, wooded areas, streams, and other environmental elements. The City should adopt a new subdivision ordinance that requires cluster development or conservation design as new development occurs. These concepts generally allow for greater development intensity in areas of the site without environmental elements. As a result, the overall development density is preserved, but important natural features are maintained and uninterrupted to the greatest extent possible.



OBJECTIVE
2

Work with local schools and other partners to enhance education and awareness about the unique natural environment in Fort Dodge, its benefits to the community, and ways it can be preserved.

The City of Fort Dodge has important relationships with experts in the local environment. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is a key partner in on-going initiatives in Fort Dodge, and Webster County Conservation often works with the City on trails, open space, and natural resource projects.

The City of Fort Dodge should maintain and build on relationships with these environmental specialists such to provide information, demonstrations, or presentations related to the natural environment in Fort Dodge. Educational components should also address the local ecology, flora, and fauna, as well as provide information about environmental stewardship. This includes educational components related to stormwater best management practices and proper disposal of green waste, clippings, compost, etc.

Such interaction can be supported through local school curricula, specialized programs at ICC, employers, and not-for-profit groups. The City should also provide information about Fort Dodge’s natural environment through its website.

OBJECTIVE
3 **Identify and establish policies to address stormwater and water quality best management practices.**

Stormwater and water quality best management practices include techniques that are often prohibited or not explicitly permitted by local ordinances. The City should amend its zoning and subdivision regulations to encourage such practices as development and redevelopment occurs. Bioswales, pervious pavers, rain gardens, native plantings, and other techniques can be addressed through infrastructure standards, site design requirements, and requirements for certain landscaping materials. Additional information with regard to stormwater BMPs can be found in the Community Facilities Chapter.

OBJECTIVE
4 **Identify and preserve critical species habitats throughout the planning area.**

The Des Moines River and other waterways, wooded areas, and steep slopes are important ecosystems for a variety of wildlife in Fort Dodge. The City should work with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Webster County Conservation to identify and preserve these areas, as well as create a plan to identify and remove invasive species. In addition to encouraging cluster development on sites that include general environmental features, more prohibitive regulation should be adopted for areas identified as critical ecosystems or migratory greenways.

OBJECTIVE
5 **Create a diverse and resilient tree population in established and new growth areas in Fort Dodge.**

In 2014, only 6% of the State of Iowa included forested areas. In Fort Dodge, trees support a variety of local wildlife species, especially along the Des Moines River, Lizard Creek, Soldier Creek, and other tributaries. The City should take proactive steps to ensure the long-term health of its tree population, including:

- Amending zoning and subdivision regulation to require parkway trees in new development areas and prescribe tree species that provide diversity and resiliency to disease and climate change;
- Conduct a City-wide tree survey to assess the type, age, size, and condition of trees throughout the community;
- Plant replacement trees in areas where aging or dying trees are anticipated to be removed;
- Raise the tree canopy by removing invasive species to allow sunlight that ensures proper growth and vegetation; and,
- Support the use of cluster development to maintain existing forested areas as new development occurs.

OBJECTIVE
6

Maintain Fort Dodge Open Space Areas.

Fort Dodge owns 247.8 acres of undeveloped parkland that are classified as Open Space - Natural Parks and Greenways. These areas include Duck Island, Soldier Creek Nature Trail, McCarville Park, and the Lizard Creek Acquisition, among others. Natural Resource areas are characterized as being largely undeveloped, and including environmental features such as large tree stands, native plant communities, and animal habitats. Natural Resource Areas can be used for passive recreation, although they should have limited human disturbance. In contrast, developed parks are used for active recreation.

As important contributors to the City’s natural landscape and ecosystem, the City should work with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Webster County Conservation to establish vegetation management plans and stormwater management and drainage plans. Natural Resource Areas should be regularly maintained for waste removal and monitored for illegal dumping. Signage that directs visitors to any trails or scenic viewpoints, as well as identifies critical habitats and hazards, should also be placed within Natural Resource Areas.

OBJECTIVE
7

Strictly enforce regulations related to illegal dumping and pollution.

Throughout the planning process, several residents discussed the negative impacts of illegal dumping in wooded areas in and around Fort Dodge. This puts local wildlife a risk, and also impacts the aesthetic quality of wooded areas and river environments. The City should strictly enforce regulations related to illegal dumping and pollution in order to ensure they do not become more significant issues.

OBJECTIVE
8

Continue to identify strategies to transform former mining properties into environmental and open space assets.

Gypsum mining has been a foundation of Fort Dodge’s local economy for several decades. However, as mines expire and operations cease, large tracts of land may be left vacant. As local mines are taken offline, the City should have a plan in place for their reuse. A plan for the eastern expansion of the OHV Park to take over expired mines is outline in the *OHV Park Master Plan*. The City should continue implementing future phases of the OHV Park as a positive solution to expired mine lands.

For other mine areas, the City should work with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Webster County Conservation to identify potential strategies and funding sources related to the acquisition, clean up, and development of such properties into natural and ecological assets. Potential scenarios include wetland restoration, recreational use, and commercial, residential and industrial development; however, the City should also work with property owners to ensure any potential contaminants are properly addressed and environmental hazards are remediated. Potential mining areas are identified in the *Commercial & Industrial Areas Framework Map*.



Des Moines River
GOAL 18

Make the Des Moines River the centerpiece of the community’s natural and recreational systems, and expand its draw to areas beyond Fort Dodge and Webster County.



Provide additional opportunities for residents and visitors to access the Des Moines River.

The Fort Dodge planning area includes four Des Moines River access points and one Lizard Creek access point. Hydroelectric Park, Loomis Park, Phinney Park, Sunkissed Meadows, and Riverside Park allow residents and visitors opportunities to view and interact with the River, and a number of trails allow cycling, walking, running, and hiking along the river and creek corridors. The *Des Moines River and Lizard Creek Riverfront Master Plan* (adoption pending) identifies a number of potential locations for new trails and river access points. The City of Fort Dodge should support these proposed improvements through trail access, signage, parking, and ADA accessibility.

Riverfront Community Identity

The Des Moines River is a character-defining element of Fort Dodge. Residents value its natural beauty and recreational offerings and the City is making great strides in planning for its riverfront areas and neighborhoods. Implementation of the Loomis Park Plan, the Northwest River District Plan, and Des Moines & Lizard Creek Riverfront Plan will provide increased interaction with the Des Moines riverfront and Lizard Creek. To further bring attention to the river and associate it with the identity of Fort Dodge, the City should continue to provide directional and wayfinding signage to access points and scenic viewpoints. Marketing and promotional material for the City should include high-quality imagery of the riverfront, and the City should work with regional partners including Webster County and other riverfront communities in the county to give regional recognition to the 56 miles of Des Moines Riverfront in Webster County.



OBJECTIVE
2 **Encourage active and passive recreation on and along the Des Moines River.**

The Des Moines River is a community asset that is used year-round by residents and visitors for hiking, nature appreciation, fishing, snowmobiling, and other activities. *The Des Moines River and Lizard Creek Riverfront Master Plan* identifies in more detail specific kinds of uses along the river corridor. The City should support this vision through the enhancement of existing parks and open spaces with various facilities and amenities.

OBJECTIVE
3 **Modify or remove the Hydroelectric Dam and Little Dam.**

The Hydroelectric Dam was constructed in 1916 on the Des Moines River and generated electricity until it was decommissioned in 1971. The Little Dam was built in the same year to help with cooling the now demolished Fort Dodge Gas and Electric Plant. While their presence has created several local fishing holes, their function as dams is obsolete and the low head dam design poses significant safety hazards. The dams should be modified or removed in order to accomplish other long-term community objectives, including the enhancement of water quality, wildlife migration, river-based recreation, and safety.

OBJECTIVE
4 **Preserve and restore significant and environmental features of the Des Moines River and Lizard Creek corridors, and ensure proper use of the corridor.**

The Des Moines River and Lizard Creek are unique and attractive assets; the dramatic terrain and transportation network that parallel each corridor provide the opportunity for prominent views of the environment. The City should identify important viewpoints, and enhance them through motorist pull-out areas, trail and sidewalk connections, removal of invasive species, wayfinding signage, and informational kiosks that describe the importance of each waterway and key elements that can be seen.

While much of the land adjacent to Des Moines River should remain in its natural state, as much of these areas lie within the floodplain, areas near Downtown Fort Dodge present potential development opportunity sites. The City should encourage riverfront development in order to promote interaction with the Des Moines River and catalyze additional downtown development. Nevertheless, as areas along the riverfront develop, the City should ensure future use and development of lands take into account environmental, recreational, and economic goals of the *Des Moines River and Lizard Creek Riverfront Master Plan*. This approach encourages environmentally-responsive riverfront development that allows residents and visitors to engage and connect with a vital community asset that represents much of Fort Dodge's history and future. In addition, the City should utilize development tools such as zoning, conservation easements, and land acquisition to discourage development within the floodplain, ensuring flood-prone areas remain in their natural state.

OBJECTIVE
5 **Support local events that bring people to the riverfront and create awareness of its role in Fort Dodge.**

The City owns and maintains several open spaces along the Des Moines Riverfront. Many of these spaces can easily accommodate community-based events, including festivals, concerts, markets, or others that would attract residents and visitors to the river's edge. The City should work with local community partners to host events and have information on-hand regarding the river and initiatives related to its preservation.



COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Community facilities and infrastructure provide vital services to the Fort Dodge community and contribute to its overall quality of life. As the County Seat and largest municipality in the region, Fort Dodge benefits from a robust system of public infrastructure and community facilities.

Community facilities include city administration, schools, public safety providers, libraries, places of worship, and other public and semi-public uses. Infrastructure includes the systems that deliver utilities and services to Fort Dodge citizens. This section identifies future needs and provides recommendations for the City's community facilities and infrastructure systems.

Existing Community Facilities & Infrastructure

The recommendations of this chapter build upon an existing system of facilities and infrastructure intended to support economic activities and residential quality of life.

Public Safety

Fort Dodge Police Department

The Fort Dodge Police Department includes 40 full-time officers and two staff members, which puts it at par with peer Midwest communities. The Department is being proactive with officer training and community partnerships. This includes developing officer leadership skills as well as working closely with the Webster County Sheriff's Department and local schools. The Police Department is seeking to actively collect data to better address areas of crime and traffic issues as well as upgrade its radio system. The Fort Dodge Police Department Foundation Fund may provide an additional source of funding to allow the department to increase its level of service.

Fort Dodge Fire Department

The Fort Dodge Fire Department provides fire safety and emergency medical services to the greater Fort Dodge region, including many areas of Webster County and several rural industrial complexes. It provides emergency medical services at the paramedic level in partnership with Trinity Regional Medical Center and has a Comprehensive Mutual and Automatic Aid Plan with all Fire Departments within Webster County.

The department has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) classification of 4, which is much higher than surrounding rural areas. Nevertheless, as the population grows and ages, the department faces the challenge of providing adequate levels of public safety service with limited resources. The department sees private/public inter-agency cooperation and managed growth as key factors to maintaining service.

Education

Fort Dodge Community School District

The Fort Dodge Community School District consists of 10 facilities that include five elementary schools, the Fort Dodge Middle School, and Fort Dodge Senior High School. With a 2014-2015 enrollment of 3,700 students, the district's schools are at capacity; however, the school is currently undergoing a master plan process to plan for future enrollment. In addition, several existing facility improvements and upgrades are planned, including the construction of a new elementary school and renovation of Fort Dodge Senior High School.

Private Schools

Fort Dodge includes several private, faith-based schools that provide an alternative to the public school system. In addition to Harvest Baptist Bible College, Saint Edmond Catholic School offers programs for K-12, St. Paul Lutheran School offers K-8, Community Christian School offers K-8, and Harvest Baptist offers K-12 programs. These schools work collaboratively with one another and the community through frequent communication to address student needs.

Fort Dodge Public Library

The Fort Dodge Public Library consists of a 32,000 square foot space built in the heart of Downtown in 2001, on the City Square. In addition to the library, the facility holds the Karl L. King Municipal Band, Webster County Historical Society, Webster County Genealogical Society, and Friends Bookshop. The library provides free internet access, meeting rooms, community events, and has a 90,000-item circulation that consists of books, periodicals, DVDs, and CDs.



Iowa Central Community College

Iowa Central Community College (ICCC) is one of fifteen Iowa Community Colleges. The campus houses approximately 1,200 students during the school year, and for the 2014-2015 school year, ICCC was at capacity with an enrollment of 5,686 students. In response to projected enrollment increases and the need for periodic facility updates, ICCC has renovation projects planned for the East Campus, the Crimmins Building, and Main Campus. The college provides use of its facilities, including the Decker Auditorium, and partners with organizations across Webster County for education and workforce development programs.

Buena Vista University

Buena Vista University is a private university founded in 1891. Buena Vista University has a satellite Graduate and Professional Studies program at ICCC. This public-private partnership provides students an opportunity to earn an associate's degree at ICCC and receive a bachelor's degree at Buena Vista University.

Health & Social Services

Healthcare

UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center is the primary health care facility for the Fort Dodge region and employs more than 1,000 healthcare professionals. The facility is part of the larger UnityPoint Health system, which serves an eight county area in North Central Iowa. While the hospital includes 200 beds, there are generally 35-60 patients at any given time. The focus of the hospital is shifting from emergency room services to a more community-based health model.



Cultural Facilities

Blanden Memorial Art Museum

The Blanden Memorial Art Museum was the first structure in the State of Iowa built for the sole purpose as an art museum. Located at the edge of Downtown Fort Dodge in the Historic Oak Hill District, the museum grants free admission to a variety of permanent and rotating visual art exhibits. In addition to its galleries and museum shop, the Blanden offers both children and adult art classes and workshops, as well as other creative events and programming.

Oleson Park Bandshell

Also known as the Karl King Bandshell, the Oleson Park Bandshell was constructed in 1938 as a Works Progress Administration project. The concrete, modernist music venue is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is home to the Karl King Municipal Band.

Arts Organizations & Businesses

Fort Dodge includes a considerable number of arts-related business and organizations. The Fort Dodge Fine Arts Association supports 12 member organizations, which includes the Karl King Municipal Band, Fort Dodge Area Symphony, and Hawkeye Community Theater, among others.

The City is also home to nearly a dozen private performance and visual arts businesses.

Fort Museum & Frontier Village

Located on the west side of the Des Moines River, the Fort Museum and Frontier Village provide a glimpse into the community’s past. The Fort Museum includes artifacts and educational information from early settlers, including Civil War memorabilia. The Frontier Village includes a dozen structures that replicate traditional homes and businesses that would have been in Fort Dodge at the time of the Civil War. Both the museum and village are open to the public year-round and are home to the Frontiers Day festival.

Public Art

The City of Fort Dodge enjoys a variety of public art pieces that have an aesthetic and cultural benefit for the community. Many of the installations have been made possible by grants from local foundations and trusts. The most recent public art projects include the “Over the Treetops” mosaic by Michael Sweere in the terminal of the Fort Dodge Regional Airport, “Axiom” by Tom Stancliffe at ICCC, “Parade” by William King at S 8th Street and Kenyon Road, and Tom Stancliffe “Oak Leaves” at the Blanden Art Museum.



Quality of Life & Community Pride

Recent growth in industry and commerce is beginning to shift the City's image to one of growth and innovation. As a Semifinalist in the America's Best Communities Competition, Fort Dodge is continuing to improve its image as a quality rural community. Miles of trails, acres of parkland, quality educational opportunities, effective community services and facilities, a historic downtown, and growth in community events provide for an ever-increasing quality of life for residents. In order to continue this momentum, the City should continue to work with GFDGA and other partners to market its assets, as well as be proactive to improve its physical identity. This includes maintenance and beautification of arterial roadways, addressing distressed properties, and establishing a variety of design and streetscape standards. This proactive approach will aid in business and employee recruitment, and more importantly, solidify community pride.

Infrastructure

Water

Through its Public Works Department, the City of Fort Dodge collects, treats, and distributes potable water for City residents and businesses. The water system includes 7 wells and one Water Treatment Plant. Fort Dodge uses five elevated storage tanks and 184 miles of water main to distribute water throughout the City. The Public Works Department is also responsible for maintaining the City's water mains and fire hydrants.

The Iowa's Crossroads of Global Innovation (ICGI) project, located approximately six miles west of Fort Dodge, is connected to the city's water system. The City has committed to extend a 30-inch water main from Harvest Avenue west approximately 3,300 feet to Grain Avenue should industrial development continue in the area.

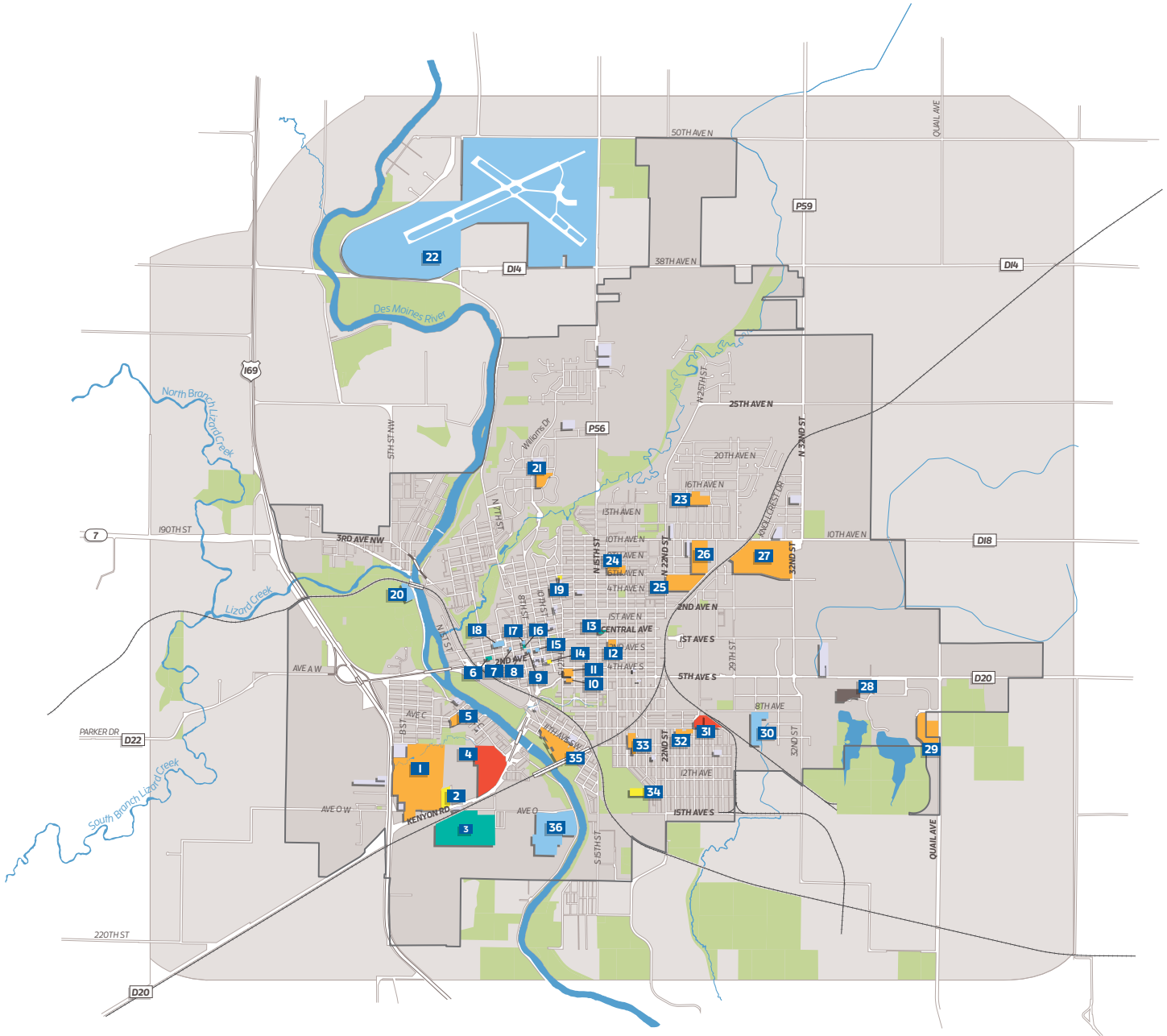


Stormwater

The City of Fort Dodge maintains approximately 130 miles of stormwater sewer, 3,249 intakes, and 1,389 manholes. A recent improvement to the stormwater system includes the East Region Storm Sewer Project. This project includes the construction of multiple stormwater detention facilities and attendant features to improve stormwater management around the commercial areas along 1st Avenue South, 5th Avenue South, South 25th Street, and South 29th Street.

Sewer

The Public Works Department provides wastewater services through 129 miles of sewer lines, 2 sewage lift stations, and a Wastewater Treatment Plant. The total capacity of the city wastewater system is 20 million gallons per day (MGD) and has an average daily treatment of 10.5 MGD. No issues have been reported with current or anticipated future capacity. The ICGI site is connected to the city’s wastewater treatment system. The City has committed to extend an existing 48-inch gravity sanitary sewer from Harvest Avenue west approximately 3,300 feet to Grain Avenue should future industrial development occur in the area.



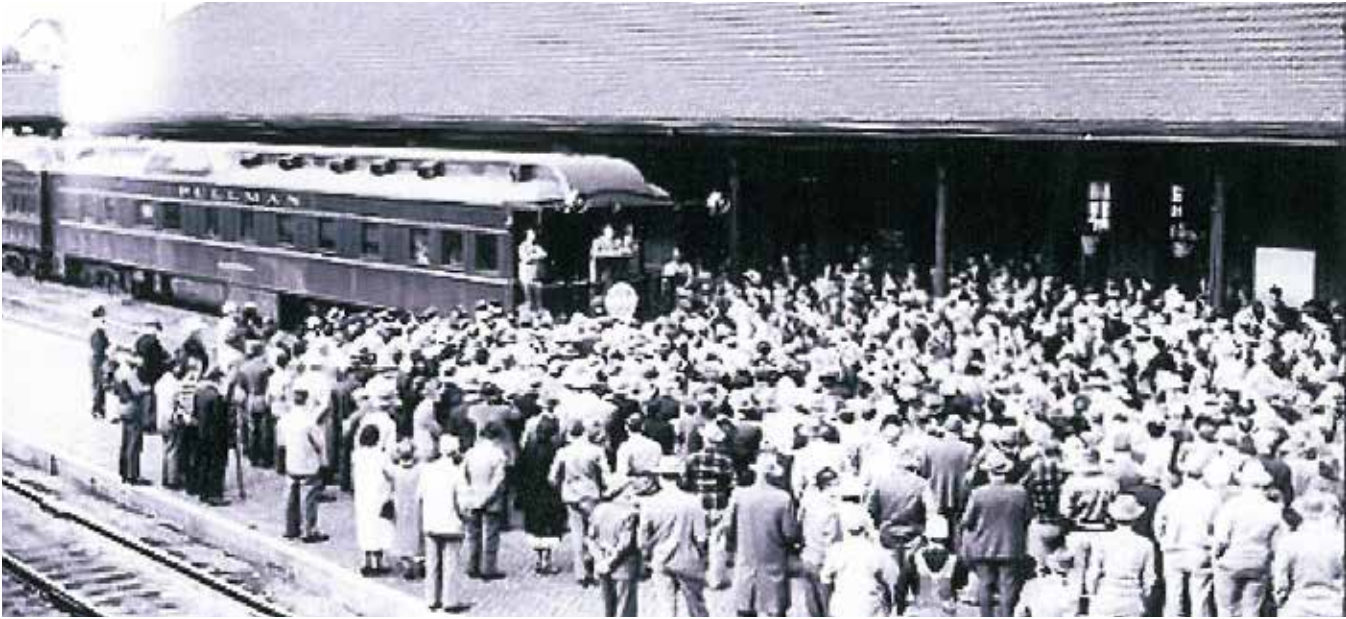
CITY OF FORT DODGE COMMUNITY FACILITIES

KEY

- City of Fort Dodge / Webster County
- Public Safety
- Education
- Public Health
- Arts and Culture
- Religious
- Other Facilities

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Iowa Central Community College (Buena Vista University Satellite Campus) 2 Fort Museum and Frontier Village 3 Fort Dodge Correctional Facility 4 Fort Dodge Public Library 5 Riverside Early Learning Center 6 Fort Dodge Community Corrections Center 7 Dodger Area Rapid Transit (DART) 8 Harvest Baptist School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Webster County Public Health Department 10 Prairie Lakes AEA 11 St. Paul Lutheran School (private) 12 Fort Dodge Arey Education Center (private) 13 Fort Dodge Fire Department 14 Blanden Memorial Art Museum 15 Fort Dodge City Hall 16 Webster County Law Enforcement Center 17 Webster County Courthouse 18 Fort Dodge Public Library | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 Hawkeye Theater 20 Water Plant 21 Feelhaver Elementary School 22 Fort Dodge Regional Airport 23 Cooper Elementary School 24 Duncombe Elementary School 25 St. Edmonds Schools (private) 26 Fort Dodge Senior High School 27 Fort Dodge Middle School 28 U.S. Post Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29 Iowa Central Community College - East Campus 30 Fort Dodge Central Maintenance Facility 31 Trinity Regional Medical Center: Highland Park Center 32 Community Christian School (private) 33 Butler Elementary School 34 Oleson Park Bandshell 35 Iowa Central Community College - Crimmins Complex 36 Fort Dodge Wastewater Treatment Plant |
|---|---|--|---|



Goals, Objectives & Recommendations

Fort Dodge residents and businesses benefit from a robust system of community service providers. The recommendations in this section aim to maximize the effectiveness of these service providers, recognizing that many of them are not under direct purview of the City of Fort Dodge. As such, the provision of community services requires collaboration and coordination among several agencies, forms of local government, or not-for-profits.

City Government

GOAL 19

Ensure that City government and administration support desirable investment in Fort Dodge and maximize the effectiveness of public resources.



Maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal services.

Efficient and effective services translate into reliability and a lower overall tax burden – characteristics that would make Fort Dodge more attractive for business and residential investment. The City should continue to review its municipal services to determine opportunities to implement the following:

- Consolidation of services in order to reduce inefficiencies or unneeded spending;
- Appropriate redundancy in services to ensure continuing performance and resiliency to major weather or man-made events;
- Potential privatization of services where the overall impact related to cost and performance would benefit Fort Dodge citizens; and,
- Liquidation of unused public properties to foster community and economic development, and generate additional property tax revenue.

OBJECTIVE
2 **Remove barriers to desirable development in Fort Dodge.**

The goal of development regulations should not be to overly burden development, but rather to remove barriers to the right kinds of development. The City should review its subdivision and zoning regulations and consider adopting a new ordinance to achieve the following:

- Maximize alignment with the objectives and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan;
- Clarify development standards and reduce the likelihood of inconsistent interpretation or arbitrary decision-making;
- Establish clear and predictable procedures for approval that provide applicants with a level of certainty in the process; and,
- Establish incentives or bonuses for projects that go above and beyond basic standards in order to accomplish broader community objectives.

OBJECTIVE
3 **Maintain open and transparent communication with Fort Dodge citizens.**

Since the development of Envision 2030 in the mid-2000's, Fort Dodge has undertaken several City initiatives that included open and inclusive dialogue with the public. It is critical that this continue in the future, as it will ensure that plans and policies remain in-line with the community's evolving vision and foster local stewardship and implementation of plans. To do so, the City and its various Departments should:

- Strengthen its social media presence to ensure that a broad cross-section of the community is aware of opportunities for involvement;
- Actively engage relevant stakeholders as various initiatives are undertaken;
- Encourage volunteerism and civic pride through resident participation in boards and commissions, focus groups and steering committees, community organizations, and other outlets;
- Actively engage students through curricula that stress civics and local government;
- Utilize schools, religious congregations, not-for-profits, and other established networks to disperse and receive information regarding government initiatives; and,
- Continue to support media outlets to encourage strong communication with the public on programs, initiatives, and requests for involvement.



OBJECTIVE
4

Support continued collaboration among all education providers, from early childhood to adult continuing education, to pursue funding, align educational programs, and provide employment opportunities.

Education in Fort Dodge includes the Fort Dodge Community School District, as well as many other educational providers. Early childhood educators and daycare providers, private schools, ICCC and Buena Vista University, and the Fort Dodge Public Library all play a role in the continuum of education. In order to foster the City’s educational offerings and develop a high-quality local workforce, the City should:

- Work with the Fort Dodge Community School District to assess future growth trends and projections, as well as establish triggers for the proactive acquisition of land for new facilities, and the development of those facilities as the student population increases.
- Work closely with educators, the GFDGA, and local employers to identify professional and vocational training that would make Fort Dodge residents prime candidates for local employment.
- Support the continued coordination among local schools to ensure they are providing sequential curricula that reflect the latest approach to education.
- Serve as an active partner with Fort Dodge Community Schools, colleges and universities, and others in pursuing grant funding, especially when it relates to other local objectives such as economic development, neighborhood revitalization, or workforce development.



Cultural Facilities GOAL 20

Ensure support and continuance of the City’s cultural facilities and identify strategies to expand on the art and cultural experiences that promote tourism and activities throughout the community.

OBJECTIVE
1 **Analyze and consider what other communities are doing in Iowa relative to the fine arts.**

Fort Dodge can look to other communities within Iowa to assess the benefits and efficacy of previous and existing arts programs and initiatives. The City should research art programs applied within communities throughout the state, identify the programs that have had a measurable impact, and consider opportunities for the application of similar programs in Fort Dodge.

OBJECTIVE
2 **Encourage collaboration of the City and various art entities to support and expand on art activities.**

Fort Dodge has a rich history that has shaped the development of its character, while its arts and cultural facilities both impact quality of life and have a significant influence on the image and identity of the community. To further expand existing arts and cultural facilities and services, as well as expand programming, the City should consider the following actions:

- Develop a public art plan;
- Identify an individual or create a community-based committee that can act as a liaison between different arts organizations and the City;
- Identify business and corporate partnerships that could establish and build on public art; and,
- Identify and prioritize space for cultural activities such as community facilities, parks, outdoor public gathering areas, and other public spaces.



Public Safety

GOAL 21

Improve and maintain public safety responsiveness as growth occurs.

OBJECTIVE 1 Continue to involve Police and Fire Departments during the development approval process.

The development of portions of the community as described in the Future Land Use Plan will place additional demand on police and fire services, and could potentially extend response time; this includes areas both in the City of Fort Dodge and in unincorporated Webster County. As proposed subdivisions and developments are reviewed by the City or County staff, the Police and Fire Departments should continue to be involved in plan review to assess the impacts on existing services and provide feedback regarding access, connectivity, and public safety.

OBJECTIVE 2 Proactively preserve land necessary for service expansion in anticipated growth areas.

Anticipated growth areas may place enough demand on existing services, requiring new facilities to sustain effectiveness and responsiveness. The City should work with the Police and Fire Departments to model the long-term impacts of planned growth and establish the need for new facilities or infrastructure. Where necessary, land for future facilities or rights-of-way should be acquired in order to allow for improvements as development occurs.

Conversely, proactively placing public safety facilities in key development areas can serve to expand desired growth. The City should work with the Police and Fire Departments to analyze the necessary services and facilities that can support expansion of the City’s industrial base, in particular, areas near Iowa’s Crossroads of Global Innovation and the Cross-town Industrial Park.

OBJECTIVE
3**Continue to implement a model of Community Policing.**

Community Policing is an approach that stresses police and citizens as partners rather than adversaries. By establishing dialogue with residents, especially the youth, Community Policing can help residents be more aware of their surroundings, build trust with the police force, and be prepared to react in a safe and effective manner when they witness criminal activity. This can result in lower crime rates and a better perception of the safety of Fort Dodge. To do this, the City should support department activities such as:

- Designation of local officer leaders who have regular interaction with residents or homeowners associations;
- A prominent and collaborative presence in schools through demonstration, roundtable discussions, and speaking engagements; and,
- Continued coordination with the Webster County Sheriff Department and quasi-public safety entities, such as ICCC security.

OBJECTIVE
4**Support efficient and effective ambulance service.**

Fort Dodge includes unique topography and a mix of old and new neighborhoods that may be challenging to ambulance service providers. The City should work with local responders to identify potential impediments to ambulatory services and create an action plan to ensure adequate response times and availability.

Infrastructure

GOAL 22

Maximize the effectiveness and long-term reliability of Fort Dodge’s municipal infrastructure.

OBJECTIVE 1 **Continue to maintain and implement a Capital Improvement Program.**

The City of Fort Dodge maintains a Capital Improvement Program that identifies project needs and funding sources for the next several years. The City should continue to use this as a guide for investment in infrastructure and facilities, including the on-going maintenance and new development of roads, water lines, and sewers.

OBJECTIVE 2 **Adopt a stormwater ordinance.**

As development occurs in Fort Dodge, new impervious surfaces will place additional demand on stormwater infrastructure, potentially resulting in localized flooding. Currently, the City has no regulations related to on-site stormwater management. The City should adopt a stormwater ordinance that would prescribe the amount of stormwater to be managed on a given site, the duration of release into the public infrastructure system, and types of alternative management practices that would result in on-site filtration. The ordinance should reflect the six minimum control measures outlined in the U.S. EPA’s National Menu of Best Management Practices for Stormwater Phase II. These measures include public education, public involvement, illicit discharge detection & elimination, construction, post-construction, and pollution prevention/good housekeeping.

OBJECTIVE 3 **Provide development incentives or tax abatements to encourage low impact development stormwater best management practices.**

As a component of a stormwater ordinance, the City should provide incentives for the use of low impact development (LID) stormwater best management practices. This type of development practice uses alternative design methods in order to preserve the natural drainage patterns of the land as much as possible. Appropriate incentives could include density bonuses, increased lot coverage allowances, or reductions in property taxes, since resulting development would place less demand on municipal infrastructure. The City could also act as a partner in pursuing grants to fund on-site best management practices. Such practices include:

- Rain gardens, bioswales, and infiltration basins
- Tree planters, landscape islands, and buffer/filter strips
- Stream restoration and wetland preservation or rehabilitation
- Reforestation
- Green roofs or pervious pavement
- Urban agriculture
- Rainwater harvesting and reuse



Utility Screening & Placement

To mitigate the visual impact of utilities on residential and commercial areas, the City should consider requiring the screening of utility facilities and equipment. Utility facilities that may require screening include transformers, substations, and other facilities used for the distribution and/or production of electricity; telecommunications devices such as cell towers; and other utility infrastructure that may create a visual nuisance for residential and commercial areas. The City should work with local utility providers to establish screening criteria that includes a combination of landscaping, fencing, and/or walls. The design should be both aesthetically appealing while also meeting safety and accessibility requirements of the utility. In addition, as utilities are decommissioned, the City should consider requiring a minimum level of maintenance for decommissioned land.

OBJECTIVE **4** Bury power lines through incremental development.

Many roads in Fort Dodge have overhead power lines that make the community susceptible to disruptions in service during severe weather events and negatively impact the overall character of the City. The *2012 Hazard Mitigation Plan* states that the City is highly vulnerable to thunderstorms, windstorms, and severe winter storms, which can impact electric transmission lines. The City should work closely with MidAmerican Energy to bury overhead utility lines incrementally as subdivision, redevelopment, roadway reconstruction, or other infrastructure improvements occur.

OBJECTIVE **5** Advocate for compliance with Iowa Green Streets criteria.

The Iowa Green Streets criteria are a series of design and development standards applicable to projects seeking support through the Iowa Economic Development Authority Housing Fund, Community Development Block Grant Program for Community Facilities and Services, Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery projects, and Main Street Iowa Challenge Grant projects. The criteria aim to advance green design practices based on eight categories: integrated design; site, location and neighborhood fabric; site improvements; water conservation; energy efficiency; materials beneficial to the environment; healthy living environment; and operations and maintenance. The rating scale could be used as a guide for local projects seeking municipal support or incentives. Such development would achieve broader community objectives while reducing environmental impacts and demands on local infrastructure. The City should review the Green Streets criteria and establish requirements for projects utilizing local assistance.



IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Fort Dodge Comprehensive Plan sets forth a road map for growth and development for the next 15 to 20 years. This Implementation Chapter helps translate the Comprehensive Plan's policy and land use recommendations into direct action. It outlines the next steps to the successful execution and application of the Plan's goals, objectives, and policy recommendations, as well as identifies potential funding sources to assist in implementation. Through regular use and updates, the Plan is intended to serve as a continuous and sustainable visioning document that supports decisions regarding strategic planning and capital improvement planning.

This section outlines seven key steps the City of Fort Dodge should undertake to begin implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Use the Plan Daily

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve as the official policy guide for land use and development. It should be readily available and accessible for reference and used on a day-to-day basis by City staff, officials, boards, and commissions to inform everyday decision making. New facilities, infrastructure, and programming should align with the Plan's goals and objectives. Following adoption of the Plan, the Department of Business Affairs and Community Growth should meet with all department heads for a debriefing of the Plan, highlighting the significance of its contents and how it may influence policies, projects, and capital improvements.

2. Review & Update the Plan on a Regular Basis

Cities are dynamic environments and are constantly changing and evolving. As such, the Comprehensive Plan should serve as a living document that is updated on a regular basis to reflect the changing needs of the community.

- **Annual Review.** The City should review the plan annually, maintaining a public list of potential amendments, issues, or needs which may be a subject of change, addition, or deletion from the Comprehensive Plan. Routine examination of the Plan will help ensure that the Plan remains relevant to community needs and aspirations.
- **Plan Update.** The City should undertake a systematic review of the Plan every 3 to 5 years, and revise and update the Plan accordingly. The review should coincide with the preparation of the City's budget and Capital Improvements Program. In this manner, recommendations or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs can be considered as part of the commitments for the upcoming fiscal year.

3. Update Development Regulations

The Comprehensive Plan sets forth policies regarding the location and uses of land within Fort Dodge and establishes guidelines for the quality, character, and intensity of new development in the years ahead. Development regulations, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances, should align with and support the Comprehensive Plan’s vision, goals, and objectives. The City’s development regulations in the Zoning Ordinance are the “legal teeth” for the Plan’s recommendations. As such, the City’s zoning, subdivision, property maintenance, and other related codes and ordinances should be reviewed and updated to ensure that all are consistent with and complementary to the Comprehensive Plan. Zoning Ordinance amendments and ordinances may include the following:

- Modify the Zoning Map to reflect to reflect the desired locations of residential, commercial, and industrial development throughout the community.
- Amend the subdivision and zoning ordinance to support cluster development, explicitly permit stormwater management best management practices, and protect open space areas, etc.
- Identify key corridors and neighborhoods to adopt and apply residential design guidelines.
- Review the standards for older residential districts (6RS, 2RM and 3RM) and, where necessary, amend lot coverage standards that limit horizontal additions, height standards that inhibit vertical additions, or others to enhance the quality of the housing and its competitiveness within the City’s residential market.
- Expand the coverage and use of overlay zoning districts to create distinct commercial character areas
- Require sidewalks along the right-of-way as redevelopment occurs as well as on-site pedestrian access from the right-of-way to building entrances. Regulations should also require commercial development to install bicycle parking, using standards established by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals as a basis for local requirements.
- Amend Article 4 of the City’s Subdivision Ordinance to not only require dedication of parkland for “sites that are designated in the Comprehensive City Plan to be used for schools and parks,” but also require new developers to dedicate an appropriate amount of parkland or provide a fee-in-lieu to be used towards parks elsewhere in the community. The amendment should also dictate types of park amenities to be included.
- Develop an airport overlay zone for areas around the airport to regulate land use and structure height, among others, to minimize incompatible uses and uses that may interfere with airport operations.
- Require parkway trees in new development areas and prescribe tree species that provide diversity and resiliency to disease and climate change.
- Adopt a Stormwater Management Ordinance.

4. Maintain Open Communication

The public dialogue that shaped the City of Fort Comprehensive Plan should continue well into its implementation. Consistent communication and outreach with residents and businesses is essential for the successful implementation of the Plan. The City should ensure that the Plan's major recommendations and "vision" for the future are conveyed to the entire community. To further educate the community about the Plan, the City should:

- Make copies of the Plan available and accessible online and at City Hall
- Provide assistance in explaining the role of the Plan, its policies, and its relationship to public and private development.
- Keep the public informed of all planning developments through the City's website, a newsletter, and communication through civic and community leaders.
- Continue to engage and seek feedback from residents and the business community.

5. Promote Cooperation

Strong leadership from the City of Fort Dodge and firm partnerships and relationships between other public agencies, community groups and organizations, the local business community, and the private sector are crucial to the success of the Comprehensive Plan. The City should assume a leadership role to cooperate and coordinate with government agencies such as Webster County, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and Iowa Department of Transportation. Cooperation and communication with local service providers such as the Fort Dodge Community School District, ICCC, public safety providers, and utility providers, are equally important. Regular communication with these entities promotes cooperation and helps identify mutually beneficial projects and opportunities.

6. Identify & Pursue Funding

The Comprehensive Plan includes a variety of policy and planning recommendations for land use and development, transportation, parks and open space, and community facilities. Many vary in terms of time frame and cost. Some actions, such as regulatory amendments, administrative policies, or partnerships, can be executed immediately with minimal or no financial cost. Others, however, require funding that may not currently be programmed or is beyond the capacity of the City. As such, the City of Fort Dodge should continuously identify and apply for local, state, and federally-available funds.

The funding sources identified below provide a range of potential sources to implement the Comprehensive Plan. These resources, however, are subject to change as local, state, and federal programs evolve. They should be closely monitored and assessed to understand application deadlines and eligibility requirements.

Economic Development

Self-Supporting Municipal Improvement District

Iowa Code Chapter 36 §386 governs Self-Supporting Municipal Improvement Districts (SSMID). A SSMID can be created in a municipality if at least 25% of all property owners in a proposed district are in favor and the SSMID is approved via city ordinance. The SSMID sets the rate of minimum tax to be levied on property owners, and the funds are then used for the maintaining and improving areas and properties within the district. Only land that is zoned as commercial or industrial are eligible to form or be a member of a SSMID. Currently, Fort Dodge is home to the Downtown Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) which was created in 1982 by the Fort Dodge City Council.

Tax Incremental Financing/Urban Renewal Areas

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) provides the opportunities for the funding of certain kinds of improvements within a specific geographic area as property tax revenue increases, usually due to private investment. The increase in tax revenue, or increment, over the base year of the TIF can be leveraged for infrastructure improvements, property acquisition, improvements to existing development, and related allocations. City councils or county board of supervisors may use the additional property tax to:

- Finance direct grants or loans to the business.
- Offset the costs of public improvements or provision of utilities to serve the new private development.
- Provide the local match for federal or state economic development assistance programs.

High Quality Jobs Program

The High Quality Jobs Program administered by the State of Iowa offers tax credits to eligible businesses to off-set the cost of locating, expanding, or modernizing an Iowa facility. Businesses must be a non-retail or non-service business and meet a variety of wage and benefit requirements. Incentives provided include a mixture of tax credits, exemptions, or refunds, such as a property tax exemption of up to 100% of the value added to the property for 20 years or a refund of state sales, service, or use taxes paid to contractors during construction.

New Market Tax Credits

The U.S. Congress established the New Market Tax Credits (NMTC program) in 2000 to encourage new investment in businesses and real estate projects located in under-served areas. Criteria for such areas include census tracts with high unemployment, low incomes, and significant out-migration. Individual and corporate investors receive a tax credit on their

federal income tax return in exchange for making investments in federally-designated financial institutions called Community Development Entities (CDEs). CDEs, in turn, develop projects in low-income areas. The credit equals 39% of the original investment and is allocated over seven years. To learn more about the NMTC Program in Iowa, contact the Iowa Business Growth Company, administer of the Iowa program.

Innovation Fund Tax Credit

The Innovation Fund Tax Credit program was created to stimulate venture capital investment in innovative Iowa businesses. Individual investors can receive tax credits equal to 25 percent of an equity investment in a certified Innovation Fund. In turn, those certified Innovation Funds make investments in promising early-stage companies that have a principal place of business in the state of Iowa. Innovative businesses can include, but are not limited to, businesses engaged in advanced manufacturing, biosciences, and information technology. The total amount of tax credits available for investment in Innovation Funds is \$8 million this fiscal year.

Community Development Corporation

Community Development Corporations are non-profit organizations that provide economic development assistance to under-served and disinvested areas within a community. CDCs require a grassroots effort to meet a community need that existing governments, organizations, for-profit businesses, and non-profits cannot. CDCs can be used to build community wealth through real estate acquisition and development, economic development initiatives, social services, and building social capital. CDCs are eligible to become a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), which allows them to utilize the US Treasury CDFI Fund.

Transportation

Road, Street & Bridge Programs

Surface Transportation Program

In the past, these funds have been allocated to coordinating regional councils to be used for all roadway and roadway related items. Projects in this funding category have required a local sponsor and have been selected based on, among other factors, a ranking scale that takes into account the regional benefits provided by the project, among other factors.

Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program (ICAAP)

Administered by Iowa DOT, the ICAAP funding is awarded on a statewide competitive application basis. The federal funds are awarded to those projects with the highest potential for reducing transportation-related congestion and air pollution. Project applications may be submitted by cities, counties, public transit agencies, and state and federal agencies. Private nonprofit organizations and individuals who wish to apply for funding must have a public agency as a co-sponsor. Typical funding ratio for the ICAAP program is 80% Iowa DOT funds with a 20% local match.

County & City Bridge Construction Fund

This funds the construction or replacement of public roadway bridges. Iowa counties and cities are eligible for this funding. The qualifications for funding include:

- A local match of 20 percent is required (80 percent state funding).
- Replacement and rehabilitation candidates must be classified as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete according to federal guidelines.
- Replacement and rehabilitation candidates must have a sufficiency rating of 80 or less and average daily traffic of at least 25 vehicles.

IDOT RISE Program

The Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) program is administered by the Iowa DOT and promotes economic development in Iowa through the establishment, construction, improvement, and maintenance of roads and streets that provide highway access to key economic development assets such as industrial development sites, urban centers, points of shipment or processing of products, trucking terminals and shipping centers, or tourist locations.

Project activities or costs eligible for RISE funding, and which may be counted as part of the non-RISE participation in immediate opportunity and local development roadway projects, include only the following:

- Roadway resurfacing, rehabilitation, modernization, upgrading, reconstruction or initial construction, including grading and drainage, paving, erosion control, pavement overlays, and shoulder widening and stabilization;
- Bridge and culvert repair, modernization, replacement or initial construction;
- Roadway intersection and interchange improvements including warranted traffic signalization when it is integral to the improvement;
- Right-of-way purchase;
- Construction or improvement of motorist rest areas, welcome centers, and information centers;
- Design engineering costs and construction inspection costs associated with RISE-financed projects;
- County and city bond principal and interest payments associated with RISE projects. No financing expenses incurred prior to funding commitment shall be eligible; and,
- Storm drainage and storm sewer costs to the extent needed for draining the roadway.

Urban-State Traffic Engineering Program (U-STEP)

The intent of this Iowa DOT program is to solve traffic operation and safety problems on primary roads in Iowa cities. Qualifications for funding:

- The city must engineer and administer the project.
- Improvements must involve a municipal extension of a primary road. The two types of projects eligible are spot improvements and linear improvements (spot improvements are those limited to single locations; linear improvements are those which span two or more intersections).
- City match is 45% of the construction cost (55% state-funded).
- An engineering analysis of the problem area is required.
- Iowa Traffic Engineering Assistance Program (TEAP) can be used for analysis.

Highway Safety Improvement Program - Secondary (HSIP - Secondary Program)

This federally-funded program was established to fund low-cost, systemic safety improvements on rural roads (also known as the Secondary Road System) that meet certain criteria regarding safety. Iowa counties may apply. The key focus of the program would be to reduce lane departure crashes. In addition, the program will promote systemic implementation of safety countermeasures. The systemic approach installs countermeasures along an entire corridor, in lieu of treating only a problem location. For example, a project could be developed to address curve crash issues on roadways of a certain classification or type. Systemic projects could include many miles across a county, and even include neighboring counties or multiple counties.

Traffic Safety Improvement Program

The Traffic Safety Improvement Program, also known as “TSIP,” “Traffic Safety Funds,” “TSF,” or “Half-Percent,” provides funding for traffic safety improvements or studies on any public roads under county, city, or state jurisdiction. Eligible projects will fall into one of three categories:

- Construction or improvement of traffic safety and operations at a specific site with an accident history;
- Purchase of materials for installation of new traffic control devices such as signs or signals, or replacement of obsolete signs or signals; or,
- Transportation safety research, studies, or public information initiatives such as sign inventory, work zone safety and accident data.

Railroads

Highway-Railroad Crossing Safety Program

This federally funded program improves the safety of public highway-railroad grade crossings. Railroad companies and public jurisdictions are eligible for this funding. The qualifications for funding include:

- 10 percent non-federal match required (from the railroad company and/or public road jurisdiction)
- Inclusion of crossing location on a prioritized list of projects. Priorities are determined through a benefit cost analysis that takes into consideration the extent of vehicle and train traffic at the crossing, speed of trains, certain characteristics of the crossing, effectiveness of the proposed improvement, estimated cost of the improvement and other factors. Generally, those crossings with a high probability for a serious crash with a proposed improvement anticipated to be effective and cost efficient will receive the highest priority.

Highway-Railroad Crossing Surface Repair Fund

This program assists railroad companies and public road jurisdictions with rebuilding railroad grade crossing surfaces in Iowa. Railroad companies – or other private entities that own a railroad track – and public road jurisdictions can apply for this funding.

- 20% railroad match
- 20% public road jurisdiction match
- 60% this funding program

Both the railroad and the public road jurisdiction must enter into a project agreement with the Iowa Department of Transportation.

Federal Transportation Funding

In December 2015 the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, a five-year transportation reauthorization bill, was established. The FAST Act replaces the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act, which expired in October 2015 and was extended three times. The FAST Act aims to improve infrastructure, provide long-term certainty and increased flexibility for government, streamline approval processes, and encourage innovation to make the surface transportation system safer and more efficient.

The FAST Act continues funding for numerous programs previously funded through MAP-21. Given the recent passage of the FAST Act, it is still uncertain how changes in Federal policy will ultimately impact existing funding programs. The City should stay informed of the status of these programs and new funding sources that may be introduced in the near future as a result of the FAST Act. The following are grant programs covered under the FAST Act that could be utilized by the City to make enhancements to local transportation infrastructure.

Active Transportation

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

SRTS is an effort to increase safety and promote walking and bicycling to school through the “5Es: engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement, and evaluation.” The 2015 FAST Act carries this program over from the 2005 SAFETEA-LU federal transportation bill. Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding which can be used for SRTS projects is delegated to Iowa metropolitan planning agencies throughout the state. Eligible projects include:

- Sidewalk improvements;
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements;
- Pedestrian and bicycle-crossing improvements;
- On-street bicycle facilities;
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
- Secure bicycle parking system; and,
- Traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools

Parks & Trails

Recreational Trails Program (Federal)

This program provides and maintains motorized and non-motorized recreational trails and trail-related projects. Public agencies, and non-profit or private organizations are eligible to sponsor – non-profit and private sponsorship will require a public agency co-sponsor. Qualifications for funding include:

- A minimum 20% match is required.
- Trails resulting from successful applications must be maintained as a public facility for a minimum of 20 years.

Iowa's Federal Recreational Trails Fund

The Federal Recreational Trails (FRT) Fund – also known as the National Recreational Trails (NRT) Fund – was established in the state in response to the Federal Inter-modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991. This is a national program to provide funds to states to allocate grants for trails and trail-related projects. The NRT Program was later reaffirmed in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) administers the program. The Iowa department of Transportation (DOT) has been designated as the state agency responsible for the program in Iowa. The Iowa DOT and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) co-administer the program.

Conservation

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants are available to cities, counties, and school districts to be used for outdoor recreation projects. Projects require a 50% match and are taken under perpetuity by the National Park Service and must only be used for outdoor recreational purposes. Development and renovation projects must be maintained for a period of 25 years or the life of the manufactured goods. LWCF grants are managed by the IDNR and assistance ceilings are established by population.

More specific, statewide grants supporting conservation and recreation in Iowa can be found on Iowa's DNR website and include the following list:

- All-Terrain Vehicle Grant Program
- Educational Grants
- Fish Habitat Promotion For County Conservation Boards

- Iowa Water Trails Mini Grants
- Low-Head Dam Public Hazard Program
- Land And Water Conservation Fund
- REAP City Parks And Open Spaces Grant Program
- REAP Conservation Education
- REAP County Conservation Grant Program
- Snowmobile Trail Grant Program
- Solid Waste Alternatives Program
- State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Water Recreation Access Cost-Share Program
- Watershed Improvement Grants
- Wildlife Habitat With Local Entities Grant Program

Image & Identity

DOT/DNR Fund – Roadside Beautification

The intent of this fund is roadside beautification of primary system corridors with plant materials. Any tax-levying body is eligible to receive these funds, and the site must be on primary highway right-of-way, including primary highway extensions. Participation is limited to the cost of materials and installation of seed or live plants.

Living Roadway Trust Fund – Gateway Enhancement

This program implements Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management programs (IRVM) on city, county, or state rights-of-way or publicly owned areas adjacent to traveled roadways. Categories of eligible projects are as follows: roadside inventories; gateway enhancement plantings for city, county and state locations; education/training; research/demonstration; roadside enhancement; seed propagation; and special equipment.

7. Prioritize Objectives & Strategies

The Comprehensive Plan includes 22 goals and 107 supporting objectives. Each objective includes strategic recommendations and strategies to achieve the vision of the community. The City should utilize the existing processes in place to prioritize objectives and strategies, ensuring members of the community also have an opportunity to provide input.

Actions with the highest priority should include those that are easily completed or may be necessary actions for long-term projects to begin, such as regulatory changes. Lower priority actions include long-term projects that may require significant funding or the completion of other strategies before they can be started.

8. Implement & Regularly Update the Action Matrix

The following Action Matrix assists implementation by creating a clear and manageable way to outline key actions and measure progress. The Action Matrix consists of:

- Plan Goals and Objectives;
- A description of the projects and activities to be undertaken; and,
- An indication of the potential public and private sector partners that can assist the City to implement each activity.

Partner Organizations

The Action Matrix identifies numerous potential partners that may assist with and be a critical component to successful implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Nevertheless, the City of Fort Dodge remains primarily responsible for all action items. The listed potential partners demonstrate opportunities for cooperation, but the Action Matrix does not represent a commitment or responsibility on their behalf.

Implementation Action Committee & Updates

To aid in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan as well as monitor progress, the City should form an Implementation Action Committee. The Action Committee should consist of City staff and community volunteers who meet at specific times throughout the year to identify opportunities for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations. Working in an advisory role, the committee would be able to assist the City with monitoring actions and re-prioritizing actions that adhere to the Plan's goals and objectives.

Committee members should meet annually throughout the life of the plan, to re-evaluate all of the Plan's recommendations and re-prioritize execution based on community needs, ease of implementation, and current and projected resources. Recommended actions should be tailored to City finances, economic development, and implementation progress.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
----------------	-----------------	--------------------

GROWTH & ANNEXATION

I Create long-term growth that builds upon existing investment, maximizes the efficiency and performance of municipal infrastructure and services, and reflects the community's vision for Fort Dodge.

1.1	Encourage infill development in areas already within the City's boundaries.	Promote new infrastructure investment in development areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.	Webster County
1.2	Plan for and prioritize annexation to ensure development in areas where it is most effective and efficient.	Require the establishment of an annexation agreement under such circumstances where city-sponsored infrastructure extensions occur outside of existing municipal boundaries.	
		Consider establishing a requirement for an annexation agreement if a subdivision occurs within the 2-mile boundary.	Webster County
		Require new development within its 2-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction meets established City infrastructure regulations (i.e. stormwater, sanitary sewer, water, streets, etc.).	Webster County
1.3	Utilize existing anchors as catalysts for new development.	Work with local realtors to actively market available sites in established commercial areas.	GFDGA
1.4	Continue to coordinate closely with Webster County to assess the impacts of proposed development in unincorporated parts of the planning area.	Work with Webster County to provide City control of zoning within the 2-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction boundary.	Webster County
		Amend Section 17.08 of the City's Zoning Ordinance to include requirements the protection of sensitive natural areas, floodways, trees, and other environmental features.	Webster County
1.5	Utilize zoning and subdivision regulations to require development to respect critical natural features that support natural habitats, help manage stormwater, and define the unique character of the community and region.	Amend Article 4 of the City's Subdivision Ordinance to preserve tree stands, floodplains, wetlands, areas of steep grade, etc.; while promoting a variety of lot sizes and dimensions. Consider development fees and the potential to include performance fees for future development.	
1.6	Review and update the entire extent of the City's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to ensure predictability for future development.	Identify the advantages and disadvantages of amending areas of the zoning map to reflect the future land use map, and prioritize rezoning that will reflect the future land use map.	

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS: REVITALIZATION AREAS

2 Create walkable and attractive neighborhoods in Fort Dodge's urban center through reinvestment in older housing stock and Downtown living.

2.1	Adopt new zoning regulations that remove barriers to reinvestment.	Perform a comprehensive review and assessment of all residential zoning districts to identify and amend provisions may limit reinvestment.	
2.2	Develop programs and incentives to support housing rehabilitation and maintenance.	Research and procure outside grant funding for residential maintenance and rehabilitation.	
		Assess the impacts and benefits of residential tax rebates for homes that undergo rehabilitation.	
		Foster partnerships among local material retailers, contractors, and volunteers to provide low-cost or volunteer maintenance to qualifying tenants.	Building material retailers, contractors, Fort Dodge Community School District, colleges and universities
		Create a neighborhood pride program to recognize residents that have invested in the maintenance of their homes.	
		Create and distribute educational material (brochures, pamphlets) that provide information to homeowners regarding proper home maintenance and available resources.	

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
2.3 Grow the population of residents in Downtown Fort Dodge through the development of attractive and diverse multi-family housing.	Continue to work with local employers to identify housing preferences for a variety of professional employees. Provide residential tax rebates for developers that provide a variety of housing types through adaptive reuse or redevelopment.	Local employers, GFDGA
2.4 Establish a residential infill program that supports investment in new housing that is compatible with the surrounding context.	Identify and demolish compromised, unsound, and abandoned residential buildings. Offer residential incentives for new development or infill development that meets specific neighborhood character standards (i.e contextual setbacks, massing, architectural details, etc.) that are above and beyond basic zoning standards.	
2.5 Utilize code enforcement as a means of improving housing conditions and encouraging rehabilitation.	Develop and distribute brochures about typical code compliance issues and appropriate solutions. Establish code enforcement fines and consider performance fines where a portion of the paid code violation citations, once compliance is achieved, are reimbursed to property owner. Ensure trash receptacles at multi-family properties are properly stored and screened	Neighborhood associations

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS: MAINTENANCE & STABILIZATION AREAS

3 Sustain the long-term vitality and character of Fort Dodge's thriving neighborhoods through proactive policies and support for property owners.

3.1 Work with property owners to maintain historic properties, districts, and residential structures.	Provide property owners with information regarding the importance and benefits of historic preservation. Conduct public meetings and administer surveys to determine support for new local historic districts.	
3.2 Ensure the maintenance of public spaces, neighborhood cleanup, and senior assistance programs and events through interdepartmental coordination, capital programming, public service agencies, and other organizations.	Use the City's Capital Improvement Program to establish a long-term strategy for the regular maintenance of streets, alleys, and public spaces. Establish a student volunteer program through Fort Dodge Community School District.	Fort Dodge Community School District, neighborhood associations Fort Dodge Community School District

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS: GROWTH & DIVERSITY

4 Create new neighborhoods that reflect the character and identity of Fort Dodge and provide a variety of housing options that appeal to different demographics, socioeconomics, and consumer preferences.

4.1 Support future development that provides a variety of housing types and designs.	Consider the benefits and constraints to including anti-monotony standards for housing design within the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinance. Modify zoning standards to allow for a variety of housing types within a proposal based on a housing type's location on a block or within a larger subdivision.	
4.2 Encourage new neighborhoods to meet high standards for maintenance and design.	Encourage developers to establish Homeowners Associations with bylaws that include high standards for property maintenance and housing design.	Homeowners Associations
4.3 Utilize subdivision standards to create attractive public spaces in new neighborhoods	Review and amend the City's Subdivision Ordinance to include standards related to parkway design, tree species and placement, open space, and trails. Amend the City's Subdivision Ordinance to require the establishment of local open spaces that are usable amenities for residents.	

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
4.4 Utilize Planned Development to support subdivisions with varying housing types.	Consider amending standards for Planned Development review to be less cumbersome and consider including provisions for housing variety Update Planned Development Ordinance to be less cumbersome.	
4.5 Establish a short-term incentives program to bolster mid-range housing development.	Provide residential tax abatements in order to offset high land costs for developments that meet the demand for mid-range housing. Continue to support housing development along Williams Drive in the area known as the Theiss Property	GFDGA, Webster County Improvement Corporation
4.6 Continue to work with local employers and the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance to identify target housing markets.	Regularly conduct interview or surveys with local employers to assess the types of housing being sought by potential employees.	Local Employers, GFDGA

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS: GENERAL COMMERCIAL

5 Create attractive and vibrant commercial areas that demonstrate distinct design characteristics and positively contribute to the identity of Fort Dodge.		
5.1 Consider and amend existing commercial design standards to create consistent and attractive development.	Amend design standards to ensure quality design, but logical application and apply according to unique commercial and downtown districts. Determine appropriate applications and implementation techniques (i.e. advisory, incentive-based, regulatory) for guidelines in various commercial areas.	
5.2 Integrate public gathering and open space areas into the commercial environment.	Utilize incentives as a trigger to require dedicated public open spaces as a component of new commercial development. Work with developers to integrate active open spaces in new commercial developments through easements or development agreements.	Development community through the plan approval process
5.3 Distinguish commercial areas through varying streetscape designs to create unique and recognizable districts, and establish maintenance of such.	Establish a streetscape design manual for distinct commercial areas throughout the City. Continue to expand upon the City-wide wayfinding sign program and integrate into all streetscape design concepts. Establish a long-term streetscape improvement capital program that prioritizes improvements in various commercial areas, and includes a maintenance plan for public ROW improvements.	
5.4 Ensure commercial properties provide safe multi-modal access throughout commercial areas and to individual commercial uses.	Amend Section 17.08.03-G (Site Plan Review Development Standards) of the City's Zoning Ordinance to include provisions for designated pedestrian paths between the public sidewalk and building entrances. Amend Section 17.08.03-G (Site Plan Review Development Standards) of the City's Zoning Ordinance to require bicycle parking according to standards established by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.	
5.5 Continue to work with the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance and Small Business Development Center to support small businesses.	Host regular small business assistance workshops to help small business owners and entrepreneurs navigate the city permitting process and understand various local design requirements. Provide small businesses information and application assistance for available local, state, and federal small business financing assistance programs.	GFDGA, Small Business Development Center GFDGA, Small Business Development Center

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS: DOWNTOWN		
6 Support a Downtown that includes a variety of activities and businesses while maintaining its historic character and role as the heart of Fort Dodge.		
6.1 Support a variety of community-based events that center on cultural, arts, entertainment, and recreational activities to promote Downtown business development.	Support the creation of an informal group of Downtown business owners to coordinate events that draw people to Downtown. Work with the Downtown SSMID to identify potential funding for advertising, security, clean up, or other activities that would support events beneficial to Downtown businesses.	GFDGA, SSMID SSMID
6.2 Support outdoor commerce activities such as markets, sidewalk displays, and café seating.	Eliminate the provision in Section 17.07.11.C.3.h of the zoning ordinance that requires Downtown businesses to provide parking for temporary outdoor seating areas.	
6.3 Continue to support the preservation and restoration of historic buildings and façades.	Provide property owners with information regarding the importance and benefits of historic preservation. Support the redevelopment and adaptive reuse of historic buildings through targeted incentives.	SSMID SSMID
6.4 Utilize strategic parking management to ensure adequate capacity, access, and turnover.	Implement the recommendations of the Downtown Parking Study, including the addition of signage, parking lot improvements, and land banking future parking areas.	
6.5 Support redevelopment and revitalization throughout the Downtown with a focus on the Cross-town Connector, through incentives targeted at vacant lots and blighted buildings.	Identify financial or procedural incentives for development throughout the downtown and along the Cross-town Connector that include targeted tenants or business types, that go above and beyond the intent of current zoning related to design quality, landscaping, and signage. Support the development of a community recreation and fitness center - support a collaborative partnership with the Fort Dodge Community Recreation Center and other community partners to acquire property and develop funds to establish a state-of-the art recreation and fitness center in the City's downtown.	
6.6 Integrate community and residential uses in Downtown.	Conduct an inventory of publically-owned property in Downtown; assess long-term land needs to determine which properties can be made available for private redevelopment and which properties should be held for public use; and promote the sale of identified public property, while encouraging sound development in line with local design guidelines and stormwater management.	Webster County, IDNR
6.7 Provide connections to the Des Moines Riverfront.	Identify key points to install additional gateways and wayfinding signage that direct people to the Des Moines River. Establish a capital plan for the implementation of a streetscape improvement project to enhance Central Avenue from the Fort Dodge Public Library to the River's edge.	
	Assess the need for environmental remediation of industrial properties between Downtown and the riverfront, and identify grant funding to support remediation and redevelopment.	GFDGA
6.8 Review and adjust the Downtown District boundaries.	Amend the City's official zoning map, downtown design guidelines, urban renewal and Self-Supported Municipal Improvement districts coincide and work together.	SSMID

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
----------------	-----------------	--------------------

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS: EASTERN RETAIL

7 Establish an attractive destination commercial district that builds upon existing businesses and the strength of 1st Avenue S and 5th Avenue S.

7.1	Prioritize commercial redevelopment on the Cross-town Connector with a focus on abandoned buildings and vacant sites.	Actively market vacant properties along 1st Street South, highlighting the increased visibility and traffic resulting from the Cross-town Connector improvement. Establish a capital program to install decorative streetscaping along the Cross-town Connector. Promote the sale of City-owned property, while encouraging sound development in line with local design guidelines and stormwater management.	GFDGA
7.2	Continue to enhance 5th Avenue South as the Corridor of Commerce.	Continue to implement the recommendations within the Business Highway 20/ 5th Avenue Corridors of Commerce Action Plan. Establish an SSMID to support streetscaping, marketing, and other activities along 5th Street South (this also includes crossroad mall/other nearby retail areas). Promote the sale of City-owned property, while encouraging sound development in line with local design guidelines and stormwater management.	IDOT 5th Ave S commercial property owners
7.3	Redevelop the Crossroads Mall as a new town center between 5th Ave S and 1st Ave S.	Implement short-term improvements to the existing property to increase on-site landscaping, bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian connections. Work with mall ownership, economic development professionals, and designers to establish a viable repositioning and modernization concept.	Crossroads Mall ownership Crossroads Mall ownership, GFDGA
7.4	Increase safety and traffic efficiency through enhanced site access management and circulation.	Encourage cross-access between adjacent properties, and encourage vehicular site access from intersecting side streets. Identify curb cuts to consolidate or remove on arterial commercial and industrial corridors.	
7.5	Increase housing density around east side commercial uses.	Amend the Zoning Map to reflect desired multi-family housing in and around the Eastside Commercial District. Actively market multi-family sites to developers in Fort Dodge, Iowa and surrounding States.	Property owners, developers

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS: WEST COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

8 Develop the US 169 Corridor as a multi-use commercial area that caters to local residents, regional visitors, and employment hubs.

8.1	Concentrate commercial development on the City's west side to prominent nodes.	Review and amend the Zoning Map to concentrate commercial districts at nodes that have the greatest potential for short-term development. Identify improvements to local intersections and extensions of bike trails as specific projects in the City's Capital Improvement Program.	Webster County
8.2	Utilize private development and public investment to make the US 169 corridor an attractive gateway to Fort Dodge.	Incorporate community gateways, wayfinding and streetscaping near the commercial nodes. Amend zoning regulations to require attractive building design, signage and landscaping for commercial uses along the US 169 corridor.	

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX		
Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
8.3 Create planned commercial site access off of US 169.	Work with Iowa DOT for access management as new commercial projects develop on US 169. Continue to require private development to provide stubbed circulators or driveways that can easily be extended as future development occurs.	IDOT
8.4 Expand hospitality-related uses near employment anchors on the west side of the City.	Regularly conduct surveys with major employers to assess unmet demand for lodging, restaurants, and related services for employees and clientele. Actively market available development sites to targeted tenants that would meet unmet demand for hospitality services.	ICCC, UnityPoint Health - Trinity Regional Medical Center GFDGA

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS: LOCAL COMMERCIAL

9 Strengthen neighborhood commercial areas that provide for the retail and commercial service needs of Fort Dodge residents and contribute to local character.

9.1 Consider the use of building design standards to ensure local commercial development is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.	Consider the benefits and constraints to amending the Zoning Ordinance to require local commercial development to integrate residential design elements (such as pitched roofs, masonry or siding, residential style windows, etc.) that are compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.	
9.2 Require pedestrian connections to surrounding residential areas.	Amend Article 5, Section 4 (Sidewalks) of the City's Subdivision Ordinance to require new subdivisions to provide local pedestrian connections to commercial areas, even where public streets are not provided.	
9.3 Support the creation of larger local commercial lots in order to accommodate more functional development and buffering against residential areas.	Support rezoning applications that convert one or two residential lots adjacent to existing commercial lots to appropriate commercial zoning districts. Consider short-term property tax abatements or developments that replace excessively-small commercial lots with lots that can fully accommodate new commercial uses, parking, landscaping, pedestrian access, and buffering.	

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS: EMPLOYMENT & INNOVATION DISTRICTS

10 Create well-planned and attractive professional office and industrial parks that provide quality employment and convey a sense of innovation in Fort Dodge.

10.1 Build upon existing employment and industrial anchors.	Amend Section 17.07.09 (Office Commercial District) and 17.07.10 (Arterial Commercial District) and 17.07.09 (Office Commercial District) to include minimum lot depth standards that ensure functional commercial sites. Actively market industrial development opportunities that provide quality employment. Establish a capital program for the Fort Dodge Regional Airport to install necessary infrastructure to support research and industrial uses.	GFDGA Fort Dodge Airport Commission
10.2 Support the development and expansion of the Cross-town Industrial Park on the 1st Avenue South and 5th Avenue South corridors, between Gypsum Creek and Quail Ave.	Actively market available industrial sites to potential developers and tenants, including those already located in Fort Dodge.	GFDGA
10.3 Require heightened streetscape design and signage along prominent corridors.	Review and amend zoning regulations as needed to require enhanced building design or screening of industrial uses along the eastern end of 5th Street South.	

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
----------------	-----------------	--------------------

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS: GENERAL INDUSTRY

II Promote industrial business growth and the attraction of quality jobs while limiting negative impacts to the Fort Dodge community.

II.1	Transition residential areas near South 31st Street to industrial uses.	Evaluate the benefits of amending the City's official zoning map to designate properties in the triangle bound by 5th Avenue South, South 32nd Street and rail corridor as industrial.	
II.2	Mitigate impacts of industrial land uses to surrounding neighborhoods and prominent roadways.	Amend Section 17.08.03-G.9 (Site Plan Review-Landscaping) of the City's Zoning Ordinance to require substantial development buffers between industrial and non-industrial land uses, as well as landscaped screening or berming along prominent roadways that include industrial uses.	
II.3	Support industrial growth through the development of a positive community image, partnerships, and high quality of life.	Develop a comprehensive marketing and promotional campaign promoting research, innovation, and manufacturing in Fort Dodge and related quality of life amenities that they support. Support communication between ICCC, Buena Vista University, Fort Dodge Community Schools, and local employers to align curricula with the skills required to fill the needs of established and emerging industries in Fort Dodge.	GFDGA ICCC, Buena Vista University, Fort Dodge Community Schools, GFDGA, and others

ROADWAY NETWORK

12 Strengthen the roadway network to better foster mobility throughout Fort Dodge, provide connections across river and rail corridors, maintain the safety and attractiveness of residential areas, and support local community and economic development in targeted growth areas.

12.1	Utilize roadway design to balance multi-modal mobility of specific corridors.	Update and implement the City's Complete Streets Policy. Establish a long-term capital program for the installation of on-street bike lanes as restriping or roadway resurfacing occurs.	IDOT
12.2	Provide roadway connections to areas separated from surrounding parts of Fort Dodge by railroads, rivers, and other terrain.	Establish a capital program for future roadway extensions.	
12.3	Ensure that future development provides logical connections to the existing roadway network.	Continue to enforce the provisions of Article 4, Section 1 (Streets) of the City's Subdivision Ordinance.	
12.4	Continue to monitor and enforce truck traffic restrictions.	Continue to strictly enforce local truck routes to minimize industrial traffic impacts on neighborhoods. Assess and modify truck routes as industrial and commercial areas come off- or on-line.	
12.5	Continue to work with Iowa DOT and Webster County to monitor traffic patterns and modify traffic controls as appropriate.	Update local traffic projections as development comes on-line. Establish a community-wide traffic model that demonstrates anticipated impacts of development according to the Future Land Use Plan.	Iowa DOT, Webster County
12.6	Continue to implement a long-term roadway maintenance and reconstruction program.	Continue to use the City's 5-year Capital Improvement Program to allocate funding for roadway maintenance and reconstruction, which also takes into account traffic management and safety.	
12.7	Coordinate roadway improvement projects with other capital investments.	Regularly review upcoming projects to identify potential savings or efficiencies among related projects.	Iowa DOT, Webster County, utility providers

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
----------------	-----------------	--------------------

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN MOBILITY

<p>13 Create a community-wide, fully accessible system of sidewalks and trails that provides access between residential neighborhoods and Downtown Fort Dodge, the Des Moines River, the Harlan Rogers Sports Complex, Iowa Central Community College, and other destinations throughout the City.</p>		
<p>13.1 Strengthen the City's Complete Streets policy and implement it through design standards and zoning and subdivision regulations.</p>	<p>Update the Complete Streets policy to include specific roadway design standards for different types of streets and procedures for triggering standards based on alignment with adopted policies.</p>	
	<p>Amend the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to ensure they appropriately address Complete Streets through roadway network cross-section design, sidewalk provisions, trail dedications, on-site pedestrian access, bicycle parking, and other aspects of development.</p>	
<p>13.2 Require all new residential subdivisions to provide dedicated trails or designated bike lanes that connect to the community-wide trail network.</p>	<p>Amend Article 4 (Planning Criteria) of the Subdivision Ordinance to require subdivisions to provide dedicated trails or on-street bike lanes.</p>	
<p>13.3 Ensure that all signalized intersections include appropriate amenities and technologies to support pedestrian crossing movements.</p>	<p>Conduct an inventory of intersections with high levels of known pedestrian activity to determine what improvements are needed to support safe crossing.</p>	<p>IDOT, Webster County</p>
	<p>Establish a capital program to upgrade intersections according to on-site inventories of the Pedestrian & Bicycle Mobility Map.</p>	<p>IDOT, Webster County</p>
<p>13.4 Establish a sidewalk improvement program that prioritizes investment near common pedestrian destinations and pedestrian routes with the potential for high pedestrian traffic counts.</p>	<p>Conduct pedestrian traffic counts at prominent intersections and in areas close to parks, schools, and other common pedestrian traffic generators.</p>	<p>IDOT, Webster County</p>
	<p>Enhance pedestrian crossings in areas of high pedestrian activity.</p>	<p>IDOT, Webster County</p>
<p>13.5 Designate and mark a network of on-street bike lanes that would complement the system of dedicated trails.</p>	<p>Identify local capital funding our outside grant funding to install on-street bike lane striping and curbside signage.</p>	
<p>13.6 Ensure that the bicycle and trail network includes amenities that enhance rider safety, comfort, and usability.</p>	<p>Identify specific areas throughout the trail system for benches, fountains, restrooms, lighting, and other amenities.</p>	<p>Webster County</p>
	<p>Identify key locations to incorporate public art throughout the trail system.</p>	<p>Webster County</p>
	<p>Create a trail management plan that addresses maintenance, seasonal uses, closures, and funding strategies for repair and replacement.</p>	
<p>13.7 Make the Fort Dodge trail network a destination.</p>	<p>Include information about the Fort Dodge trail network in City promotional and marketing material.</p>	<p>Webster County</p>
	<p>Develop and implement a Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan that focuses on connecting existing neighborhoods and establishing amenities to make the trail network a destination.</p>	

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
----------------	-----------------	--------------------

TRANSIT MOBILITY

I4 Ensure that all residents have access to efficient transit service that provides access to destinations throughout Fort Dodge and Webster County.

14.1	Work with DART to monitor socioeconomic and demographic trends that may influence potential transit ridership demand.	Regularly provide DART with updated population and socioeconomic data and projections.	DART
14.2	Work with DART to advertise services and encourage transit as an alternative during special events.	Include a quick reference link to DART on the City's website. Market DART services as a component of City events.	DART
14.3	Support coordination among the City, DART, and Fort Dodge employers and institutions to provide services that support local access to employment and education.	Conduct outreach and surveys with local employers to determine barriers to using transit for the workforce. Encourage employer participation in federal transit reimbursement programs.	DART
14.4	Work with DART to install bike racks on transit vehicles.	Partner with DART to seek grant funding to upgrade transit vehicles with bike racks.	DART

AIRPORT & RAIL FACILITIES

I5 Maximize the potential for the Fort Dodge Regional Airport and network of rail corridors to support economic growth and access to Fort Dodge from throughout the Midwest and United States.

15.1	Establish and enforce development regulations that align with the FAA Overlay Zones.	Review any development proposals near the airport with the Airport Commission to ensure they conform to the requirements of the overlay district. Consider applying an airport overlay zone to regulate land use and height, among others, to minimize incompatible uses and uses that may interfere with airport operations. Establish a disclosure statement attached to properties within the City's Zoning Overlay District created out of this action.	Fort Dodge Regional Airport Commission
15.2	Support the on-going maintenance and upgrade of the Fort Dodge Regional Airport.	Continue to support implementation of the Airport Master Plan through municipal policies and regulations. Partner with the Airport Commission to seek grant funding for improvements identified in the Airport Master Plan. Develop a Business Plan for airport businesses on the airport property in order to market the potential.	Fort Dodge Regional Airport Commission
15.3	Support coordination among the City, Fort Dodge Regional Airport, and the Greater Fort Dodge Growth Alliance to ensure facilities and infrastructure support economic development.	See Objective 10.3.	Fort Dodge Regional Airport Commission, GFDGA
15.4	Work with the Union Pacific and Canadian National rail companies to determine opportunities or needs related to the existing rail network.	Partner with local rail companies to seek grant funding to undertake a rail consolidation study.	Union Pacific, Canadian National
15.5	Support coordination to provide rail spur access to key economic development sites.	Coordinate with rail companies to assess capacity on local lines and determine standards related to access and design. Partner with local rail companies to seek grant funding to install rail spurs that support economic development. Actively market sites with rail access to potential industrial developers or tenants that depend on rail access.	Union Pacific, Canadian National, GFDGA GFDGA

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
15.6 Work with rail companies to ensure that all at-grade rail crossings have appropriate warning lights and gates to increase public safety.	Inventory existing at-grade crossings and establish a program for upgrading warning devices over time.	Union Pacific, Canadian National
	Partner with local rail companies to seek grant funding for upgrades to at-grade rail crossings.	Union Pacific, Canadian National
	Identify potential hazardous crossings that have limited warning devices.	
15.7 Work with rail companies to establish and enforce curfews or quiet zones in residential portions of Fort Dodge.	Coordinate with rail companies to establish curfews or quiet zones in areas where rail lines run along residential areas.	Union Pacific, Canadian National

PARKS & RECREATION

16 Create a comprehensive, community-wide system of parks and recreational programming accessible to all Fort Dodge residents.		
16.1 Maintain existing park and recreational facilities, and improve them based on the standards defined in the Fort Dodge Community Recreation Needs Assessment and Recreational Master Plan.	Amend the Zoning Map to ensure all existing parks are protected under the CN zoning designation.	
	Establish a long-term capital program to bring existing park facilities up to the standards identified in the Recreation Master Plan.	
16.2 Prioritize improvements to neighborhoods parks.	Partner with schools to improve 'school parks' in proximity to areas not adequately served by small neighborhood or mini-parks.	Fort Dodge Community School District
	Create a plan for the vacation of small, ineffective neighborhood and mini-parks once they are replaced by newer neighborhood parks.	
	Amend the Subdivision Ordinance to require parkland that includes amenities meeting the development guidelines of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, or provide a fee-in-lieu to be used towards park improvements elsewhere in the community.	
	Require Homeowners Associations to establish covenants/bylaws that include standards and procedures for park maintenance.	
16.3 Continue to build on existing relationships with local recreational providers and organizations to share facilities, programs, and services.	Continue to work with local groups to provide rentable facilities for private or not-for-profit programs and activities.	WCCB, UnityPoint Health - Trinity Medical Center, Friendship Haven, Athletics for Education and Success, and others
	Continue to work with the Fort Dodge Community School District to share facilities to support programs by the City's Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department.	Fort Dodge Community School District
16.4 Expand the City's recreation amenities.	Identify a master plan and establish a capital program to fund mountain bike trails within Fort Dodge.	
	Continue to actively market the Gypsum City OHV Park to support the growth of recreational tourism.	GFDGA

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT		
17 Strengthen Fort Dodge's natural environment and ecosystems through the proactive use of planning, regulations, and partnerships.		
17.1 Adopt regulations within the City's subdivision ordinance that promote conservation design in areas with sensitive environmental features.	Amend Article 4 (Planning Criteria) of the City's Subdivision Ordinance to require the clustering of development to avoid wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, wooded areas, etc.	
17.2 Work with local schools and other partners to enhance education and awareness about the unique natural environment in Fort Dodge, its benefits to the community, and ways it can be preserved.	Develop information, demonstrations, and/or presentations related to the natural environment in Fort Dodge.	Fort Dodge Community School District, private schools, IDNR, WCCB
	Provide information about Fort Dodge's natural environment through the City website.	
	Install informational signs along trails that intersect environmental areas.	IDNR, WCCB
17.3 Identify and establish policies to address stormwater and water quality best management practices.	Amend the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to encourage and/or require bioswales, rain gardens, pervious pavers, rain barrels, etc.	
17.4 Identify and preserve critical species habitats throughout the planning area.	Identify and inventory critical species habitats	
	Utilize zoning, conservation easements, and land acquisition to preserve critical natural areas and discourage development within the floodplain.	IDNR, WCCB
	Create an open space plan with WCCB and IDNR for managing invasive species.	IDNR, WCCB
17.5 Create a diverse and resilient tree population in established and new growth areas in Fort Dodge.	Amend the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to require parkway trees in new development areas and prescribe tree species that provide diversity and resiliency to disease and climate change.	
	Conduct a City-wide tree survey to assess the type, age, size, and condition of trees throughout the community.	
	Identify locations of aging and dying trees and create a plan for tree replacement .	
17.6 Maintain Fort Dodge Open Space Areas.	Regularly maintain open space areas and establish a practice for waste removal.	IDNR, WCCB
	Install signage that directs visitors to any trails or scenic viewpoints, as well as identifies critical habitats and hazards.	IDNR, WCCB
17.7 Strictly enforce regulations related to illegal dumping and pollution.	Enforce regulations related to illegal dumping and pollution.	
	Monitor open space areas for illegal dumping.	
17.8 Continue to identify strategies to transform former mining properties into environmental and open space assets.	Work with property owners to determine the lifespan of mineral extraction and mining activities.	
	Identify appropriate future land uses for mining sites based on surrounding development, infrastructure, and the condition of expired mines.	
	Identify potential grant funds related to the acquisition, clean up, and development of expired mines.	IDNR, Webster County Conservation

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
DES MOINES RIVER		
18	Make the Des Moines River the centerpiece of the community's natural and recreational systems, and expand its draw to areas beyond Fort Dodge and Webster County.	
18.1	Provide additional opportunities for residents and visitors to access the Des Moines River.	Implement the recommendations of the Des Moines River and Lizard Creek Riverfront Master Plan. IDNR, WCCB
18.2	Encourage active and passive recreation on and along the Des Moines River.	Based on the recommendations of the Recreation Master Plan and Des Moines River and Lizard Creek Riverfront Master Plan, establish a master concept plan for each open space along the riverfront. Webster County
		Establish capital funding and seek grant funding to ensure the proper use of open space and natural areas per the Des Moines River and Lizard Creek Riverfront Master Plan. IDNR, WCCB
18.3	Modify or remove the Hydroelectric Dam and Little Dam.	Establish municipal funding or seek grant funding for the to create a detailed analysis design of the modification of the Hydroelectric Dam and Little Dam that expands upon water quality, water levels, species diversification, erosion mitigation, etc. IDNR, WCCB
		Seek grant funding for the modification or removal of the Hydroelectric Dam and Little Dam, per the preferred design. IDNR, WCCB
18.4	Preserve and restore significant and environmental features of the Des Moines River and Lizard Creek corridors, and ensure proper use of the corridor.	Identify important viewpoints, and enhance them through motorist pullout areas, trail and sidewalk connections, removal of invasive species, wayfinding signage, and informational kiosks. WCCB
		Ensure future use and development of lands take into account environmental, recreational an economic goals of the Des Moines River and Lizard Creek Riverfront Master Plan.
		Establish a capital improvement strategy to ensure adequate infrastructure is provided to serve preferred land uses.
		Actively market development sites to targeted uses or tenants that complement riverfront activities. GFDGA
18.5	Support local events that bring people to the riverfront and create awareness of its role in Fort Dodge.	Host an annual river cleanup. IDNR, WCCB
		Support local festivals that use the riverfront as a backdrop.
		Include high-quality imagery of the riverfront in all Fort Dodge marketing and promotional material. Webster County

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
CITY GOVERNMENT		
19 Ensure that City government and administration support desirable investment in Fort Dodge and maximize the effectiveness of public resources.		
19.1 Maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal services.	Identify and consolidate or eliminate redundant or unneeded services in order to create more lean government operations.	Webster County, Fort Dodge Community Schools
	Work with local service providers to develop a plan that identifies needed services to ensure continuing performance and resiliency to major weather or man-made events.	Webster County
	Identify and assess the potential privatization of services where the overall impact related to cost and performance would benefit Fort Dodge citizens.	Webster County
	Promote the sale of City-owned property, while encouraging sound development that takes into account local standards, guidelines and stormwater management.	Webster County
19.2 Remove barriers to desirable development in Fort Dodge.	Undertake a comprehensive update of the City's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to make them easier to understand and administer, and create predictable and fair approval procedures.	
	Establish incentives or bonuses for projects that go above and beyond basic standards in order to accomplish broader community objectives.	
19.3 Maintain open and transparent communication with Fort Dodge citizens.	Strengthen Fort Dodge's social media presence to ensure that a broad cross-section of the community is aware of opportunities for involvement.	Local media outlets, local agencies or service providers
	Actively engage relevant stakeholders as various initiatives are undertaken.	
	Encourage volunteerism and civic pride through resident participation in boards and commissions, focus groups and steering committees, community organizations, and other outlets.	
	Actively engage students through curricula that stress civics and local government.	Fort Dodge Community School District
	Utilize schools, religious congregations, not-for-profits, and other established networks to disperse and receive information regarding government initiatives.	Local not-for-profits or service providers
	Continue to support media outlets to encourage strong communication with the public on programs, initiatives and requests for involvement.	
19.4 Support continued collaboration among all education providers, from early childhood to adult continuing education, to pursue funding, align educational programs, and provide employment opportunities.	Assess future growth trends and projections, and establish triggers for the proactive acquisition of land for new school facilities	Fort Dodge Community Schools
	Identify professional and vocational training that would make Fort Dodge residents prime candidates for local employment	Fort Dodge Community Schools, Iowa Central Community College, GFDGA
	Pursue joint grant funding related to local objectives such as economic development, neighborhood revitalization, or workforce development.	Fort Dodge Community Schools, Iowa Central Community College

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX			
Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners	
CULTURAL FACILITIES			
20	Ensure support and continuance of the City's cultural facilities and identify strategies to expand on the art and cultural experiences that promote tourism and activities throughout the community.		
20.1	Analyze and consider what other communities are doing in Iowa relative to the fine arts.	Develop a public art plan.	Fort Dodge Fine Arts Association
		Identify an individual or create a community-based committee that can act as a liaison between different arts organizations and the City.	
		Identify business and corporate partnerships that could establish and build on public art.	
		Identify and prioritize space for cultural activities (buildings, rooms, and outdoor public gathering areas).	
20.2	Encourage collaboration of the City and various art entities to support and expand on art activities.	Identify successful programs that have had a measurable impact within those communities and could be applied in Fort Dodge.	
PUBLIC SAFETY			
21	Improve and maintain public safety responsiveness as growth occurs.		
21.1	Continue to involve Police and Fire Departments during the development approval process.		Fort Dodge Fire Department, Fort Dodge Police Department
21.2	Proactively preserve land necessary for service expansion in anticipated growth areas.	Acquire land for future facilities and rights-of-way based on growth anticipated in the Future Land Use Plan.	Fort Dodge Fire Department, Fort Dodge Police Department
		Analyze the services and facilities necessary to support targeted industry and employment sectors.	
		Evaluate emergency service agreements in unincorporated areas to ensure they meet the needs of the community.	Fort Dodge Fire Department, Fort Dodge Police Department, Webster County Sheriff
		Conduct a station location study for the potential future fire station locations	Fort Dodge Fire Department
21.3	Continue to implement a model of Community Policing.	Facilitate regular community meetings with neighborhoods and local law enforcement officials.	Fort Dodge Police Department
		Coordinate with schools to increase the presence of law enforcement officials in a constructive educational environment.	Fort Dodge Community School District
		Have a "friendly" police presence at community events.	Fort Dodge Police Department
		Continue to coordinate with regional public safety providers.	Fort Dodge Police Department, Webster County Sheriff
21.4	Support efficient and effective ambulance service.	Identify potential impediments to ambulatory services and create an action plan to ensure adequate response times and availability.	Fort Dodge Fire Department, Ambulance and Medical Service Providers

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

Goal/Objective	Action/Strategy	Potential Partners
INFRASTRUCTURE		
22	Maximize the effectiveness and long-term reliability of Fort Dodge's municipal infrastructure.	
22.1	Continue to maintain and implement a Capital Improvement Program.	Continue to use technology resources to map, evaluate and prioritize all repair and replacement of infrastructure
22.2	Adopt a stormwater ordinance.	
22.3	Provide development incentives or tax abatements to encourage low impact development stormwater best management practices.	Identify appropriate development incentives for use of low impact development stormwater best management practices
22.4	Bury power lines through incremental development.	Identify priority character corridors where utility burial should be done as redevelopment occurs
		Establish a capital program to bury utilities over time
	Coordinate the burial of utilities as other infrastructure improvements are made	Utility and telecommunications companies, IDOT
22.5	Advocate for compliance with Iowa Green Streets criteria.	Review the Green Streets criteria and establish requirements for projects utilizing local assistance
		IDOT, Webster County

APPENDIX

- Envision 2030 Survey Update Analysis & Results

Envision 2030 Survey Update

In 2007, members of the Fort Dodge community were asked to participate in a survey to prioritize the most pressing issues facing the City. To understand the changing priorities of the community, the same survey was administered in an online format as part of the Fort Dodge Comprehensive Plan public outreach process in 2015. The findings, summarized below, demonstrate the shifts in community preferences and priority issues over the past eight years.

Survey Methodology

The Envision 2030 Survey requested participants rank both the quality and the highest priority issues under seven categories: Quality of Life, Housing, Communities, Transportation, Finances, and Municipal Profile. Results within each category were categorized by user type: High School Students, City/Government Employees, and Other/Citizen. These categories provide a more detailed picture of the issues affecting different segments and demographics of the Fort Dodge Community. It should be noted that for the High School student category, the 2007 questionnaire only surveyed high school seniors, whereas the 2015 version allowed for high school students of all grade levels to participate.

The quality rankings allowed participants to rate a variety of issues. Quality questions asked participants to assign one of the following rankings to each issue: Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or No Opinion. To prioritize issues, each participant was allowed to identify his/her top three issues. The results were collated to prioritize the top issues by the issues that received the highest percentage of votes. The raw scores can be found in the Appendix following the summaries.

Survey Results & Analysis

A total of 92 people responded to the 2015 survey. Of those 92 survey participants, 50 were High School Students, 9 were City/Government Employees, and 33 were Other/Citizens. The following is a summary of the responses gathered through the 2015 survey, identifying specific discrepancies between the 2007 survey and the 2015 survey.

Quality of Life

Both 2007 and 2015 survey participants were asked two questions in relation to 23 items related to quality of life in Fort Dodge. First, they were asked to rate each of the 23 items either excellent, good, fair, poor, or no opinion. Most of the answers from the 2007 survey indicated a positive change including retail shopping, which jumped from poor to fair in 2007 to good in 2015, also types of restaurants was ranked as fair in 2007 but good in 2015.

The second question asked participants to rate their top three priority issues in relation to quality of life, allowing them to choose only 3 of the 23 original items. In 2007, the top three issues for the High School category regarding quality of life in Fort Dodge included the availability of arts and cultural activities, tourist attractions, and lodging. 2015 shows a dramatic shift in priorities, with the top three rankings for the same age group including job availability, tourist attractions, and retail shopping. Previously, job availability ranked 14th, which indicates that high school students may be experiencing challenges finding employment as students and/or would like to ensure there are sufficient employment opportunities upon graduation.

The City/Government demographic also indicated that arts and cultural activities, lodging, and childcare services were the top three issues affecting Fort Dodge in 2007. By 2015, these priorities had also shifted potentially due to an increase in restaurants and lodging businesses that have since opened in Fort

Dodge. 2015 priority issues consist of a tie between the types of restaurants available, retail shopping, environmental protection, job availability, education, technology services, and beautification.

Lastly, the Other/Citizen category ranked job availability, healthcare options, and recreational activities as the top three issues in 2007. In 2015, the priority issues included health care options, law enforcement, education, and art and cultural activities.

After averaging the priorities over all three groups, it is clear how the priorities of the community have changed since the survey elicited in 2007. Since 2007, five items under the “quality of life” category have gone down in priority by at least 10 spots including arts and cultural activities, fire protection services, lodging, faith based organizations, and child care services. On the other hand, three items have significantly gone up in priority including recreational activities, law enforcement, and types of restaurants. The other categories either stayed the same or changed only minimally (six or less spots up or down on the list).

Housing

In the same fashion as with quality of life, survey participants were asked to do the same exercises in relation to housing. First, participants were asked to rate eight items individually, as either excellent, good, fair, poor, or no opinion. The answers from 2007 to 2015 changed only minimally; the subjects that improved from fair to good were range of housing opportunities, neighborhood homes, and housing availability. On the other hand, people feel that senior living options are fair, whereas in 2007 people felt that they were good, and new housing developments in 2007 were ranked as fair to good whereas the survey in 2015 shows more people ranking it as fair.

Next, people were asked to rank the same eight issues based on priority. The priority issues have remained relatively stable among all respondent categories between 2007 and 2015. Housing availability and housing affordability were the top priorities among all categories in 2007. In 2015, the range of housing opportunities jumped to a top three priority within all categories, while senior living options remained steady or dropped.

Overall, the priorities for housing in the community have only shifted slightly. Two items in the housing category shifted upwards in priority including range of housing opportunities shifting from number 5 to number 3, and gated housing developments, which shifted from number 8 to number 6. On the other hand, one item moved down in priority; senior living options shifted from number 5 to number 7 in the updated survey. The housing category overall did not have any major shifts—of over 25% change—in priority.

Communities

The Communities questions provided 11 issues to rate first based on quality and then priority. In quality, most of the items stayed roughly the same, including strong sense of place, distinctive, attractive, communities, respectful community character, forests, protection of natural resources, community collaboration, and civic places. On the other hand, a few categories diminished minimally—shifting from fair to good, to mostly just fair—these include walkable neighborhoods, open space areas, parking standards, and historic resources.

The results for each respondent category encompassed a range of the priority issues. In 2007, High School respondents gave the greatest weight to Walkable Neighborhoods, Strong Sense of Place, and Respectful Community Character. City/Government Employees ranked Respectful Community Character, Distinctive, Attractive Communities, and Walkable Neighborhoods as the top three. However, the Other/Citizen respondent group ranked Forests, Protection of Natural Resources, and Parking Standards as the biggest issues in 2007.

In 2015, the top issues for each respondent category was Respectful Community Character. Walkable neighborhood remained a top issues for each group, Distinctive, Attractive Communities held on as a top three issues for all respondent groups.

Overall, shifts in items under the category of “communities” are few. Two items shifted upwards: distinctive, attractive communities shifted from 5th to 2nd on the priority list, whereas civic places shifted from 11th to 8th. On the other hand, two items shifted downward on the community’s priority list; historic resources shifted from 8th to 11th, and—the most significant change—forests shifted from 4th all the way down to 10th.

Transportation

The Transportation category offered five issues to rank individually as excellent, good, fair, poor, or no opinion. The survey results in 2015 varied only minimally from those in 2007. Commercial air services, options for getting around, and connectivity and circulation all stayed roughly the same, somewhere between fair and good. Bicycle/multi-use trail facilities and Interstate highway access both improved, shifting from fair to good, to good.

Though Interstate Highway Access was the top priority in 2007, in 2015 it dropped ranks while Options for Getting Around rose for the High School and City/Government Employee respondent groups. Within the City/Government Employee and Other/Citizen groups, Bicycle/Multi-Use Trail Facilities rose to top priorities, which indicates a shift in preference for alternative transportation modes and increased recreational opportunities.

Overall, the community’s list of priorities has changed slightly with regard to transportation. The most significant change was the downward shift in priority for interstate highway access, which moved from 1st on the list in 2007, to 4th on the list in 2015. On the other hand, commercial air services moved from 4th in 2007 to 2nd in 2015.

Finances

The Finance questions included four issues to rank by quality and priority. These questions were only answered by the City/Government Employees and Other/Citizen respondent groups. In ranking the quality of each item, survey takers rated each issue as excellent, good, fair, poor, or no opinion. On this specific question, many people felt that they had no opinion, especially in relation to coordination of public investment and micro-business loans. Those who did have opinions, on the other hand, reported similar opinions to those survey takers in 2007. All items in this category were rated as mostly fair in both 2007 and 2015.

Given the small number of ranking options, the top priorities remained relatively stable. Nevertheless, both City/Government Employees and Other/Citizen respondent groups showed an increased preference for Business Diversity in 2015, which replaced Small Business Development & Support.

Overall, there were two small shifts in the community's average priority list as a whole. Small business development and support shifted from 1st to 2nd on the list of 4 items, whereby business diversity shifted up from 2nd in 2007 to 1st in 2015.

Municipal Profile

The Municipal Profile questions included 17 issues to rank by quality and priority. These questions were only answered by the City/Government Employees and Other/Citizen respondent groups. Most of the items in this category underwent either a minimal positive change, or remained the same in relation to the responses in the 2007 survey. Nine of the 17 items shifted positively, while six of the items stayed the same, and two—building and development codes and utilities—shifted in a slightly negative direction.

In 2007, City/Government Employees ranked government leadership as the highest priority issues. In 2015, this dropped to the third most important issues, replaced by the condition of buildings as the highest priority issue. Street Quality remained steady as the second most important issue.

The Other/Citizen respondent category ranked government leadership as the highest priority issue in 2007, which dropped to a sixth place ranking in 2015. The highest priority issues that emerged in 2015 was the quality of the streets, which ranked second in 2007. This indicates an improvement in government leadership; however, street conditions have deteriorated.

As a community the priorities for the “municipal profile” category changed in a number of places. A total of 4 items shifted significantly—five or more spaces—upward, and 3 items shifted downward. Public involvement, condition of buildings, street patterns, and live-work districts moved upwards, whereas government leadership, infrastructure to support growth, and utilities all shifted downward. The remaining 10 items shifted minimally (less than 5 spaces), or not at all.

Q1: Please rate the following items related to QUALITY OF LIFE:

RANKINGS:

High School	2007	2015
Arts & Cultural Activities	1	16
Tourist Attractions	2	2
Lodging	3	16
Retail Shopping	4	3
Environmental Protection	5	11
Child Care Services	6	11
Emergency Services	7	16
Fire Protection Services	8	23
Beautification	9	11
Technology Services	10	22
Faith-Based Organizations	11	16
Health Care Options	12	5
Education	13	8
Job Availability	14	1
Safety & Security	15	4
Law Enforcement	16	7
Diversity	17	11
Recreational Activities	18	5
People Availability for Work	19	23
Youth Activities	20	8
Social Events	21	16
Types of Restaurants	22	8
Volunteerism	23	11
Non-Profit Community Organizations	24	16

City/Government Employees	2007	2015
Arts & Cultural Activities	1	9
Lodging	2	16
Child Care Services	3	16
Fire Protection Services	4	16
Tourist Attractions	5	9
Faith-Based Organizations	6	16
Health Care Options	7	9
Retail Shopping	7	1
Environmental Protection	9	1
Job Availability	10	1
Social Events	11	16
Emergency Services	12	9
Education	13	1
Technology Services	14	1
Safety & Security	15	16
Types of Restaurants	15	1
Non-Profit Community Organizations	17	16
Recreational Activities	18	1
Youth Activities	18	16
Diversity	20	16
Beautification	21	1
Law Enforcement	21	9
People Availability for Work	23	9
Volunteerism	23	9

Other/Citizen	2007	2015
Job Availability	1	7
Health Care Options	2	1
Recreational Activities	3	7
Education	4	3
Safety & Security	5	5
Beautification	6	7
Youth Activities	7	14
Law Enforcement	8	1
Arts & Cultural Activities	9	3
Retail Shopping	10	7
Types of Restaurants	11	7
Faith-Based Organizations	12	14
Emergency Services	13	19
People Availability for Work	14	7
Social Events	15	5
Technology Services	15	13
Environmental Protection	17	14
Fire Protection Services	18	14
Volunteerism	19	19
Tourist Attractions	20	14
Child Care Services	21	19
Diversity	22	19
Non-Profit Community Organizations	22	19
Lodging	23	19

Overall	2007	2015
Job Availability	1	1
Arts & Cultural Activities	2	12
Retail Shopping	3	2
Health Care Options	3	5
Fire Protection Services	5	24
Tourist Attractions	6	9
Lodging	7	22
Faith-Based Organizations	8	19
Child Care Services	9	19
Education	9	3
Environmental Protection	11	11
Emergency Services	12	18
Safety & Security	13	9
Beautification	14	8
Recreational Activities	15	4
Technology Services	16	13
Youth Activities	17	15
Law Enforcement	17	7
Social Events	19	14
Types of Restaurants	20	6
People Availability for Work	21	16
Diversity	22	19
Non-Profit Community Organizations	23	22
Volunteerism	24	16

Q2: Rate the following items related to HOUSING

RANKINGS:

High School	2007	2015
Housing Affordability	1	1
New Housing	2	4
Housing Availability	3	2
Neighborhood Homes	4	6
Senior Living Options	5	7
Range of Housing Opportunities	6	3
Gated Housing Developments	7	5
Planned Unit Development	8	8

City/Government Employees	2007	2015
Housing Affordability	1	4
Housing Availability	2	1
New Housing	3	1
Range of Housing Opportunities	4	3
Neighborhood Homes	5	5
Senior Living Options	6	6
Planned Unit Development	7	7
Gated Housing Developments	8	7

Other/Citizen	2007	2015
Housing Affordability	1	1
Housing Availability	2	3
Senior Living Options	3	7
Neighborhood Homes	4	4
Range of Housing Opportunities	4	1
New Housing	6	4
Planned Unit Development	7	6
Gated Housing Developments	8	7

Overall	2007	2015
Housing Affordability	1	1
Housing Availability	2	1
Senior Living Options	5	7
Neighborhood Homes	4	5
Range of Housing Opportunities	5	3
New Housing	3	4
Planned Unit Development	7	8
Gated Housing Developments	8	6

Q3: Rate the following items related to COMMUNITY

RANKINGS:

High School	2007	2015
Walkable Neighborhoods	1	4
Strong Sense of Place	2	5
Respectful Community Character	3	1
Forests	4	9
Distinctive, Attractive Communities	5	1
Open Space Areas	6	5
Protection of Natural Resources	7	5
Parking Standards	8	1
Community Collaboration	9	8
Historic Resources	10	10
Civic Places	11	10

City/Government Employees	2007	2015
Respectful Community Character	1	1
Distinctive, Attractive Communities	2	2
Walkable Neighborhoods	3	2
Strong Sense of Place	4	2
Community Collaboration	5	6
Protection of Natural Resources	5	2
Civic Places	7	6
Historic Resources	8	9
Open Space Areas	9	9
Forests	10	9
Parking Standards	11	6

Other/Citizen	2007	2015
Forests	1	9
Protection of Natural Resources	2	7
Parking Standards	3	9
Historic Resources	4	9
Open Space Areas	5	8
Walkable Neighborhoods	6	4
Civic Places	7	6
Community Collaboration	8	2
Respectful Community Character	9	1
Distinctive, Attractive Communities	10	3
Strong Sense of Place	11	5

Overall	2007	2015
Forests	4	10
Protection of Natural Resources	3	5
Parking Standards	8	6
Historic Resources	8	11
Open Space Areas	7	8
Walkable Neighborhoods	1	3
Civic Places	11	8
Community Collaboration	8	6
Respectful Community Character	2	1
Distinctive, Attractive Communities	5	2
Strong Sense of Place	5	4

Q4: Rate the following related to TRANSPORTATION

RANKINGS:

High School	2007	2015
Interstate Highway Access	1	5
Bicycle/Multi-Use Trail Facilities	2	3
Commercial Air Services	3	2
Options for Getting Around	4	1
Connectivity & Circulation	5	3

City/Government Employees	2007	2015
Options for Getting Around	1	3
Interstate Highway Access	2	1
Bicycle/Multi-Use Trail Facilities	3	1
Commercial Air Services	4	5
Connectivity & Circulation	5	3

Other/Citizen	2007	2015
Interstate Highway Access	1	2
Bicycle/Multi-Use Trail Facilities	2	1
Commercial Air Services	3	2
Options for Getting Around	4	5
Connectivity & Circulation	5	2

Overall	2007	2015
Interstate Highway Access	1	4
Bicycle/Multi-Use Trail Facilities	2	1
Commercial Air Services	4	2
Options for Getting Around	3	2
Connectivity & Circulation	5	4

Q5: Rate the following related to FINANCES

RANKINGS:

City/Government Employees	2007	2015
Small Business Development & Support	1	2
Business Diversity	2	1
Coordinate Public Investment	3	3
Micro Business Loans	4	4

Other/Citizen	2007	2015
Small Business Development & Support	1	2
Business Diversity	2	1
Coordinate Public Investment	3	2
Micro Business Loans	4	4

Overall	2007	2015
Small Business Development & Support	1	2
Business Diversity	2	1
Coordinate Public Investment	3	3
Micro Business Loans	4	4

* High School Students were not asked to answer questions in this category

Q6: Rate the following related to MUNICIPAL PROFILE

RANKINGS:

City/Government Employees	2007	2015
Government Leadership	1	3
Street Quality	2	2
Decisions Predictable, Fair & Cost Effective	3	3
Infrastructure to Support Growth	4	3
Condition of Buildings	5	1
Downtown Development	6	3
Regional Development	7	3
Business Friendly	8	3
Utilities (Water, Sewage, Gas, Electricity)	9	14
Public Involvement	10	3
Landscapes	11	3
Regional Cooperation	12	14
Land Use, Zoning & Subdivisions	13	3
Building & Development Codes	14	14
Efficient Infrastructure Design	14	14
Street Patterns	16	3
Live-Work Districts	16	3

Other/Citizen	2007	2015
Government Leadership	1	6
Street Quality	2	1
Downtown Development	3	3
Infrastructure to Support Growth	4	13
Public Involvement	5	3
Business Friendly	6	8
Regional Development	6	3
Condition of Buildings	8	2
Decisions Predictable, Fair & Cost Effective	9	6
Landscapes	10	14
Utilities (Water, Sewage, Gas, Electricity)	11	13
Building & Development Codes	12	9
Regional Cooperation	12	9
Efficient Infrastructure Design	14	13
Land Use, Zoning & Subdivisions	15	14
Street Patterns	16	9
Live-Work Districts	17	9

Overall	2007	2015
Government Leadership	1	6
Street Quality	2	1
Downtown Development	4	3
Infrastructure to Support Growth	3	11
Public Involvement	9	3
Business Friendly	8	8
Regional Development	6	3
Condition of Buildings	6	1
Decisions Predictable, Fair & Cost Effective	5	6
Landscapes	11	12
Utilities (Water, Sewage, Gas, Electricity)	10	16
Building & Development Codes	13	14
Regional Cooperation	12	14
Efficient Infrastructure Design	14	16
Land Use, Zoning & Subdivisions	14	12
Street Patterns	16	9
Live-Work Districts	17	9

* High School Students were not asked to answer questions in this category