

City of

OSHKOSH Nebraska

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2016-2026

& ZONING REGULATIONS

Office Locations

Kearney
McCook
Holdrege
Grand Island
Colby, KS

Migrating
to a
Better Tomorrow
OSHKOSH, NEBRASKA
2016-2026

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City Clerk/Treasurer - LeAnn Brown
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Vision for Oshkosh

Oshkosh's residents and business owners are enormous assets to the community and their participation was essential to the planning process. The planning process for Migrating to a Better Tomorrow, the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Oshkosh, included many public participation meetings which, in turn, gave stakeholders the opportunity to frame the goals and direction of the Plan. This Plan presents a vision for the community, from the community.

The blueprint for Oshkosh is to have continuing community input of goals and ambitions for the City. The goal is to promote and grow a diverse economic base while emphasizing overall community development, including a proactive approach for attracting new residents. Commercial and housing development is currently an issue that needs to be addressed in order to attract and maintain residents. There are areas for development; however, these areas need to be marketed in order to attract a developer. Gateway corridors along Highways 26 and 61 was a major discussion point during public input sessions. Residents would love to see this corridor beautified in order to give a grand "first impression" to visitors. Other goals for Oshkosh are to create a variety of job options, agricultural and non-agricultural, while also maintaining infrastructure such as roads, water, and public buildings/services. The City is also proactively pursuing recreational amenity additions to improve the quality of life for all residents. The creation of this plan and the continual reference back to it and any other planning efforts, will benefit the City on its road to reach the goals laid out in this Comprehensive Plan.

Introduction

Migrating to a Better Tomorrow 2016-2026 for the City of Oshkosh is an outline of the goals for the community, by the community. This Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint for the City's future, a blueprint to develop the community into the vision created by its residents. It provides guidance on where and how the City will invest and change over the next ten years and beyond. It contains maps, visions, and goals for the future as well as policies to address topics ranging from land use and demographics to transportation and community services. The purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to provide long-range guidance to property owners, residents, elected and appointed officials, City staff, and others to inform, provide options, and stimulate community discussion on issues such as where and what type of future developments should occur.

Compliance with State & Local Requirements

Governmental & Jurisdictional Organization

The governmental functions of Oshkosh, Nebraska are provided and coordinated by the Mayor and City Council of Oshkosh, comprised of five elected officials.

The planning and zoning jurisdiction for the City of Oshkosh includes an area within one-mile of their corporate limits, following section lines 25, 26, 35, and 36 of Township 17N and Range 44W, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §17-1002.

Nebraska Revised Statute §17-1002.

Designation of jurisdiction; suburban development; subdivision; platting; consent required; review by County planning commission; when required.

(1) Except as provided in section 13-327, any city of the second class or Village may designate by ordinance the portion of the territory located within one mile of the corporate limits of such city or Village and outside of any other organized city or Village within which the designating city or Village will exercise the powers and duties granted by this section and section 17-1003 or section 19-2402.

(2) No owner of any real property located within the area designated by a city or Village pursuant to subsection (1) of this section may subdivide, plat, or lay out such real property in building lots, streets, or other portions of the same intended to be dedicated for public use or for the use of the purchasers or owner of lots fronting thereon or adjacent thereto without first having obtained the approval of the city council or board of trustees of such municipality or its agent designated pursuant to section 19-916 and, when applicable, having complied with sections 39-1311 to 39-1311.05. The fact that such real property is located in a different County or counties than some or all portions of the municipality shall not be construed as affecting the necessity of obtaining the approval of the city council or board of trustees of such municipality or its designated agent.

(3) No plat of such real property shall be recorded or have any force or effect unless approved by the city council or board of trustees of such municipality or its designated agent.

(4) In counties that have adopted a comprehensive development plan which meets the requirements of section 23-114.02 and are enforcing subdivision regulations, the County planning commission shall be provided with all available materials on any proposed subdivision plat, contemplating public streets or improvements, which is filed with a municipality in that County, when such proposed plat lies partially or totally within the extraterritorial subdivision jurisdiction being exercised by that municipality in such County. The commission shall be given four weeks to officially comment on the appropriateness of the design and improvements proposed in the plat. The review period for the commission shall run concurrently with subdivision review activities of the municipality after the commission receives all available material for a proposed subdivision plat.

The planning and zoning jurisdiction of City of Oshkosh is governed by Neb. Rev. Stat. §17-1004. As Oshkosh continues to grow and annex land into their corporate limits, their extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJ) may extend further into Garden County. The City of Oshkosh has chosen, at this time, to extend their jurisdiction following sections 25, 26, 35, and 36 of Township 17N and Range 44W.

Nebraska Revised Statute §17-1004

An ordinance of a City of the second class or Village designating its jurisdiction over territory outside of the corporate limits of the City or Village under section 17-1001 or 17-1002 shall describe such territory by metes and bounds or by reference to an official map.

The Plan has been prepared in accordance with state statutes and requirements.

Nebraska Revised Statute §19-903

Comprehensive development plan; requirements; regulations and restrictions made in accordance with plan; considerations.

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

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

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

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

(4) When a new Comprehensive Plan or a full update to an existing Comprehensive Plan is developed on or after July 15, 2010, but not later than January 1, 2015, an energy element which: Assesses energy infrastructure and energy use by sector, including residential, commercial, and industrial sectors; evaluates utilization of renewable energy sources; and promotes energy conservation measures that benefit the community. This subdivision shall not apply to Villages; and

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

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

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

It is the duty of the City Council to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality. The master plan of a community shall be an advisory document to guide land development decisions.

The Planning Commission, after a public hearing, shall make its recommendation to the City Council. The City Council, after a public hearing, shall adopt and approve the Comprehensive Plan, by Resolution.

Why a Comprehensive Plan?

This document is the community's long-term Comprehensive Plan that establishes vision and direction for the future (to the year 2026). Its objectives are to confirm the community's vision for the future, and to set the policy framework to help guide future decisions related to development and investment. It will help the City thoughtfully address future needs for economic development, transportation, housing, services, parks and open space, and other community benefits. It will also help to ensure a sustainable and fiscally responsible future, by setting the desired direction for future development regulations, policy decisions, and community programs.

Goals for Oshkosh's Comprehensive Plan 2016-2026

While this Plan embodies many ideas, goals, and policies that are parallel with other communities' goals in this region, there are some noteworthy new directions and slight changes in course presented in this plan. These new directions resulted from community feedback, reaction to current trends and conditions, and policy direction from elected and appointed officials. These directions include the following list of goals:

- Improve Public Infrastructure
- Promote Commercial Development
- Improve the Existing Housing Market
- Expand Recreational Attractions & Community Amenities
- Enhance Gateway Entrances & Community Beautification
- Develop Marketing Campaign

Data Sources

2010 Census (short form)

This is the form that every household should have received in 2010. It has basic gender, age, and race population but there is not enough data reported to elaborate on Oshkosh's demographic or economic standings.

American Community Survey (ACS)

This survey is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in replacement of the Decennial Census Long Form. The ACS reports a variety of data such as household income, commute time to work, year of household, etc. The survey is spread over five years (2009-2013) and it uses a smaller sample population than the Decennial Census Long Form did. Every year a small portion of surveys are mailed to residents; the Census Bureau then makes estimates based on those numbers that were gathered over the five-year time span. The ACS reports the data as an estimate with a margin of error. The ACS states there is a 90 percent chance of accuracy within the margin of error reported on either side of the original estimate (i.e. If the ACS estimate is 25 ± 5 , there is a 90 percent chance the correct number falls within the margin of error, including all numbers between 20 and 30).

Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)

ESRI reports data on Nebraska's Location One Information System (LOIS) website. ESRI reports data similar to the Census Bureau's data, and LOIS allows each community to enter additional information regarding commercial properties, including vacant lots and buildings, to market and promote economic development in each community and for the State of Nebraska. The ESRI data reported is from the 2014 estimates.

Building on Previous Planning Efforts

The City of Oshkosh has a solid record of community participation and planning for the future. The 2016 Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint to 2026 which builds on previous planning efforts. In 2003, a Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations were completed for the City of Oshkosh by the Panhandle Area Development District. This Comprehensive Plan update included review of these previous efforts and documents. A few of the goals, policies, and ideas for the future represented in the previous planning efforts are still relevant, and are carried forth in this Plan. There are also some new ideas for development that were discussed during our public input sessions.

Planning Period

The planning period for Oshkosh's Comprehensive Plan, is from 2016-2026. This plan should be reviewed in 2017, 2021, and a complete update should be done in 2026 if City officials decide the community has had enough change to warrant a new plan or they determine the process and goal-setting would be beneficial for the City at that time. However, it is still important to continually refer to and update this Plan throughout the ten-year planning period.

Establishing an annual review process of the Comprehensive Plan will be important to the success of this Plan and to the City of Oshkosh. This process should include public hearings to discuss whether the Plan is still valid or whether updates need to be made. Actual documentation of these meetings is pertinent in providing proof of the public's continued input concerning this Plan.

1 Community Profile

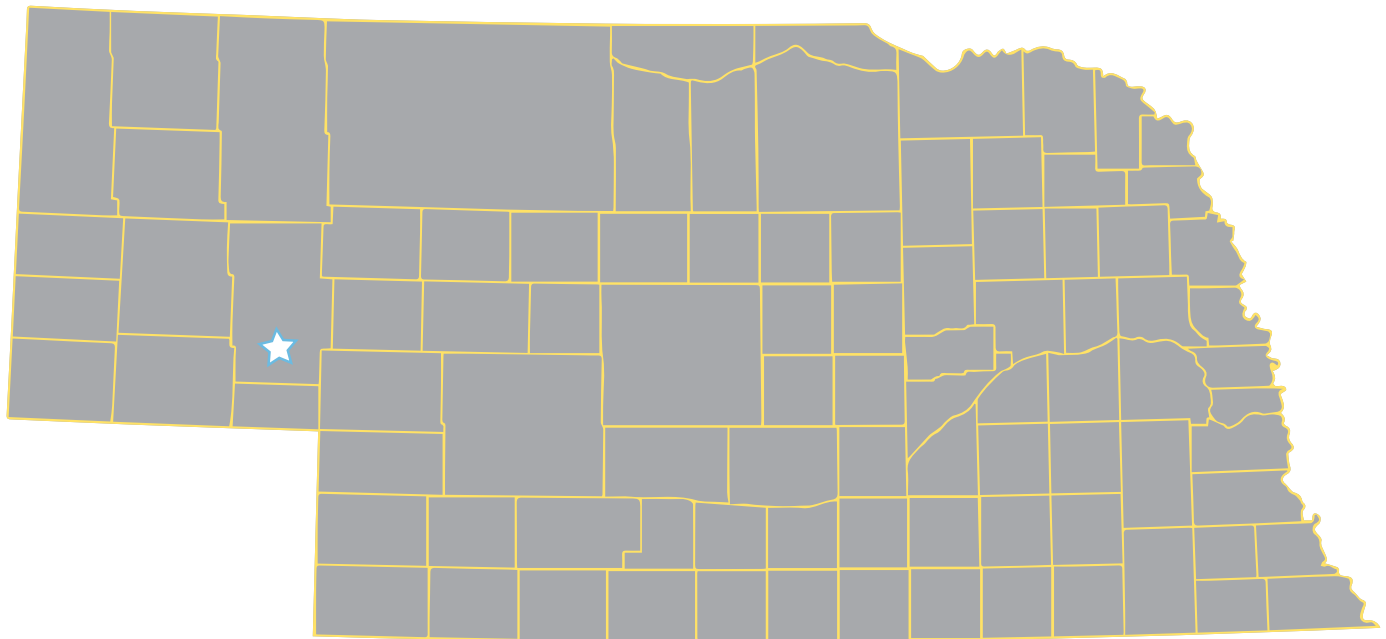
The Community Profile Chapter considers current characteristics of the community that will form the foundation for planning in Oshkosh for the next ten years. This profile is a compilation of information that is derived through outside research, conversations with local residents and officials, on-site assessments, and data analysis. This Community Profile Chapter will consist of the following components:

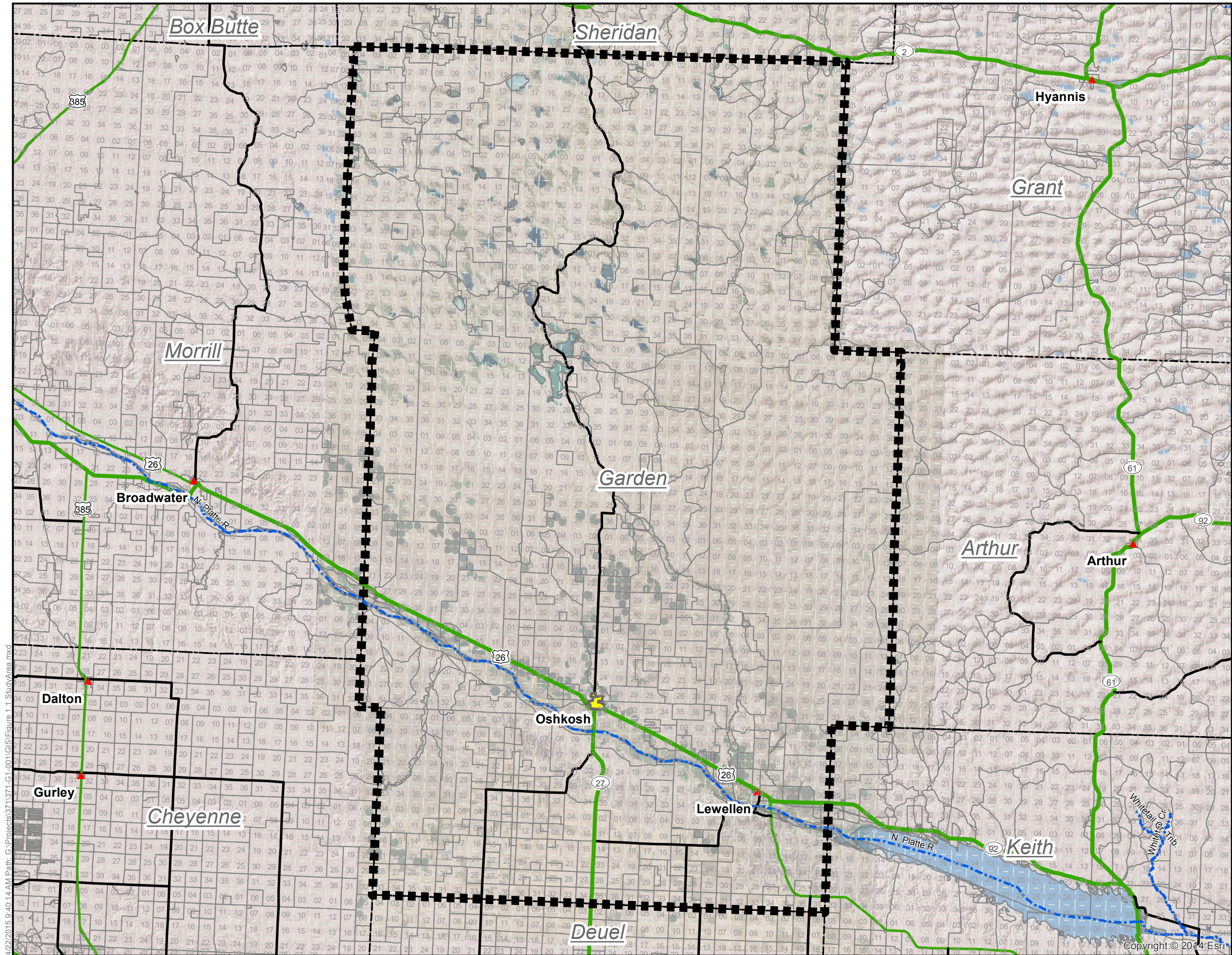
- Description
- History
- Population
- Housing
- Economy & Capital Improvement



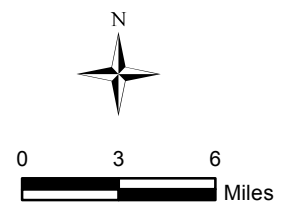
Description

The City of Oshkosh, which is approximately 0.67 square miles, is situated in south-central Garden County on United States Highway 26/Nebraska Highway 92 and Nebraska Highway 27. Oshkosh is the County Seat of Garden County and the other communities located in Garden County include Lewellen and the unincorporated communities of Lisco, Mumper, and Rackett. Garden County borders the following Counties: Cheyenne, Morrill, Sheridan, Grant, Arthur, Keith, and Deuel. According to the 2010 Census, Oshkosh's population was 884. Oshkosh is an agricultural community with a few different industries, a wonderful school district, healthcare options, senior housing and services, and enjoyable recreational facilities. **Figure 1.1** shows Oshkosh's location in Garden County. This map acts as a Study Area Map for the Comprehensive Plan.





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- Legend**
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits
 - Garden County

Figure 1.1
Study Area Map
Garden County, Nebraska

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The following account of Oshkosh's history was written by Helen M. Robinson and can be found on the University of Nebraska - Lincoln's "Virtual Nebraska" website. This article and the following historic images of the community can be found by visiting <http://www.casde.unl.edu/history/counties/Garden/Oshkosh/>.

History

The first permanent settlers in this vicinity were men from the Oshkosh Land and Cattle Company, some of whom had come from Oshkosh, Wisconsin. In 1885 Henry Gumaer and John Robinson drove the first herd of cattle to the area, building headquarters on land now part of the Garden County Airport. In 1889 a two-story structure was built on Main Street for a general store, post office, and hotel. This building, still in good condition, now houses an antique and gift shop.

Many details about the town's early history have been included in "The Garden County History." Briefly, Oshkosh established a post office in 1889, when the area was part of Deuel County. Later, in 1909, citizens voted to form Garden County, choosing the title as "garden spot of the west," and elected Oshkosh its county seat.

The town is located on the North Platte River where the Mormon and Oregon trails can still be traced by where wagon wheels left their ruts. The railroad, arriving in 1908, was a welcome convenience. Today, while the Union Pacific still goes by, the primary linkage with the world is Federal Highway 26.

Oshkosh has two museums, a public library, an auditorium, a center for senior citizens, and a city park with picnic tables and a swimming pool. The business district has stores and businesses that offer all the necessary items for a comfortable living, plus many specialty shops -- antiques and other collectables. The town has several doctors, dentists, lawyers, and real estate agents. As a provider of services for travelers, there are motels, service stations, and cafes.

The Garden County High School, a Class VI school located in Oshkosh, provides secondary education for 102 students and the town's Class I, K-8 for 165 elementary students, as of December 1987. The town is proud of its young people, and enjoy the full range of athletic team sports and youth groups. Over the years, more than 25 graduates have gone on to become doctors and dentists.



The coming of the Union Pacific Railroad is greeted with celebration in Oshkosh, September 1908.



Originally built in 1889, this was the Oshkosh Land and Cattle Company General Store and Post office.

Churches were also established early in our history with current congregations that include Methodist, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Wesleyan, Assembly of God, and Episcopal.

Garden County airport, country club, and golf course provide the community with current "up town" status. Several manufacturing businesses help provide a stable economic base. Bennet's Thunder Valley Wagon Rides offer people a glimpse of the past, as they trace a segment of the old Oregon Trail along the river. Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge 20 miles north, Ash Hollow State Park, and Lake McConaughy to the east, make Oshkosh a prime location for sportsmen and nature buffs. A goose shoot and Ducks Unlimited Banquet are held each November.

The business community promotes a number of activities; a big Fourth of July parade and free lunch in the park, special sales for "Fall Festival", and when Santa arrives in December, he gives each child a bag of treats and there is a big cash drawing.



The wreckage of H.J. Curtis' barn in September of 1924 after a tornado hit the southern portion of Oshkosh.



1930s Main Street, looking West.



Main Street, Oshkosh, 1904. The Burke Bank building and upstairs resident (Left foreground) along with the building across the street were later moved to make way for the proposed U.P. Railroad and right of way.

Past and present residents that have gained state and national recognition for their accomplishments include:

- King Rhiley, Sr. race car driver who won the Pike's Peak Race in 1921 and took second place in 1922, and Don Meier of "Wild Kingdom" fame, a graduate of Garden County High School, who returned to Oshkosh to teach for a number of years before going into TV broadcasting. In addition to many National Awards for the program he produced and directed, Don received the Garden County Hall of Fame Award in 1982.
- Bill Laux, native of the Oshkosh area, received a Fulbright Scholarship in 1953. His studies, primarily in Denmark, have been augmented by a number of other grants over the years.
- A hobby that turned into a full time business is Pollard Kennels, which raises and trains racing dogs. Bill Pollard first raced in Colorado in 1967. Larry, Bill's son, whose dogs carry the "Oshkosh" name, currently manage the kennels and race in Oregon, Florida, and Iowa.



Population

The residents of Oshkosh are the lifeblood of the community. The people that live, work, and visit Oshkosh everyday are what make the community “tick”. Understanding the population is just as important as understanding the wants and needs

of that population. Analyzing demographics is important to the Comprehensive Plan because it becomes the basis for prioritizing future growth. All other plan elements depend on an assessment of existing and changing population characteristics and the needs of future population. In order to accurately plan for the growth of Oshkosh, we first must consider the past and current populations before we can make projections for the future. Population projections are significant because they assist communities with a vision for where they will be in five, ten, and even fifteen years. That will in turn help decision-makers plan for social, economic, and physical infrastructure with the purpose of meeting the community’s future needs and demands.

The 2010 Census data, which was released during the first few months of 2011, shows Oshkosh’s population was almost stationary between 2000 and 2010; there was a decrease of only three persons in the ten-year span. The City’s 2000 population was 887 and the 2010 population was 884. Oshkosh’s population is 97.1 percent White and 4.2 percent of the population is Hispanic or Latino of any race. The 2010 Census reported that there are 37 persons living in Oshkosh that are of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity which is the largest minority group in Oshkosh. Almost three percent, or 25 persons, of Oshkosh’s Hispanic or Latino population declared Mexican as their race. The Hispanic or Latino population has grown since the 2000 Census, when the 17 persons of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity comprised two percent of Oshkosh’s total population.

Table 1.1 shows a comparison of Oshkosh’s population changes between 2000 and 2010 with surrounding communities that have similar characteristics to Oshkosh. Of the six communities, including Oshkosh, all of them experienced a decrease in population. These communities have many of the same challenges that Oshkosh faces with growth, development, and trying to attract residents to their communities. Oshkosh experienced the smallest percentage of decline with only a 0.3 percent decrease in population which is considered a stationary population. Two of the communities, Bridgeport and Ogallala, saw less than a 4 percent decrease in population over the ten-year span; Chappell and Kimball experienced a 5.4 percent and 6.5 decrease, respectively. Julesburg, CO. had a 16.5 percent decrease for the same time period. This data shows City leaders that regardless of a community’s size and location, they are still liable to population loss; proving that Cities must continually work to retain the existing population and attract new residents. In fact, rural community must work even harder than larger Cities to maintain a sustainable population base.

Table 1.1 Comparable Population Changes, Oshkosh, 2000-2010				
Community	2000	2010	Difference	% of Change
Oshkosh	887	884	-3	-0.33%
Kimball	4,089	3,821	-268	-6.5%
Ogallala	4,930	4,737	-193	-3.9%
Bridgeport	1,594	1,545	-49	-3.1%
Chappell	983	929	-54	-5.4%
Julesburg, CO	1,467	1,225	-242	-16.5%
Source: US Census Bureau				

Table 1.2 shows the history of Oshkosh’s population which has fluctuated between each decennial census; however, Oshkosh has seen an overall increase in population when comparing the City’s population in 1930 with the most recent Census data. This is not typical for many small, rural communities in Nebraska; many have experienced fluctuation between each decennial Census, but show an overall decline in population between 1930 and 2010. Between 1930 and 2010, Oshkosh experienced almost a five percent increase in population, with the City’s largest population in 1950 at 1,124 residents. Most rural communities in Nebraska are experiencing an overall decline in population, the table on the previous page shows many communities near Oshkosh are experiencing large declines. Oshkosh has fluctuated in total over the past eight decades, making projecting future populations more complicated when using a historical analysis method because of the variability. From the last decennial Census reporting period, Oshkosh’s population has stabilized. The City will need to work to maintain the population stabilization as well as find ways to continually improve the housing market and overall quality of life in order to attract new residents to the community.

Age and Gender are other facets to consider when analyzing a community’s population. Over 51 percent of Oshkosh’s population is female and over 48 percent of the population is male. The median age for females is 49.1 years-old, which is slightly higher than 45.8 years-old, the median age for males in the community. The median age for all of Oshkosh’s residents is 47.5; this is slightly lower than Garden County’s median age of 49.8 and both numbers are higher than the State’s median age of 36.2. Oshkosh’s median age in 2000 was 46.8 which was slightly higher than Garden County’s 2000 median age of 45.6.




Table 1.2 Population History, Oshkosh, 1930-2010									
Year	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	843	910	1,124	1,025	1,067	1,057	986	887	884

Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Census Bureau

Age and gender differences can affect housing, recreation, community services, and businesses that will be desired in Oshkosh because of the differences in wants and expectations for amenities between men and women as well as between the differing ages. Therefore, it is important to monitor and understand the changes in the community and how the overall needs for the future of the City are affected.

The Census Bureau divides the total population into four-year age groups called “cohorts”. A cohort is a set of individuals, grouped together based on experiencing the same event within the same time interval. Each decennial Census presents population data in cohorts. These cohorts range from under five years of age to the last cohort which is 85 years and over. **Table 1.3** shows all 18 cohorts, from the 2010 Census, and the corresponding percentages of the total population for each cohort.

When comparing each cohort between the 2000 and 2010 Census surveys, it is important to remember that people age and will move two cohorts over a ten-year span. This cohort movement was compared for the 2000 and 2010 Census data to show in-migration and out-migration statistics for Oshkosh. Comparing the number of persons in a particular cohort in 2000 with same group of persons in the corresponding age cohort for 2010 permits a detailed analysis of the cohorts showing movement trends, called migration. Positive change between cohorts indicates in-migration and negative change reflects out-migration.

Oshkosh's population comparison for percentage of the entire population, shows growth in 10 of the 18 cohorts, and eight of those cohorts show in-migration trends for 2000-2010. The under five years and five to nine years cohorts will always show growth when comparing the adjusted 2000 cohort figures because the persons in those cohorts were not born when the previous Census was taken. Therefore, those two cohorts were not included in the eight cohorts reflecting positive in-migration in Oshkosh. Based on the adjusted cohort analysis, the figures show an in-migration of several residents between 30 and 49 as well as an increase in school-aged children which implies that several families with children moved to Oshkosh between 2000 and 2010. It is important for the City to maintain this trend and provide more opportunities for young families to move to Oshkosh for jobs, lifestyle, the public school systems, etc.

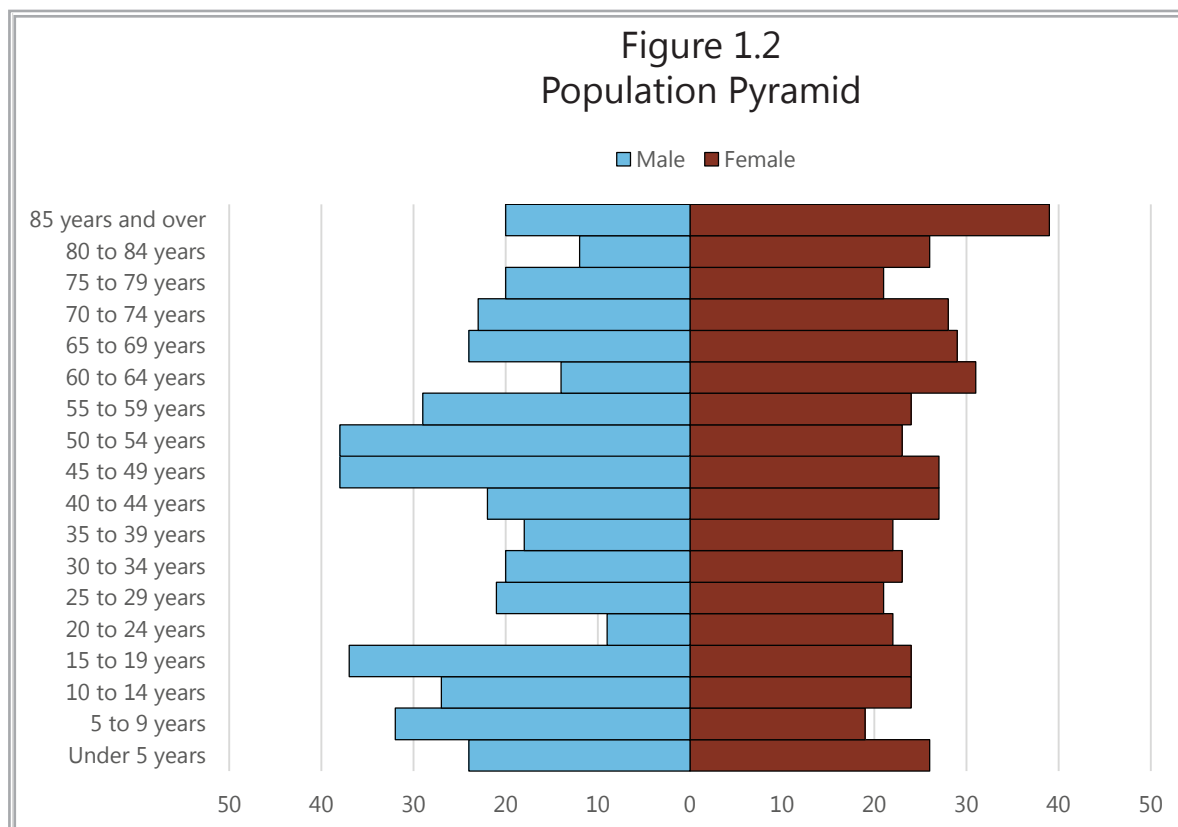
The cohorts that experienced out-migration include the 20-29 year olds, 50-59 year olds, and 70-84 year olds. The City should look for ways to retain these cohorts to minimize out-migration. Age-appropriate housing, activities, and amenities are some of the important factors to consider when finding ways to improve the quality of life for certain cohorts. Finding ways to improve the quality of life for residents is essential when trying to maintain the existing population as well as trying to attract new residents to the community.

Table 1.3 Population Composition, Oshkosh, 2000-2010

Age Cohort	2000				2010			
	Male	Female	Total	% of Total	Male	Female	Total	% of Total
Total Population	407	480	887	100	428	456	884	100
Under 5 years	18	11	29	3.3	24	26	50	5.7
5-9 years	27	22	49	5.5	32	19	51	5.8
10-14 Years	36	39	75	8.5	27	24	51	5.8
15-19 years	23	23	46	5.2	37	24	61	6.9
20-24 years	8	16	24	2.7	9	22	31	3.5
25-29 years	17	16	33	3.7	21	21	42	4.8
30-34 years	11	14	25	2.8	20	23	43	4.9
35-39 years	32	29	61	6.9	18	22	40	4.5
40-44 years	39	35	74	8.3	22	27	49	5.5
45-49 years	33	27	60	6.8	38	27	65	7.4
50-54 years	18	25	43	4.8	38	23	61	6.9
55-59 years	21	31	52	5.9	29	24	53	6
60-64 years	22	32	54	6.1	14	31	45	5.1
65-69 years	24	29	53	6	24	29	53	6
70-74 years	25	32	57	6.4	23	28	51	5.8
75-79 years	20	34	54	6.1	20	21	41	4.6
80-84 years	16	32	48	5.4	12	26	38	4.3
85 years and over	17	33	50	5.6	20	39	59	6.6
Total Population	407	480	887	100.0%	428	456	884	100.0%
Median Age	46.8				47.5			

Source: US Census Bureau

Reported by the 2010 Census, approximately 22 percent of the population was under 18 years-old. Of the City's 884 residents, 27.4 percent, or 242 people, were 65 or older in 2010; this number is important because 65 is the common age of retirement, although recent trends show the retirement age is rising. **Figure 1.2** shows a population pyramid for Oshkosh's 2010 Census population based on age and gender. A population pyramid is a series of bar charts set on a vertical axis. The 18 bars represent each of the 18 cohorts with the male population represented on the left side of the chart and the female population numbers represented on the right side of the chart. A population pyramid showing a healthy viable population will have a large base of children and young adults and a much smaller number of elderly persons, creating the shape of a pyramid and indicating a self-sustaining population base for the community. A population pyramid uses two assumptions, with the first assuming that the community exists to meet the need of its residents. The government and other quasi-governmental agencies provide public/quasi-public uses including schools, Churches, medical facilities, emergency services, and public infrastructure to meet the needs of the public. The second assumption is that people have needs and expectations that change with age.



The population pyramid for Oshkosh shows a large female population 85 years or older as well as a large section of middle-aged cohorts. Oshkosh's population pyramid shows a stationary population because it is relatively even through the entire pyramid. In order for Oshkosh to grow into a self-sustaining community, based on the 2010 population pyramid, the community will have to rely on in-migration to attract new families and depend on new and existing families to expand the base of the pyramid. Most rural communities in Nebraska have an aging population with a population pyramid, showing a stationary population like Oshkosh or one resembling an upside-down pyramid showing a decline in population. The City will need to rely on in-migration to help create a self-sustaining population; however, the City should also focus efforts on maintaining the existing population to prevent continued out-migration.

The largest cohort is 45-49 year-olds making up 7.4 percent of the total population. The 20-24 year-olds comprise 3.5 percent of the total population and although that is not a large part of the total residents in Oshkosh it is not uncommon. This cohort is the typical age for college students and young professionals just entering the workforce; therefore, it is common to see a lower population percentage in smaller communities for this particular cohort. The 25-29 year olds experienced almost a one percent increase in population from 2000 to 2010 and in 2010 the 25-29 year olds made-up almost five percent of the total population. This cohort also falls into the young professional category which is an important cohort to attract to the community. Although, it is common to have a smaller percentage of college-aged people living in Oshkosh, it is important for the community to attract those potential residents and young professionals when they have graduated from school. Attracting young professionals and families is challenging in a smaller community; however, the Great Plains region has been experiencing a legacy migration trend that could positively affect Oshkosh in the coming years. This trend has been termed “legacy migration” because it involves many citizens moving back to the places where they grew-up, returning to their legacy. Many people hope to raise their children in a familiar location, which has created a trend for people to look for employment opportunities in their hometown. Once a home is established, these residents are very likely to stay in a community, plant roots, and grow their family – all added benefits to the community.

Availability of employment is the main “pull factor” for people moving into a community; the availability of jobs in Oshkosh will bring more residents to the community. Job diversity and availability is crucial for communities working to attract new residents. It is also important to provide amenities and adequate housing for new and potential residents. Attracting and keeping the young ‘creative class’ generation is imperative to growing a self-sustaining population base. The ‘creative class’ is a socioeconomic class of workers that bring new ideas, art, science, and technology together to positively impact the community. Being able to draw these people in and to retain them as residents is critical in growing Oshkosh. Creating activities or a social group to help new community members get involved with current residents is a way for the community to reach out to new residents. A Young Professionals group or even an annual community dinner recognizing new community members would be beneficial for Oshkosh’s new residents. Another way to encourage young people to stay in the community or move back after furthering their education is to create a program for high school students or recent high school graduates that provides job training opportunities specifically relating to businesses located in the community.

Knowing the demographics, such as age, sex, racial break-up, and its history helps steer decision-makers in the right direction when planning for community infrastructure. This data can be used in several different ways. For example, a community could have the City Council members vote to either financially support the expansion of a local nursing home or the expansion of a local elementary school. Analyzing this data for population trends based on age groups, will help decision-makers make informed decisions on what is best for the community. If population trends show an aging population, then supporting the nursing home would benefit those citizens; and, if an influx of families with young children moving into town was discovered, then supporting the elementary school expansion would be more beneficial for residents. Of course there are many other factors that need to be taken into consideration, but understanding the breakdown of population has proven to be very helpful for decision-makers.

The history and apparent trends in Oshkosh's history are important aspects in making projections for the community's future population. Projecting Oshkosh's population is key to understanding the future demographic character of the community. These projections help to determine the City's future land use and community service needs and policies. **Table 1.4** shows the different population growth scenarios for Oshkosh until 2025.

Table 1.4 Population Projections, Oshkosh, 2010-2025				
Annual Growth Rate Percentages	2010	2015	2020	2025
Trend 1 (-0.03%)	884	883	881	880
Trend 2 (-1.00%)	884	841	799	760
Trend 3 (-0.67%)	884	855	827	799
Trend 4 (0.41%)	884	902	921	940
Trend 5 (0.25%)	884	895	906	918
Source: US Census Bureau, M&A				

The first four trends are annual growth rate percentages coming from historic trends depicted by historic decennial Census data. Trend 1 is the difference in population between 2000 and 2010, which was a three percent decrease over the decade. This annual growth rate trend of -0.03 was projected for future populations at the years 2015, 2020, and 2025. Trend 2 is the historic trend difference between 1990 and 2000, a one percent decrease over the ten-year period, that was forecasted to the same three time periods of 2015, 2020, and 2025. This scenario shows a steady decrease in population over the projected years to a total population of 760 residents in 2025. Trend 3 shows the projected population based on the population decline between 1980 and 1990. Trend 4 shows the increase of population Oshkosh experienced over the past eight decades and what the City's population would look like in 2015, 2020, and 2025 if they experienced the same growth that occurred from 1930 to 2010. If the community was going to experience the overall rate of population change that it experienced over the past eight decades then Trend 4 would be the approximate population figures for Oshkosh in the future.

Trend 5 is not based on historic trends; however, it could be considered relative to some historic trends that have occurred. This growth rate percentage was determined by community members during a public input session to be a goal for the City to work to achieve an annual half percent growth rate. This is a feasible growth rate for the City to work to achieve, and several initiatives outlined in this Comprehensive Plan will provide community stakeholders with strategies to complete in order to attract people to the community as well as retain the existing population base. Of course, populations do not change at a constant rate every year; however, these numbers give an example of what the population could look like at the five different projected time intervals.

There are differences in the five population projection trends shown in **Table 1.4**. This table helps show City leaders how Oshkosh's population could change by 2025 if the historic trends accurately project the community's future. There are a couple of things that could completely change the scene of Oshkosh. A major local industry or employer closing its doors or a new manufacturing business moving into town or the region would drastically change the population of Oshkosh. This historic population fluctuation is typical for many communities, especially small rural communities like Oshkosh. Therefore, it is important for City leaders to be prepared for a multitude of scenarios and to understand the necessity of continually working to improve the community. City leaders need to stay vigilant in the growth, success, and sustainability of the community in order to progress and move forward. Having land available for both residential and commercial/industrial growth, incentivizing development to encourage more opportunities, establishing a successful business retention program, and having a willingness to make public investments which create opportunities for private investment are a few ways for City leaders to encourage growth in Oshkosh.

Families are an important to the viability of any community, including Oshkosh. A family, whether it is a one- or two-parent household, would add at least one worker to the local workforce, children into the school system, a home that would be rented or owned, an additional family to purchase groceries in town, another vehicle to fill with gas, etc. New families moving to the community creates another group of residents that have a vested interest in the welfare of the community. Families make up approximately 57.3 percent, or 229, of all occupied households in Oshkosh. There are 181 owner-occupied family households and 48 renter-occupied family households. A household is considered to be a "family household" when at least one member of the household is related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. "Non-family households," those consisting of people living alone and households who do not have any members related to the householder, make up 42.8 percent of all occupied housing units in Oshkosh. Of the non-family households in Oshkosh, 112 live in owner-occupied housing units and 59 live in renter-occupied housing units. Based on the 2010 Census, 45 percent of all family households, or 180 total households, are husband-wife households, 16 homes have a male householder with no wife present, and 33 homes have a female householder with no husband present. There are 100 households in Oshkosh that have children under the age of 18 living at home.

Educational attainment is yet another component to analyze in order to better understand your community's population base. As seen in **Table 1.5**, the 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) reported 758 (± 90) people that are 25 years-old or older living in Oshkosh. The ACS also reported 8.2 (± 3.6) percent of the 25 and older population has an Associate's degree and 9.5 (± 3.5) percent of Oshkosh's 25 and older population has a bachelor's degree. Approximately 4.7 (± 2.4) percent of the population has also received their graduate or professional degree. Oshkosh's educational attainment figures are lower than Garden County's reported data for associate's and bachelor's degrees of 8.0 (± 3.2) percent and 15.3 (± 3.2) percent, respectively. Oshkosh's percentage of residents with a graduate or professional degree is slightly lower at 4.7 percent than Garden County's percentage of 5.5 (± 2.0). Both the City of Oshkosh and Garden County have a lower percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree than the State of Nebraska's 19.3 (± 0.2) percent of residents with a bachelor's degree. Approximately 9.2 (± 0.2) percent of Nebraska's residents have a graduate or professional degree. Educational attainment levels should continue to grow over the next decade due to the growing demand for Americans to receive a college education. This societal change can be seen all around the country, but smaller communities are having a harder time trying to attract and retain persons with bachelors, graduate, or professional degrees.

Table 1.5 Educational Attainment, Oshkosh, 2013

Educational Attainment	Estimate	Percentage
Population 25 years and over	758 (± 90)	758
Less than 9th grade	11 (± 12)	1.5% (± 1.6)
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	66 (± 27)	8.7% (± 3.5)
High school graduate (Includes equivalency)	251 (± 50)	33.1% (± 4.7)
Some college, no degree	260 (± 65)	34.3% (± 6.8)
Associate's degree	62 (± 27)	8.2% (± 3.6)
Bachelor's degree	72 (± 26)	9.5% (± 3.5)
Graduate or professional degree	36 (± 18)	4.7% (± 2.4)
Source: ACS 2009-2013		

Throughout its history, Oshkosh has experienced population fluctuation, but most recently has remained stationary in total population numbers. Overall, the City has grown since 1930, but has decreased since the largest population in 1950. For the region, Oshkosh is one of the few communities that did not experience a large loss in population between 2000 and 2010. The stationary population trend should be viewed as a positive attribute for the community, especially in comparison with similar-sized communities in the region that all experienced large decreases in population for the same time period.

Between 2000 and 2010, there were several cohorts that experienced in-migration and several others that were affected by out-migration trends. There has been an overall increase in school-aged children as well as 20-34 year olds living in Oshkosh. Development of community services and amenities coupled with suitable housing and employment opportunities are key ways to encourage more families to move to Oshkosh. Capitalizing on the recent in-migration of young families will help improve the community's sustainability without having to depend on future in-migration of residents because young families have a tendency to place roots in the community that is best suited for their family. In essence, young families lead to a larger percentage of young people (under 18 years old) that will help support the future of the City.

Almost 22 percent of Oshkosh's population is under the age of 18 which is a group of cohorts that likes to be active both indoors and outdoors. Community members, of all ages, seem to be large supporters of the Garden County Eagles and community's student population in general. Providing amenities for this age group is also essential to providing a good quality of life for families as well as successfully attracting these former students back to the community when they start their own families. Things such as summer sports leagues and public and private recreational facilities are a great place for the 18 and under crowd to congregate.



Another population sector that experienced changes between 2000 and 2010 were the empty-nesters, or those over 60 years old. A majority of the six cohorts that comprise this population sector experienced a decrease in population including three cohorts that showed out-migration trends. Because of the nature of life, the people in these cohorts will continue to grow older and could possibly retire in Oshkosh, if they have not already. These six cohorts, including empty-nesters, retirees, grandparents, and senior citizens tend to lead a different lifestyle than when they were younger and had children living at home. Empty-nesters like to dine out or go for walks around the community; they like to enjoy the freedom of being on their own schedule again. Oshkosh's Downtown District, Library, eateries, and some of the existing recreational facilities are all excellent amenities that many empty-nesters, retirees, and senior citizens love to take advantage of in their community. As previously stated, over 27 percent of Oshkosh's population is 65 years and older. Community services such as an active Senior Center and ease of pedestrian traffic, through sidewalk connectivity and/or hike/bike trails, can promote a healthy quality of life for this population sector. It is important to provide amenities and services that will create a balance for all residents of the community, both young and old; this will in turn help the community retain residents as well as attract new residents to the community.

Population projections are meant to help decision-makers understand where the community is headed. The scenarios presented in this Comprehensive Plan are provided as a guide to decision-makers in order to have a better understanding of what the future may hold for Oshkosh. These projection figures will help City leaders determine what types of public facilities, services, and amenities will be needed in the future. In order to prepare for future population changes, leaders need to continually gather and analyze population data. Every year leaders should review school attendance data, talk with local professionals, and be cognizant of building permit totals and home sales to analyze current population changes and trends. Waiting every ten years for Census data to be reported is not as beneficial for the community as staying up-to-date with the ever-changing information. Utilizing other data sources, revisiting the Comprehensive Plan or other community plans, and continually working with stakeholder groups will encourage City leaders to stay active and up-to-date on the ever changing society that is present today as well as provide City leaders with an opportunity to market the community.

Housing

Housing is a crucial piece to the prosperity of Oshkosh. Oshkosh must work to constantly assess and improve the existing housing market by identifying needs for new market-rate housing or ways to encourage development of quality, low-income housing options. In order to attract people to the community, there has to be a supply of well-maintained, available, and affordable housing. Projecting for future demand is an important, but sometimes difficult task when trying to promote growth in any community. Addressing the issues of an aging housing stock that does not meet the needs of today's renters and buyers is also another challenge that faces City leaders. Community growth and revitalization are possible through the identification of housing needs. When considered in conjunction with demographic information, housing data analysis will enable Oshkosh to identify market improvements that are most appropriate for the community's success.

Data taken from the American Community Survey is represented in **Table 1.6** and provides the overall age for owner-occupied units in Oshkosh. Like many rural communities in Nebraska, Oshkosh has an aging housing stock; this can create several issues for the community including outdated, undersized, and unkempt homes that do not meet the needs of today's buyers and renters. Approximately 36 percent of the existing homes in Oshkosh were built prior to 1940 and another 33 percent were constructed between 1940 and 1960. In comparison to historic population trends, there are obvious connections between population growth and an increase in housing units constructed. Many communities have an aging housing stock which creates challenges in the housing market because a majority of today's buyers are looking for specific items such as a two car attached garage, three-four bedrooms, two bathrooms set, and large lot sizes. Homes constructed 40+ years ago were typically constructed on 50-foot wide lots platted throughout the community. Today's buyers have different standards for homes including more space within the home and on the lot. Fifty-foot wide platted lots do not typically fit what buyers are looking for in today's market.



Table 1.6 Year Housing Unit Built, Oshkosh, 2013

Total housing units	470 (±62)
2010 or Later	0 (±9)
2000-2009	34 (±18)
1990-1999	11 (±9)
1980-1989	23 (±11)
1970-1979	51 (±18)
1960-1969	28 (±14)
1950-1959	75 (±31)
1940-1949	78 (±31)
1939 or Earlier	170 (±46)

Source: ACS 2009-2013 Estimates

From the 2010 Census, Oshkosh had 490 total housing units which included all single-family homes, duplexes, apartments, etc. The 2010 vacancy rate for Oshkosh was 18.4 percent, recording 90 vacant and 400 occupied housing units in Oshkosh. As seen in **Table 1.7**, of the 90 vacant properties, there were 15 properties for rent, 12 for sale, and two homes that were sold but not occupied. There were 17 homes marked as seasonal, recreational, or occasional use which made up 3.5 percent of the total vacancy rate. The 2010 Census also reported 44 homes as “other vacant” which includes homes that are uninhabitable, stuck in litigation, or being remodeled as well as several other possibilities a Census investigator may quantify. The majority of the “other vacant” homes in Oshkosh are considered uninhabitable, a housing vacancy for the unique reason of the structure not being suited for residents. The “other vacant” category comprises nine percent of the total vacancies in Oshkosh. This is slightly lower than Garden County’s “other vacant” percentage of 11.1 units. Both Oshkosh and Garden County have a much higher percentage of homes rated as “other vacant” than the State, which has a three percent “other vacant” rating.

Table 1.7 Vacancy Status, Oshkosh, 2010	
Total Housing Units	490
Total Vacant Units	90
Vacancy Rate	18.4%
For rent	15
Rented, not occupied	0
For sale only	12
Sold, not occupied	2
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	17
Other vacant	44
Source: 2010 Census	

Although it is a balance, there should always be a small percentage of housing units on the market to successfully attract new residents and also create an atmosphere for a healthy housing market; therefore it is important to have homes “for rent” or “for sale”. It is important for a City to have a balance of occupied homes and homes for sale or rent; too many vacancies or a poor quality of vacant units can be detrimental to the housing market. Adequate housing is essential in supporting economic growth. Many businesses explore the local housing market when researching potential communities for new locations because the housing market is directly tied to the ability of new employees to move to a community. As mentioned above, Oshkosh’s total vacancy rate was 18.4 percent in 2010. The City’s homeowner vacancy rate was 3.9 percent and the rental vacancy rate was 12.3 percent. By rule of thumb, a homeowner vacancy rate less than three percent and a rental vacancy rate less than five percent signifies very tight housing market conditions. A tight housing market can drive-up housing prices, making it challenging for people to purchase or rent a home in the community. Oshkosh’s statistics do not reflect tight housing market conditions; however, the homeowner vacancy rate is not much higher than the three percent threshold indicating a tightening of the “for sale” market. When the market has limited flexibility and minimal availability for persons looking to purchase or rent, it directly affects the growth of the community influencing both population and economy. If no homes are available or available homes are too expensive when a family is trying to move to Oshkosh, then they will be forced to look in bordering towns with available housing options. The main goal is to ensure that available homes also fit the needs and wants of the buyers and renters.

When analyzing vacant housing units in the community, it is important to determine whether the units are still habitable. Uninhabitable structures should be removed to provide vacant lots for new construction and infill development, as well as to rid the surrounding neighborhoods of fire and safety hazards. There are options to help with funding for the demolition of uninhabitable structures including Tax Increment Financing (TIF) which can provide the City of Oshkosh with a tool to eliminate some of the vacant, blighted hazards in the community. TIF funds can be used for a variety of projects following Legislative Bill 729 in the determined Redevelopment Areas including the demolition on vacant, unsafe residential homes. A nuisance abatement program, grant funding, or code enforcement are all options of programs and funding assistance tools the City can utilize.



In 1995, a study was conducted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This study estimated the percentage of housing units needing substantial rehabilitation of the occupied, permanent (non-mobile home), year round houses or apartments in the United States. These national percentages can be used to determine the local need. It was reported that approximately four percent of all owner-occupied housing structures were in need of substantial rehab or needed to be demolished. The American Housing Study also determined approximately six percent of all renter-occupied units were in need of substantial rehabilitation or needed to be demolished.

Number of Units x Percent Needing Substantial Rehab = Units Needing Demolished

400 x 4% = 16 Owner-occupied Units Needing Substantial Rehab

107 x 6% = 7 Renter-occupied Units Needing Substantial Rehab

16 + 7 = 23 units needing demolished



This analysis shows a need for demolition of uninhabitable housing structures. Based on 2010 Census data reporting housing vacancies, results showed 44 housing units that were determined to be "other vacant". In comparison, there are 21 more homes listed as "other vacant", which includes uninhabitable homes, than the national standards applied to the City of Oshkosh. Because of the age of Oshkosh's housing structure it could be assumed that the national averages are too low for the number of units needing demolished in Oshkosh. Whichever the case, there are a number of homes in Oshkosh that need demolished for safety and welfare purposes. The City should explore options for uninhabitable structure demolition.



Housing rehabilitation and code enforcement programs are beneficial tools to utilize to maintain and improve the condition of homes within the City of Oshkosh. These programs, whether through the City or a third party group such as Panhandle Area Development District could be an essential tool in helping residents pay for housing repairs, energy efficiency improvements, or maintenance issues as well as assist with code enforcement through a nuisance abatement program. There are grant programs available to utilize in the creation of a revolving loan fund that can be used to offer zero or low interest loans for qualifying households in Oshkosh to make home improvements. Promoting home maintenance and improvements throughout the community could help prevent additional homes from falling into disrepair. Community leaders should continually look for ways to incorporate these programs into Oshkosh's annual plan.

There are 850 persons living in occupied housing units in Oshkosh. A discrepancy exists between the population that occupies the 400 housing units in Oshkosh and the City's overall population of 884 residents due to 34 persons living in group quarters. Residents who live in group quarters are not counted as persons living in occupied households because the Census separates group quarters and housing units. There are two types of group quarters, institutionalized and non-institutionalized. Non-institutionalized facilities include college/university student housing and military quarters; there are no non-institutionalized facilities in Oshkosh. During the 2010 Census, 34 people lived in institutionalized facilities; this category includes nursing homes, juvenile homes, and adult correctional facilities. All 34 residents who were reported living in an institutionalized facility lived in a nursing home, with 33 of the 34 reported residents being 65 years and older. Approximately 13.6 percent of the 65 and older population in Oshkosh lived in a nursing home during the 2010 Census.



Although we know there are 400 occupied housing units in Oshkosh, we need to evaluate the characteristics of those units. The 2010 Census reported 293 housing units, 73.3 percent of all occupied housing units, were owner-occupied. A total of 107, or 26.8 percent, of the occupied housing units in Oshkosh were rented. The reported average household size of an owner-occupied unit was 2.11 people and the average renter-occupied household size was slightly larger at 2.17. The overall average household size in Oshkosh was 2.13, while the average family size was 2.82. This difference can be explained by the number of people in Oshkosh living alone.



Table 1.8 shows persons per household in the 293 owner-occupied and 107 renter-occupied housing units. There are 156 persons in Oshkosh living alone which is over 39 percent of the total occupied housing units. Of the 156 persons living alone in Oshkosh, 56.4 percent, or 88 persons, are 65 years old or over. As a note, none of the 156 people living alone were living in an institutionalized facility at the time of the 2010 Census because the institutionalized persons were not counted in the occupied household data. That statistic is very distinct, and can help community leaders make informed decisions that will benefit the majority of Oshkosh's citizens. For example, community leaders could focus on finding developers that would be interested in developing condominiums or apartments for elderly residents or empty-nesters to rent or purchase. Another housing amenity that would be attractive, especially for elderly residents or persons living alone, would be the presence of an association that would, for a fee, take care of maintenance for the homeowners to take the burden of mowing the lawn and scooping the sidewalks off of the homeowner.



Table 1.8 Persons per Household, Oshkosh, 2010

Owner-Occupied persons per Household	
Total:	293
1-person	104
2-person	121
3-person	28
4-person	20
5-person	13
6-person	6
7 or more-persons	1
Average household size	2.11
Renter-Occupied persons per Household	
Total:	107
1 person	52
2 person	19
3 person	14
4 person	13
5 person	6
6 person	3
7 or more-persons	0
Average household size	2.17
Source: 2010 Census	

Another point to consider when looking at persons per household and the large number of residents living alone in Oshkosh is the fact that these 156 residents living alone do not all live in single-bedroom housing units. Local realtors commented on the need for larger homes for families which would typically include housing units with at least three or four bedrooms. There is a good possibility that some of the people who live on their own live in three or four bedroom homes. These individuals would maybe be willing to move to a smaller, up-to-date, and low maintenance home, if there were any available. If there were smaller homes, whether for purchase or rent, and some of the 156 one-person households were to move, it could add larger homes to the housing market for families to purchase.

Table 1.9 shows American Community Survey (ACS) data representing housing values for owner-occupied units. One thing to remember is the ACS data is presented as an estimate with a margin-of-error for each housing value. The median household value for Oshkosh is approximately \$49,200 (\pm \$5,607). Garden County's median household value is \$61,800 (\pm \$11,449) and the Nebraska median value for owner-occupied units is \$126,000 (\pm \$718). Although the majority of Oshkosh's homes are valued below \$50,000, there are still close to 100 homes in Oshkosh valued between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and several more homes valued up to \$200,000.

Table 1.10 shows the gross rent paid for rental units in Oshkosh. The ACS median rent is \$532 (\pm \$29) which City stakeholders believe is higher than the actual average rent paid in Oshkosh. Garden County's median rent was also reported by the ACS as \$545 (\pm \$39) with the majority of renters paying between \$500 and \$749 each month.

Local realtors shared information about the existing housing market in Oshkosh. The local realtors expressed many thoughts and insights concerning the housing market including the fact that housing prices dictate a majority of resident's decisions on purchasing or renting a home. Many people are working multiple jobs in order to afford housing payments. Their concern was the limited supply of quality housing units and the fact that rentals are hard to find in Oshkosh. The realtors were excited about the first stick built house being constructed in Oshkosh in the past ten years. They have seen an influx of younger families moving to Oshkosh because one or both of the parents are from the area. The price range most people are looking for is \$45,000 to \$65,000 to purchase a home and \$350 to \$450 to rent a home. Many of the existing homes in Oshkosh are aging, small, and have lots of steps into or inside of the home which can be challenging for many residents. The realtors also shared that many of the homes are not "move-in ready" based on today's standards of granite countertops, two-car attached garages, two bathrooms, etc. There are several lots available in the community to purchase for a small fee. These lots would be suitable for infill housing development and could be very beneficial for someone looking to build their home. The local realtors shared their thoughts on the struggles of Oshkosh's housing market but they also discussed ways to improve the market such as updating many of the existing homes and developing one-level townhomes with two bedrooms and two bathrooms which would be ideal for aging residents to rent or purchase.

The previous information was provided by local realtors who work with the Oshkosh housing market on a daily basis. Information from local professionals cannot be found through the Census or any other source online.

Decision-makers need to continually engage in conversations with local professionals in order to determine what people are looking for when they are interested in moving to Oshkosh.

Table 1.9 Housing Values-Owner Units, Oshkosh, 2013

Value	ACS
< \$50,000	160 (\pm 37)
\$50,000 to \$99,999	82 (\pm 27)
\$100,000 to \$149,999	37 (\pm 16)
\$150,000 to \$199,999	17 (\pm 12)
\$200,000 to \$299,999	7 (\pm 7)
\$300,000 to \$499,999	0 (\pm 9)
\$500,000 to \$999,999	8 (\pm 8)
\geq \$1,000,000	0 (\pm 9)
Total	311 (\pm 43)
Median Value	\$49, 200 (\pm \$5,607)
Garden County Median Value	\$61,800 (\pm \$11,449)
Nebraska Median Value	\$128,000 (\pm \$718)
Source: ACS 2009-2013 Estimates	

Table 1.10 Gross Rent, Oshkosh, 2013

Occupied units paying rent	
Less than \$200	0 (\pm 9)
\$200 to \$299	10 (\pm 10)
\$300 to \$499	12 (\pm 10)
\$500 to \$749	39 (\pm 22)
\$750 to \$999	4 (\pm 5)
\$1,000 to \$1,499	2 (\pm 5)
\$1,500 or more	0 (\pm 9)
Median (dollars)	532 (\pm 29)
Source: ACS 2009-2013 Estimates	



Table 1.11 shows a housing affordability analysis based strictly on the data reported by the American Community Survey. This table shows the comparison of the household income range and the value of housing units that are currently present in Oshkosh. Housing values are only presented for owner-occupied units while the household income data is presented for all housing units in Oshkosh. Therefore, all household income values in **Table 1.9** are adjusted to represent the owner-occupied units, totaling 73 percent of all housing units, in Oshkosh. The rule-of-thumb when purchasing a home is to multiply the annual household income by two; homes in that price range are typically what can be afforded by the buyers. Using this assumption, the table shows where there are gaps and where there is a surplus of housing units present in Oshkosh based on value. The following is a breakdown of the process:

- Column 1: Household income range for residents in Oshkosh
- Column 2: ACS 2009-2013 household income data from **Table 1.14** (modified to relate to owner-occupied)
- Column 3: Column 1 multiplied by 2 (i.e. \$25,000 x 2 = \$50,000)
- Column 4: ACS 2009-2013 data from **Table 1.9** that shows the number of owner-occupied units in Oshkosh, based on value
- Column 5: Column 2 subtracted from Column 4 (i.e. 160 - 103 = 57)

Table 1.11 Housing Affordability Analysis, Owner Units, Oshkosh, 2013				
Household Income Range	# of Households (Units Needed)	Affordable Range for Housing Units	# of Owner Available Units	Gap/Surplus of Housing Units
\$15,000-\$24,999	103	<\$50,000	160	57
\$25,000-\$34,999	39	\$50,000-\$70,000	82	-15
\$35,000-\$49,999	58	\$70,000-\$100,000		
\$50,000-\$74,999	33	\$100,000-\$150,000	37	4
\$75,000-\$99,999	32	\$150,000-\$200,000	17	-15
\$100,000-\$149,999	9	\$200,000-\$300,000	7	-2
\$150,000-\$199,999	5	\$300,000 or greater	8	0
\$200,000 or greater	3			

Source: ACS 2009-2013 Estimates, M&A



There is a gap, totaling 15 homes each, in the \$50,000-\$100,000 and \$150,000-\$200,000 value ranges for Oshkosh. However, there is a surplus of 57 homes valued under \$50,000. This analysis is based solely on numbers for owner-occupied units in Oshkosh; therefore, it does not take into account people that live above or below their means, units available for rent, the market-rate price of homes, and the fact that several people live in their home until they are retired which would significantly lower the annual household income. As a note, because of the way housing values are reported, the \$25,000-\$34,999 and \$35,000-\$49,999, and the \$150,000-\$199,999 and \$200,000 or greater household income ranges had to be consolidated to correctly correspond with the housing value ranges reported by the ACS.

Moving forward, community leaders can use this formula, as new data is reported, to determine where there are shortfalls in Oshkosh's housing supply. Quality and availability of decent housing is a major factor for individuals and families when they are considering moving to a community. Oshkosh should take steps to improve their current housing situation including development of affordable housing for low-income families. With a homeowner vacancy rate of 3.9 percent, a supply of affordable housing needs to be created and that can only happen with the construction of new housing units. A shortage of up-to-date, sizable rentals exists and the local realtors expressed the need for more rental units because of the shortage. In order to maintain as well as diversify the population base, Oshkosh's leaders must investigate feasible options for housing development in the community. It may be important for Oshkosh's leaders to consider what other communities are successfully implementing to help with housing development as well as programs that have been created to help raze uninhabitable homes to allow for infill development.

There is a need for additional housing units in Oshkosh even without taking into account the need for replacing uninhabitable homes that currently exist in Oshkosh. Additionally, Many homes will "fall off the market" every year because they are uninhabitable due to age, lack of maintenance, and the sheer fact that homes do not last forever. It can be assumed that approximately one percent of all homes will fall off the market each year. Knowing and understanding the need to replace those homes with market-rate housing is important for City leaders. Actions need to be taken to replace the homes that are no longer habitable. This becomes challenging because uninhabitable homes do not disappear on their own; therefore, steps need to be taken to remove vacant, uninhabitable structures to avoid larger problems in the future. If Oshkosh has 490 existing housing units, and one percent falls off the market each year then approximately five homes will fall off the market each year. By 2025 that would be an additional 75 homes from the 2010 statistic of 490 existing housing units. To avoid large numbers of homes falling off the market each year, the City should be progressive with encouraging home maintenance and updates. The City could apply for a grant from the State to receive assistance with an owner-occupied housing rehabilitation program so the City could then offer residents owner-occupied rehabilitation grant/loan funds to help with home updates.

In summary, Oshkosh has a housing shortage especially with homes valued between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and between \$150,000 and \$200,000. There are a few affordable lots available for infill development including lots as well as a few vacant uninhabitable homes that could be cleared to have the sites ready for infill housing development. Although there is a need for construction of new single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes, and/or apartments, not all of the needs will be met with new construction. Many young persons or families do not have the means to construct a new home which is why they will need to purchase an existing home. If the City or other entities in the community can offer incentive programs such as down-payment assistance, rental assistance, or housing/rental rehabilitation programs it could greatly benefit residents and potential residents as well as improve the quality of the existing housing market. Rental housing can fill the need for so many different persons including transitional housing for someone not wanting to maintain a single-family home but also not ready to live in assisted living, someone living alone not wanting a single-family home, someone who cannot afford to purchase a home, someone needing a temporary place to stay while constructing a new home or finding a place to purchase, etc.

A large issue for the housing market, including both rental and owner-occupied units, is the condition and quality of the homes available not fulfilling the want and needs of today's renters and buyers. Exterior maintenance, adequate square footage options, and accessible units are amenities that may attract several single persons, empty-nesters, young couples, senior citizens, and persons in need of transitional housing. There are a few vacant lots available throughout the community; these lots were originally platted roughly 50 feet wide, making it challenging to build a home of today's standards. New construction would help to provide flexibility to the market; however, many of the City's residents need more affordable housing options than what new construction can provide. A progressive rehabilitation program may be necessary to provide the housing market with much needed updates.

Table 1.12 - Market Supply/Demand Analysis, -0.03% Annual Growth Rate, Oshkosh

Projected 2025 Population (-0.03%)	880
Projected Group Quarters (persons)	34
Average Household Size	2.13
Total Number of Housing Units Needed in 2025	397
5% Vacancy Rate	20
Known Supply 2010	490
Estimated Total Demand	417
Estimated Total Need	-73
Existing Substandard Units	33
2025 - 1% "Fall Off Market" Rate (units)	50
Units Needing Demolished	83
Adjusted Estimated Total Need	10
Source: 2010 Census, M&A	

Table 1.13 - Market Supply/Demand Analysis, 0.25% Annual Growth Rate, Oshkosh

Projected 2025 Population (0.25%)	918
Projected Group Quarters (persons)	35
Average Household Size	2.13
Total Number of Housing Units Needed 2025	415
5% Vacancy Rate	21
Known Supply 2010	490
Estimated Total Demand	435
Estimated Total Need	-55
Existing Substandard Units	33
2025 - 1% "Fall Off Market" Rate (units)	50
Units Needing Demolished	83
Adjusted Estimated Total Need	28
Source: 2010 Census, M&A	

When determining the future need for housing units an analysis can be done to compare existing housing units, dilapidated units, household size, and units needed based on population growth scenarios. **Table 1.12** and **Table 1.13** show market supply/demand analysis scenarios completed for Oshkosh. In the population section of this study, population projections were completed. Oshkosh had a stationary population from 2000 to 2010, equating to a 0.03 percent annual decrease. During a public input session for the planning project, City stakeholders determined it was their goal to increase the population by a quarter of a percent each year which is a feasible goal for the City. In order to show both scenarios, the market supply/demand analysis has been completed for both population projection scenarios.

In 2010, the average household size was 2.13 individuals. By dividing the estimated 2025 population, for both growth rate scenarios, (minus the projected number of persons living in group quarters) by the average household size, it brings the projected number of households to 397 and 415, respectively, for the -0.03 percent and 0.25 percent growth rate scenarios. The desired vacancy rate of five percent must then be added to the total number of households needed. The 2010 known supply of housing units in Oshkosh of 490 must be subtracted from the total number of households needed in order to determine the additional housing units required to meet the needs of the projected population.

It is also important to consider the existing substandard units, the average between the national standards and the structures listed as "other vacant" during the 2010 Census was used to determine this number, as well as the projected number of units needed based on the assumed rate of one percent of the total housing units falling off the market each year due to aging structures and conditions of the structures. One percent of the total housing units is approximately five units every year for the next ten years. By the year 2025, that will be an additional 50 units that will need to be replaced in order to keep the same number of housing units. The need to replace 50 additional units seems to be a large number, but it is important to remember this is an estimated figure and it is a projected number to 2025. Also when taking into consideration the number of housing structures that were built in 1939 or before, approximately 170 (± 46), it is plausible that 50 additional structures will fall off the market over the next ten years.

Based on this data analysis the City would need to build ten new housing units by the year 2025 for a stationary population, or to fill the need for a -0.03 annual growth rate percentage. Even though this scenario represents a decrease in the total population, there is still a need to construct new housing units in the next ten years due to the need of replacing aging and dilapidated structures. If the City were to grow at their target goal rate of one-quarter percent each year, 28 additional housing units would need to be built by 2025, which is approximately three housing units each year for the next ten years, in order to have enough replacement housing as well as to provide housing for the additional residents.

To err on the side of conservation and to ensure the City does not over-saturate the market, the -0.03 percent annual growth rate scenario will be used at this time to determine future housing needs for Oshkosh. However, it is strongly suggested that City leaders continue to regularly monitor population changes in order to best prepare for shifts in the trend. Promoting a steady growth rate and encouraging extra development at certain increments (i.e. every three years based on demand analysis) is the suggested approach moving forward for the City of Oshkosh. Although, the City can and should prepare itself from a land accountability standpoint, such as having adequate lots available for residential development with other areas of land set aside for future potential residential development, it is not encouraged for the City to invest in the construction of three new housing units each year or to fully invest in public infrastructure expansions to support that rate of growth until the City has begun to increase population at their desired target rate.



The ability for Oshkosh to predict development needs and future land uses relies heavily on economic trends. Therefore, a description and analysis of local economic factors is a crucial component of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Economic development is a major goal for community planning efforts. It is not a "once-and-done" event but rather a continual process that requires on-going efforts to make advancements. Communities differ greatly and no one economic development strategy fits all communities. In fact, economic development in rural communities often becomes community development. It requires active engagement of the community, its leadership, its organizations, its institutions, and its businesses. The keys to greater productivity are innovation, creativity, new technologies, and public and private investment. The private sector is the primary source of economic activity, but the public sector plays an important, and ideally, complementary role. Therefore, it is essential that both the public and private sectors be analyzed and included in the goal and strategy development for economic development in Oshkosh.

Economy & Capital Improvement



A strong labor force is extremely important to a City of any size, especially during these trying economic times. Although Nebraska was not hit as hard through the 2007-08 economic crisis as other states were, it is vital for communities to create jobs in order to attract new residents and grow the tax base. Analyzing the labor force requires employment figures, income levels, and an understanding of the economic base. Residents 16 and older are considered to be of working age; therefore, in order to study the workforce population we only consider those that are 16 and older. The 2009-2013 ACS reported 828 (± 100) people are 16 or older and 464 (± 73) persons are in the labor force. The other 364 (± 67) people are not considered to be a part of the labor force because they are neither employed nor officially classified as unemployed. This classification could be a variety of reasons such as full-time students, retired persons, volunteers, stay-at-home parents, persons unable to work due to a disability, etc.

As stated above, the ACS estimated 828 (± 100) of Oshkosh's residents to be in the labor force. The ACS also reported of that 828 people in the labor force, 433 (± 65) were employed while 31 (± 25) people were unemployed. Based on the ACS, only 3.7 (± 3.0) percent of Oshkosh's residents were unemployed which is starkly different than the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) 2013 national unemployment rate of 7.3 percent. Unemployment data is not readily available for smaller communities which means we have to follow larger trends and rely on national data services. Nebraska has weathered the recent economic downturn better than a majority of the nation, so luckily for Nebraska's communities they share in the same goodwill. With such a low unemployment rate in the City it is very challenging for businesses to find qualified employees.



There are several different job opportunities in the City of Oshkosh including the medical and educational systems, retail and service sector businesses, and many different types of agricultural and warehousing businesses. Although there are many job opportunities in Oshkosh for their residents, some of them commute to work in other communities. This is fairly typical in the smaller communities across the United States including Oshkosh. Commuting patterns for Oshkosh's residents include a mean travel time to work of 14.0 (± 3.2) minutes. Approximately 315 (± 59) people drive to work alone while 53 (± 22) or 12.5 percent of Oshkosh's residents carpool. Approximately 8 (± 7) residents work from home. Based on 2011 U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 275 people commute into Oshkosh for work while 179 of Oshkosh's residents commute to areas outside of the corporate limits for work. Based on the same 2011 data source, there are 360 total employees employed in the City of Oshkosh with 85 of those employees also being residents of Oshkosh. Based on the 2011 U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, a majority of Oshkosh's residents commute to the southwest and northwest and a smaller portion commutes southeast from Oshkosh.

Table 1.14 shows the household income for Oshkosh in 2010. Household income is defined by the Census Bureau as the following:

"Any sum of money income received in the calendar year by all household members 15 years old and over, including household members not related to the householder, people living alone, and other nonfamily household members. Included in the total are amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income."

Table 1.14 Household Income, Oshkosh, 2013		
Household Income	# of Households	
	ACS	ESRI
Less than \$15,000	49 (± 28)	112
\$15,000-\$24,999	92 (± 35)	57
\$25,000-\$34,999	54 (± 24)	25
\$35,000-\$49,999	79 (± 28)	72
\$50,000-\$74,999	45 (± 20)	67
\$75,000-\$99,999	44 (± 17)	40
\$100,000-\$149,999	12 (± 10)	16
\$150,000-\$199,999	7 (± 7)	1
\$200,000 or more	4 (± 5)	3
Median household income (dollars)	\$34,792 ($\pm 6,549$)	\$35,353
Source: ACS 2009-2013 Estimates, ESRI		

Household income data is displayed in ranges based on dollar amounts and the related number of households with an annual income that falls into the associated range. ACS reported Oshkosh's median household income to be \$34,792 (\pm \$6,549). The ACS estimated Garden County's median household income to be \$39,400 (\pm \$4,355) which is slightly higher than the City of Oshkosh's median household income. The ACS 2009-2013 estimates for the State of Nebraska's median household income are \$51,672 (\pm \$325) which is higher than Oshkosh and Garden County's median household income. It is expected for the median household income to increase overtime due, if only, to inflation; however, based on comparisons between the increase in median household incomes for Oshkosh, Garden County, and Nebraska from 2000 to 2013, Oshkosh's median household income only increased by 28 percent while Garden County and Nebraska's median household incomes increased by 49 and 95 percent, respectively. Oshkosh's median household income experienced a 28 percent growth from 2000 to 2013 while Garden County experienced a 49 percent and the State of Nebraska experienced a 95 percent growth.



Approximately 12.5 (\pm 6.9) percent, as reported by ACS, of families in Oshkosh live below the poverty level based on annual income. Approximately 175 (\pm 41) households in Oshkosh receive Social Security and the mean Social Security income is \$17,508 (\pm \$2,147) and 54 (\pm 22) residents receive retirement income with an average retirement income of \$15,354 (\pm \$2,968). Six (\pm 4.3) percent of households receive supplemental security income with an average of \$13,122 (\pm \$3,894) and 12 households with cash public assistance and 12.4 (\pm 5.8) percent of households, or 48 (\pm 25) people receive Food Stamp/SNAP benefits. The City of Oshkosh's low-to-moderate income (LMI) percentage is 55.49, meaning that over 55 percent of the residents in Oshkosh fall into the low-to-moderate income category as outlined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Low income levels affect residents' amount of spending money and it impacts their ability to save money. For owner-occupied households, approximately 31 (\pm 13.9) percent of households spend 35 percent or more of their income on monthly household costs. Based on ACS data, 33 (\pm 12.5) percent of households spend less than 20 percent of their income on monthly household costs, and 15.5 (\pm 9.0) percent of households spend between 20 and 25 percent of their income on monthly household costs. For renter-occupied units, 28.4 (\pm 18.9) percent of households spend 20 to 25 percent of their income on their monthly rent, while 22.4 (\pm 18.6) percent spend less than 15 percent of their income on their monthly rent. Over 13 (\pm 11.4) percent of households spend 35 percent or more of their income on their monthly rent. Households, whether owner- or renter-occupied, that spend more than 30 percent of their income on household costs are considered to be house-poor because the balance of their income and necessities is strapped because of the large housing costs.



Oshkosh has a balanced economy which draws in outside citizens to shop/do business in the community; however, not all of resident's needs can be met with businesses and services in Oshkosh. During our public input sessions, residents discussed the need to draw even more people into the community and to capitalize on people moving in to the community. One way to do both of these things, with additional bonuses, is to market the community and what it has to offer. Several residents, during public input sessions, discussed their desire to promote tourism, including seasonal and recreational tourism, as well as focusing on expanding the economic businesses existing in the community. In order to attract people to the community to live or to visit, outside marketing must be done. Marketing Oshkosh with a brand will help make visitors aware of Oshkosh and what it has to offer. It is also important to have internal marketing to encourage residents to shop locally and support local businesses and services but it is vital in today's society to market the community as a commodity to visitors.

The Downtown District is the main hub for retail and service sector businesses; however the Highway 26 corridor is also important to the community's tax base. There are major differences in the way land is used between the Downtown District and the Highway corridors especially on the fringe of the community. In order for the Downtown District to keep its distinct appeal, the City must focus on updates and improvements that are pedestrian friendly in order to maintain the neighborhood feel that is essential for Downtown Districts. That neighborhood 'appeal' is what helps attract people to shop in a Downtown area.

The Highway 26 and Highway 27 corridors and railroad are best for businesses that require large areas of land, high visibility, and easy access from the Highway. Land availability is essential for economic growth; although each company has specifics that are needed in a location before they can consider developing a new business. There are a few vacant areas of land available along the highway corridors; however, there is minimal land available in the existing corporate limits for larger economic developments requiring access and visibility from the highway. The businesses existing on Highway 26 are successful, in part, because of the high traffic volume, visibility, and easy access. Businesses along the Highway corridor should have off-street parking, larger setbacks, more green space, larger buildings, and even more signage than what is necessary for Downtown businesses while the Downtown District should focus on aesthetic continuity, pedestrian crosswalks, sidewalks, zero off-street parking requirements, smaller lot sizes, and zero setbacks to promote downtown development that is seamless with existing businesses and further enhances the neighborhood appeal.

It will be important for City leaders to understand the difference between the two commercial areas and encourage economic development to fit the unique identity of each area. The Downtown District is best suited for retail, entertainment, and personal service type businesses. These businesses encourage busy sidewalks which promote safety and accessibility as well as window shopping and higher foot traffic for retail stores. Businesses with large traffic volumes, a need for space, and agricultural or manufacturing in nature are best suited along Highway 26 and Highway 27 as well as the UPRR; therefore, development of those businesses should be encouraged along the highway corridors and railroad but in close proximity to the corporate limits so the land could be annexed if necessary.



Oshkosh is already home to several businesses both large and small that provide the community with basic needs, services, as well as a variety of other businesses that provide a mixture of job opportunities for residents. Job variety is important to attract new residents to move to Oshkosh as well as maintain existing residents. It is important to consider how businesses will succeed in the community. City leaders should focus on attracting businesses that can co-exist and/or support existing businesses and industries in Oshkosh in order to promote a self-sustaining economy. There should be an ongoing effort to develop local talent, retain jobs, and foster an environment that supports job creation, local businesses, and entrepreneurs. Economic growth should be sustainable over time and ought to provide young people with an opportunity to stay and work in the community or return after college and find a quality job. These goals will require career options, affordable housing, supportive community and public services, such as access to healthcare, along with continuing education and training and cultural and recreational possibilities.

Small, rural communities must be able to provide for all aspects of a person or family's needs in order to retain them as long-term residents of the community. It truly has to be a comprehensive approach to promote growth and economic development must also include the analysis and development of other community needs like housing and recreational amenities. In the 1960s, economic development meant industrial recruitment, especially centered on the railroad. This industrial recruitment is better known as "smokestack chasing." However, over the past 40 years, manufacturing has declined in its contribution to the overall economy. Today, services and government jobs provide more than five out of every six jobs in America. Communities, like Oshkosh, must now focus their economic development efforts on self-help and self-promotion, local business creation and expansion, and strategic planning. Economic development is necessary for community growth and for the City to maintain its quality of life.



Retail Market Power (RMP) - Opportunity Gap is as beneficial as it is interesting for communities and counties to review. It is an analysis that allows you to compare supply and demand to determine potential sources of revenue growth. An opportunity gap appears when household spending levels for a specific geography are higher than the corresponding retail sales estimates. This difference signifies that resident households are meeting the available supply and supplementing their additional demand potential by going outside of their own community. The opposite is true in the event of an opportunity surplus. That is, when the levels of household expenditures are lower than the retail sales estimates. In this case, local retailers are attracting residents from other areas in to their stores. Businesses are placed in each economic sector by their primary type of economic activity. Depending on how the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) classifies each business is how they are represented in this table.

Table 1.15 shows an abundance of information. The first column shows a list of retail store categories. The second column shows resident demand by estimating consumer spending habits for each category in 2014. The third column shows the total retail sales in 2014, by each retail market, of stores found within Oshkosh. The fourth, and last column, shows an opportunity gap or surplus that exists for each retail sector. In the fourth column, if the number is black, it means there is a surplus of supply in Oshkosh for the associated sector. In this case, a surplus is not bad; it means that businesses in Oshkosh are meeting the needs of residents in Oshkosh as well as attracting customers who live outside of Oshkosh. For example, many people travel to Oshkosh from the surrounding rural area or community in order to fill some of their needs through businesses in Oshkosh. The numbers in red, in the fourth column, show a gap or an opportunity for that particular retail sector. These numbers show there is a demand for the associated economic sectors in Oshkosh; however, there may not be stores to fulfill the consumers’ needs. Therefore, they are leaving the City of Oshkosh to spend their money someplace else. These red numbers should be viewed as an opportunity; they are areas where the City can improve.

Table 1.15 shows a summary of Oshkosh’s RMP analysis. This analysis estimates over 7.1 million dollars were spent in Oshkosh in 2014 at retail trade stores and eating and drinking establishments. ESRI reported estimates of seven million dollars of consumer demand for Oshkosh’s residents at retail stores and eating and drinking places, not taking into account location of purchases. When analyzing the entire table a balanced retail trade and eating and drinking establishments in Oshkosh is shown because the opportunity gap/surplus analysis shows a small surplus for total demand comparative to supply. However, this data is slightly skewed because of the Cabela’s Return Center being located in Oshkosh. This impacts the sporting good, hobby, book, and music stores category showing a supply of 6.2 million dollars. When removing this entire category, both demand and supply the total analysis looks completely different. By removing the sporting good, hobby, book, and music stores category, the City’s total demand now becomes 6.9 million dollars and the total supply is \$892,429 creating an opportunity gap of six million dollars.

There are several retail sectors that do not have businesses located in Oshkosh; however, it is important to realize that Oshkosh would not be able to viably support all retail sectors due to its size, the total population of the region, low demand, and the City’s proximity to larger markets like Scottsbluff, Ogallala, Sidney, and even Cheyenne, WY and Denver, CO. Some of the retail sectors reported by ESRI’s 2014 estimates that are not represented in Oshkosh include furniture and home furnishings; electronics and appliance stores; health and personal care stores; and general merchandise stores; miscellaneous retailers. Competing with larger Cities that can easily support a variety of “big box” stores such as Wal-Mart, Target, Sears, and Menards is not easy for any community. However, these “big box” stores attract many shoppers making it challenging for smaller communities to retain local shoppers.



This analysis does not mean the existing retail operations in Oshkosh are bad businesses or that they are lacking in any way. It simply means there is opportunity to improve for the City as a whole. Expanding existing businesses and adding new inventory are a few ways that existing businesses could progress to meet more needs of Oshkosh's residents. Several of the missing business categories would not be self-sustainable businesses in Oshkosh. Furniture and home furnishings as well as health and personal care stores may not be able to attract the foot traffic necessary to support the store.

Table 1.15 RMP - Opportunity Gap Analysis, Oshkosh, 2014

Retail Stores	2014 Demand (Consumer Expenditures)	2014 Supply (Retail Sales)	Opportunity Gap/Surplus
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$7,049,037.00	\$7,103,681.00	\$54,644.00
Total Retail Trade	\$6,400,228.00	\$6,831,347.00	\$431,119.00
Total Food & Drink	\$648,809.00	\$272,334.00	\$376,475.00
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	\$1,258,137.00	\$39,578.00	\$1,218,559.00
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	\$118,880.00	\$0.00	\$118,880.00
Electronics and Appliance Stores	\$205,974.00	\$0.00	\$205,974.00
Building Material, Garden Equipment Stores	\$224,991.00	\$56,546.00	\$168,445.00
Food and Beverage Stores	\$884,175.00	\$47,291.00	\$836,884.00
Health and Personal Care Stores	\$518,665.00	\$0.00	\$518,665.00
Gasoline Stations	\$668,283.00	\$303,132.00	\$365,151.00
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	\$300,352.00	\$102,388.00	\$197,964.00
Sporting Good, Hobby, Book, Music Stores	\$125,098.00	\$6,211,252.00	\$6,086,154.00
General Merchandise Stores	\$948,049.00	\$0.00	\$948,049.00
Miscellaneous Retailers	\$105,238.00	\$39,497.00	\$65,741.00
Non-Store Retailers	\$1,042,386.00	\$31,663.00	\$1,010,723.00
Foodservice and Drinking Places	\$648,809.00	\$272,334.00	\$376,475.00
Source: ESRI 2015 Estimates			



It is not recommended to add “big box” retailers, unless the store would act as an anchor to attract people to the community and support the existing businesses located in Oshkosh. Otherwise there is fear that a “big box” store would detract from the Downtown District and the small businesses in town. Locally run businesses would struggle to compete with certain “big box” store names; therefore, it is important to attract businesses that will complement existing business entities in Oshkosh. Entrepreneurism, business retention and expansion, and succession planning should be the main areas of focus for economic development efforts in Oshkosh. While “big box” stores, like Wal-Mart, may not be the answer, it is important for Oshkosh to take advantage of its location on a highway which provides many commercial opportunities for the community that many other communities do not have.

Having an established retail base is difficult, but Oshkosh and its entrepreneurs/business owners have been working hard to maintain and expand the retail base in the community. Several businesses are expanding and several new businesses have come to the community in recent years. The Chamber of Commerce and City of Oshkosh should create an internal marketing plan to encourage shopping locally to support local businesses which, in many cases, includes supporting neighbors, family members, and friends. A few examples of ways to encourage residents to support local businesses is to develop placemats in local restaurants or yard signs saying “Support your neighbors, shop locally” to act as the extra reminder residents need to support Oshkosh. Other ideas for a “shop local” campaign in Oshkosh could include establishing a Thankful Thursday event each week to encourage residents to show support and thanks for the local businesses and business-owners in the community by shopping at their stores or encouraging business owners to stay open later in the evening one night a week to encourage downtown shopping. Holding events in the Downtown District is another way to draw people from the community and from outside of the community to spend time in Downtown Oshkosh.

Not all industry sectors would be self-sustainable businesses in Oshkosh. It is important for Oshkosh to take advantage of its location on the two highways and UPRR which provides many commercial opportunities for the community that many other communities do not have. Therefore, having shovel ready sites to market to potential businesses along the highway and railroad is important for large scale economic development opportunities. But the community cannot forget to encourage entrepreneurship and provide incentives and areas for business growth for small businesses that are typically best suited in the Downtown District.

Table 1.16 shows employment by industry percentages for Oshkosh based on 2009-2013 ACS data. The largest employment industry in Oshkosh is educational services, health care, and social assistance with retail trade being the second largest employment industry; these two industries comprise over 48 percent of the total employment in Oshkosh.

Table 1.16 Employed Population by Industry, Oshkosh, 2012

Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	9.9% (±4.5%)
Construction	6.5% (±3.7%)
Manufacturing	0.7% (±1.0%)
Wholesale trade	1.6% (±1.6%)
Retail trade	21.5% (±8.0%)
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3.0% (±2.5%)
Information	0.7% (±1.4%)
Finance and insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	3.9% (±2.7%)
Professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services	4.2% (±2.9%)
Educational services, health care, and social assistance	26.8% (±6.7%)
Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services	6.7% (±4.6%)
Other services, except public administration	9.9% (±6.2%)
Public administration	4.6% (±2.4%)

Source: ACS 2009-2013 Estimates

The economic base analysis is a great technique to use when describing any local economy and its employment base. Basic sector businesses are companies that produce goods/services for export, which, in turn, brings money into the community from outside sources. These industries rely heavily on external factors and they usually export their goods and can be considered the “engine” of the local economy because this sector helps to strengthen and grow the economy. Non-basic sectors are companies that directly serve its community’s residents. Oshkosh is home to many non-basic sector companies and although they are important to the quality of life for Oshkosh’s residents, they are not viewed to be as important to the local economic base because they do not bring in as many outside dollars. Non-basic sector businesses are important for communities because they support residents’ needs and they help to draw potential residents to the community because of the increased quality of life with the presence of the non-basic sector businesses.

Some of the non-basic sector industries include information; construction; finance and real estate; professional, scientific, and management; and educational services and health/social care assistance. These industries serve the local economy and local residents; although, they will also help to bring people to Oshkosh from surrounding communities because these industries relate to the quality of life for residents. There are a few industries that are always considered to be non-basic sector regardless of the comparison calculations. A few of these sectors are construction, retail trade, and educational services because the purpose of these industries is to serve the local economy. However, Oshkosh’s retail trade industry has a much higher percentage of employees in comparison to the State’s retail trade employment. Also, with nature of Cabela’s Return Center it is affecting the national economy because returns for all of Cabela’s are run through the Oshkosh location. This higher employee comparison means that a large portion of the retail trade employment sector is basic sector employment.

In order to establish which industries are base sectors of the local economy a simple comparison calculation is done to determine an industry's impact over the local economy versus that same industry's impact in the regional area. The calculations were computed based on 2009-2013 ACS data for Oshkosh and the State of Nebraska. The industries that are considered basic sectors for Oshkosh are agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining; other services except public administration; and public administration. Manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation, warehousing, and utilities are always assumed to be a base-sector industries because manufacturers typically export the goods they manufacture, transportation and warehousing is specifically for the use of transporting goods in and out, and wholesale trade businesses are selling goods a majority of the time to locations outside of the local community.

Another aspect to consider when comparing the basic and non-basic sectors of Oshkosh's economy is the job creation ratio. The analysis concluded, for Oshkosh, every basic sector job that is created, an additional 0.7 non-basic sector jobs will also be created or for every ten basic sector jobs that are created, seven non-basic sector jobs will be created as an effect. The non-basic sector jobs are not typically created immediately after the fact, it can take up to a couple of years before all potential jobs have been created. Also, they are not always created in the same community; however, this relationship shows the impact of creating basic jobs for the local and regional economy. An example situation, for every five jobs created at basic sector company, such as Cabela's Return Center (which is most likely classified as a retail industry under the Cabela's umbrella), three jobs could be created in non-basic sector businesses to support the additional employment at the basic sector company. Perhaps a job in personal services such as a restaurant, grocery store, or a local retail shop may also be created in order to better serve the other jobs that were created. Now these jobs are not necessarily directly tied to that one specific basic sector job. If the five basic sector positions were phased out one day the three other positions could still exist the next day meaning they are not directly related to one another. This comparison and analysis is used to show how different companies/businesses impact the local economy. Ultimately, basic sector employment is a major factor in the success of the local economy and the community.

Table 1.17 shows Oshkosh's largest employers. If any of these companies were to downsize or leave Oshkosh, it would greatly affect the community and its economic status. The community's large employers including Cabela's, Garden County, Garden County Schools, and Regional West Garden County Hospital. As seen in the table, many of these companies employ a large number of people; however, there are many other businesses in Oshkosh that still have an effect on the local economy. Communities need all types of businesses, whether they are large or small, in order to be successful. Although not all businesses can staff a large number of employees, every business is important to the betterment of the community. The City should also find ways to promote a good environment for entrepreneurship. Getting the "big fish," although beneficial, is not where all of the focus should be put for economic development efforts. Fostering an environment for small businesses that add to the character of the community will continue to benefit Oshkosh.

Table 1.17 Major Employers, Oshkosh, 2015

Company Name	Full-time	Part-time and/ or seasonal	Total Employees
Cabela's Return Store	50	15	65
Garden County Hospital	27	14	41
Garden County Schools	51	9	60
Garden County Nursing Home	16	18	34
Garden County	24	7	31

Source: City of Oshkosh



The Chamber of Commerce and City of Oshkosh continually work hard to provide assistance to existing and potential businesses. Panhandle Area Development District (PADD) is also a great local resource for businesses in Oshkosh and the surrounding region. Between three groups, there are many resources available to businesses in Oshkosh. The following is list of the current programs available:

REAP Business Loans (Rural Enterprise Assistance Microenterprise Program) - This program was created by the Center for Rural Affairs as a rural microenterprise lending organization. REAP provides counseling, technical assistance, and training for small business owners as well as offers low interest loans to small businesses with five employees or less.

Nebraska Business Development Center - NBDC is a region-wide program offering consulting and educational services to small and mid-sized businesses including individual management consultations, workshops and seminars, business and financial planning analysis, and special studies. Many services are free to the business owner or entrepreneur.

Western Nebraska Community College - WNCC offers services including business and entrepreneurial education, computer and technical skills, leadership and management training, needs assessments, continuing professional education and certification, grant funding, technical assistance, adult basic education programs, GED testing, certified testing, distance learning classroom, and English as a Second Language program.

Economic Development Loan Fund - EDLF was created by PADD to provide funding for economic development projects in the 11-County region. The fund is administered by the Loan Fund Manager and is overseen by the PADD Board of Directors. EDLF provides gap financing in conjunction with local banks or financial institutions to assist businesses with expansion, transfer of ownership, or purchase of assets. New or existing businesses located within PADD's 11-County region are eligible to apply for funds.

Cooperatives - PADD assists community groups in development business cooperatives from concept to start-up.

EDGE Classes - PADD's EDGE classes help entrepreneurs develop a professional business plan for their business idea.

Nebraska Advantage - The Nebraska Advantage was designed to create a business climate that makes Nebraska the preferred location for starting and growing businesses. In this progressive, pro-business tax climate, corporate income and sales taxes are reduced or virtually eliminated. More details can be found on Nebraska Advantage's website.

LB840 (Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act) - The Local Option Municipal Economic Development Act (LB 840) was approved by Oshkosh voters in the 1990s for sales tax to be used for economic development. This provides the City with a financing tool to fund existing business needs, the development of new business start-ups and economic development site improvements.

Tax Increment Financing - TIF is primarily designed to finance the public costs associated with private development projects. Property tax increases resulting from a new development are targeted to repay the public investment required by the project. The City of Oshkosh has not completed a blight and substandard analysis; however, TIF is a development incentive that could be utilized once the City has completed the proper steps.

These programs and partnerships should continually be supported by the City and its residents, because it is a great way to support local businesses while trying to expand the economy. It is also important to maintain the Region-County-City relationship so that all resources can be utilized and so that the region is truly helping itself grow as opposed to "one-man-for-himself" type of strategy with economic development. These relationships are essential for small communities because there are several individuals with the knowledge and experience to assist communities with several economic development efforts.



Economic growth is a challenging task, but it becomes an extremely important one in order to maintain the vitality of Oshkosh. Oshkosh is taking the right steps forward, but there is always room for improvement. Additional items that need to be addressed in Oshkosh is business retention and expansion, workforce training and development, succession planning for many of the existing businesses, and youth retention are all important economic development efforts. This is something that must be discussed for the successful sustainability of Oshkosh's economic base. A succession plan will help owners plan for the longevity of their businesses and ensure that residents will maintain the quality of life they have become accustomed to in Oshkosh. Leaders in Oshkosh must be able to help change the culture of traditional economic development and re-focus everyone's efforts and energy to new ways to develop and grow. Focusing all of the City's attention and landing the "big fish" means that the City is missing multiple opportunities for collecting many other fish that would still add value to the community. Business retention and expansion allows the existing business owners to know the City and its partnership groups are there for guidance and assistance when needed. It also is a way for the City to be made aware of issues or needs of the existing businesses so they can find solutions to assist the businesses. Focusing efforts on education and involvement for community and economic development from the community's youth will help to pave the way for the future of the City by ensuring the community's youth is aware of the opportunities available in Oshkosh. Workforce development and training is important to provide unilateral opportunities for growth and improvement for the region's employees. This is beneficial for the employees themselves, but also for the local employers. As job requirements continue to change, training and education is key to a strong workforce.

It will be crucial for community leaders and Economic Development personnel to stay up-to-date with the ever-changing economic world. The State of Nebraska offers many resources including Community Development Block Grants and educational sessions on community, housing, and economic development which the City of Oshkosh may be able to utilize. The City of Oshkosh and other stakeholder entities have done a fantastic job of being proactive for the community as well as providing funding assistance for residents and business owners in Oshkosh. This shows support for the local economy, and is an important way to retain and attract businesses and residents alike.

Facilities & Infrastructure 2

The Facilities & Infrastructure section acts as an inventory of public infrastructure and current amenities available to the residents and visitors of Oshkosh. This section should be used as a working document, with continual review and updates as amenities and infrastructure are improved and expanded, to ensure current information. This section is also helpful for others to read to see what the community has to offer. This Facilities & Infrastructure section will cover the following components:

- Recreational Facilities
- Education System
- Transportation
- Community Events
- Community Services
- Energy
- Utilities



Recreational Facilities



Country Club

The Oshkosh Country Club is located one mile south of Oshkosh on Highway 27. This nine-hole golf course boasts green fairways bordered by a rough consisting of natural prairie grass and sandhill potpourri. Pines, cedars, and blue spruce trees also trace the fairways. The Oshkosh Country Club is a private course, supplying its patrons with a putting green, chipping green, golf lessons, rental clubs, rental carts, and pull carts, along with a snack bar and bar. Non-members can also enjoy the course for minimal green fees; no tee times are required. History buffs will also appreciate the Oregon Trail tracks crossing the second fairway.



Swimming Pool

In June 2014, the City of Oshkosh began construction on a new swimming pool facility. The pool has a surface area of 4,029 square feet and includes a diving board, a flume slide, and a bubbler in the zero depth entry. A 2,240 square foot bathhouse provides space for showering and restroom amenities, life guard commons, concessions, a mechanical and equipment room, and a unisex bathroom for other park users.

A Pool Committee comprised of eight residents oversaw fundraising efforts and worked diligently with the City Council to discuss implementation and plans for successful completion of the project. With an estimated cost of \$2.1 million to \$2.2 million, the City secured three separate private grants totaling approximately \$225,000. Residents of the City passed a bond issue authorizing up to \$800,000 in bonds for the project and other fundraising contributions and commitments have added over \$500,000. In an effort to spur fundraising, the City auctioned equipment from the old pool, including the diving boards, gutters, bathhouse plumbing fixtures and piping, as well as the fence.

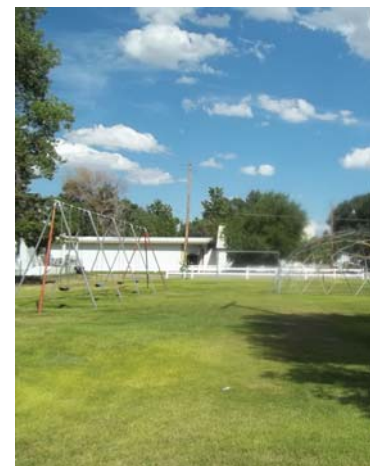
Hours for the new pool will be 1:00pm-5:00pm and 6:00pm-8:00pm with daily admission costs of \$4.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children. In addition, swimming lessons, private parties, adult swim/swimnastics, and season entry passes will be offered.





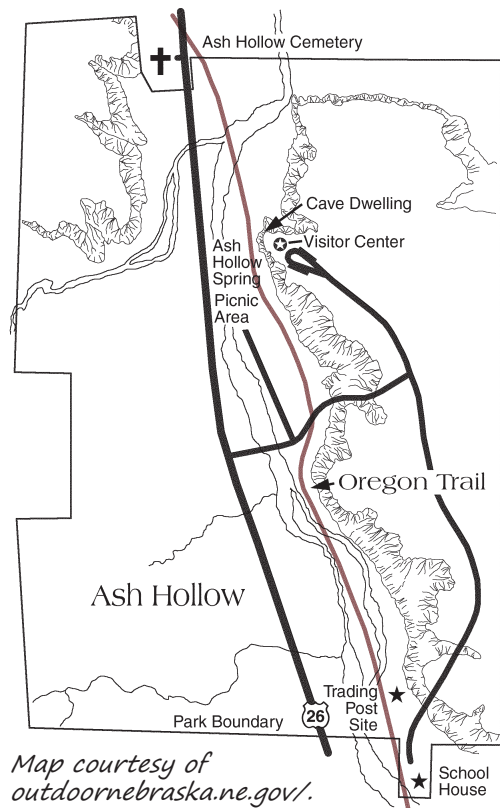
Ballpark

Many softball and baseball programs are hosted at the Oshkosh Ballpark including PeeWee, Co-ed T-Ball, Little League, Babe Ruth, Young Girls, and Girls Softball. In addition to the baseball diamond, there are also lighted tennis courts and a basketball court at the park. A special 4th of July Celebration is hosted at the park as well. Attendees enjoy baseball, kids' races, and a fireworks display.



Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Ranked number two in the nation for birding, the Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge is home to a variety of waterfowl. This 46,600-acre refuge is part of a nationwide system established for the preservation of waterfowl and can be found 27 miles north of Oshkosh. Wildlife found on the refuge includes Canada geese, snow geese, and most species of ducks. Upland birds such as grouse and pheasants are plentiful along with prairie chicken, deer, antelope, coyotes, raccoons, badgers, owls, and golden eagles. Hunting deer, grouse, and pheasant is allowed in designated portions of the Refuge with non-toxic shot only. Multiple lakes in the Refuge also allow fishing with stock including Bluegill, Common Carp, Crappie, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, and Yellow Perch; restrictions for fishing vary depending on the lake. For more information, please visit www.fws.gov/refuge/crescent_lake/.



*Map courtesy of
outdoornebraska.ne.gov/.*



Photos above courtesy of www.fws.gov/.

North Platte River

At approximately 716 miles in total length, the North Platte River runs through Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska. The river joins the South Platte near North Platte, Nebraska to form the Platte River. Oshkosh is located on the North Platte River roughly 90 miles west of this meeting. Historically, the North Platte River guided numerous pioneers through Nebraska, marking the routes of the Oregon, California, Mormon, and Bozeman Trails. In addition to historical significance, the North Platte River also boasts a variety of recreational activities. Near Oshkosh, these activities include hunting, fishing, camping, and birding.



Ash Hollow State Park

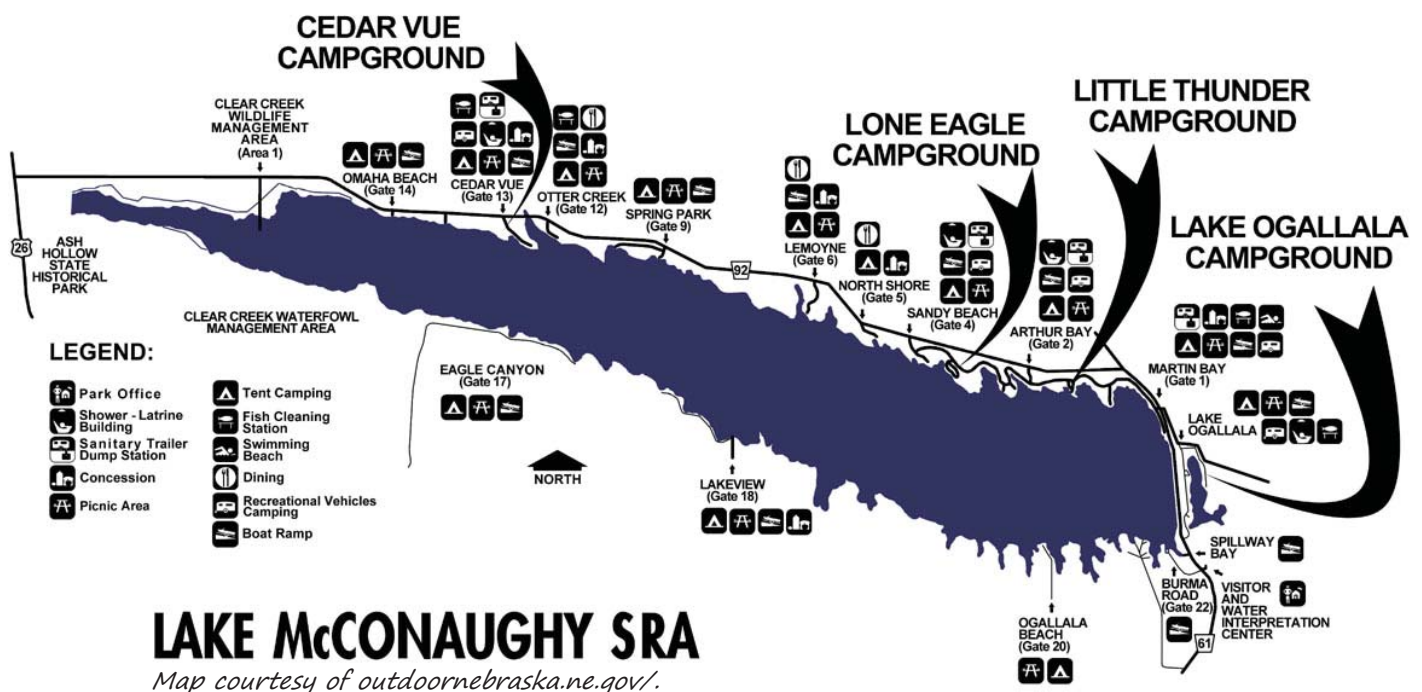
Ash Hollow State Park, located near Lewellen, Nebraska, is a short 15 miles southeast of Oshkosh on Highway 26. Visitors to this Park can observe paleontology, geology, and history, including both Native Americans and the Pioneers. During the pioneer treks west, Ash Hollow attracted a mass of travelers with its high-quality water. As a result, Ash Hollow now provides a coupling of high quality water and a historical landmark to attract its visitors. Later, trading posts and an unofficial post office were established for communication with family still living in the East. Ruts etched deep into the landscape from heavily-laden wagons are still visible today. A Visitor Center provides visitors with more information about the area for a minimum admission fee of \$2 for adults and \$1 for children under 13 years of age (under 3 is free). More information can be found on the Nebraska Game and Parks website at <http://outdoornebraska.ne.gov/>.

Lake McConaughy State Recreation Area

Lake McConaughy is a product of drought and farming in south-central Nebraska. In 1935, the Public Works Administration approved funding for the hydro-irrigation project that would later become Lake McConaughy, Nebraska's largest lake. The Lake's website, www.ilovelakemac.com, provides the following information about the area:

Kingsley Dam, located 9 miles north of Ogallala, Nebraska, is the second largest, hydraulic fill dam in the world. It is over 162 feet high, 3.1 miles long, has 26 million cubic yards of material, and holds Lake McConaughy, which is 22 miles long and 142 feet deep.

The Lake McConaughy Visitors Center and Water Interpretive Center provides interactive, educational exhibits about the area. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday 8:00am to 5:00pm with additional hours of 8:00am to 5:00pm on Saturday and Sunday during the summer months (May 1 - Mid-September). The Lake's location near the Nebraska Sandhills supplies visitors with white sand beaches, swimming, boating, fishing, camping, and many other types of outdoor recreation. Hunting in the area includes deer, grouse, rabbit, turkey, and waterfowl with special provisions governing waterfowl blinder barge placement. Clear Creek Waterfowl Management Area, on the southwest side of Lake McConaughy, also includes dove, pheasant, and squirrel for hunters. Fisherman can enjoy a variety of catches, including Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Bullhead, Channel Catfish, Northern Pike, Smallmouth Bass, Striped Bass Hybrid (wiper), Walleye, White Bass, and Yellow Perch.



Education System

A great school system is more than an amenity for communities in the Midwest. Oshkosh has a sound educational system along with a strong tradition of various extracurricular activities. Community members are continuous supporters of the Garden County Schools, and City leaders should continue to promote

a strong relationship between the school system and the community. Great school districts are one of the leading factors when looking at population growth; families want to live in a community where their children can attend school and receive a high quality of education. The following section explores Garden County Schools and its existing presence in the community.

Many rural Nebraska communities and counties put a high value on maintaining and protecting their local schools, because they are vital in preserving community pride as well as supporting local residents and businesses. The following section analyzes Garden County Schools compared to other Nebraska school districts in surrounding counties as well as historic school enrollment data for Garden County Schools. Nebraska State Statutes group schools into six different classifications.

These classifications are defined by the following law:

2009 Nebraska Code, Chapter 79 SCHOOLS - §79-102.

- (1) Class I includes any school district that maintains only elementary grades under the direction of a single school board;
- (2) Class II includes any school district embracing territory having a population of one thousand inhabitants or less that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board;
- (3) Class III includes any school district embracing territory having a population of more than one thousand and less than one hundred fifty thousand inhabitants that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board;
- (4) Class IV includes any school district embracing territory having a population of one hundred thousand or more inhabitants with a city of the primary class within the territory of the district that maintains both elementary and high school grades under the direction of a single school board;
- (5) Class V includes any school district whose employees participate in a retirement system established pursuant to the Class V School Employees Retirement Act and which embraces territory having a city of the metropolitan class within the territory of the district that maintains both elementary grades and high school grades under the direction of a single school board and any school district with territory in a city of the metropolitan class created pursuant to the Learning Community Reorganization Act and designated as a Class V school district in the reorganization plan; and
- (6) Class VI includes any school district in this state that maintains only a high school, or a high school and grades seven and eight or six through eight as provided in section 79-411, under the direction of a single school board.

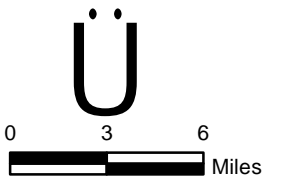
Garden County Schools (35-0001-000) is classified as a Class III School because it maintains both elementary and high school grades, and because the school district territory has a population of more than 1,000 and less than 150,000. **Figure 2.1** shows Garden County Schools' boundaries. The District boundary encompasses most of Garden County, excluding the southwestern corner, as well as an eastern portion of Morrill County. The Garden County School's facilities are located in Oshkosh, but other communities are served by the school district, including Lewellen and Lisco. Garden County Schools is part of the Educational Service Unit 13 (ESU 13). ESU 13 has three offices located in Chadron, Scottsbluff, and Sidney. ESU 13's mission statement is, "to achieve educational excellence for all learners through strong partnerships, service, and leadership." To accomplish this, ESU 13 offers schools in the area support through educator training and an annual conference called the Youth First Conference Western Region.



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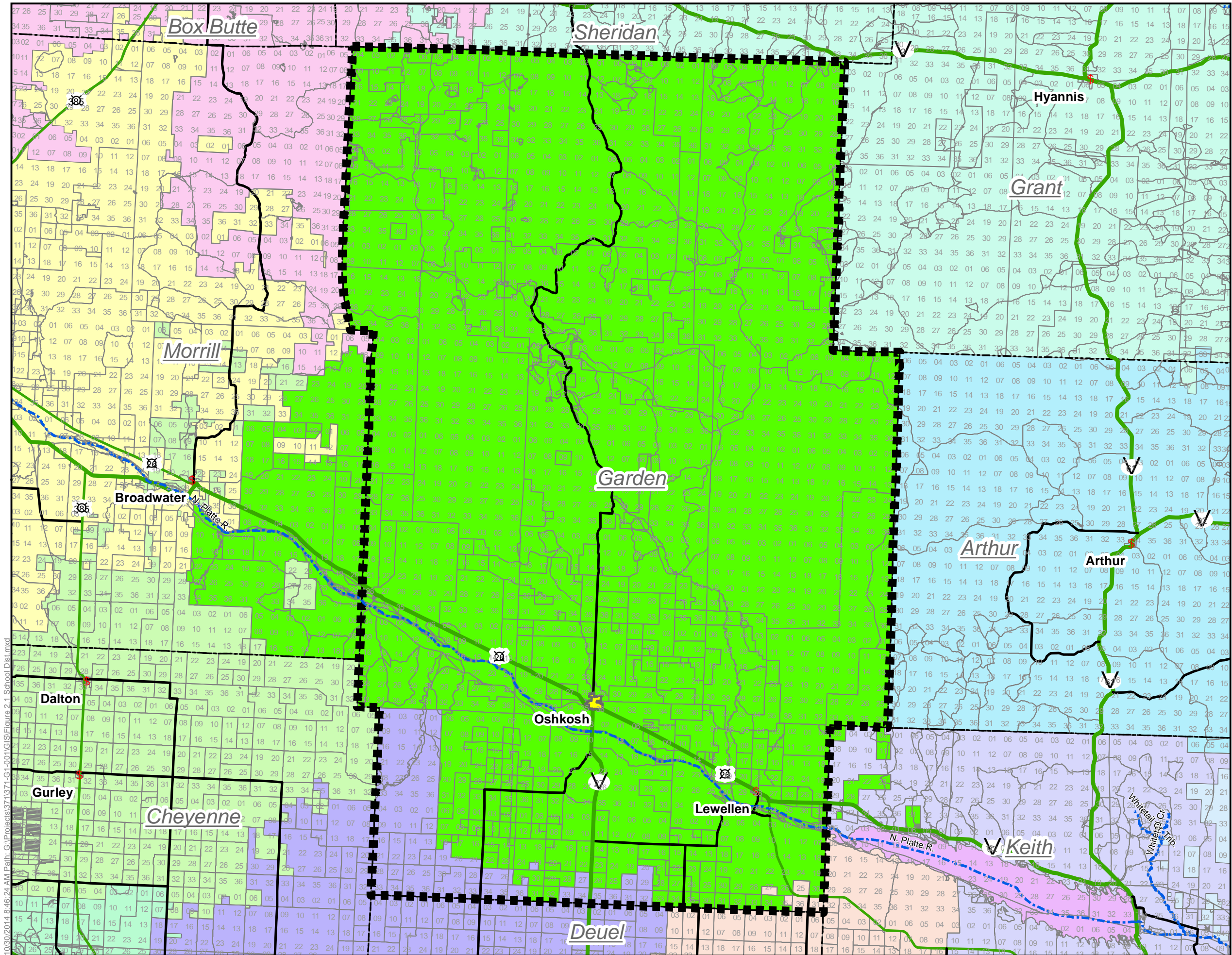


Legend

- Garden County
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits
- School Districts**
 - Garden County Schools
 - Alliance Public Schools
 - Arthur County Schools
 - Bridgeport Public Schools
 - Creek Valley Schools
 - Gordon-Rushville Public Schools
 - Hyannis Area Schools
 - Leyton Public Schools
 - Ogallala Public Schools
 - Paxton Consolidated Schools
 - School District Not Defined
 - Sidney Public Schools
 - South Platte Public Schools

Source:
US Census Bureau,
Geography Division - 2013

Figure 2.1
School District Boundary
Garden County School District



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The mission of Garden County Schools is to “provide a quality education through shared responsibility in a safe, supportive environment for all students to meet the challenges of a diverse society.” Two schools, both located in Oshkosh, form the School District – Garden County Elementary and Garden County Junior/Senior High School. Garden County Elementary is a Kindergarten through fifth grade school and is located at 800 West 2nd. The Junior and Senior High School, located at 200 West 4th Street, educate sixth through eighth grade and ninth through twelfth grade students, respectively. There is also a Pre-School Program ran through Volunteers of America Western Nebraska, located in Lewellen, with pick-up points for children in Oshkosh.

Garden County Junior/Senior High School prides itself on its academic excellence and student performance. In addition to academics, the School also provides many options for extracurricular activities. These activities strengthen the community by encouraging students to stay involved, developing strong relationships with one another as well as learning to be an active participant and contributor to a community. Options available to students include many sports teams, Garden County FFA, and a music and drama program. Not only do these activities provide students with a way to become involved, they also provide events outside of school-time for community members to attend and show support for the school system.

There are also several post-secondary education options in Western Nebraska and throughout the state. Ogallala, Sidney, and Scottsbluff are a few communities that are geographically close to Oshkosh and have post-secondary options. This gives Oshkosh’s residents the option of earning a higher education while staying close to home.

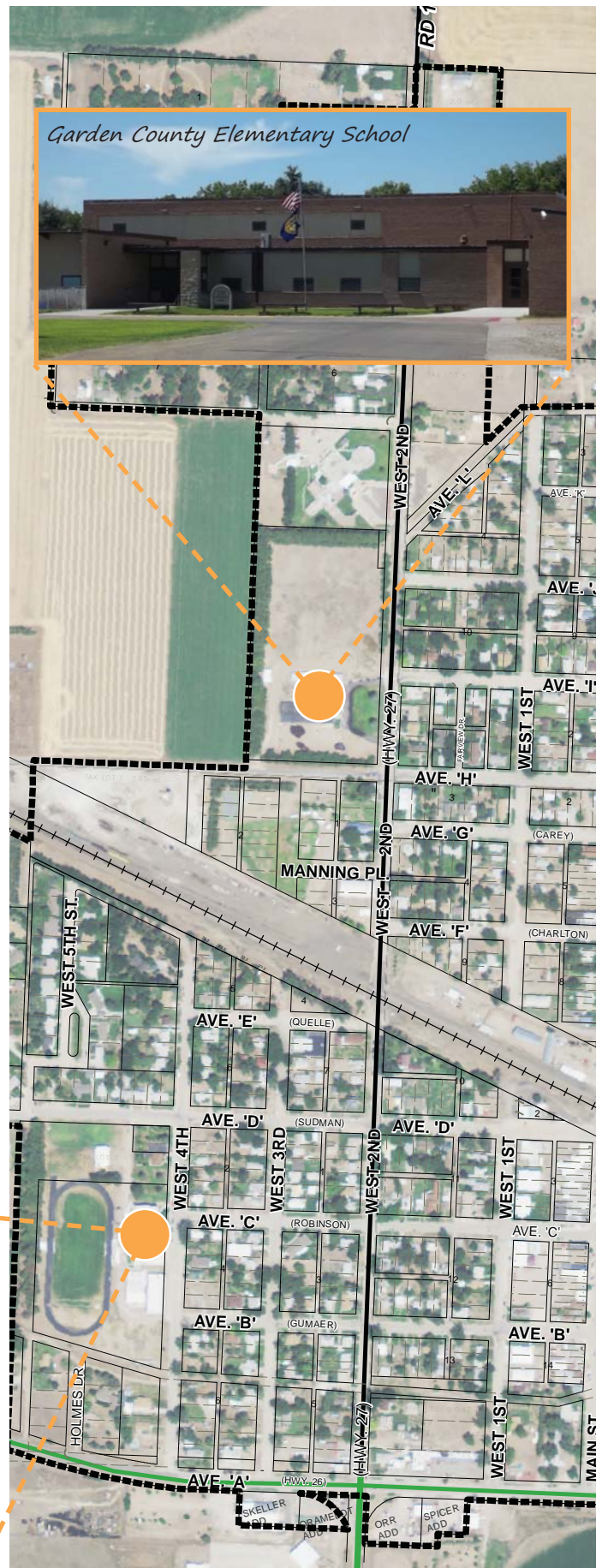


Table 2.1 shows the number of students enrolled by grade, from Kindergarten to 12th; this table shows data from the 2004-2005 to the 2014-2015 school years. The 2004-2005 school year shows the largest total enrollment of 303 students. A higher school enrollment reflects more young families with school-age children living in the community; therefore, communities should work to increase school enrollment in order to obtain a more sustainable population base. The 2014-2015 school year was a comparative increase in enrollment from the previous two school years. It is important for Garden County Schools to encourage a continuation of this trend. The average graduating class for Garden County Senior High School is 24 students in the last 11 school years. While the 2015 graduating class was smaller than average, the District has seen an increase in Kindergarten enrollment in the last few years.

Table 2.1 School Enrollment, Garden County Schools, Oshkosh, 2004-2015														
School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total Enrollment
2004-2005	14	11	15	23	21	23	19	24	33	26	35	28	31	303
2005-2006*	13	12	13	12	26	22	24	24	26	28	28	35	26	289
2006-2007	10	12	9	15	13	25	22	27	25	27	27	28	35	275
2007-2008	23	13	13	11	13	14	24	25	27	23	23	26	25	260
2008-2009	12	22	15	15	14	17	13	24	20	32	25	27	26	262
2009-2010	20	12	18	16	16	14	14	12	22	21	31	25	29	250
2010-2011	19	18	11	19	17	16	14	15	12	24	21	28	26	240
2011-2012	18	19	16	12	16	18	17	18	19	13	24	20	27	237
2012-2013	14	19	20	16	11	17	16	17	17	19	11	20	23	220
2013-2014	19	10	17	21	17	11	19	17	16	12	20	11	26	216
2014-2015	26	16	13	18	23	16	10	21	16	17	12	22	14	224
*1st year for Garden County Elementary School														
Source: Nebraska Department of Education														

Education is the largest public expense in local communities. Because the local school board controls the budget, coordination of the plans between the school board and City Council is essential for effective management of growth, annual budgets, and delivery of education services. It is essential for there to be active participation from both sides of the relationship between the City of Oshkosh and Garden County Schools. The Garden County School District is vital to the sustainability of Oshkosh and the region. It is important for residents to have a quality, productive school district in their community; therefore, community members' continual support of the school system is necessary for the success of the school and the community. School districts provide many qualities in a community that are immeasurable. However, it is important to know and understand school districts are evaluated on several different levels including test scores, graduation rates, and how their formula student population affects the amount of resources the district will receive as well as the operating expenditures per formula student.

Table 2.2 depicts the adjusted general fund operating expenditures per formula student during the 2014-2015 school year. Formula students are based on the 2013-2014 average daily attendance and the 2014-2015 contracted students. The table highlights Garden County Schools and other school districts in surrounding counties. Garden County's formula student amount for 2014-2015 was 219.78; the total expenditure cost per student was \$14,830.30 for the same year. As seen in the table, Garden County School's adjusted general fund operating cost per formula student is in the upper range for the school districts in the surrounding counties. Typically, larger schools will have lower operating costs per student. While it is still possible to see this general shift in data; the trend is not as apparent in this comparison as usual. Many variables like number of school buildings, teacher to student ratio, or the consolidation of school systems could contribute to this unique set of data represented in the table. Many students, parents, and teachers prefer a smaller student-to-teacher ratio for the attention and assistance each student receives. Currently, the Garden County School District is able to provide a small student-to-teacher ratio, but an increase in student enrollment may help lower the operating funds per student as the trend suggests.

Table 2.2 TEEOSA Formula Students, 2014-2015					
Nebraska Department of Education School Finance and Organization Services, Model LB235					
County	County/ District Number	District/System Name	Formula Students	Adjusted General Fund Operation Expenditures	Adjusted General Fund Operating Expenditures per Formula Student
ARTHUR	03-0500-000	ARTHUR COUNTY SCHOOLS	93.44	\$1,681,570.67	\$17,995.72
DEUEL	25-0095-000	SOUTH PLATTE PUBLIC SCHOOLS	171.91	\$2,720,420.04	\$15,824.56
CHEYENNE	17-0003-000	LEYTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	216.23	\$3,269,463.69	\$15,120.31
GARDEN	35-0001-000	GARDEN COUNTY SCHOOLS	219.78	\$3,259,394.63	\$14,830.30
DEUEL	25-0025-000	CREEK VALLEY SCHOOLS	250	\$3,660,205.36	\$14,640.59
CHEYENNE	17-0009-000	POTTER-DIX PUBLIC SCHOOLS	191.73	\$2,664,226.86	\$13,895.64
GRANT	38-0011-000	HYANNIS AREA SCHOOLS	153.57	\$2,094,761.71	\$13,640.03
MORRILL	62-0063-000	BRIDGEPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS	467.46	\$6,136,428.66	\$13,127.28
SHERIDAN	81-0003-000	HAY SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	158.1	\$1,887,559.33	\$11,938.77
KEITH	51-0006-000	PAXTON CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS	224.22	\$2,623,493.76	\$11,700.49
SHERIDAN	81-0010-000	GORDON-RUSHVILLE PUBLIC SCHS	655.62	\$6,714,869.90	\$10,241.95
MORRILL	62-0021-000	BAYARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS	429.43	\$4,353,572.23	\$10,138.04
KEITH	51-0001-000	OGALLALA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	851.56	\$8,497,567.82	\$9,978.81
CHEYENNE	17-0001-000	SIDNEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1,270.69	\$11,128,034.17	\$8,757.45
Source: Nebraska Department of Education					

It is important to support a the local and regional education services in Oshkosh; one method is to ensure there is a healthy connection between the community and the school while promoting the community itself to attract new families to Oshkosh. With the addition of new families to the community, there is potential of adding students to the total enrollment. Increasing community population and student enrollment will work hand-in-hand. This relationship inevitably ties back to employment and job availability in the community. Families are attracted to communities with quality school systems which in turn will help draw residents to Oshkosh.



Transportation systems control interactions, or lack of interactions, between two places. Local roads, streets, and sidewalks should provide safe, reliable access to work, schools, shopping, parks, and back home. Transportation networks to the outside world are important to the economic growth of Oshkosh. These networks provide access to markets, goods, and services not found in the community. Transportation also provides a means by which employees commute to Oshkosh for work, businesses succeed because of increased exporting opportunities, and Oshkosh becomes more than just a “drive-through” community. An adequate system of rail, streets, roads, and sidewalks provides a variety of options for accessibility to all parts of the community and beyond.

Transportation



Oshkosh’s transportation system creates many opportunities for growth because of the proximity and connectivity to the larger transportation network. U.S. Highway 26/Nebraska Highway 92, most commonly referred to as Highway 26, runs east/west bordering the south side of Oshkosh and Nebraska Highway 27 starts in Oshkosh and runs south to connect with U.S. Highway 30. These two highways connect many surrounding communities to Oshkosh. The highway corridors create important access points for the community also creating gateways for all travelers going to and from Oshkosh. These gateway entrances act as a “first impression” for visitors. It is important, when talking about community corridors and connections, to understand how highway corridors are important features for the City. Gateway entrance development is discussed in the Future Land Use section of this Comprehensive Plan.

There are a few options for bus and public transportation services in and near Oshkosh. The nearest national bus service is provided by Greyhound in Ogallala which is 43 miles southeast of Oshkosh. Garden County has a transportation system that is open to the general public. The bus system is used to support residents of Garden County and works on a first call, first serve basis. The first person to call and reserve a bus will dictate which City the bus is traveling to for that day; the second bus will stay in the County and can still offer services for that day if needed. The price is dependent on the number of riders, but typically only costs one or two dollars for a round trip to neighboring communities or to stay in the same community. For round trip rides to Scottsbluff or North Platte, the fee is twenty dollars.

Oshkosh has a local airport and is located on the Union Pacific Railroad providing different transportation options as well as amenities for economic development. Pedestrian foot traffic is another form of transportation used to get around the community. There is sidewalk circulation throughout the community; however, some locations in town are lacking sidewalks. Also, some of the sidewalks are in need of repair and/or replacement just based on age and condition. The transportation section of a Comprehensive Plan is important because it is necessary to address the condition of both local road and street networks that tie the community together and the types of transportation that link Oshkosh with the outside world.

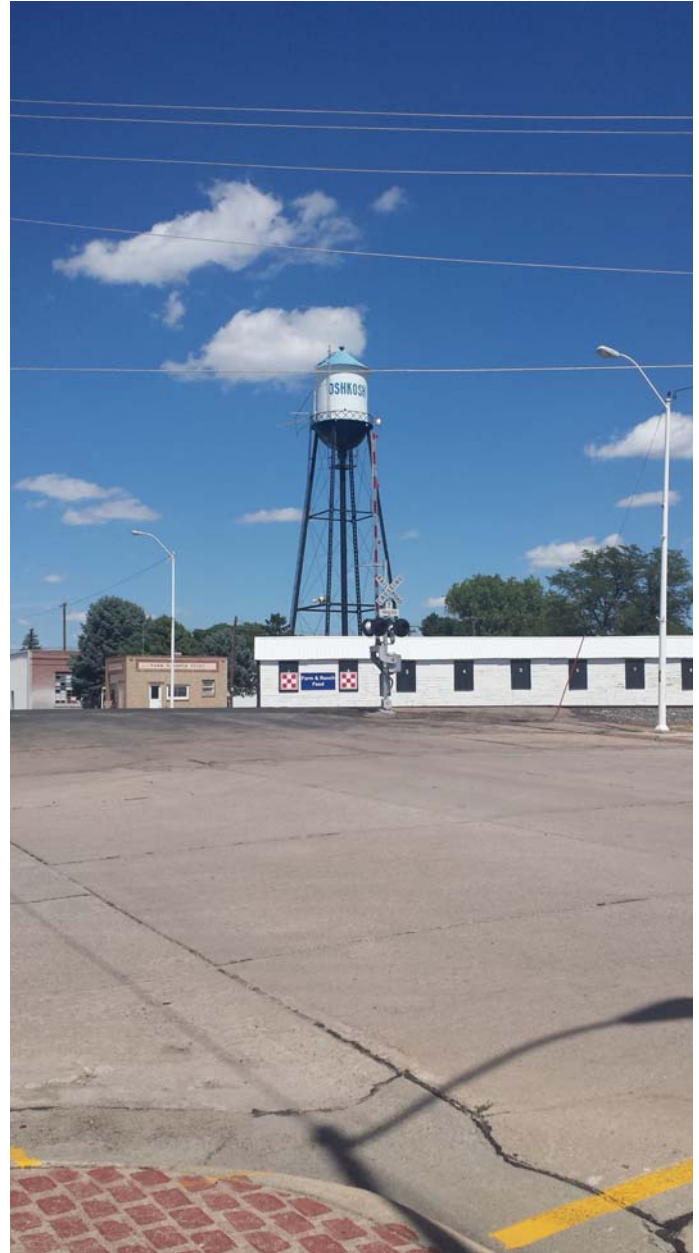


Railroad

Oshkosh sits on the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) which runs diagonally from southeast to northwest through the middle of the community. UPRR's main line through central Nebraska is the busiest rail freight corridor in America with 1,067 miles of track stretched through the State. In 2014, 207,476 rail cars originated in Nebraska and 164,970 rail cars terminated in Nebraska. The top five commodities shipped on UPRR from Nebraska in 2014 were grain, corn refining, feed and animal protein, non-metallic minerals, and meals and oils. The top five commodities received on UPRR in 2014 were coal, fertilizer, steel, ferrous scrap, and lumber and building materials. The railroad offers great commerce opportunities to Oshkosh that would not be available without the presence of the UPRR. The railroad runs through the heart of Oshkosh with two at-grade crossings located within the community and an overpass carrying U.S. Highway 26 located on the west side of Oshkosh. Although the railroad offers opportunities for economic development, it also present development challenges for the community that must be taken into consideration when planning for the future of the community.

Airport

Garden County Airport is a publically owned airport located on the southwest side of Oshkosh. From 2012 to 2013 there were an average of 120 aircraft operations per week, 64 percent were local general aviation, 35 percent were transient general aviation, and one percent was air taxi. The airport has a 60-foot wide, 4,699-foot long concrete runway. Denver International Airport is located 204 miles southwest of Oshkosh and is the most accessible, international passenger service airport for Oshkosh's residents.





Roads

As previously mentioned, transportation systems are vital to the sustainability of the community; especially in the automobile dependent society we live in today. There are three different categories of roads in Oshkosh: local, collector, and arterial streets. Highways 26 and 27 are the main arterial roads carrying traffic into and out of town acting as the gateways to Oshkosh. Development along arterial roads influences the perception of drivers to the overall appearance and priorities of the community. During our public input sessions, many residents discussed the desire to beautify these highway corridors in order to enhance the general appearance of the entire City. U.S. Highway 26/Nebraska Highway 92, specifically will influence the economic growth potential for Oshkosh. Also U.S. Highway 26/Nebraska Highway 92 is a part of the Western Trails Historic and Scenic Byway and provides a tourism advantage for Oshkosh.

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) annually reports surface aggregates for all of the roads in Oshkosh. Updated in 2014 road types include concrete, asphalt, bituminous, and gravel surfaces. The Lane-Mile Report for Oshkosh detailed the following figures, 6.64 miles of concrete, 0.90 miles of asphalt, 0.50 miles of bituminous surfacing, and 3.49 miles of gravel in Oshkosh. Although there are roads that are in need of improvement, 58 percentage Oshkosh's existing roads are paved with concrete. Although concrete is not the only street surfacing option, it has the longest life-span and requires less maintenance in comparison to other road surfacing types; therefore, concrete roads are a good investment for the future of the community. A large portion of the community's gravel roads are located in the northwest corner of the corporate limits and although it is necessary to maintain these streets properly, this portion of the community is not home to many residents and does not provide access to any other portion of Oshkosh for residents. Because of the public expense, a cost-benefit analysis should always been completed prior to any decisions being made on resurfacing any roads in the community. Successful street networks are dependent on the availability and condition of the roads throughout the community. Oshkosh has a safe, efficient transportation system. However, this type of public infrastructure, like all others, requires continual maintenance and updates in order to maintain the high level of effectiveness.



NDOR also conducts traffic counts biannually; 2012 traffic counts are the most recent numbers available through the State. **Figure 2.2** shows traffic counts for the U.S. Highway 26/Nebraska Highway 92 and Nebraska Highway 27 near Oshkosh. The top number represents the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) for all vehicles; the bottom number characterizes the number of heavy commercial vehicles. Highway 26 is the primary access for residents and visitors of Oshkosh to utilize. Commercial businesses examine traffic counts when looking for new locations because commercial businesses want space with high visibility, good connectivity, and access to the larger transportation network. With ADT counts of 2165 and 2130 on either side of Oshkosh on Highway 26, land along this highway is prime real estate for commercial and/or light industrial development. Both Highways provide the community with a link to the outside world which is an economic asset for the City. It is ideal for commercial development to happen along the Highway corridor because of the large number of vehicles that utilize the highways each day. Although many businesses are currently located along the Highway 26 corridor, there is still a large amount of land undeveloped, mainly on the outskirts and adjacent to corporate limits.

Oshkosh also completed its 1 & 6 Year Road Plan in February of 2015. This plan is in place to help guide achievable transportation development for the first year and development goals for the remaining five years. As seen in **Figure 2.3**, six projects are depicted for the six-year plan. Oshkosh’s one-year road plan includes maintenance projects, as needed, throughout the community. The projects listed on the six-year road plan include concrete pavement, curb and gutter, and drainage structures for all six projects with a total estimated cost \$271,500 for all projects depicted on the map.

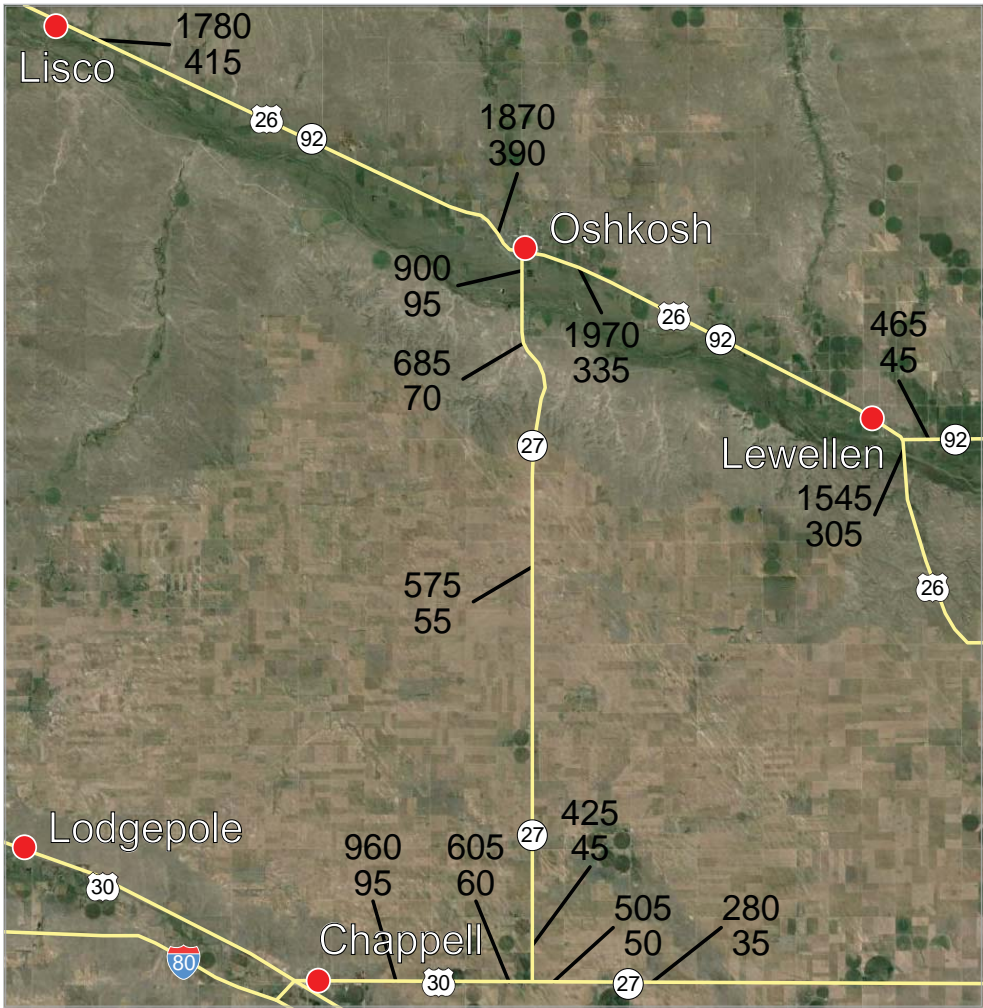


Figure 2.2
2014 NDOR Traffic Counts
 Oshkosh, Nebraska

OSHKOSH

GARDEN COUNTY

NEBRASKA

POPULATION 1057 (1980 CENSUS)

1984

"201

ONE & SIX YEAR Street Improvement Program

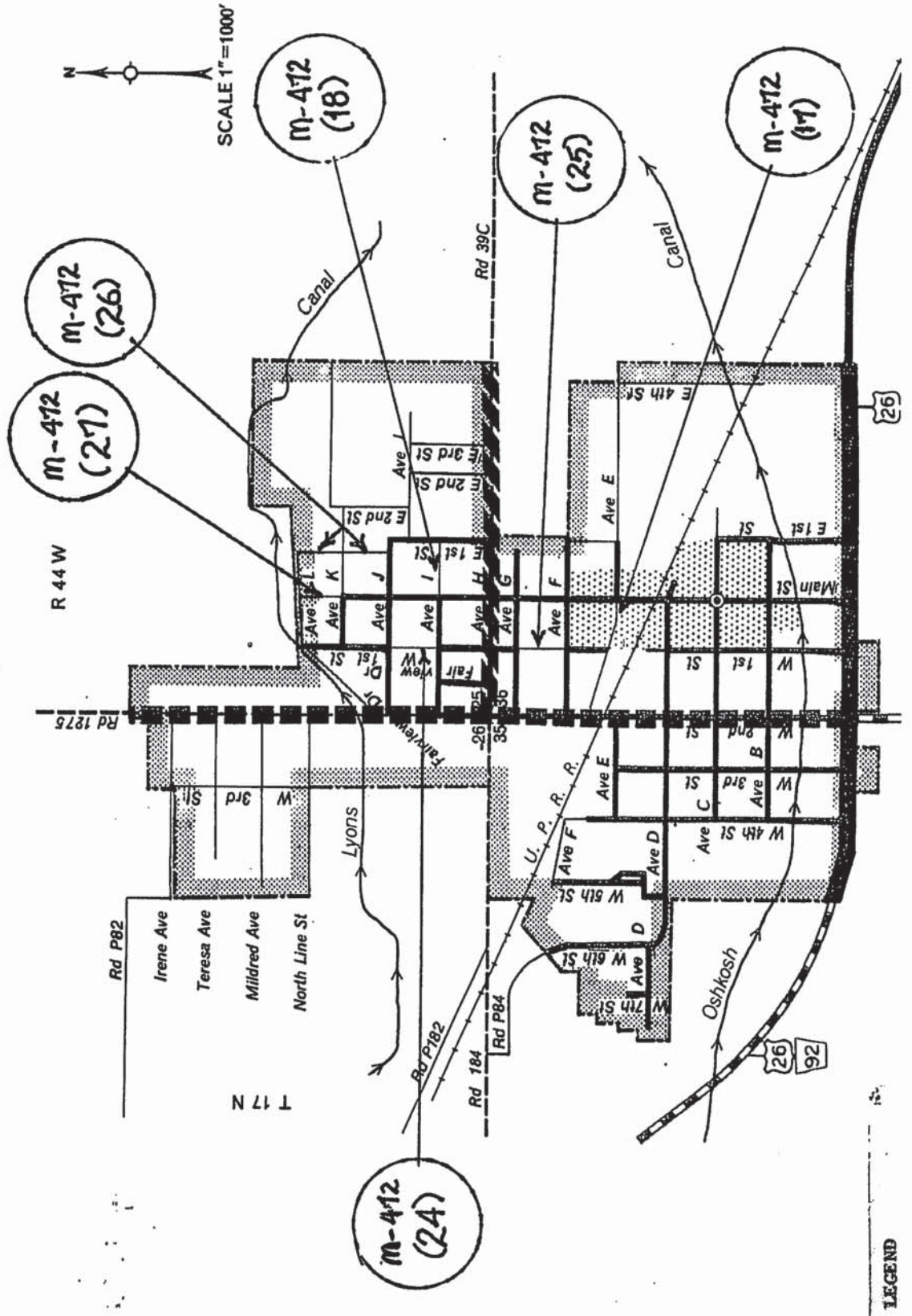


Figure 2.3
1 & 6 Year Plan
Oshkosh, Nebraska



Sidewalks

Sidewalks are a way to walk to the neighbor's house, allow kids to ride their bikes and walk to school, and for families to enjoy the outdoors on the way to the park. Oshkosh's community is also linked by sidewalks to provide pedestrian safety and access. Approximately 46 percent of the community has existing sidewalk infrastructure; however, several of the existing sidewalks are in need of repair and/or replacement. Through the sidewalk assessment it was apparent that the northern portion (divided by the UPRR) of the community does not have as many sidewalks to create the interconnectivity as the south portion of Oshkosh. When dividing the community into two sides, the north and south sides of the railroad, the sidewalk inventory analysis is flipped. On the north side of the railroad, 73 percent of the community does not have existing sidewalk infrastructure and 27 percent has existing sidewalks. On the south side of the railroad, 73 percent has existing sidewalks and 27 percent does not.

Sidewalks promote foot traffic and provide a safe place for all residents to travel. Many people believe that busy sidewalks also lead to a safer community because when more people out and about it inherently deters crime and lowers the opportunity for criminal activity. With a chance of being seen by someone walking their dog or shopping downtown most criminals would be discouraged from attempting an unlawful activity.

Although sidewalks are an essential amenity in communities, they are also another form of public infrastructure that requires maintenance, ADA compliance, updates, and sometimes complete replacement. Areas of broken or cracked sidewalks coupled with incomplete connections make sidewalks challenging to use. Completing a sidewalk inventory and conditions analysis including ADA-compliance review would assist City leaders with planning for sidewalk improvements. Approximately 54 percent of the platted community is lacking sidewalk infrastructure of any kind. The majority of the inconsistent sidewalk network exists in the north part of the community. Improving existing sidewalks is important as the City moves forward, but it is also important for decision-makers to determine if new sidewalks need to be constructed in order to close the existing gaps and improve pedestrian transportation, safety, and connectivity. A matching program could be established by the City to encourage residents to construct new sidewalks and/or repair existing sidewalks in order to improve accessibility throughout the entire community. The most recent ADA design guidelines should be followed when any new sidewalk project is undertaken. Completing a sidewalk inventory map depicting where sidewalks exist and do not exist, if sidewalks are in poor condition and need repaired, and whether or not there are existing ADA ramps would be an important visual tool for the City to utilize when determining improvement needs. The map may also help stakeholders visualize specific areas in need as well as determine practical pedestrian traffic patterns and decide where specific sidewalks need to be constructed to better serve the community.

Oshkosh holds three annual community events. These events are important to the City itself as well as residents and visitors of Oshkosh. Providing a way for community members to come together and celebrate living in Oshkosh, these events help encourage community spirit as well support local businesses. Below are descriptions of Oshkosh's annual community events. More information may be obtained by contacting the City.

Community Events



4th of July Celebration

The annual 4th of July celebration in Oshkosh provides residents and visitors of the City with a weekend full of summer activities. The festivities include a free street dance on the 3rd of July along with a parade, BBQ, Watermelon Feed, food vendors in the park, kids races, baseball games, and fireworks. If the 4th of July falls on a weekend, additional street dances are held on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Every five years, the City also hosts an alumni banquet in conjunction with the celebration.

Fall Festival

Held in association with the annual Garden County High School Homecoming, the Fall Festival is in September or October. During the festival, vendors are set-up all day on Main Street and a person or group that has positively impacted the community is honored at the parade and again at the football game that night. The event also includes a Junior Class Worker Sale.

Santa is Coming to Town

Typically the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, Santa Claus visits the City of Oshkosh. Santa's helpers, the elves, are also in attendance with sacks of candy for the children. Santa coming to town is an excellent way for families to welcome the holiday season in Oshkosh.



Photos courtesy of www.visitgardencounty.com

Community Services

Oshkosh offers many community services and events to its residents. These services add to the quality of life citizens have come to enjoy living in Oshkosh. The following is a list of services available in Oshkosh.

Library

The Oshkosh Public Library has a collection of over 13,000 items including books, cake pans, and movies. In addition to the collection, the Library also offers computers with access to Nebraska On-Line and with reference CD-ROMs for public use. Preschoolers, kids, and teens are provided with specialized programs to encourage interest in reading and learning. There are also many events hosted at the Library throughout the year. Hours of operation are as follows:

Monday - Tuesday	1:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Wednesday - Friday	1:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Saturday-Sunday	Closed

The Library is located at 307 W. 1st Street. For more information, please call (308) 772-4554 or visit the website at oshkosh.panhandlelibraries.org.



Post Office

The Oshkosh Post Office is located at 201 W. 1st Street. The Post Office's retail hours are as follows:

Monday - Friday	8:30 am - 12:30 pm 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Saturday	10:00 am - 11:00 am
Sunday	Closed

For more information on services and hours, please visit the USPS website www.uspspostoffices.com/ne/oshkosh/oshkosh.



Newspaper

The Garden County News reports the news to the residents in and around Garden County with a circulation of approximately 1,400-1,500 people. The newspaper's business hours are:

Monday - Thursday	8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Friday	8:30 am - Noon
Saturday-Sunday	Closed

The weekly deadline for news and advertising is Monday at 2:00 pm. Readers are encouraged to submit news and articles; engagement, wedding and baby announcements are all published without charge. The Garden County News is located at 204 Main Street in Oshkosh. For more information please visit the website at www.gardencountynews.com.



Public Safety

In 2006, the Oshkosh Volunteer Fire Department merged with the Garden County Fire Department, allowing both to serve and protect the coverage area in the best way possible. The Department currently has 25 volunteers and a number of facility amenities including three grass rigs, one tanker, two pumpers, and a jaws-of-life pickup. Volunteers also have many training opportunities throughout the year; training varies from Storm Spotter, Pumper Class, and Grassland Training to Fire School in Grand Island. The Garden County Volunteer Fire Department is located in Oshkosh at 611 Main Street.

As the county seat of Garden County, Oshkosh is also home to the Garden County Sheriff's office. It is the duty of the Sheriff to enforce legal processes issued by the County. This includes acting as a peace officer, apprehending criminals, and having custody of the jail and its prisoners. There are eight officers, including the Sheriff, serving Garden County; this includes 5 full-time and 3 part-time deputies. The Sheriff's Department also oversees a male and female jail.

City Offices

The Oshkosh City Building is located at 305 West 1st Street, housing the offices for the Mayor, City Council, Fire Chief, City Administrator & Director of Economic Development, Clerk & Treasurer, and Emergency Responders.

County Offices

As the County Seat of Garden County, Oshkosh is also home to the Garden County Courthouse, located at 611 Main Street. This building houses the County Assessor, Clerk of District Court, Emergency Manager, Register of Deeds, Treasurer, County Attorney, County Clerk, Sheriff, Veterans Services Officer, and many more.

Chamber of Commerce

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce works to promote and protect the longevity of local business in Oshkosh. In an effort to support these businesses, the Chamber sponsors several events every year. Some of these events include the 4th of July Parade along with a free barbeque and fireworks, and Santa Claus is Coming to Town.

The Garden County Chamber of Commerce also works with the City of Oshkosh, as well as other Garden County communities, to promote old and new businesses and an ever-improving quality of life in Garden County. The Garden County Chamber is comprised of local business owners and citizens with the common goal of "building a better business community." For more information, please visit the "Garden County Chamber of Commerce" facebook page.





Churches

The City of Oshkosh is home to several churches, representing multiple religious practices, including the Assembly of God, Church of Christ, Saint Elizabeth's Catholic Church, Saint George's Episcopal Church, Saint Mark's Lutheran Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church, United Methodist Church, and Wesleyan Church. Please visit Garden County's website, www.gardencounty.org, for a listing of the address and phone number as well as service times for each Church.



Cemetery

The Oshkosh Cemetery is located north of Oshkosh, on County Road 60. Saint Elizabeth's Cemetery is located Northwest of Oshkosh on County Road 60. Records of burials and gravestone pictures for both cemeteries can be found at nebraskagravestones.org.

Funeral Home

Holechek Funeral Home has served communities in Northern Colorado and Western Nebraska for over forty years, offering funeral home, memorial, and cremation services. The funeral home's website, www.holechekfuneralhomes.com, allows visitors to examine pre-planning options as well as read recent obituaries. The Oshkosh branch is located at 212 West Ave D and serves Garden County and its surrounding area. For more information, call (308) 772-3663.



Healthcare

Regional West Garden County Hospital is a ten-bed critical access hospital located at 1100 West 2nd Street. Services include surgery, respiratory therapy, physical therapy, orthopedic care, diagnostic radiological service, x-ray service, and prenatal care along with a free immunization clinic and a chapel. The hospital's 24-hour ambulance service includes two well equipped ambulances and serves all of Garden County. For more information, visit the hospital's website at gchealth.org.

Specialty Healthcare

Regional West Garden County also offers family practice healthcare through the attached clinic. For more information, please visit the hospital's website previously listed.



There is one dental clinic in Oshkosh. Tim Jensen Dentistry is located at 390 Main Street in Oshkosh. For more information, please call (308) 772-3055.

While there are no other clinics in the Oshkosh City Limits, there are clinics located in surrounding communities to supplement this demand. A few examples of specialty healthcare clinics available in nearby communities include:

Acupuncture:	Bridgeport, Ogallala
Chiropractic:	Bridgeport, Ogallala
Dentistry:	Bridgeport, Chappell, Ogallala
Optometry:	Ogallala

Pharmacy

Campbell Drug is a pharmacy and gift shop located at 311 Main Street. The gift shop stocks a variety of goods including, but not limited to, spices, snacks, party supplies, a photo printing machine, and cleaning supplies. The pharmacy is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:30 pm. For more information, call (308) 772-3333.



City Auditorium

The Oshkosh Auditorium acts as the City's community building. Located at 504 West 2nd Street, the Auditorium provides a place for citizens to gather for public events, group activities, or private celebrations.



Community Organizations

The Eagles, Freemasons, and Order of the Eastern Star are three organizations citizens of Oshkosh can join.

These organizations help foster relationships throughout the City by developing a strong sense of community and uniting members behind common goals and objectives. Because Oshkosh is host to multiple organizations, residents enjoy a variety of options when looking to impact the community.



Senior Center

The Oshkosh Senior Center, located on Main Street, is part of eleven participating Counties in the Aging Office of Western Nebraska (AOWN). According to their website, their mission is "to provide a comprehensive and coordinated service delivery system to help elderly citizens remain safe and independent in their own home and community." One service offered by the Senior Center is the Senior Center Volunteer Senior Companion Program (SCVSCP). For this program, AOWN matches volunteers with older persons to provide them with assistance, companionship, transportation, and other daily needs; this also provides daily caregivers with some respite. The Oshkosh Senior Center may be reached by calling (308) 772-3400 or visiting www.aown.org.

Oshkosh Housing Authority

According to HUD (Housing and Urban Development), the Oshkosh Housing Authority is a very small public housing authority, managing a public housing program with eighteen affordable units located in the Mesa Vue complex. This single project recently received an inspection score of 92, with 60 being a passing score. The office is located at 404 West 6th Street #21. More information may be obtained by calling (308) 772-3941 or visiting <http://affordablehousingonline.com>.

Lodging

Lodging options in and around Oshkosh provide a variety of retreats for travelers including Bed & Breakfasts, Lodges providing hunting excursions, and Hotels. These lodgings are in the following locations:

Blue Creek Lodge
8460 Road 181
(308) 772-9912
www.bluecreeklodging.com

Oregon Trail Campsite
402 West Ave A
(308) 778-7395
www.oregontrailcampsite.com

Shady Rest Motel
201 Main Street
(308) 772-4111
www.oshkoshshadyrest.com

Bugle Canyon Game Ranch
(308) 772-3840
www.buglecanyon.com

Oshkosh Inn
207 West Avenue A
(308) 772-3066
www.oshkoshinn.com



Senior Living

Regional West Garden County Long Term Care Unit is a 40 bed intermediate care facility attached to the Regional West Garden County Hospital. The 24-hour licensed nursing care provides services to help residents maintain their optimum functioning level within a comfortable and dignified atmosphere. Additional services include Adult Day Care, Respite Care, and Hospice. The facility offers private and semi-private rooms along with family style dining, a transportation van, chapel, beauty shop, and fenced outdoor area. More information may be obtained by calling (308) 772-3283.

Riverview, is an assisted living facility providing two apartment floor plans. Located at 215 East Church Street in Lewellen, this facility is only a short distance from Oshkosh and provides carefree living in a country-side setting. For more information, the Resident Services Coordinator may be reached by calling (308) 778-5351.

Airport

The Garden County Airport is a publicly-owned facility located southwest of Oshkosh on Highway 27. The airport has a 4,701-foot by 60-foot concrete, lighted runway along with two, 30-foot wide taxiways and a nondirectional beacon. A heated terminal building, an eight unit nested T-hangar, and a four-unit T-hangar provide ample air craft storage for both twin- and single engine air crafts. An EPA-approved 100-octane above ground refueling facility provides aviation fuel to the airport. There is also a 24-hour flight lounge with public telephone.



Museums/Historical Markers

Silver Hill Museum was originally constructed to serve as the community's opera house and gathering place in 1907. Later, the building became the home of the Silver Hill Movie Theater. Now, the museum is ran by the Historical Society of Garden County and houses artifacts including local artist and celebrity Miles Maryott's collection of local birds, period tableaux, and the original movie projector. The museum is located at 501 West 1st Street.



At the Rock School Museum, visitors can observe arrowheads, pioneer memorabilia, and local history. The museum was originally built as a school as well as a society and church meeting place in 1905. It served this purpose until 1914, and later was rented as a multi-family residence. The museum is located at 215 West Avenue G.

Both of the museums are open from Memorial Day thru Labor Day, with the following hours of operation:

Monday - Friday	9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Sunday	2:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Appointments can also be made for other times by contacting Verna Bairn at (308) 772-3848.



Utilities

Electricity

Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) provides re-tailed electric service to Oshkosh. A 115,000/34,500 volt substation which is served by a 34,500 volt sub-transmission line is located immediately east of the City. The 115,000 volt transmission line serving the substation is tied to NPPD's statewide grid system. This distribution substation has a transformer capacity of 3750 kVA and the distribution voltage is 2400/4160 wye.

Water

The City of Oshkosh operates a public water supply system under the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS) via permit NE-3106901. The system is responsible for supplying water to approximately 500 customers. **Figure 2.4** depicts the City's water supply service. Over the past seven years, the City has had a few violations concerning Maximum Contaminate Levels (MCL). In March 2009, Oshkosh completed a Water Study addressing concerns related to results of testing for arsenic, uranium, and ground water under the direct influence of surface water (GWUDI). The arsenic and uranium concentrations in the well water fluctuates, but they have exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). The current status and water supply well locations are described below.

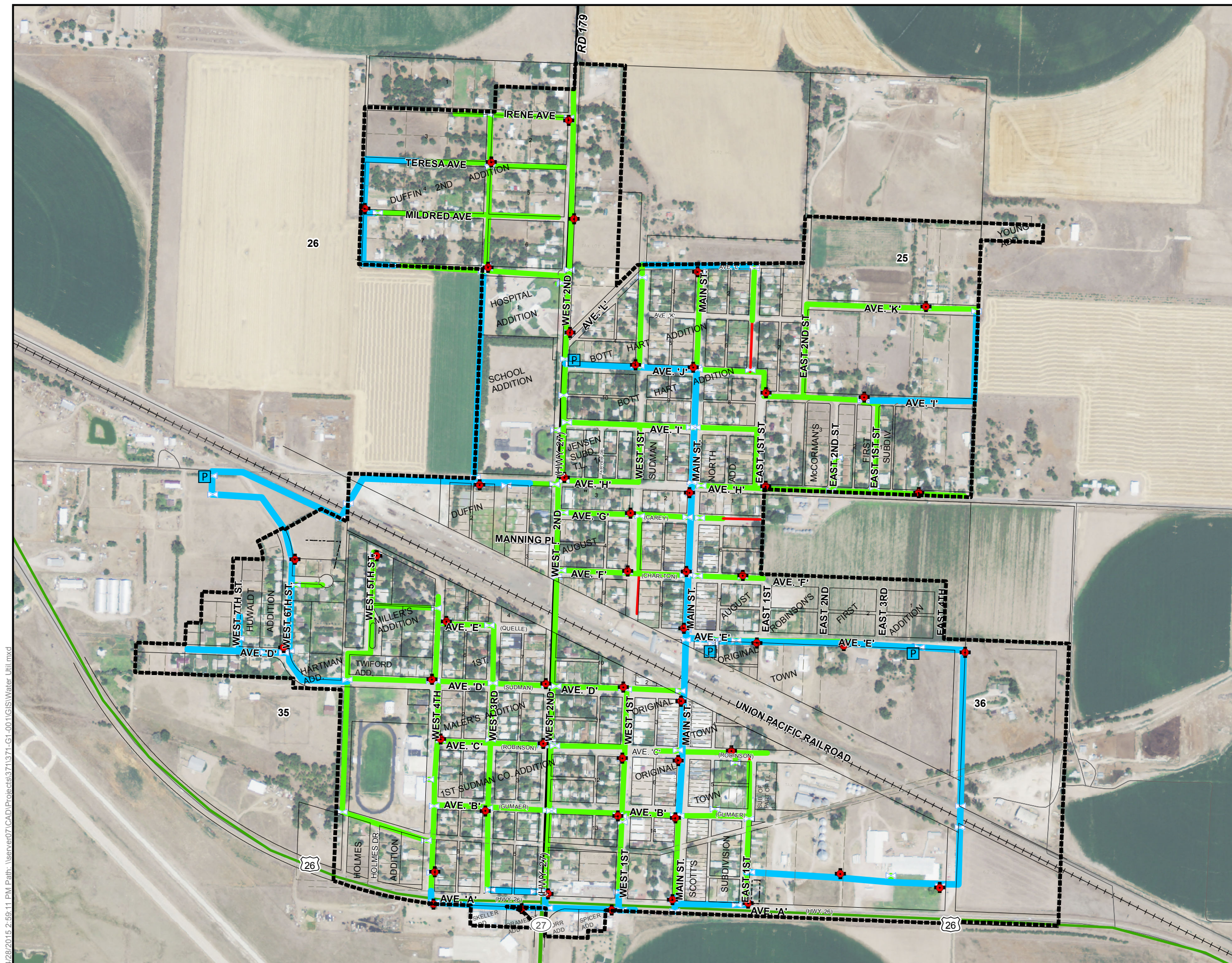
Well #1 (Water Tower Well, 45-1, G-120260) was constructed in 1945 and is located at the base of the water tower. The application permit to construct the well, dated September 14, 1945 indicates a pumping capacity of 350 gpm. The well registration dated February 26, 2003 indicates a pumping rate of 150 gpm. This well is not currently used for water supply due to high levels of uranium.

Well #2 (North Well, 45-2, G-120261) was constructed in 1945. The well registration dated February 26, 2003 indicates a pumping rate of 450 gpm. This well is still in operation today.

Well #3 (West Well, 63-1, G-025446) is located in the southwestern portion of the City of Oshkosh, just south of the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way. This well was taken out of service in 2005, due to high concentrations of uranium and according to the inspection report filed in July of 2005, it was shut off and the pipe capped.

Well #4 (East Well, 74-1, G-043401) was constructed in 1974. The well is located in the southeastern portion of the City of Oshkosh north of Highway 30 and the Union Pacific Railroad. The well registration dated February 26, 2003 indicates a pumping rate of 750 gpm. This well is still in operation today.

After extensive testing by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS), it was determined that the remaining wells in the system were not under the direct influence of surface water.



Oshkosh, Nebraska

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Water storage and system pressure is provided by a 50,000-gallon elevated storage tank that was constructed in 1920. The tank is a riveted shell, cone-roof style, with four lattice leg supports. The tower functions with the distribution system providing operating storage to balance rapid fluctuations in system demand. Under normal conditions, the tower provides operating pressures in the City's water supply system, ranging from 40-60 psi. The pressure observed at Well #1 located at the base of the water tower was 58 psi, which correlates to a water level height in the tower of about 134 feet above the ground. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) map, the elevation at the water tower is approximately 3,393 feet, which correlates to a normal water level elevation of 3,527. Pressure in the system is controlled by a pressure sensor in the discharge piping of each well. The controls were installed in 1993.



After the 2009 Preliminary Engineering Report and new source search it was determined the proposed course of action would be blending the water from Well #1 with Well #4 for compliance with the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for arsenic and uranium as well as water distribution system replacement and looping and replacement of the water meters.

From 2009 to present the City has been impacted by elevated concentrations of arsenic and uranium in the wells. The use of Well #1 has been discontinued due to uranium. Well #2 has elevated concentrations of arsenic and has exceeded the MCL numerous times, which triggered a violation letter from NDHHS. Well #3 was disconnected from the water system and was sold in 2013 due to elevated concentrations of arsenic, uranium, and nitrate. Well #4 has arsenic concentrations nearing the MCL and the well was lined in 2010, a special sample for uranium exceeded the MCL.

The water supply was re-evaluated in a 2014 Preliminary Engineering Report and it was determined a new source of water was needed in order to provide the community with a reliable source of drinking water. A new source of water was located north of the City and due to the location of the new water source and the fact that the current elevated water storage tank, constructed in 1920, is undersized, it was also determined that a ground storage facility should be constructed to replace the elevated tank and to increase reliability.

The City applied and received funding for a new water improvement project that is currently under design. The approximately four million dollar funded water project scope of service includes:

- Construct two new source supply wells with backup power;
- Construct approximately 33,000 linear feet of transmission main to the new source;
- Construct a new 200,000 gallon pre-stressed concrete water storage facility;
- Replacement of deteriorated water mains that are undersized or have had numerous breaks;
- Provide for new mains - looping dead-end water quality concerns and improving the flow to the core of the City;
- Replacement of the existing water meters;
- Upgrading the meter reading system to include radio read, in lieu of the manual reading currently used; and
- Install new well controls.

Sanitary Sewer

The City of Oshkosh's sanitary sewer system serves the community with gravity collection lines. Treatment is provided through a non-discharging lagoon system. The design of the system was based on a population of 885 and an average daily flow of 121,000 gallons. The collection system does not have any lift stations. The collection system is mainly composed from Vitrified Clay Pipe (VCP) varying in sizes from 4-inch to 15-inch with a majority of the system being 8-inch diameter pipe. The original system was installed in the 1920s. The City owns and operates the necessary cleaning equipment to keep the collection system in good working condition.

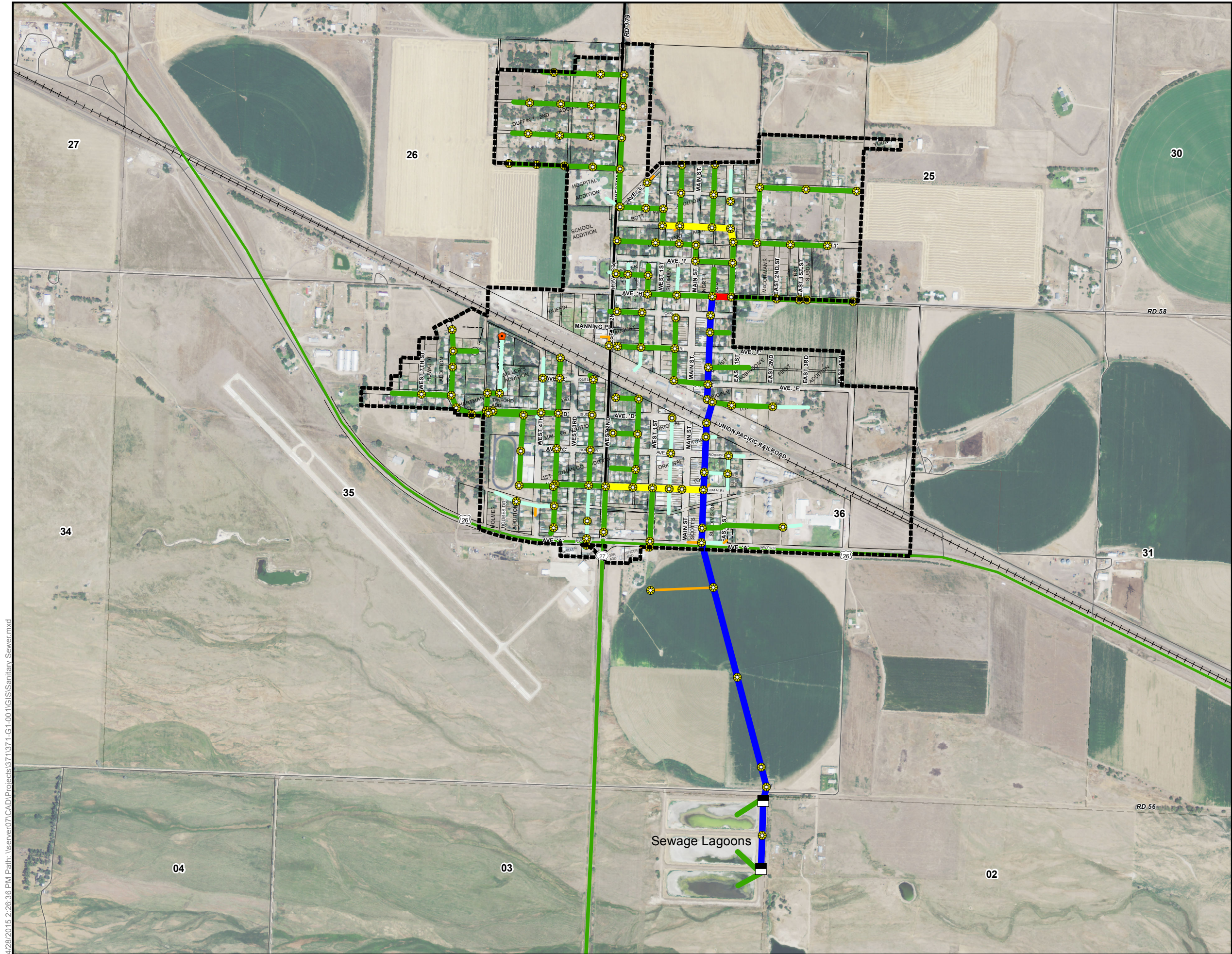
The gravity flow collection system conveys the wastewater to the lagoon system which is located south of the City. The City of Oshkosh operates under an exempt discharge permit NE-0021181. The lagoon system is a three cell system with each cell being approximately 2.4 acres in size for a total of 7.2 acres. The lagoons system was constructed in 1978 after the old mechanical plant, which is currently abandoned, had exceeded its life. The cells currently do not retain much water as they appear to seep more than the allowed seepage rate.

The City is currently under contract to perform a Sewer Study to evaluate the lagoon system and determine the proper size and course of action to re-seal the lagoons. **Figure 2.5** shows the City's sanitary sewer collection and treatment system.

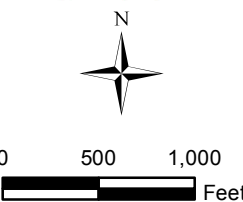
Natural Gas

Natural gas is supplied to the Oshkosh community by SourceGas Distribution, LLC through a three-inch transmission pipeline with an operating pressure of approximately 400 pounds per square inch. Choice Gas through ACE (Alliance for Community Energy) is also available to natural gas customers in Oshkosh which is owned by 72 member communities and one public power district that serves more than 22,000 in Nebraska.





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- Legend**
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits
 - Manhole
 - Splitter Box
 - Cleanout
- Sanitary Sewer Main Size**
- 4"
 - 6"
 - 7"
 - 8"
 - 10"
 - 15"
- Source:**
Data provided by Nebraska Rural Water Association and the City of Oshkosh.

Figure 2.5
Sanitary Sewer
System Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

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Energy & Natural Resources

3

The Community Profile Chapter considers current characteristics of the community that will form the foundation for planning in Oshkosh for the next ten years. This profile is a compilation of information that is derived through outside research, conversations with local residents and officials, on-site assessments, and data analysis. This Community Profile Chapter will consist of the following components:

- Energy
- Land
- Soils
- Water

Energy

1. Energy infrastructure and energy use by sector, including residential, commercial, and industrial sectors:

The Nebraska Energy Office compiles statistics on energy consumption in the State by sector. The latest statistics are from 2012.

Residential: In 2012, 43.3% of the residential sector's energy usage was from natural gas, 44.9% was electricity, 8.0% was from propane, and 3.7% was renewable energy (wood 2.9%, geothermal 0.7%, and solar 0.1%). [Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Net Energy Consumption by Fuel Type, Residential Sector, Nebraska, 2012," <http://www.neo.ne.gov/statshtml/09.html>]

Commercial: In 2012, 51.09% of the commercial sector's energy usage was from electricity and 43.79% from natural gas. In 2012, 1.94% of the State's total energy consumption for the commercial sector came from diesel fuel, 1.12% was from geothermal, and 0.88% from propane. [Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Net Energy Consumption by Fuel Type, Commercial Sector, Nebraska, 2012," <http://www.neo.ne.gov/statshtml/12.html>]

Industrial: In 2012, 29.63% of the industrial sector energy usage was from natural gas, 10.89% from diesel fuel, 13.81% from electricity, 6.42% from coal, and 33.89% from biofuels. [Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Net Energy Consumption by Fuel Type, Industrial Sector, Nebraska, 2012," <http://www.neo.ne.gov/statshtml/15.html>]

Table 3.1 shows the electric power consumption for the residential and commercial sectors in Oshkosh. This data was provided by NPPD for 2012 and 2013. Energy infrastructure data is not available for the City of Oshkosh.

2. Utilization of renewable energy sources:

The Nebraska Energy Office reports that in 2012, 15.79% of Nebraska's energy consumption was met by renewable resources. The renewable energy sources in 2012, for Nebraska were wind (1.4%), geothermal (0.139%), hydro power (1.37%), biomass (0.818%), and biofuels (12.04%). The sources of energy for Nebraska in 2012 were petroleum (27%), coal (31%), natural gas (19%), nuclear power (7%) and renewable energy (16%). [Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Nebraska's Energy Consumption, 2012," <http://www.neo.ne.gov/statshtml/92.htm>]

The nation as a whole used a higher percentage of renewable energy than Nebraska. Data from 2012 shows that Nebraska is 7th in the nation for energy consumption per capita. The United States renewable energy consumption grew by six percent between 2009 and 2010, and the relative share of renewable energy to total energy consumption has grown to eight percent in 2010 from seven percent in 2008. In 2010, the sources of energy for the nation were petroleum (37%), natural gas (25%), coal (21%), nuclear electric power (9%), and renewable energy (8%). The sources of renewable energy were solar (2%), geothermal (3%), wind (11%), hydroelectric (31%), and biomass (53%). [Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Trends in Renewable Energy Consumption and Electricity," <http://www.eia.gov/renewable/annual/trends/>]

Renewable energy source statistics are not available for the City of Oshkosh. **Figure 3.1** shows the rating of the State of Nebraska for 50M wind power. A majority of Garden County has a "fair" rating, but a few areas close to Oshkosh have a "good" rating. Garden County Schools is part of the "Wind for Schools" initiative and added a wind turbine to the Oshkosh skyline to power the Schools' greenhouse.

Table 3.1 Electric Consumption Totals, Oshkosh, 2012-2013

Year	Residential	Commercial	Total
2012	4,907,217 kWh	3,350,026 kWh	8,257,243 kWh
2013	5,005,947 kWh	3,382,675 kWh	8,388,622 kWh
Difference	98,730 kWh	32,649 kWh	131,379 kWh
Source: Nebraska Public Power District			



Nebraska - 50 m Wind Power

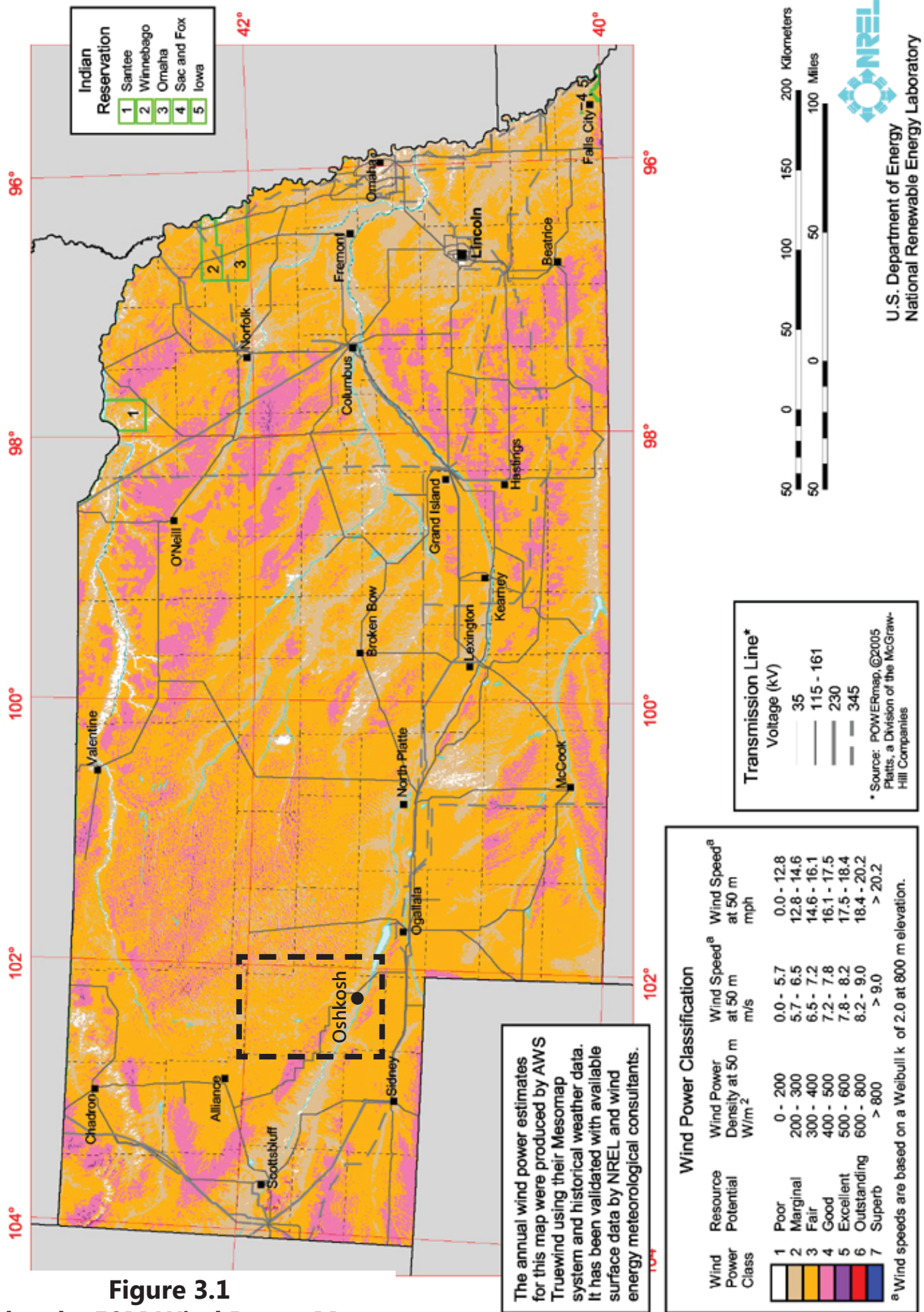


Figure 3.1
Nebraska 50M Wind Power Map
Oshkosh, Nebraska

3. Energy conservation measures that benefit the community:

a. Energy Codes – Under §81-1608 to §81-1616, the State of Nebraska has adopted the International Energy Conservation Code as the Nebraska Energy Code. Any City may adopt and enforce the Nebraska Energy Code or an equivalent energy code. If a City does not adopt an energy code, the Nebraska Energy Office will enforce the Nebraska Energy Code in the jurisdiction.

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

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

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

The City of Oshkosh has not adopted an energy code. If a City or County does not adopt an energy code, the Nebraska Energy Office will enforce the Nebraska Energy Code in the jurisdiction.

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

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

c. "Energy Saving Tips" – The Nebraska Energy Office has listed ways to save money on energy bills for the home, farm, business, or vehicle. Options for energy savings are listed on the Office's web site at <http://www.neo.ne.gov/tips/tips.htm>. The City and residents and businesses in the City are encouraged to take advantage of the conservation measures.

d. Cities may add other conservation measures. One suggestion is to include planting trees by communities. Cities that have been designated Tree City USA cities are providing energy efficiency/conservation options by planting trees.



Land

The dominant land features of Garden County consist of tablelands, dissected uplands, river valleys, sandhills, and sandhill valleys. Oshkosh lies in the valley of the North Platte River, which consists of a floodplain and the slightly higher stream terrace. The North Platte River valley ranges from two to three miles in width, and crosses the south end of Garden County from the northwest to the southeast. The river is a major water feature in the County and the river valley is the land feature of major influence on Oshkosh and the surrounding area.

Topographic elevations for Oshkosh and the vicinity range from 3,370 to 3,420 feet above Mean Sea Level (MSL). The climate of the City of Oshkosh is typical for Nebraska, which is characterized by cold winters, warm summers, high winds, and frequent changes in weather conditions. This results in average daily maximum temperatures with a high of 89° in July to the lowest average daily minimum temperature of 10.5° in January. Temperature extremes range from a record low of -34° to a record high of 111° for Garden County. Typical of its location in western Nebraska, the climate is semi-arid, with an average annual precipitation of 17 inches, mostly occurring in April through September. Snowfall averages 31 inches annually.

Proper land use practices can protect an area's natural resources while complementing the built environment, therefore understanding the topography of Oshkosh and Garden County is important to determine the community's best areas for potential development. The natural topography of the community provides both opportunities and constraints for existing and future development. In Oshkosh, like most communities, the major development constraints and opportunities are associated with the existing soils, the condition of these soils, and the topography.

Soils

The soils in Oshkosh and the vicinity are classified into soil groups, or associations, and have a broad range of characteristics. The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA – NRCS) conducted the Field Soils Survey and determined the boundaries of the soil types found in the region. The planning jurisdiction of Oshkosh, including the corporate limits and the one-mile extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) outside of the corporate limits, is comprised of four soil associations : (1) Bayard-Scoville-Rushcreek ; (2) Lewellen-Jankosh; (3) Valent; (4) Sarben-Valent. The Bayard-Scoville-Rushcreek association comprises most of the planning jurisdiction. The soils are very deep, nearly level to gently sloping, well drained, moderately drained, and somewhat excessively drained, loamy and sandy soils; in valleys. The detailed soil map units that make up this associated are described in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2 Bayard-Scoville-Rushcreek Association, Oshkosh

Detailed Soil Composition Units	Characteristics	Use and Vegetation
Bayard Loam, 0 to 1% Slopes (1305)	This composition unit consists of very deep, well drained loam formed in alluvium. This soil is present in stream terraces.	Suited for dryland and irrigated crops, rangeland and hay.
Bayard Fine Sandy Loam, 1 to 3% Slopes (1300)	This composition unit consists very deep, well drained fine sandy loam formed in alluvium. This soil is present in stream terraces.	Suited for dryland and irrigated crops, rangeland and hay.
Scoville Loamy Fine Sand, 0 to 3% Slopes (5858)	This composition unit consists of very deep, somewhat excessively drained loamy fine sand formed in loamy alluvium over gravelly coarse sands. This soil is present in flood plains.	Poorly suited for dryland crops. Unsited for gravity-irrigated crops. Poorly suited for sprinkler-irrigated crops. Suited for rangeland and hay.
Rushcreek Loam, Rarely Flooded (5668)	This composition unit consists of very deep, moderately well drained loam formed in loamy alluvium over gravelly coarse sands. This soil is present in flood plains.	Poorly suited for dryland and irrigated crops. Suited for rangeland and hay.

Source: Soil Survey of Garden County, Nebraska, USDA – NRCS

Information and knowledge on soils is an important factor when discussing future development options. The built environment is dependent upon the natural environment, and proper development practices must be followed in order to protect the natural environment. There are nine detailed soil map units in the planning jurisdiction of Oshkosh. These can all be broken down into classifications based on slope, percentage of soil type, major and minor types of soil, and degree of drainage. In order to make land use recommendations, decision makers need to understand how different soil types and slopes can affect future land uses, the environment, current residents, and farming practices. The following maps in this section depict slope, soil suitability, and dryland or irrigated capability by soil associations for the planning jurisdiction of this Comprehensive Plan; soils data and classifications were gathered by the NRCS.

Slope by Soil Association Map.....**(Figure 3.2)**

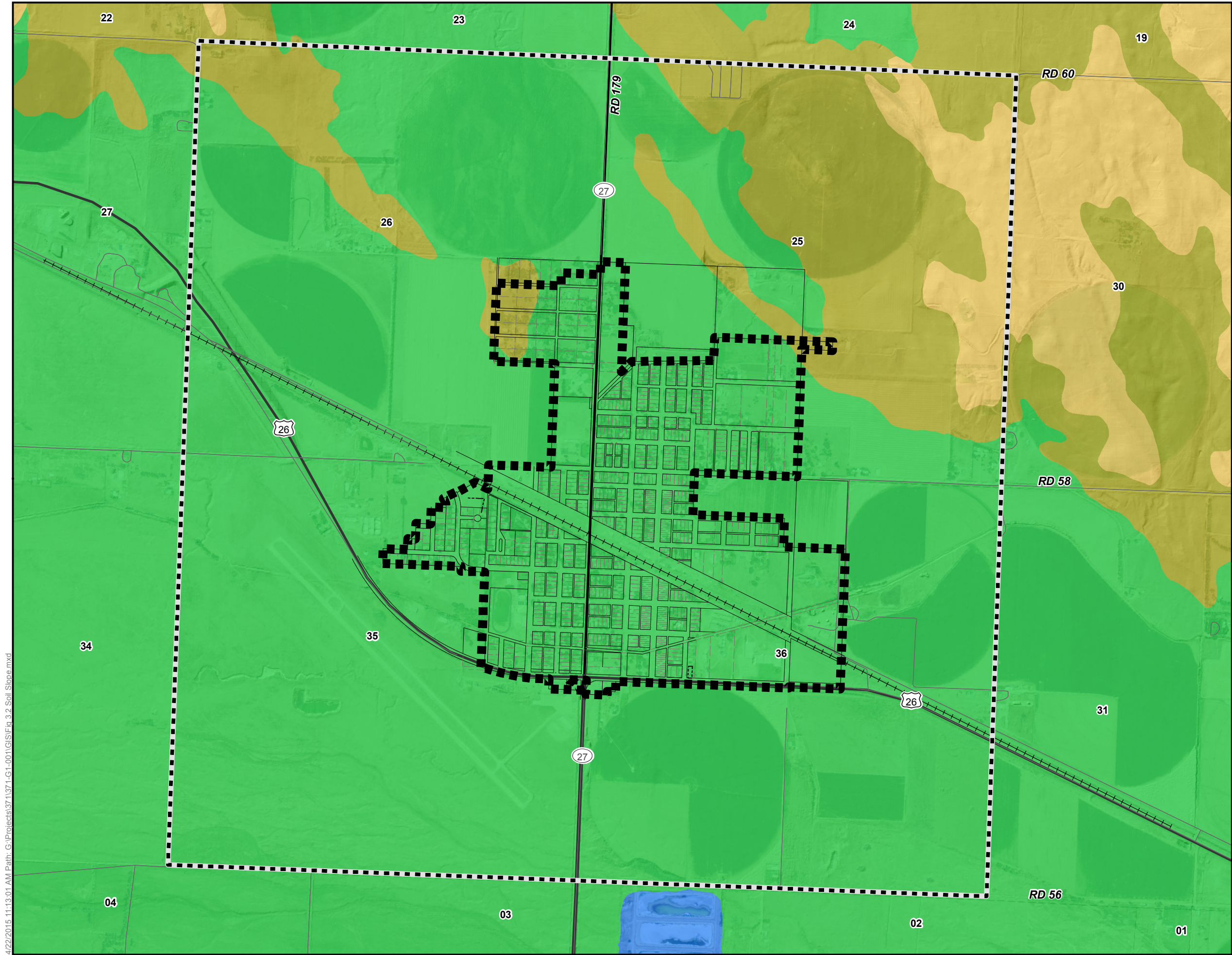
Soil Suitability for Septic Tanks.....**(Figure 3.3)**

Soil Suitability for Sewage Lagoons....**(Figure 3.4)**

Dryland Capability Classification..... **(Figure 3.5)**

Soil Suitability for Prime Farmland..... **(Figure 3.6)**





4/22/2015 11:13:01 AM Path: G:\Projects\371371-G1-001\GIS\Fig. 3.2 Soil Slope.mxd

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N

0 600 1,200
Feet

Legend

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

Oshkosh Corporate Limits

Slope Gradient - Weighted Average

Level to nearly Level (0-2 Percent)

Gently Sloping (2-6 Percent)

Moderately Sloping (6-11 Percent)

Strongly Sloping (11-20 Percent)

Very Steep (20-45 Percent)

Water

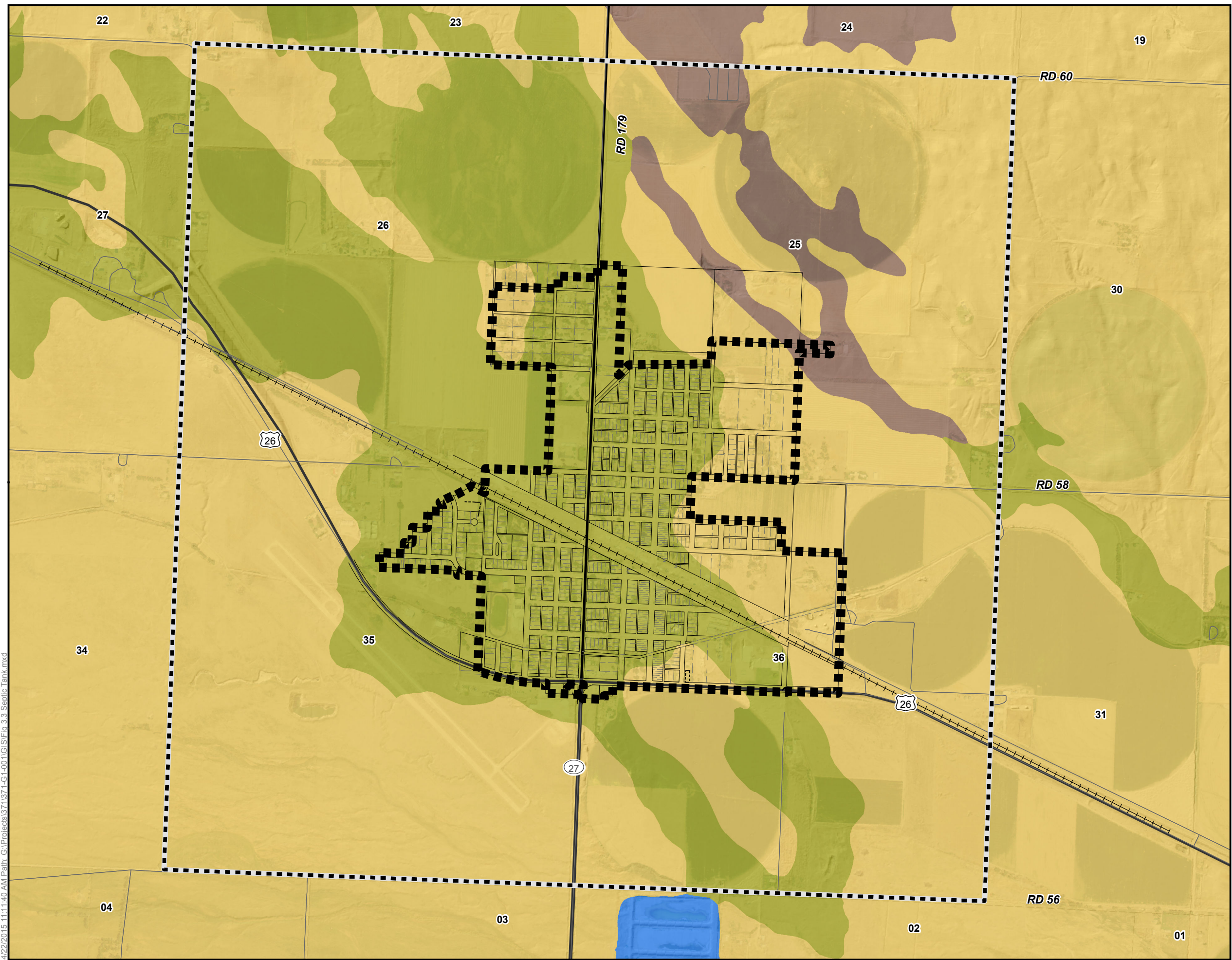
Source:
Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation
Service 12-31-2013, M&A

Figure 3.2
Slope By
Soil Association Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

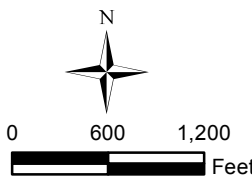
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4/22/2015 11:11:40 AM Path: G:\Projects\371\371-G1-001\GIS\Fig. 3.3 Septic Tank.mxd



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Legend

- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits

Soil Suitability

- Not limited
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited
- Water

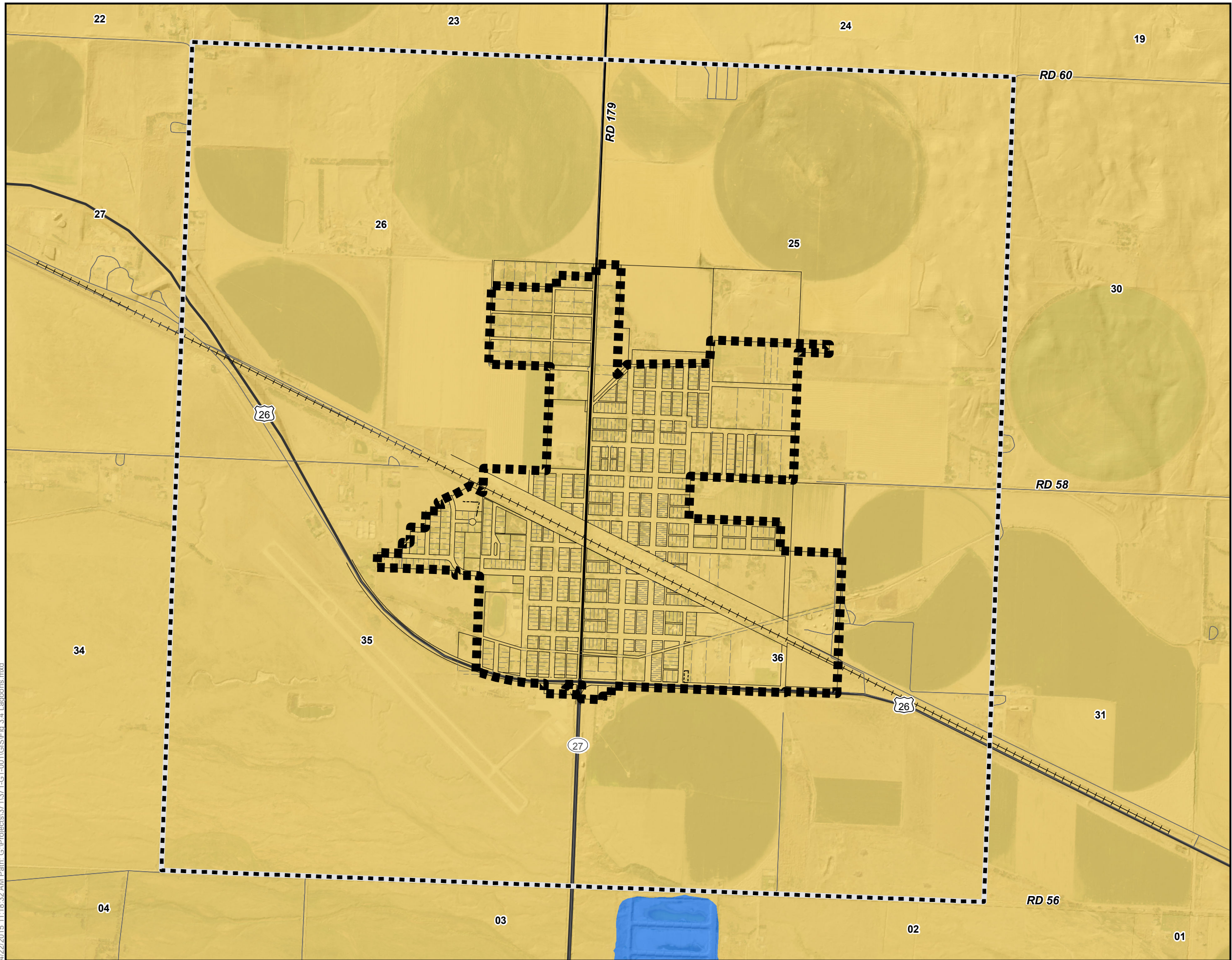
Source:
Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation
Service 12-31-2013, M&A

Figure 3.3
Soil Suitability For
Septic Tanks
By Soil Association Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

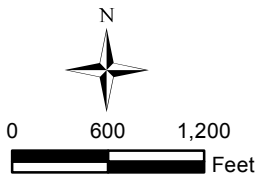
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4/22/2015 11:18:32 AM Path: G:\Projects\371371-G1-001\GIS\Fig. 3.4 Lagoons.mxd



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Legend

- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits

Soil Suitability

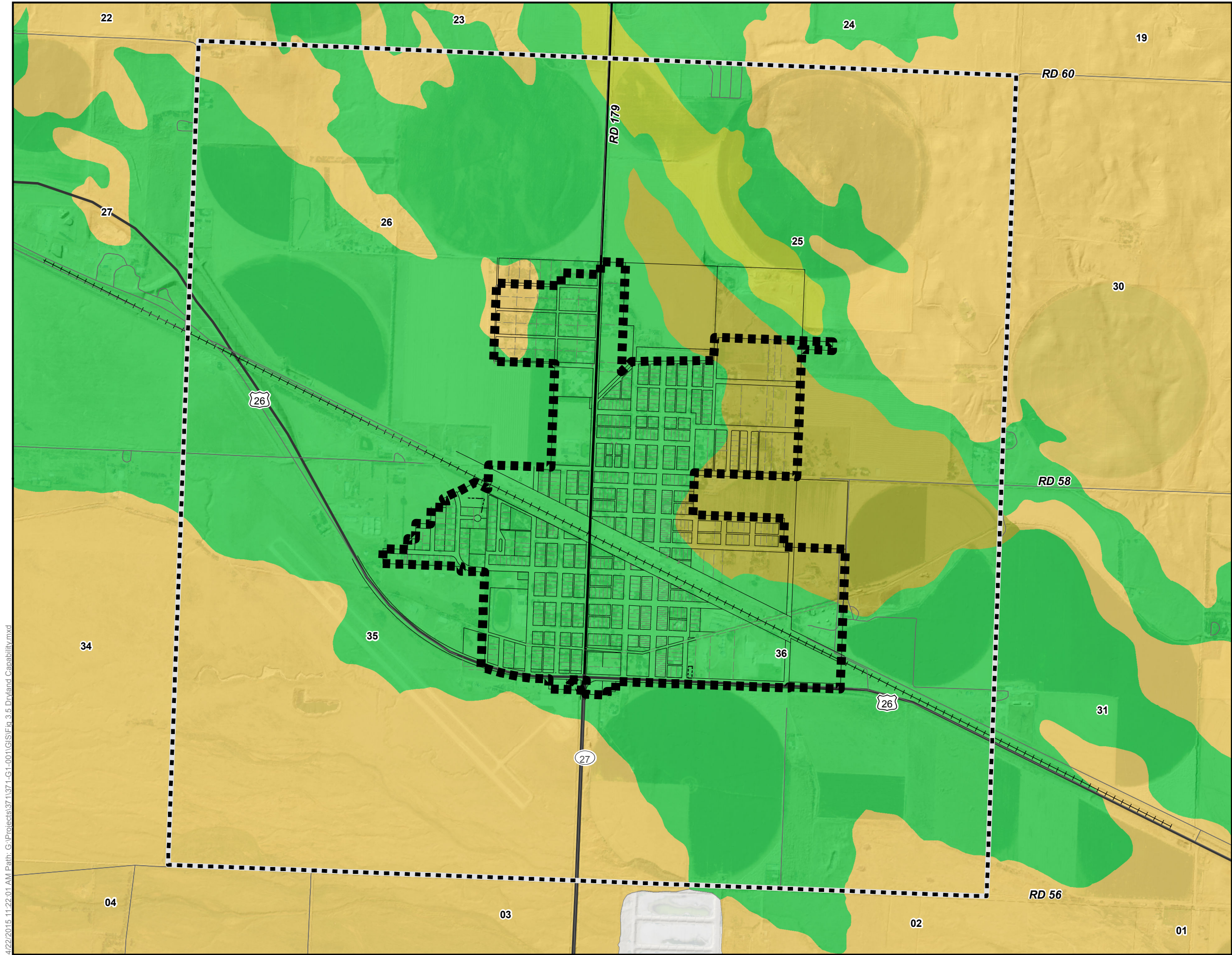
- Not limited
- Somewhat limited
- Very limited
- Water

Source:
Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation
Service 12-31-2013, M&A

Figure 3.4
Soil Suitability For
Sewage Lagoons
By Soil Association Map

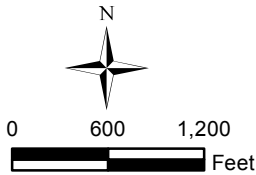
Oshkosh, Nebraska

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Class Description	
Class 1	Soils have few limitations that restrict their use.
Class 2	Soils have some limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices.
Class 3	Soils have some limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require moderate conservation practices or both.
Class 4	Soils have very severe limitations that restrict the choice of plants, require very careful management, or both.
Class 5	Soils have little or no erosion hazard, but have other limitations impractical to remove that limit their use.
Class 6	Soils have very severe limitations that make them generally unsuited to cultivation and limit their use largely to pasture, etc.
Class 7	Soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuited to cultivation and that restrict their use to grazing, etc.
Class 8	Soils/landforms have limitations that preclude their use for commercial plant production and restrict their use.

- Legend**
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
 - Oshkosh Corporate Limits
 - Class 1
 - Class 2
 - Class 3
 - Class 4
 - Class 5
 - Class 6
 - Class 7
 - Class 8

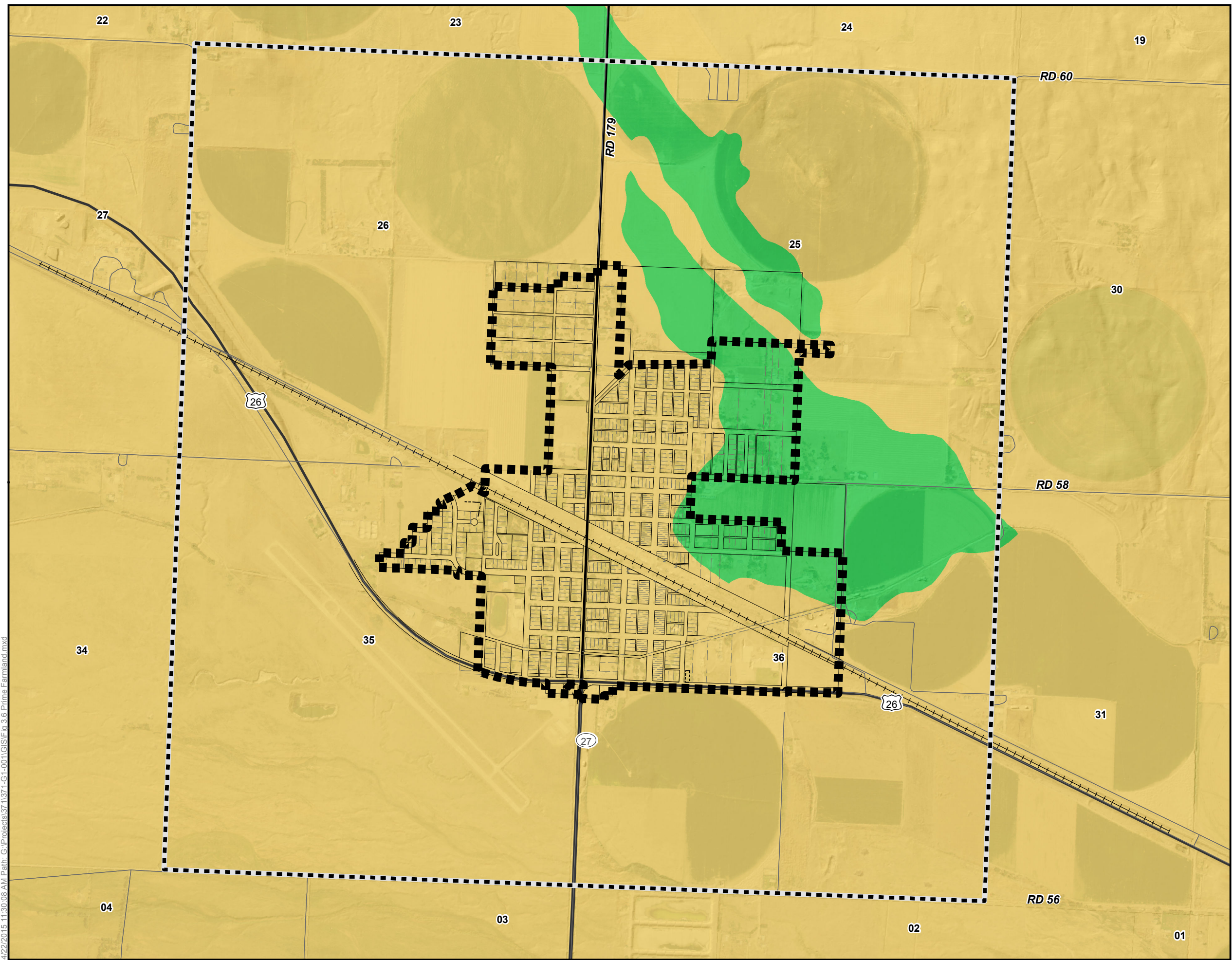
Source:
Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation
Service 12-31-2013, M&A

Figure 3.5
Dryland Capability
Classification By
Soil Association Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

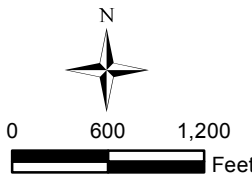
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4/22/2015 11:30:08 AM Path: G:\Projects\371371-G1-001\GIS\Fig. 3.6 Prime Farmland.mxd



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Legend

- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Prime farmland if irrigated
- Prime farmland if irrigated and drained
- Not prime farmland

Source:
Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation
Service 12-31-2013, M&A

Figure 3.6
Soil Suitability For
Prime Farmland
By Soil Association Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

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Water

Nebraska, including Garden County, has an abundance of groundwater supply from the Ogallala Aquifer. Residents within Garden County get their drinking and agricultural water from wells utilizing the bed of porous rocks that form the Ogallala Aquifer. It is a great natural resource for the State of Nebraska, and in turn for Garden County and Oshkosh, but conservation and potential contamination need to be constantly analyzed.

Figure 3.7 shows all of the registered wells within a Wellhead Protection Area that includes approximately 75 percent of the ETJ. The Ogallala Aquifer is the source of water for many irrigation systems and registered wells around Oshkosh in order to supply water to residents, cropland, pastureland, and livestock. The State of Nebraska receives about 80 percent of its public drinking water and nearly 100 percent of its private water supply from groundwater sources. The agriculture economy, upon which most of Nebraska's communities are dependent, is directly tied to these aforementioned water sources, proving contamination to be a major concern. Due to the dependence on groundwater supply, the cost of contamination runs high. The State of Nebraska understands the vital importance of the groundwater supply, and therefore utilizes Natural Resources Districts (NRD). The North Platte NRD plays an important part in protecting this natural resource for Oshkosh and the surrounding areas.

It is also part of Oshkosh's responsibility to protect the quality and availability of drinking water for the region. **Figure 3.7** shows Oshkosh's Wellhead Protection Area as covering all of the City's corporate limits boundary. The goal of the Wellhead Protection Area is to protect the land and groundwater surrounding the public drinking water supply wells from contamination. Any endangerment to the supply threatens the public's health as well as the vital farming economy of the region.

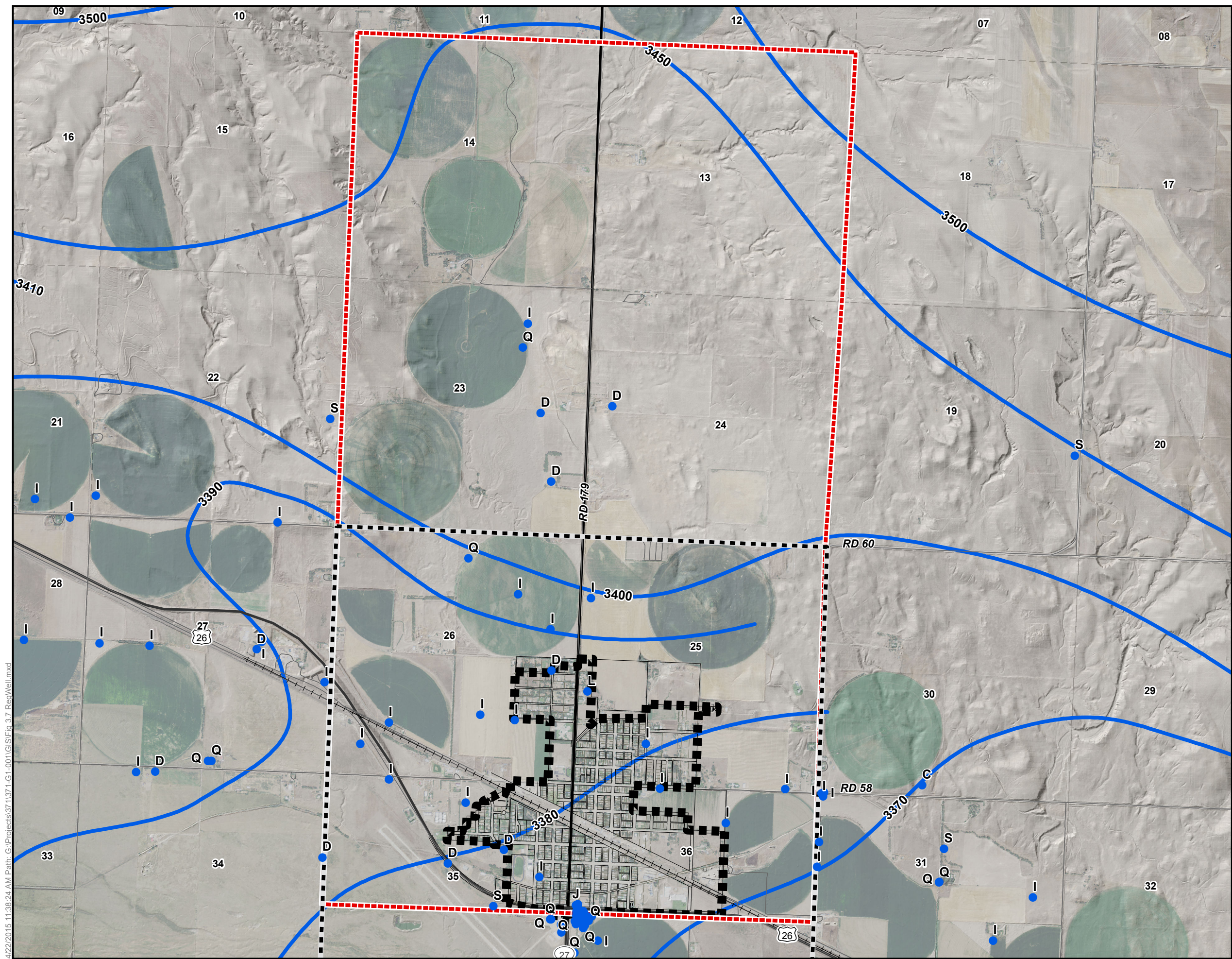
Besides the Ogallala Aquifer, there is one major waterbody in the Oshkosh vicinity. The North Platte River is 1.35 miles south of the City. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) map and the detailed soils map of the Garden County Soil Survey also depict Lost Creek in the Oshkosh vicinity. Flowing from northwest to southeast, the soil survey shows the channel terminating at the north corporate limit of the City. The USGS map shows the channel continuing through the northeast part of the city and ending at the abandoned Oshkosh Canal. The USGS map shows the channel reappearing south of the ETJ and flowing into the North Platte River.

All sources of water can create challenges for development because of the possibility of a high water table, and floodways and floodplains present with surface water. **Figure 3.8** is the floodplain map for Oshkosh. This map shows the 1.0 percent annual flood chance, or the 100-year flood, and the 0.2 percent annual flood chance, or the 500-year flood. The 100-year and 500-year floodplains are designated for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The 100-year floodplain of Lost Creek passes through the ETJ from the northwest to the southeast, including the City of Oshkosh along the north and east boundaries. The 100-year floodplain of the North Platte River covers the southwest corner of the ETJ, outside of the corporate limits of the City. It extends into a small part of one of the Garden County Airport runways. The 500-year floodplain extends beyond the 100-year floodplain boundaries to include most of the remaining area of the ETJ, except for a portion in the northeast corner. The Lost Creek 100-year floodplain has, and will continue to, impact development within the corporate limits of the City of Oshkosh and the ETJ. This includes the corridors of US Highway 26 and the Union Pacific Railroad that are within the 100-year floodplain; an area with commercial development potential.

The 100-year floodplain, of the North Platte River, will likewise impact development within the southwest portion of Oshkosh's planning jurisdiction. As far as water is concerned, though, the high water table in the floodplain is probably a greater constraint than flooding. The water table ranges from 1.5 feet in wet years to 3.0 feet in dry years. As the community continues to grow, future development within the floodplain should only be allowed through the supervision of local, state, and federal regulations.





Legend

- Reg.Well (Use Type)
- ▤ Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- ▨ Wellhead Protection Area
- ▧ Oshkosh Corporate Limits
- Groundwater Contour

"C" = Commercial/Industrial
"D" = Domestic
"G" = Ground Heat Exchanger
"I" = Irrigation
"J" = Injection
"L" = Observation (Ground Water Levels)
"Q" = Monitoring (Ground Water Quality)
"R" = Recovery
"S" = Livestock

Notes:

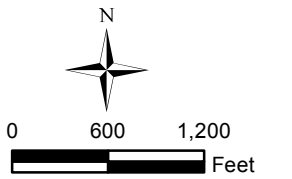
1. 1995 groundwater contours were digitized by the Conservation and Survey Division, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, from Maps developed by the U.S. Geological Survey.
2. Registered well information provided by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, September, 2013.
3. Registered well locations are positioned from well registration forms. Some errors may exist due to data input and inaccuracies within registration records.

* Public wells are not depicted on this map for safety purposes.





Figure 3.7
Registered Well &
Wellhead Protection
Area Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

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Flood Zone

-  1.0% annual flood chance (100-year)
 0.2% annual flood chance (500-year)
 Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
 Oshkosh Corporate Limits

Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation
Services 12-16-2011, M&A

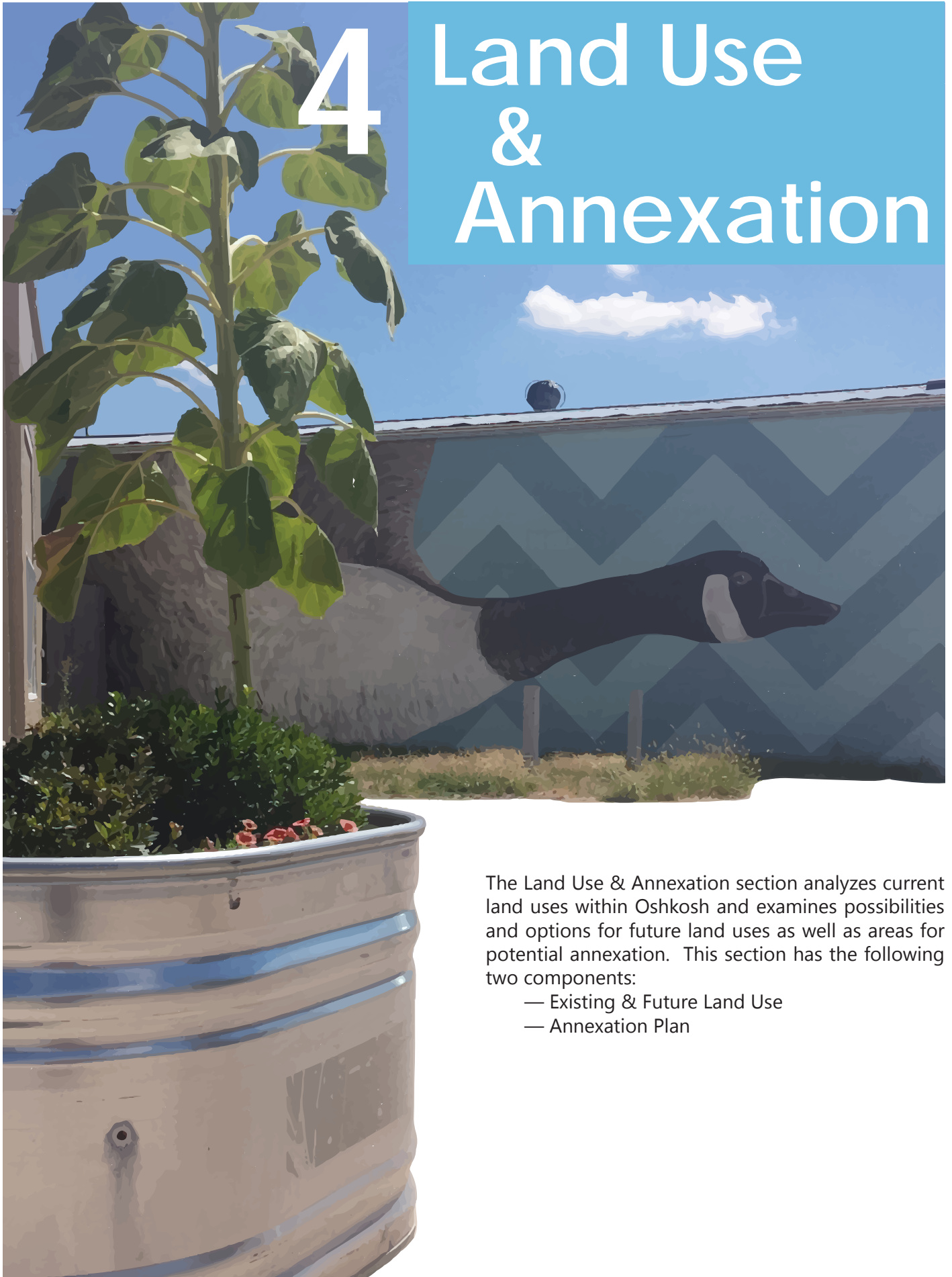
Figure 3.8 Floodplain Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

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4

Land Use & Annexation



The Land Use & Annexation section analyzes current land uses within Oshkosh and examines possibilities and options for future land uses as well as areas for potential annexation. This section has the following two components:

- Existing & Future Land Use
- Annexation Plan

Land Use

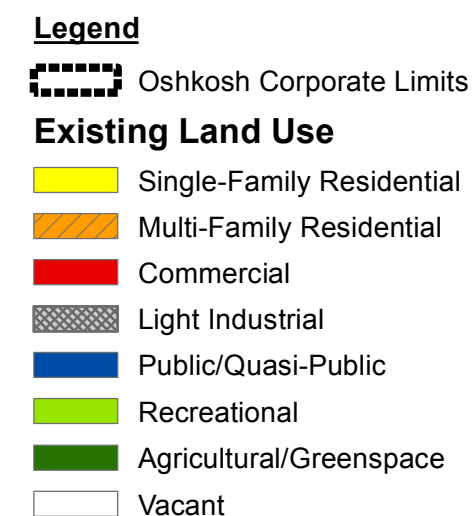
Land use is an important aspect in the Comprehensive Plan allowing community members to visualize existing land uses as well as stimulate discussion and direction for how and where the community could and should grow. How the land is being used creates relationships between the physical, built environment and the social world. Land use planning is an important process because it involves the systematic assessment of physical, social, and economic factors in a way that mitigates the potential for conflict. This section will give decision-makers options on how the community can grow.

Existing Land Use

The land use section of the Comprehensive Plan consists of two separate but related parts. The existing land use section studies and evaluates the pros and cons of Oshkosh's existing mix of land uses and development patterns. **Figure 4.1a**, the Existing Land Use Map, and **Figure 4.1b**, the Existing Land Use ETJ Map, show the current land uses in and around Oshkosh. This allows the City to see how the community's land uses fit together and how the land use patterns should change in the future. Oshkosh has eight different land use classifications including single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, light industrial, public/quasi-public, agricultural/greenspace, recreational, and vacant parcels. Commercial land uses are found along the Highway 26 and Highway 27 corridors, railroad, and Downtown District as well as some other areas spread throughout the community. Commercial properties in any community are typically located in these two areas because of the visibility and access the areas provide for each business. Companies located along the highway corridors typically require easier access, more parking, or larger space/square footage. Larger economic ventures such as manufacturing, bulk storage, or distribution facilities typically fall into the light industrial category and those businesses should be located on the outskirts of the community. Highway and Downtown Districts tend to attract different types of businesses and, for this reason, they also tend to look and feel dramatically different from one another.

Many communities have separate zoning regulations for the highway corridor commercial district and the central/downtown commercial district. Separate districts are necessary because of different setbacks, lot sizes, height restrictions, parking needs, and aesthetic desires for each of the areas. Downtown economic development should be catered towards retail, service, and/or hospitality businesses. It is important to protect the look and feel of the Downtown District because it is the heart of the community. Larger economic ventures are important to the economy because of the revenue and job opportunities they provide for the City; however, these developments should continue to take place along the outskirts of town near Highways 26 and 27 as well as the railroad. Zoning Regulations are important to steer commercial development into proper zoning districts to ensure the mix of adjacent land uses is conducive to the new business.





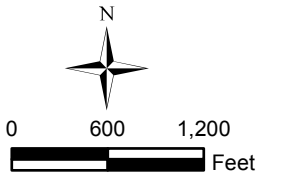
Oshkosh, Nebraska

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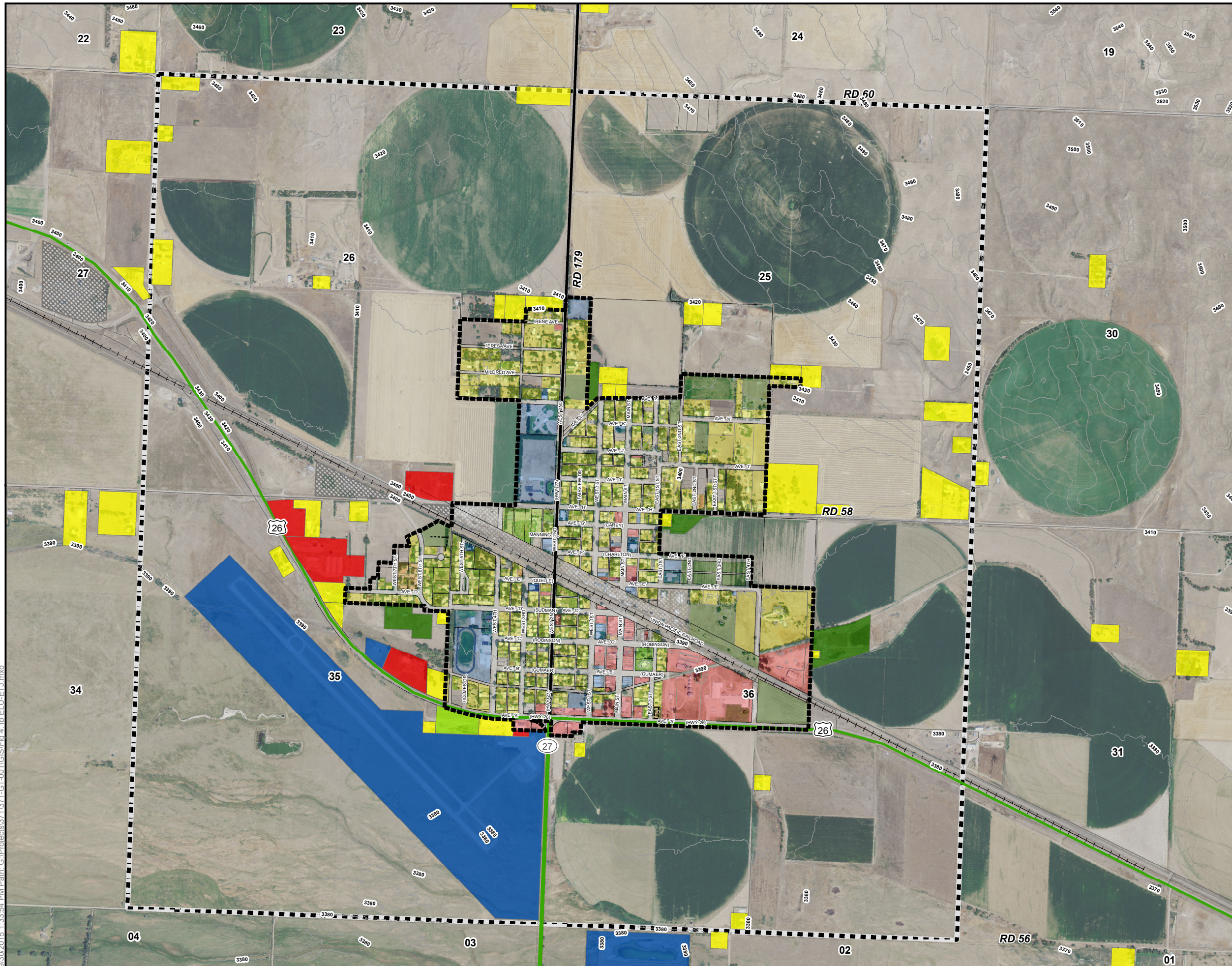
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

Existing Land Use

- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Recreational
- Agricultural/Greenspace
- Vacant

Figure 4.1b
Existing Land Use
ETJ Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska



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The primary land use in Oshkosh is residential. Structures of this nature can be found throughout the community. As obvious as it seems, it is important when planning for any future development to maintain or enhance the existing feel of the neighborhood. This is especially true in residential areas of the community; any new structures built in these neighborhoods should be residential in nature. The existing residential land uses include both single-family and multi-family developments with mixes of single-family detached homes, duplexes, and apartments. There are a few multi-family or medium density developments located throughout the community, most are duplexes constructed within single-family residential areas. Additional residential development has taken place outside the corporate limits but within the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction. These homes are typically classified as rural residential homes including farm homes or single-family homes on large lots. This type of residential development can be very enticing and attractive to people because it allows for large spacious yards and privacy, but also provides a close proximity to the community with some developments even utilizing public infrastructure such as City water and sewer. This proximity also allows easy access to the City's amenities.

There are several recreational areas throughout the community including the municipal swimming pool, ball field, tennis and basketball courts, playground equipment, and picnic shelters. Recreational opportunities can provide amenities for a wide age range of residents in a community. Availability and diversity of recreational services and parks is important to maintain a high quality of life for all residents in Oshkosh, not just the children. There are two main recreational areas in Oshkosh. The first is located south of the elementary school near the City Auditorium. This park has a ball field, tennis courts, basketball courts, and playground equipment. The second recreational area is located on the southeast side of Oshkosh one-half block east of the Downtown District. This park is home to the new municipal swimming pool as well as open greenspace and picnic shelters. Unfortunately, for residents to access either of the parks many must cross the railroad tracks which can be a safety concern especially for children; however, with the railroad running through the middle of the community there are not many other options to avoid this safety concern. As the community grows, changes, or further develops, it will be important to assess the need for improved and additional recreational amenities. One option may be to develop small neighborhood parks to serve adjacent residential areas. This option may help decrease the number of children crossing the railroad and help develop vacant lots in the community created by the removal of buildings that are no longer structurally sound.

Public/quasi-public land uses include churches, municipal properties, school buildings, healthcare facilities, museums, community buildings, etc. These existing land uses are spread throughout Oshkosh, and rightfully so. Public land uses need to be available and accessible by every resident in Oshkosh, as opposed to being concentrated in specific areas, potentially segregating neighborhoods based on available amenities. Public/quasi-public uses are typically considered amenities for residents therefore adding to the quality of life in the community. With several of these public/quasi-public land uses, it is important to analyze the potential need for expansion and availability of vacant land for any expansion. Vacant land in close proximity to public/quasi-public land uses should be considered a positive attribute for any potential future expansion or development of those land uses.

There are also a few areas of land in Oshkosh that are deemed agricultural/greenspace, especially on the fringe of the corporate limits. Some of this land is farmed, and should continue to be until it is necessary to subdivide and develop it for the benefit of the community. Other areas are also considered to be agricultural/greenspace although they may not be farmed. This is possible for several reasons including topographic challenges hindering development of the properties or properties in undesirable locations for development. Even though these areas of land may have development challenges they lend themselves to additional greenspace and/or buffers between the heart of the community and what lies outside of the corporate limits. This land use can also be an important buffer between different land uses such as light industrial or some commercial uses and residential land uses.

There are also a few vacant parcels of land dispersed throughout the community; these lots are platted parcels of ground that may or may not have ever had a structure built on them. The lots are desirable for infill development because of their vicinity to existing public infrastructure; however, the current lot sizes and conditions may not be conducive to attracting potential builders. When developing vacant, infill parcels it is important to maintain the balance of existing land uses surrounding the potential development. Most of the vacant lots are within residential neighborhoods; however, as previously mentioned original platted lots may not be suitable for development based on today's standards. In order to utilize vacant lots for infill development, it may be necessary to build multiple adjacent lots to develop homes based on today's standards.

Table 4.1 shows the approximate percentage each of the existing land use districts makes-up of the total community. Each land use category within the corporate limits can fit into a hierarchy with the least dense classification, single-family residential, on the top of the pyramid and the most dense classification, industrial, on the base of the pyramid. It is important to understand how land uses work with each other, including the need to create a balance between land uses. Having adjacent land uses from differing sides of the pyramid does not create a well-planned balance and may need buffers to help offset the real or perceived conflicts.

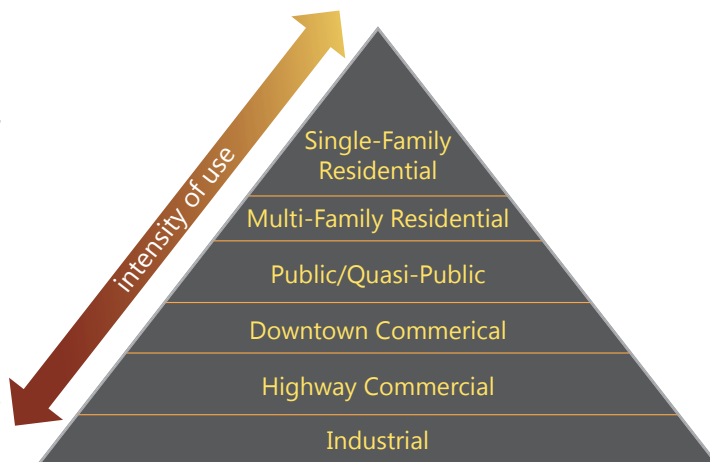


Table 4.1 Existing Land Use, Oshkosh, 2015

Land Use Category	Approximate Percentage
Single-Family Residential	56.63%
Public/Quasi-Public	17.13%
Commercial	9.11%
Vacant	6.99%
Agricultural	6.70%
Multi-Family Residential	0.84%
Recreational	1.40%
Industrial	1.20%
Multi-Family Residential	0.84%
Total Area	100.00%
Source: Miller & Associates, 2015	

Future Land Use

Planning and preparing for future land use options is a vital part of Oshkosh's Comprehensive Plan. Whether a community is growing or shrinking, there will still be changes in land use patterns; therefore, the purpose of this section is to provide a general guide for future development patterns. The idea is to avoid or minimize conflicts between land uses and the environment. The future land use plan must reflect existing land uses and options for changing land use needs. This plan should be flexible in nature in order to change as the community develops. Also, it should be molded to fit the needs, desires, and limitations of Oshkosh and its residents.

Part of the preparation for the Comprehensive Plan was to hold a series of steering group/public input meetings. The input from those meetings was imperative to planning for future land uses. Having an understanding of what residents want and need within the community is important for gaining support and assistance in bettering Oshkosh. A summary of the input collected from one of the first steering group meetings can be found in the following chapter. Information gathered at those meetings as well as existing land uses and data from primary and secondary sources was used to develop the future land use plan. A workshop session was held with residents to determine where they could foresee future development taking place. Legos were used to address land uses, areas for growth, and to show the need for additional land for different land use classifications. A future land use plan should be a vision of what you want the community to look like; a vision of goals with different land uses to encourage 'smart' growth in your community. This vision should be an outlook and a guide for the next ten years.

In order to prepare and plan for the future of Oshkosh, decision-makers need to have ambitions and goals. Realistically, what is the future of Oshkosh going to look like, or what do you want it to look like? The main focus should be to keep the strong community ties and progressive drive while diversifying amenities and the tax base in order to provide a high quality of life for residents. The types of land uses should vary within the community from single and multi-family homes, commercial ventures of different sizes, public areas including recreational amenities and public services, and some vacant land and greenspace for aesthetics and screening/buffering purposes.

Homes should also vary, based on location, size, and price in order to attract a variety of residents. Having compatible housing is important when trying to appeal to new faces in the community. The housing stock versus household income analysis is an important way to determine the type of housing stock needed to best suit the needs and desires of residents. Improving the commercial sector should involve diversifying what is available to Oshkosh's residents. Commercial development should be promoted and developed depending on available resources. However, commercial ventures not only add to the tax base for the City, but also create job opportunities for residents or potential residents of Oshkosh. Envisioning goals as realities is important for the success of Oshkosh; ideas need to become actions in order to turn them into realities. City leaders are ultimately responsible for making the final decisions for the betterment of the community; however, it is up to the residents to hold City leaders accountable and to ensure the goals of the community are being met.

During the steering group/public input meetings many future development ideas were discussed. Attendees were asked to ignore their knowledge of current property owners and to "dream big" for Oshkosh. Exploring every possible option during the planning phase is important in order to be prepared and ensure that any community growth is following the goals outlined in this Comprehensive Plan or any other plan the City has created. **Figure 4.2a**, showing the corporate limits boundary, and **Figure 4.2b**, showing the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City, outline potential areas of new development in and around Oshkosh. These areas will be discussed in detail throughout this section.

Residential and commercial are the most common types of development in small communities. Residential uses make-up the largest percentage of existing land uses in Oshkosh. Single- and multi-family residential construction is also necessary for Oshkosh to continue progressing. The existing housing units are dated and many homes need demolished; however, new home construction is needed to provide feasible options for existing and potential residents. One stick-built home is currently being constructed in Oshkosh, this is the first stick-built home being constructed in Oshkosh in the past ten years. In order to replace the aging, dilapidated housing structures, new homes and rental units will need to be built to create a housing market that can attract people to the community. There are a few vacant lots available throughout the corporate limits and these lots are best suited for infill residential development. The location and size of these lots need to be assessed prior to construction to ensure both attributes are enticing to today's buyers. Infill development helps keep costs down because there is existing public infrastructure; therefore, infill development should be promoted first before the development of a new residential subdivision, which would require infrastructure extension.

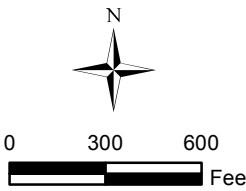
The potential for infill development is shown in the future land use maps; there are a few areas for single- and multi-family developments including scattered lots on the west, north, and east sides of the community. A majority of those lots were originally platted when the largest lots were 50-feet wide and most people did not have a garage; therefore, these lots may be too small to build a home of today's standards. In order to utilize these vacant lots, adjacent properties may need to be combined before there is enough land to build. By combining multiple, adjacent lots, the builder has more land to work with allowing for construction by today's standards for homes which includes a minimum of three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a two car attached garage. Not all vacant lots have a second vacant lot adjacent to them, which makes it difficult to effectively utilize all of the lots available for infill development.

Single-family residential areas, shown in yellow on the future land use maps, include several vacant, infill lots in the southwest and northeast parts of Oshkosh as well as potential areas for residential subdivisions. These areas were determined by residents during a public input session for multiple reasons including proximity to community amenities like the Elementary School and Hospital as well as the ability to connect with existing public infrastructure and tie in with existing streets to provide ingress and egress. The three areas shown for future residential subdivision development have the potential to include multiple lot sizes, providing options for residents. These areas are the most ideal locations for new residential subdivisions; however, the City should encourage infill development before the extra money is spent extending water, sewer, and paving into a new subdivision.

Areas with several vacant lots adjacent to one another may be best suited for multi-family developments. Multi-family housing, shown in orange on the future land use maps, can include a variety of options such as duplexes, four-plexes, townhomes, and apartments. Multi-family housing is typically renter-occupied which lends itself to fulfilling another housing need in small communities, transitional housing. The development of this type of housing would fill a large need in the community catering to young families, single persons, senior citizens, empty-nesters, and more.

Multi-family development can also mean medium-density development, which would have more homes per square acre than a typical single-family residential development. Mobile home parks are typically platted for medium density development. The area to the north, on the map shown as multi-family development would make an ideal location for a mobile home park because of the amount of vacant land available, location, and proximity to public infrastructure. Although this area would work well for a mobile home park, any type of residential development would be best suited for the northern portion of the community. Many of the vacant platted lots on the east side of Oshkosh are also conducive to multi-family development because of the amount of vacant land adjacent to existing infrastructure and because of its location near other duplexes.





Legend

- Wayfinding Improvements
- Crosswalk Improvements
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits

Future Land Use

- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Light Industrial
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Recreational
- Agricultural/Greenspace
- Vacant

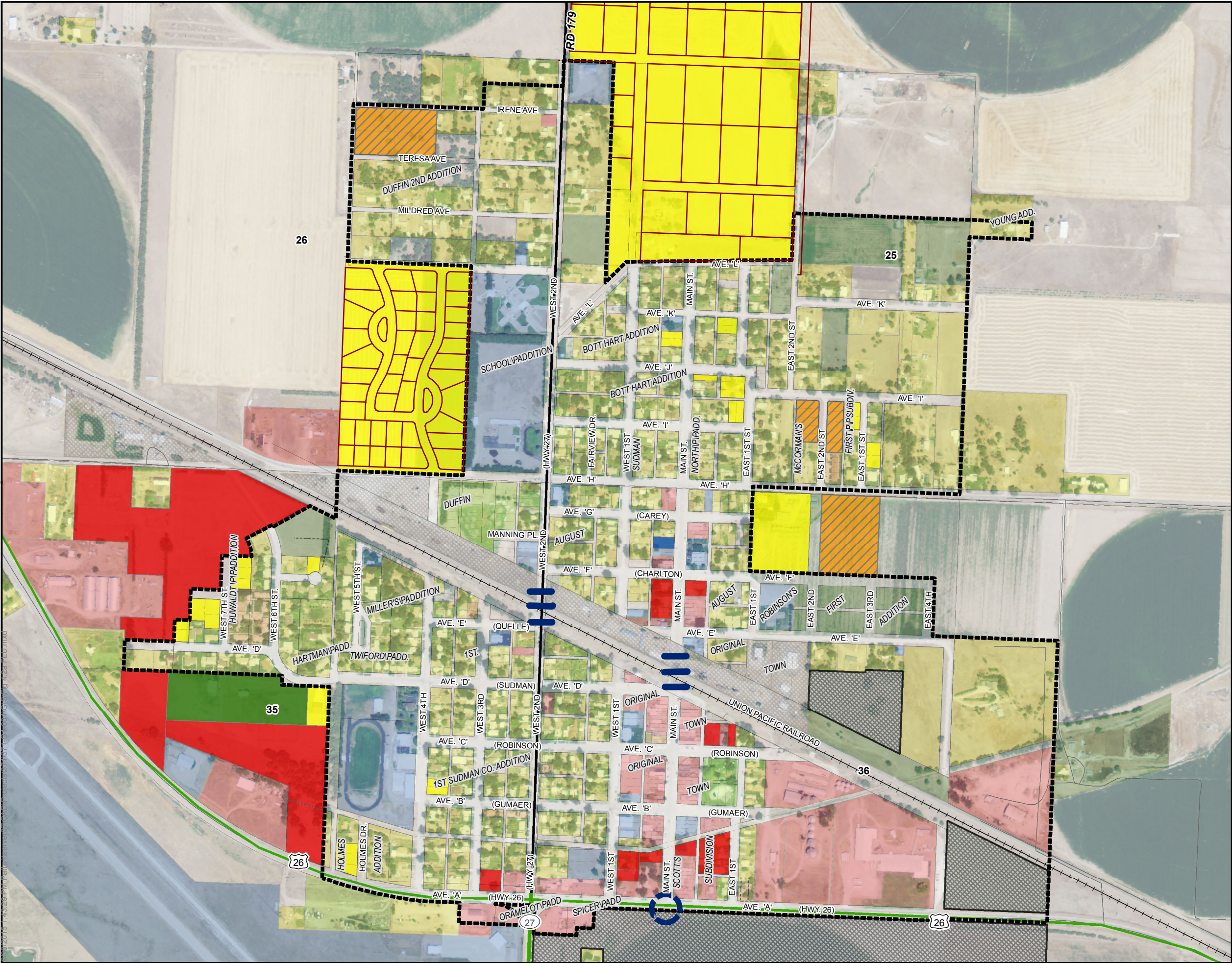
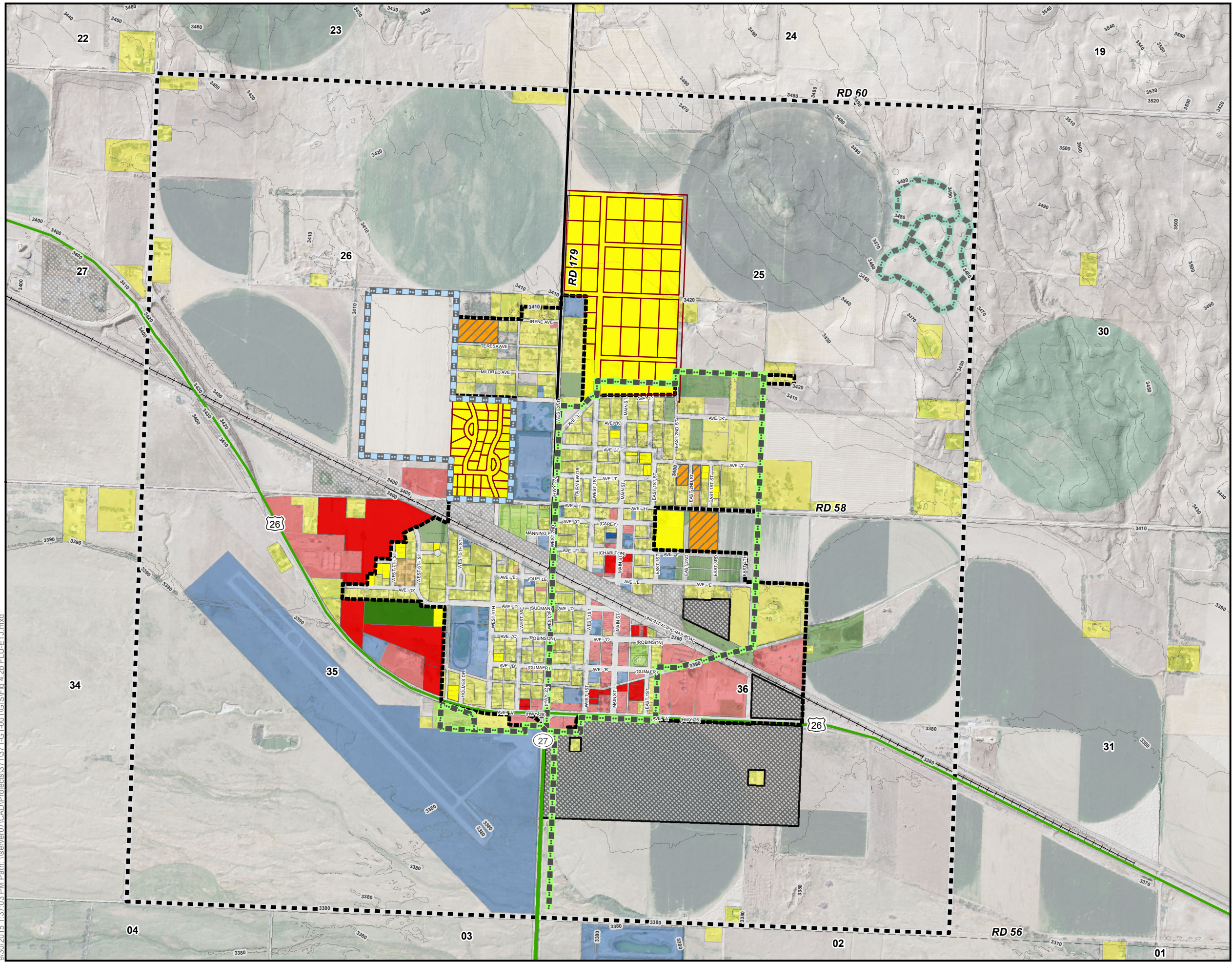


Figure 4.2a
Future Land Use Map
Oshkosh, Nebraska

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- Legend**
- Oshkosh Corporate Limits
 - Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Hike/Bike Trail**
- Route Option #1
 - Route Option #2
 - Route Option #3
- Future Land Use**
- Single-Family Residential
 - Multi-Family Residential
 - Commercial
 - Light Industrial
 - Public/Quasi-Public
 - Recreational
 - Agricultural/Greenspace
 - Vacant

Figure 4.2b
Future Land Use
ETJ Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

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Ideas to keep in mind when planning for future residential development are finding ways to maintain a neighborhood feel, connecting new subdivisions to the existing community to promote accessibility, incorporating greenspace into development plans, and providing a small mixture of lot sizes for different residential development types in larger subdivisions.

Parks and recreation areas are major community assets. Parks provide open space for residents as well as visitors and generally enhance a town's appearance. Proposed recreational development can be seen in light green on the future land use maps. There are two existing parks in Oshkosh, one is located on the north side of the railroad tracks on the west edge of the community and the other park is located on the south side of the railroad tracks one-half block east of the Downtown District. Although it is nice for the community to have two different parks in two locations, having to cross the railroad is a safety hazard for residents, especially children. Improving the railroad crossing for pedestrians as well as the sidewalks in close proximity to each of the parks would be a beneficial improvement for the community.

Another way to minimize pedestrian railroad crossings is to develop additional recreational spaces near residential neighborhoods. These smaller parks would be considered neighborhood parks because the main objective of these spaces is to serve the surrounding neighborhood. A few other recreational amenities the community has to offer is an RV Park on the southwest side of Oshkosh located along Highway 26, a nine-hole golf course south of the community, and the North Platte River which provides many summer-time activities like canoeing, kayaking, tanking, and fishing. The City is working on ways to improve accessibility and increase opportunities for use of the North Platte River and the recreational amenities it provides for residents and visitors of the community. Residents have discussed their desire to construct a hike/bike trail leading south of Oshkosh to connect with a destination point on the North Platte River, near Highway 27. This would provide river access for pedestrians as well as an additional recreational amenity, improving pedestrian accessibility for walking, running, and biking. Trail surface options include a mowed path, crushed concrete, and paved concrete; surface type should be selected to best fit the community's budget as well as to best serve residents who would utilize the trail. Other recreational improvements would be a boat launch on the river for kayaks and canoes, potential parking and loading zones for citizens wanting to make use of the river access, park benches and picnic shelters, and areas to view the sandhills and watch for birds. Oshkosh is already a stopping point for many bird watchers; increasing opportunities and providing locations to bird watch would enhance this appeal for many visitors. Any recreational improvements should be marketed to draw tourist to Oshkosh.

Other hike/bike trail options were discussed by residents and many community stakeholders took the opportunity to draw their desired routes on a large aerial map during one of the public input sessions. These routes can be seen on the future land use maps in this section of the Comprehensive Plan. Different proposed routes are shown on the map. Although hike/bike trails can be costly to construct, they are easily developed in phases which would allow the community the opportunity to develop each phase as time and funding allows. It is also possible to construct different types of trails, as shown in the future land use maps. One option was to include a mowed path trail northeast of Oshkosh because of the terrain and views this area provides. When designing the routes for hike/bike trails it is important to minimize the number of intersections and drive-ways the trail will cross because of the increased safety concerns for pedestrians at each vehicular intersection/driveway. Therefore, route options shown were determined by trying to minimize the amount of vehicular intersections by utilizing land behind homes and businesses. Hike/bike trails can be developed along easements and should be eight to ten feet wide to provide ease of use for pedestrians traveling in each direction. These trail options shown on the future land use map were options discussed by residents. Each of the options can work independently or could all be developed together. Interconnectivity and looping is a nice asset for trails; however, it is not necessary to construct a hike/bike trail loop. Phased development is encourage for the hike/bike trail options shown. One of the trail options shows connectivity between key areas in the community including the pool/park, school, and hospital. Priority areas should be determined and grant options should be researched to assist with hike/bike trail development in Oshkosh.

Commercial development in Oshkosh, like most rural communities, is a work in progress; however, the City has experienced progress with commercial development. A majority of the land that is ideal for commercial and/or light industrial development within the corporate limits has already been developed. Because there is not a supply of shovel-ready sites for commercial development within the corporate limits, businesses would have to assess land that is surrounding Oshkosh. Ideally, the City could annex adjacent land for commercial and/or light industrial development. Several locations have been highlighted on the future land use maps for commercial, shown in red, and light industrial, shown in grey. These lots border the highway corridor and a few areas are also adjacent to the railroad because most businesses are looking for land availability, easy access to transportation, and high visibility. Land along Highway 26 provides all of those things to potential businesses and if the City annexes the land and extends public services to targeted commercial land, Oshkosh would have shovel-ready commercial sites that would easily attract businesses.

Through annexation, the City could capture sales and property taxes from potential businesses along the Highway corridor and would be able to provide development incentives to potential businesses through the TIF process. Oshkosh should consider annexation of prime commercial/light industrial real estate to target for development. Through this process the City would need an infrastructure expansion plan and could possibly include the development/expansion of new infrastructure to serve the annexed areas. This would require a site survey and engineering design before the full cost-benefit analysis could be completed; however, it would mean tax base growth for the community as well as the ability to offer development incentives to potential businesses.

The commercial and light industrial areas shown on the future land use maps were discussed during a public input session. Residents shared their thoughts on having additional space available for commercial development and wanted to ensure the potential locations were in close proximity to existing businesses, the corporate limits, and public infrastructure. The area south of Highway 26 and along the east side of Highway 27 is ideal for a light industrial development or commercial development, depending on the business's needs. This is a large area that would offer many options and opportunities for light industrial or commercial development. Highway access is important for many businesses, but the Highway corridors are also important to the community because they serve as the gateway entrances into the community. Therefore, it is important that any new development would include landscaping, greenspace, and screening to ensure the highway corridor is aesthetically enhanced with each new business as opposed to becoming an eye sore.

The area south of Highway 26 and along the east side of Highway 27 also provides a large amount of land that could be developed for light industrial purposes. Most industrial parks range between 20 to 50 acres, sometimes even larger and the area shown in grey on the future land use map would provide enough space for that type of planning and future development potential. This area is planned on the outskirts of the community for additional reasons such as the possibility of having a light industrial business that may create noise, dust, smell, or other pollution concerns for nearby residents. For this reason, it was planned to have this type of development on the fringe of the community as opposed to the near heart of the community. City leaders should determine potential impacts a new business may have on the surrounding land uses before approving any development permits. This will ensure all concerns are thoroughly analyzed prior to construction. If there are conflicting land uses proposed adjacent to each other a buffer should be encouraged to provide a visual and physical break in the land uses. Some buffers include trees, shrubs, and greenspace while other buffers consist of transitional zoning allowing transitions from higher density land uses to lower density land uses. An example of transitional zoning would be a medium density residential zone between a single-family residential zone and a commercial or light industrial zone. These transitions in the land uses help protect each land use. Careful consideration should be taken when planning for areas of mixed land uses in order to protect the least dense use (i.e. single-family residential) while also allowing the most dense use to have the opportunity to operate without hassle or complaints from the least dense land use.

Both Highways and the railroad are resources that Oshkosh should always try to take advantage of because they provide many opportunities for commercial growth and development. Access, visibility, and land availability along the two Highway corridors and the railroad shaded in red and grey on the Future Land Use Map are highly feasible areas for commercial and/or light industrial developments such as a manufacturing company, Shopko, bulk grain storage, implement dealers, car dealerships, etc. The City should work with potential small business ventures in the retail/trade sector to focus on business development in the Downtown District whereas the large tracts of land on the fringes of the community are prime areas for 'heavier' commercial businesses like manufacturing or car dealerships that require high visibility and traffic volumes as well as access to transportation. Developing along a highway does come with a few constraints including obtaining permits from NDOR to have access onto the highway. NDOR would like to limit the amount of access points for safety purposes because of the high rates of speed people travel on a highway; therefore, frontage roads and cul-de-sacs may need to be constructed in order to best utilize all of the land available while limiting the amount of access points onto Highways 26 and 27.

Desires for downtown improvements were discussed by several residents. Completing a Downtown Revitalization Plan for Oshkosh would address concerns for downtown development and would provide the City with a plan for further revitalization. A Downtown Revitalization Plan will help residents and decision-makers envision an overall look and feel to physically emulate in the City's Downtown District. The planning process allows residents and downtown stakeholders to dream, discuss, and brainstorm ideas for improving the Downtown District and the plan provides images and ideas for aesthetic improvements including facades, awnings, signage, and streetscapes as well as ideas for improving the economic climate in the Downtown District. There is a limited amount of real estate space available in the Downtown District so planning for future commercial development will ensure space is used wisely to continue encouraging growth of downtown businesses. Businesses in the Downtown District should be centered on retail, service, and entertainment such as restaurants, bars, theaters, etc. As shown in the future land use plan maps, the goal for the future of the Downtown District is to encourage appropriate infill development as well as improving the overall appeal for Oshkosh's mainstreet.



Other future development options are to enhance the wayfinding, branding, and beautification throughout the community. Oshkosh already has attention-grabbing entrance signage and landscaping at the intersection of Highway 26 and 27. This look could be duplicated on the east and west sides of Oshkosh along the Highway 26 corridor. Gateway entrances can make a statement to travelers passing by on the Highway creating a good first impression of the community. Wayfinding signage is dual purpose; it directs and informs people while also being aesthetically pleasing and attention grabbing. Based on traffic counts, roughly 2,100 to 2,200 vehicles pass through Oshkosh on Highway 26 every day. Of course, some of those travelers are residents of Oshkosh commuting to and from work; however some of those vehicles are visitors to Oshkosh and the gateway entrance is the City's opportunity to make a good first impression.

Highway 26 through Oshkosh is a way to advertise all that Oshkosh has to offer. Banners, landscaping, beautification, and wayfinding signage highlighting all of Oshkosh's amenities are ways to take advantage of the Highway and promote the community to travelers. A beautified highway corridor helps make a memorable statement to a visitor and can help direct to and promote what the community has to offer. Wayfinding signage could be used to act as directional signage to the parks, museum, Library, Downtown District, Hospital, schools, or anything else the City would like to highlight. This is a "first impression" to visitors, but beautifying the highway corridor may also give residents more of a reason to help keep all of Oshkosh beautiful. Landscaping can be used for aesthetics and screening unwanted sites from vehicles. Land along highway corridors tends to be unsightly in many communities. Screening these land uses from highway travelers can really make a big impact. Zoning regulations are one way to help ensure land along highways and major arterials and connector streets are screened to create an appealing view for travelers. An image showing a potential wayfinding sign, pointing travelers towards Oshkosh's Downtown District, can be found on page 109.

All of the proposed new developments that are not currently in Oshkosh's corporate limits should be annexed into the community prior to any construction. This will allow the City to expand its physical size, population, and tax base while also providing potential benefits to the new developments. The following section discusses Oshkosh's annexation plan in more detail. All of these ideas discussed in the future land use plan are goals to work towards over the next ten years. This plan is to be used as a guide, and to help develop and steer ideas for future development. When planning for future growth it is important to consider any potential issues that could arise in order to protect the City and its current residents. The goal for any community should be to continually move forward with population and development growth, while mitigating the impact on existing residents and property owners. It is important to have ideas and plans in place to steer growth in the right direction.

Annexation Plan

Oshkosh's annexation plan should create opportunities for new development as well as help facilitate the goals of the future land use plan set forth in this document. In order to create opportunities for new development, Oshkosh needs to have a plan in place to reserve the land necessary to successfully accomplish the goals

of the community. To do this, the City may need to consider annexing adjacent territory and expanding its jurisdiction, including its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). This annexation plan, like the future land use plan, is a guide or a tool the City can utilize when discussing future growth and development options. This annexation plan is not law; annexation should take place in a manner that will follow State Statutes and best suit the City's goals and development needs and goals.

The City's annexation plan should do the following:

Protect and Enhance the City's Tax Base

Annexation allows each community to protect and enhance the City's tax base for several reasons. Land along the Highway corridors and along the railroad are prime real estate options for commercial and light industrial development. In order for the City to capture property and sales taxes, those companies need to be within the City limits of Oshkosh. Also, many new business developments want some incentives to build a new facility in a community. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an incentive communities can offer to a potential business. In order for a business to utilize TIF, the development must be located within the City limits. Another facet of annexation includes the benefits citizens receive from the City although they may not own property in the corporate limits. The residents and businesses located in the fringe of the community still benefit from the City's parks, streets, amenities, other facilities and programs, and sometimes even public utilities without having to contribute to the tax base that directly supports those amenities. By annexing this property into the community, these property owners would then be paying taxes for multiple amenities and services they most likely already utilize.

Increase Population and Size

By increasing the City's physical size and population, Oshkosh could also increase its level of political influence and attractiveness to commercial and light industrial developments. Annexation has a way of encouraging new development, which, in turn, can help increase the City's tax base and job opportunities.

Avoid Jurisdictional Confusion

Having a plan in place will ease the confusion of jurisdictions between the City and the County and will help Oshkosh plan for future services by establishing an orderly and logical boundary and understanding how growth will affect public infrastructure needs. This process would be very beneficial for both the City and Garden County, especially because changing boundaries between two different jurisdictions can be cumbersome if plans are not well communicated.

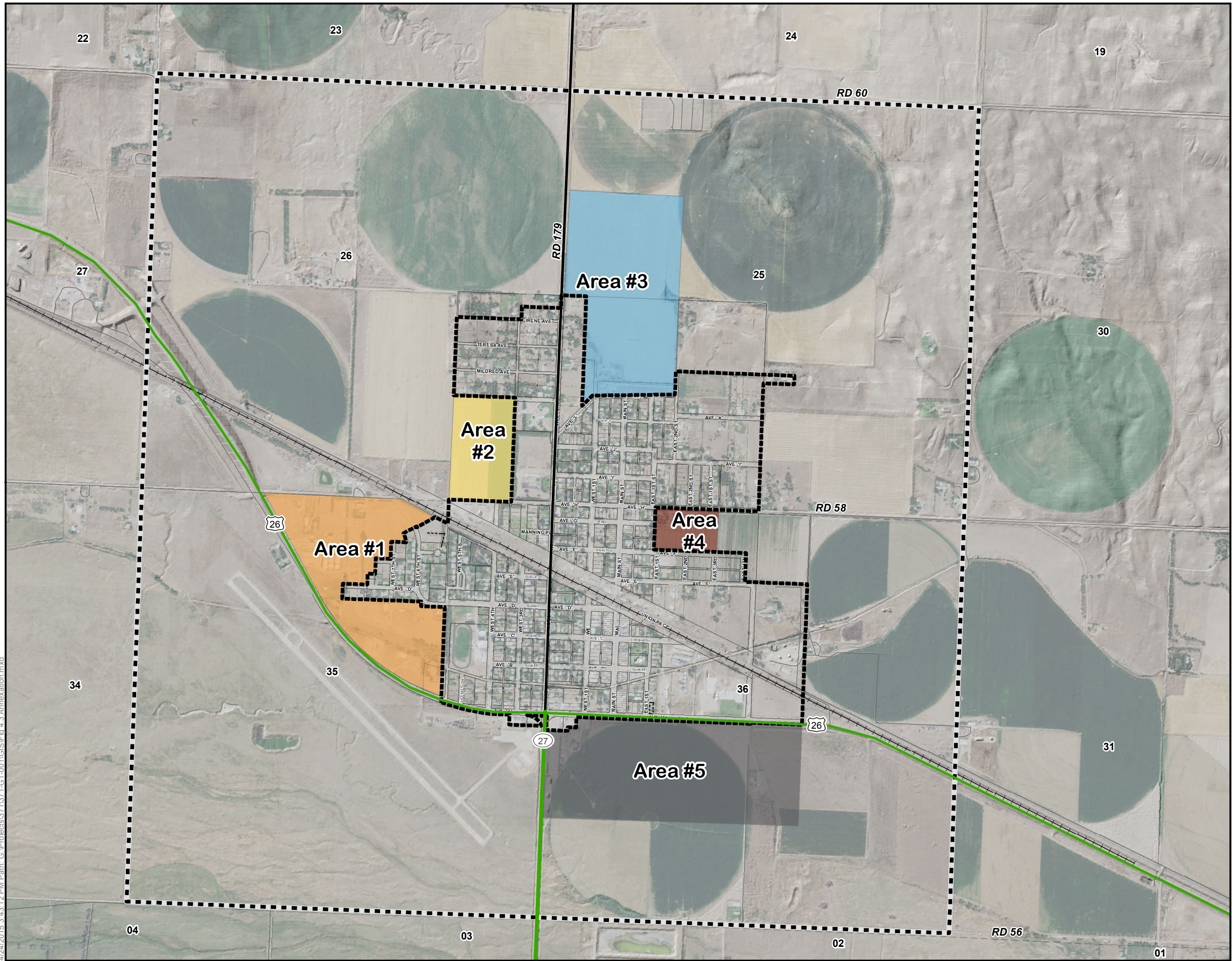
Control Fringe Development

Planning for the growth of Oshkosh is important for the community as well as the land adjacent to the corporate limits. Finding a balance between development and existing land use requires time and planning. Infill development should be promoted until larger parcels of land are needed for growth. This will help avoid sprawling development and protect the agricultural land around the community. Any new annexed land should be for the benefit of residential and commercial development, and public service needs should be assessed as the population of Oshkosh continues to change. Through annexation, Oshkosh can extend its zoning jurisdiction to adjacent areas and thus guide development in a direction that will provide a safe and healthy environment for residents and businesses in the community.

Annexation should follow the guidelines set forth through Nebraska State Statute 19-3052. As seen in **Figure 4.3** the proposed areas for the annexation plan are the following:

1. Area 1 is located on the southwest side of Oshkosh, along Highway 26. This annexation area would include existing single-family homes, businesses, public/quasi-public land uses, and undeveloped farm ground that could be developed for new or expanding businesses. This property is adjacent to existing public infrastructure and closely borders the existing corporate limits boundary of Oshkosh. The north boundary of Area 1 follows a section line allowing for a clear determination of the boundary line. This area is ideal for additional commercial development because of the close proximity to Highway 26. With the Garden County Airport located on the south side of Highway 26, any type of development must be carefully reviewed before it is approved due to the height restrictions.
2. Area 2 is located on the west side of Oshkosh near the elementary school and hospital. The annexation of Area 2 includes vacant, agricultural land. Because of the location and close proximity to the school and hospital, this space creates a well-suited development site for a residential subdivision. This land also lends itself nicely to tying into the existing grid system for transportation access and proper ingress and egress. Lots developed for the proposed annexation area could follow a typical single-family, low density pattern of development, but would also be well suited for larger lot residential development.
3. Area 3 is also located on the north side of town, along the east side of Road 179. This proposed annexation includes vacant, agricultural land and single-family homes near the existing corporate limits of Oshkosh. This area of land, like Area 2, is suited best for residential development; because of the size of Area 3, large lot residential development is the most appropriate fit and provides residents with a rural residential style. The south side of Area 3 could be developed into more traditional single-family lots to tie in with the existing development. This area, like Area 2, also lends itself to a connection with the existing transportation infrastructure providing proper ingress and egress for the site.
4. Area 4 is located on the east side of Oshkosh. This annexation area would include a property with vacant, agricultural land as well as an existing single-family home. Development of this land could very likely replicate existing residential development on the west, north, and east sides of Area 4 including single- and multi-family development. This land is in close proximity to existing public infrastructure and is surrounded on three sides by the existing corporate limits boundary. The floodplain boundary borders the east edge of Area 4; therefore, it would be important to ensure the new development does not adversely affect the floodplain. The positives of Area 2 and Area 3 are also present in Area 4 due to the proximity of existing public infrastructure, ability to connect with the road network, and the type of development surrounding each area, which allows for future residential development.
5. Area 5 is located on the south side of town, along Highways 26 and 27. This proposed area of annexation includes undeveloped agricultural land, and rural residential establishment. This area is prime real estate for light industrial or commercial development because of the access to transportation, accessibility, and the availability of a large amount of undeveloped land. With the ability to be subdivided into a variety of parcel sizes for commercial and/or light industrial development, this area could significantly increase the community's tax base. This area lies directly east of the Garden County Airport; therefore, height restrictions need to be taken into consideration before approval of development in Area 5. Because this land sits along the Highway corridors, extra precaution should be taken to ensure the gateway entrances and highway corridors through the community are clean, attractive areas to enhance the overall charm of the community.

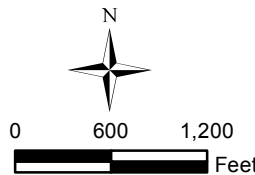
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



-  Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
-  Oshkosh Corporate Limits
-  Area #1
-  Area #2
-  Area #3
-  Area #4
-  Area #5

Figure 4.3
Annexation Plan Map

Oshkosh, Nebraska

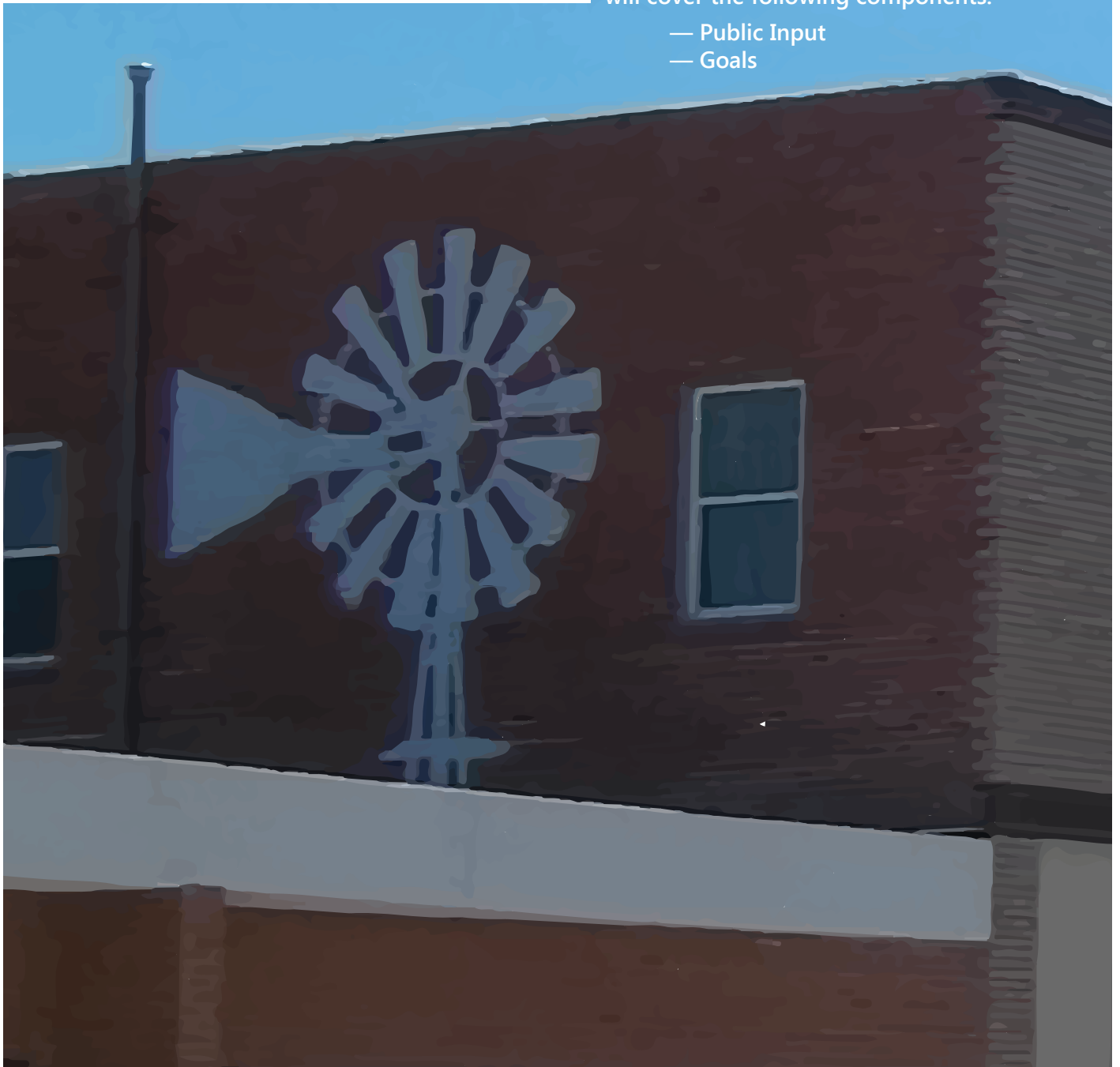
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5

Public Input & Goals

This section of the Oshkosh Comprehensive Plan; is the action section. It is here to help plan goals, guidelines, regulations, and future practices for the community. The goal of this Strategic Planning section is to help decision-makers implement the visions and actions presented by the plan through a realistic process, in line with City resources. This Strategic Planning section will cover the following components:

- Public Input
- Goals



Public Input

These questions were asked during the first public input sessions in the planning stages of the Comprehensive Plan. Residents had the chance to openly discuss some of their responses. This is

called a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. Strengths are viewed as assets to the community; areas community members want to retain and continue to improve. The weaknesses are seen as areas that need improvement in the community. Opportunities are viewed as potential areas of gain in the future, and threats are seen as challenges that may hinder the growth and development of Oshkosh.

Strengths (Now/Internal-advantages, things that are unique to Oshkosh)

- Hospital and Medical Services
- Pharmacy
- Veterinarians
- Good Existing Workforce
- County High School
- Summer Traffic – Bikers Go Through to Sturgis Blackhills
- Strong School System – Students Have Left and Made Their Mark
- Auditorium
- Transportation – New Bus
- Courthouse
- Senior Center – Senior Exercises
- Grow Garden County
- Campgrounds
- Swimming Pool
- Local Generosity
- Tight-Knit Community
- Soccer Fields – Tournaments for Soccer and Football – Brings Visitors to Town
- Centennial Celebration
- Natural Beauty
- Crescent Lake
- Golf Course
- Veterans Office – Veterans Benefits
- Proximity to Larger Communities
- Low Cost of Living
- Authors
- Something for Everyone
- Bird Watching
- Hunting
- Organizations – High Number of Volunteers
- Cultural Diversity in County
- Ballfield
- 2 Daycares
- 2 Motels – Full Most of the Time
- Sandhills
- River
- Airport – Recent Remodel
- Museums
- Artists
- Girl Who Paints Buildings (Ogallala Native)
- Library
- Community Spirit
- Community Benefits
- 4th of July Celebration
- Fall Festival
- City is Personal
- Remoteness
- Railroad – Central Office
- Businesses – Cabela's, True Value, Valley Tire, Eagle's, Attorneys, Hairdressers, Real Estate, Cleaner, Grocery Store, Florist, Mortuary, Etc.

Weaknesses (Now/Internal-limitations, where could Oshkosh improve, what should we avoid)

- No Eateries Open in the Evenings
- Lack of Housing (Rentals and Ownership)
- Family-owned Homes that People Won't Sell
- Vacant Property Owners
- Empty Lots in Floodplain
- Railroad
- Bank Does Not Support Residential Loans
- Lack of Workforce (Do Not Have Enough People)
- Dwindling Population
- Fewer Students
- Lack of Activities for Students
- Rent Costs
- Beautification
- Generation Afraid of Change/Resistance to Change in Community
- Ordinance Enforcement
- Noise Pollution from Trains
- Lack of Information Shared (LB480, Kino, Grow Garden County Office)
- Scenic By-Way Restrictions

Opportunities (Future-opportunities for Oshkosh to improve, grow, attract new people/businesses)

- Bar/Tavern – Evening Eateries (Games)
- Learn to Celebrate Diversity
- Traffic Count
- Recycling Facility
- Downtown Improvements
- Outdoor Tourism
- Hike/Bike Trail
- Proximity to Colorado (Recreational Marijuana)
- Playground Equipment
- School-Aged Kids
- Market To New Residents – Out-of-Towners
- Investment Group – For Purchasing/Flipping Homes
- Gateway Entrance Development
- Organization of Information Passed Out By City to New and Potential Residents
- Resource for People to Find Jobs (Write Resumes) – Technical Skills for Writing
- Code Enforcement
- Revamp LB840 Form
- Train Safety Sirens
- Market to Motorcyclists (route to Sturgis)

Threats (Future-what obstacles does Oshkosh face, what are other communities doing)

- Agricultural Economy
- Lifeguards
- School-Age Opportunities
- Downtown Utility Improvements
- Nepotism
- Walmart in Ogallala
- Population Shift

This section is in place to give ideas, summaries, and guidelines for the future growth and development of Oshkosh. These goals are a combination of information gathered from the public input sessions, data analysis, and prioritization. They are intended to be long-term goals with the understanding that they will require time and attention over the next several years; City leaders and community stakeholders have desires to accomplish these goals within a ten-year timeframe with the knowledge and realization that many will take even longer. The importance of these goals is that they are realistic in nature, but allow the community to continually have something to strive towards.

Goals

Quick Look

Improve the Existing Housing Market
Promote Commercial Development
Enhance Highway Corridors & Community Beautification
Develop Marketing Campaign
Improve Public Infrastructure
Expand Recreational Attractions and Amenities

Improve the Existing Housing Market

Community stakeholders have discussed many needs over the past year. Housing has remained a priority with goals focused on demolishing vacant or dilapidated structures, providing shovel-ready lots for new home construction, and providing assistance with owner-occupied housing rehabilitation. Many different objectives have been discussed to ensure each housing goal is reached. Housing market improvements are challenging because they require private investment and development that cannot be forced. The City can work towards several of the objectives to increase opportunities for private investment. There is a need for quality, mid-level homes in Oshkosh; new home construction would boost the overall housing market by adding quality, up-to-date homes, increase the price points of homes, and improve the overall development mentality in Oshkosh.

As discussed earlier in this plan, there is a housing shortage in Oshkosh for both rental and owner-occupied units. In order to solve this issue a few things can be done. The obvious answer is to develop more housing, but to accomplish this goal, private developers or local investors will need to be willing to participate otherwise residential development will only happen when a person/family constructs their own private residence. Evaluating the number, location, and desirability of the current vacant lots in the community will provide City leaders with an understanding of the number of vacant lots readily available for residential development. Unfortunately, many of the existing vacant lots are too small to build a new home by today's standards. Therefore, it may be necessary to assess the availability of vacant lots adjacent to other vacant lots.

Housing development and job growth/economic development fits the old adage, *What comes first, the chicken or the egg?* Developing new housing will help to attract new residents to Oshkosh working as a chain reaction, with new homes available, families could move to town and enroll their children in Garden County Schools, keeping Oshkosh a viable community with a high quality of life for all residents. With more families in the community, it may also open more jobs. If more jobs are available in Oshkosh, it is most likely that employees will want to live in the community. Decent, attractive, and affordable homes, as well as shovel-ready lots need to be available to encourage new employees to live in Oshkosh instead of a nearby community. With a close correlation between the housing market and economic climate for businesses it is even more crucial for housing market improvements to be taken seriously and made a top priority.

Demolition of existing substandard housing units and new home construction were two of the main objectives discussed by residents. There are approximately 33 houses in Oshkosh that are currently in substandard condition and should be demolished or have extensive rehabilitation. There is also a shortage of homes valued between \$50,000 and \$100,000 as well as \$150,000 and \$300,000 based on the housing affordability analysis. Residents discussed the need of affordable and desirable homes for moderate-income households which could fill the need as outlined in the housing affordability analysis.



Another housing option discussed by residents was the need for transitional housing development. Residents see the need to expand transitional housing options in the community for potential new residents, residents who do not want to maintain the exterior of their property, residents who are not wanting a large home but are not ready for assisted or convalescent care living, or any other person(s) looking for a two-to-four bedroom housing unit with a garage and decent-sized living space. Transitional housing could include duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, etc.; the most important need with transitional housing, as discussed by residents of Oshkosh, is to offer exterior home maintenance and care services for residents of the units. One major obstacle with developing more homes to fill the two value ranges detailed in the housing affordability analysis is the challenge to construct a home for under \$180,000; therefore, this mid-level housing will have to come from existing structures in the community. Many updates to homes would need to be made in order to modernize a home and increase the value to fit the price range and attract a mature family needing or desiring a move-in-ready home.

The City can be involved in housing improvements in a few different ways. Cleaning up lots and demolishing uninhabitable homes in Oshkosh is an on-going task; however, it will create more lots for new infill development as well as rid the neighborhood of eye sores that are also safety hazards. This is the number one priority objective as discussed by City stakeholders through the public input process. Razing vacant, dilapidated residential properties will help to improve the overall appearance, the overall housing market, and provide additional lots for infill residential development. Improving the condition of the existing housing stock will also help attract new residents to the community because the condition of the homes available would be more appealing to buyers. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) can be used in a redevelopment area to carry out plans for the demolition of structures determined by the City to be unsafe or unfit for human occupancy. This is new to the Community Development Law with LB 729, and Oshkosh should look into this option to see how it could benefit the community.

Oshkosh can also access funds for demolition through Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The only stipulation for this grant is a new housing structure must be constructed on the newly vacant lot, and it will only be available to residents who qualify as low-to-moderate income (LMI). This is a way to rid the community of an unsafe, unsightly dwelling and replace it with a new home; however, the new home may not be available to all citizens who are looking to purchase a home. Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) through CDBG has offered owner-occupied housing rehabilitation funds which is a resource Oshkosh has historically utilized through Panhandle Area Development District. The City could also work to create incentives for home-owners and people wishing to purchase homes such as down-payment assistance, first-time home-buyers credits, free-lot program, and a home-ownership rehabilitation program to encourage improvements to the housing market. Oshkosh's officials should look into each of these avenues to determine what resources may be feasible for the City to help incentivize housing market improvements for the community.

The public-private partnerships will be key as the City tries to accomplish this goal of housing market improvements. If private developers are not able to relieve all of the pressure on the housing market in Oshkosh, then local investors or a local committee may need to implement a plan for home development. Some communities have a group of residents who contribute money to begin the process; funds contributed are then used to build a spec home, also employing a local contractor; the home is then sold and the money is used to build another spec home, continuing the process for these communities. This has been a feasible model for home construction in small communities throughout Nebraska and it could be an avenue for Oshkosh to look into although it takes a motivated leader and group of people willing to invest money for the housing cause. Other communities have proven this to be successful, and Oshkosh has the ability and potential resources to do so as well. Oshkosh has been taking all of the right steps to ensure the housing market is capable of expanding to support an increasing population and stimulate growth. Because the City is eligible for Community Development Block Grants through NDED, Oshkosh should also look for potential grant opportunities to assist with new home construction, home-owner rehabilitation, renter-occupied rehabilitation, and demolition.

In order to make housing market improvements the City should work to meet the following objectives:

Clean-up vacant out lots and uninhabitable properties;

All vacant lots and vacant uninhabitable homes are properties that could be utilized for infill residential development. The City should access different avenues available to them to assist with the clean-up of vacant lots and uninhabitable properties. There is not a large amount of lots available for infill development; therefore, efforts should be made to create more availability. Also, by cleaning up vacant lots and uninhabitable homes the City will be able to rid the community of unnecessary eye sores and safety and health hazards. Based on data presented previously in this Plan, approximately 33 homes need to be demolished because of the age and condition. The City will need to complete a Blight and Substandard Study as a first step, in order to utilize tax increment financing (TIF). TIF could then be used to help with property demolition as well as infrastructure improvements to assist with shovel-ready site development for new home construction.

Work with local businesses to determine housing needs for employees;

By working with local employers, the City may be able to get a feel for real-time and projected housing needs in the community. Having these discussions with employers is beneficial for multiple reasons, it shows support for the local businesses and it opens the line of communication between the City and employers to help provide beneficial information to one or the other. Local businesses may also be able or willing to offer assistance with improving the housing market conditions in Oshkosh. Some businesses across the State have been able to find ways to assist employees with challenging housing markets in their community. Some have been able to provide down-payment assistance for their employees, some have purchased homes to rent to their employees, some businesses have even been able to help build spec housing to offer to new or existing employees. There are many ways businesses may want to get involved to benefit the community and their company as well, but the conversations must be had between City leaders and employers to determine if businesses are willing or able to assist with housing market improvements.

Create Investment Group to develop spec homes;

Stakeholder citizens should be encouraged to create an Investment Group of some type in order to build spec housing in Oshkosh. Many times, people are afraid to construct a new home on their own; however, if a group of residents was able to get the ball rolling, it may prove to be beneficial for existing and potential residents as well as provide some relief for the housing market. If the home can be marketed and sold prior to completing construction, it is more desirable for the contractor, investor, and homebuyer. The homebuyer is then able to personalize the home to fit their needs, the investor is able to get their return, and the contractor is able to work with the homebuyer to finalize the home based on their wants and needs. Therefore it is encouraged to market the home prior to and/or during construction so the home does not sit on the market because of poor finishing touch decisions that do not fit what a buyer is looking for. This same principle may be applied to develop residential lots for construction.

Promote infill development;

Infill development, by its nature, is less expensive because there is no need to extend public utility services. Infill development utilizes existing public infrastructure, filling in vacant properties with residences. By promoting infill development, the City can save funds by avoiding sprawl and the need to extend public infrastructure to new developments on the out-skirts of the community. There are a few potential infill areas that would be ideal locations for multi-family development. These areas should be considered for duplex to four-plex development because there are multiple vacant lots adjacent to one another providing enough land for a multi-family development. There is a need for rental housing and constructing these units on infill lots will help lower development costs. The City should create a database of vacant lots available for new construction to show residents or developers who are interested in building in Oshkosh. At a minimum, the database should include lot location, lot size, lot price, and current zone. This database could be kept electronically or could be developed as an overlay on an aerial map of the City. It would be important to keep this database updated as lots are developed and new lots come on the market.

Apply for home-owner rehabilitation grant funds/create City-funded home-owner rehabilitation fund;

At this time, Oshkosh is eligible to apply for owner-occupied rehabilitation funds through NDED. This program would provide seed money to start a revolving loan fund in Oshkosh to be able to offer assistance to homeowners with rehabilitation needs including exterior and energy efficiency improvements. This is a very good grant program for the City to utilize on their own or to use while working with Panhandle Area Development District. Although this grant program could be beneficial for many residents, there are a few requirements that come with the grant funds including the number of residents who would qualify for the funds. Through this grant program the funds can only be offered to residents who own their own home and sit below a pre-determined annual income set by the Federal government. In order to offer funds to a broader range of residents in Oshkosh, the City could create their own loan program for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation setting guidelines and regulations based on the needs of residents in the City. This option may be attractive to the City and its residents because the City could help middle-income residents while also boosting the existing housing conditions in the community. If the City creates their own revolving loan fund, they have the ability to set their own guidelines, income-restrictions, interest rates, pay-back regulations, etc. The City could create a program to fit the needs of their community.

Encourage property upkeep; and,

The City should work to incentivize as well as continually follow-through with nuisance abatement throughout the community to encourage residents to maintain their properties. A clean community is attractive to visitors, potential residents, and potential new businesses. A "Yard of the Month" program or some type of incentive could be created to encourage residents to maintain their properties and take pride in the way the community looks. Property upkeep is essential as the community works to encourage new development.

Locates areas for future residential development.

The City should use the future land use plan map in this Comprehensive Plan to establish target areas for all types of residential development including large lots, single-family homes, transitional housing, and other types of medium-density rental housing in order to fill all of the needs within the community. Although the City may not need to develop additional residential subdivisions at this time, it is important to target areas that are attractive for residential development in order to plan for growth and development in Oshkosh. On a smaller-scale, this could also be completed for vacant lots eligible for infill development.

Promote Commercial Development

Making improvements to Oshkosh's commercial sector and providing opportunities for increasing commercial businesses is another priority goal of Oshkosh's stakeholders. The City is home to several unique businesses including a specialty coffee roasting/production facility and Cabela's Return Center as well as several services and businesses that greatly contribute to the quality of life in Oshkosh. Those businesses include a grocery store, hospital Library, Museums, restaurants, antique shops, bowling alley, and more. Because of Oshkosh's geographic location, the community faces certain advantages and challenges for attracting and retaining commercial services and businesses. Commercial goals, determined by Oshkosh's stakeholders, include developing shovel-ready sites for new commercial development, creating an incubator space to promote entrepreneurship and business start-ups, and making improvements to the overall Downtown District.

Oshkosh has a vibrant Downtown District which is situated on Main Street, starting one block north of Highway 26, as well as a commercial and light industrial sector which can mainly be found along the Highway 26 corridor. The Downtown District is home to many existing retail and service industry businesses including offices, restaurants, and retail shops. Ideas for creating a distinct appeal for the Downtown District would come from a Downtown Revitalization Plan. This plan would give the City ideas on aesthetic improvements, traffic and pedestrian flow, parking, and potential residential opportunities. The City of Oshkosh needs to first achieve the designation of Leadership Community from the NDED. This is no longer a requirement to apply for Downtown Revitalization grant funds; however, communities with the Leadership Community designation receive 75 extra points on their Downtown Revitalization grant application scoring making it important for communities to complete this step for the highly competitive grant program. The first grant is a Downtown Revitalization Planning grant. Just like any other planning process, including the one for this Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Revitalization planning process should include several opportunities for public input from building and business owners downtown, City officials, and other community stakeholders. The plan would be a guide for development in the Downtown District. The positive side of following NDED's guidelines for Downtown Revitalization and seeking grant funding for the planning process through the State includes the opportunity to apply for Phase II funds which historically have been \$350,000 for physical improvements in the Downtown District which were outlined in the Downtown Revitalization Plan.

Because commercial development is so heavily hinged on attracting private investors/business owners it is essential for the community to constantly work on attracting new businesses in order to grow the tax base. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an important card to hold when private developers are interested in commercial developments. New commercial development will create more job opportunities which in turn attracts new people to Oshkosh, increases the City's tax base, and potentially provides residents with a new amenity or place to shop or eat. Developing relationships and resources, such as TIF and the Economic Development office as well as other resources these programs create, is beneficial for private developers and existing businesses. Promoting and marketing Oshkosh's assets, needs, location, funding sources/incentives, and land availability will be key to attracting private investment. One statewide source the City can utilize to share land and building availability information as well as a community profile for possibly attracting new businesses to the community is Location One Information Systems (LOIS). LOIS is an online database that the State of Nebraska, as well as many other states, utilize to share current information with potential businesses. For example, an owner wanting to expand his manufacturing business could look at LOIS's website and search for the specific requirements necessary for his business including location, land availability based on size, availability of public utilities, etc.

Recruitment of new businesses should be based on the feasibility of the business being successful in the region as well as how it will complement the existing industries, such as agriculture sector which is vital to the progress and growth of Oshkosh. Businesses in the agricultural sector currently exist in Oshkosh, but expanding this sector with complementary businesses could not only benefit the City but also help existing agricultural businesses and possibly lead to expansions for those existing businesses. When potential commercial companies start looking at Oshkosh, the City should consider how these developments might impact existing businesses within town. To ensure existing businesses have the opportunity to expand, new businesses will need to complement the existing economic industries in Oshkosh.

Because of the limited space available in the downtown district, vacancies should be filled by retail and/or basic service sector businesses. Larger companies or service businesses providing a unique service may best fit along the Highway 26 and 27 corridors. In order to have a distinct Downtown District appeal, the sidewalks need to be filled, store fronts need to be decorated, and businesses need to be open. Some businesses, even in the service sector, do not fulfill all of those needs for the Downtown District; therefore, the selective retail space should be left to retail and entertainment oriented businesses which encourage pedestrian traffic throughout the day, evenings, and weekends. During public input sessions, residents discussed their desires and wants for additional retail, entertainment, and service businesses which would fit well in the Downtown District. Residents of Oshkosh need to support existing and any new businesses in Oshkosh in order to keep store fronts occupied and open.

Developing along Highways 26 and 27 can be viewed as daunting because it is a challenge to encourage development of commercial space while keeping an aesthetically pleasing corridor. Possible commercial businesses could include a car dealership, truck wash, rent-to-own store, implement dealer, or a strip mall to provide space for the service sector businesses and possible manufacturing or light industrial businesses like grain or bulk fertilizer storage, and to possibly lead to existing businesses expanding because of the land availability. Having two Highways present in Oshkosh provides many opportunities for commercial and light industrial development not available in other communities. Knowing the value of the land and promoting or marketing that to companies is important; companies need to feel like the land was meant for their business. Through the process of engineering site design, it is important to understand if the area can be served with utilities and how those utilities will get there, but it is also important to leave some of the land development open for change to best fit the needs of the business or developer.

Promoting and marketing the City of Oshkosh outside the community is just as important as it is to promote and market within the City of Oshkosh. It is the best way to inform potential residents and investors about all of the positive aspects of the community and a way to remind local residents what it takes to be a self-sustainable community. Promotion and marketing is an important step for officials and local committees or groups to take in order to stimulate commercial development. Some of the other steps for City leaders to take would include partnership development and creation of relationships to support funding resources available in the area including regional, state, and federal agencies that may be useful. The future land use plan and map gives developers and City decision-makers a plan to follow. It allows leaders to make informed decisions and to ensure everyone is working towards the same goals.

In order to promote commercial development, the City should work to meet the following objectives:

Target areas for prime commercial development;

The City should work to target areas of land for prime commercial development. This land should have access to the larger transportation network including Highways 26 and 27 and the railroad. Visibility and land availability are important aspects for commercial business ventures; therefore, those should also be important factors when locating prime commercial and light industrial real estate. This land should be close to the existing corporate limits and public infrastructure as well as adjacent to existing commercial and/or light industrial businesses. Once areas have been targeted for commercial development, the pros and cons of allowing other types of development on that property should be heavily weighed in order to prevent unnecessary urban sprawl.

Develop effective Business Retention and Expansion program;

An effective way to retain existing businesses is to focus efforts through an on-going Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) program. This program creates a dialogue between the City and businesses, opening lines of communication to allow business owners to share their needs with the City and to allow the City to share their capacity to assist businesses. This will help the City maintain relationships with business owners, open lines of communications with businesses, and develop an understanding of employer needs. It is no easy task to set aside busy time to meet with businesses on an on-going basis, but it should become a goal for the City to meet with all business owners on an annual basis. Each of these 'interviews' or conversations should be recorded and formatted so the City can keep a database of the ever-changing needs. This helps ensure that the City knows of business owners' needs, can help recruit employees when needed, can help with any expansion needs, can look into possible grant funding or other development resources, and can assist with succession planning.

Job and employee recruitment;

The City of Oshkosh should market the community to potential business developers; while the City is working to recruit new businesses, they should also work with employers to determine employee needs and help recruit personnel to the community. Businesses and City officials should work together to market the community to needed employees and additional businesses that could improve the economic climate in Oshkosh. By working together it would be easier to market and recruit for a variety of positions to help fulfill the needs of employers in the community as well as to recruit potential businesses. This collaboration would show a strong support system within the community between existing businesses and the City. This level of support and a growing economy would be an attractive quality when a business owner is looking to relocate or open a new location.

Locate opportunity for development of an incubator space;

An incubator space would create a centralized location for multiple small office or business spaces to encourage business start-up and entrepreneurship. It would be ideal for this incubator space to be located within the Downtown District or along the Highway 26 corridor. This space should be created to allow for 2-5 small retail or service businesses. The idea for an incubator space is to develop smaller spaces for businesses to lessen the overall investment needed during start-up or a new business. Then, as the business expands and grows, the business owner can move to a larger space somewhere else in the community. Currently, an entrepreneur would need to rent or purchase an entire downtown building in order to have a space within the Downtown District. This may be too expensive and risky for a business start-up which may deter anyone from making the investment. A smaller space could provide the entrepreneur with a less expensive option to start the business.

Complete Blight & Substandard Analysis of prime commercial real estate;

Completing the Blight and Substandard analysis is important for the City if they want to be able to offer Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as an incentive tool for new commercial development. If TIF incentives are to be offered to a commercial business, it is imperative to complete the Blight and Substandard Study prior to any commercial development taking place. This is because of the statutory requirements for TIF. The incentives can encourage potential business owners to invest in the community, aiding the growth of the City's economy. Therefore, the City should consider meeting this objective prior to marketing the prime commercial real estate.

Market prime commercial real estate to potential businesses and developers;

After prime commercial real estate has been targeted, the City can work to market land availability to potential developers and businesses. It is important to utilize all marketing sources available especially including online sources. The City should not only market each individual site, but also what the City has to offer to the businesses including development incentives and community amenities available to potential residents that would help attract employees to the new business.

Develop annexation plan of prime commercial real estate; and

Any land targeted for prime commercial development that does not fall within the existing corporate limits boundary should be analyzed for possible annexation. Having commercial property within the corporate limits is important to help expand the tax base for the City as well as to be able to offer certain development incentives such as Tax Increment Financing to the potential businesses. Also if the new business wants to utilize public infrastructure it is essential then, that the business is located within the corporate limits.

Align development incentives from local, regional, and state sources.

Aligning development incentives for all sources including local, regional, and State could help attract a potential business to Oshkosh. When marketing any real estate, the City should also show what development incentives are offered in the area. When developers are looking to locate a new commercial business venture they also consider how development incentives can entice them to select a certain location. Having all development incentives labeled and readily available for businesses to analyze and utilize will be helpful when encouraging development in Oshkosh.

Enhance Highway Corridors & Community Beautification

Highway corridors and overall community beautification were discussed during the public input sessions held for the Comprehensive Plan. Not only were the issues discussed, but ideas were developed to improve the aesthetics of the area. Unappealing highway corridors can provide visitors with a bad reflection of what the community really is and what it has to offer. After an individual has lived in a community for several years, one starts to overlook the negative aspects or the visually unappealing areas. However, a gateway entrance and highway corridor is Oshkosh's first impression and opportunity to market to visitors. In order to improve the corridor through town, adjacent property owners will need to be supportive and understanding of the overall goal that Oshkosh is trying to achieve. Ideas and visuals for this goal can be seen in previous sections of this Comprehensive Plan.

There are many different ways to create beautiful corridors. Typically landscaping, lighting, signage, and screening are the main projects involved. A Highway Beautification Committee could be created, an existing community group could help drive these projects, or an existing group or board could volunteer their efforts for beautifying the highway corridor through Oshkosh. It will be important to achieve continuity in the aesthetics of all improvements. Having a plan or visuals in place before making any changes will be important to stimulate public support and develop a cohesive look to match the City's brand. There is no right or wrong answer to how this process will unfold, and it will be up to the community to determine the best method.

It will be up to the City and its residents to make final decisions for the vision of Oshkosh; it is important for this vision to encompass the entire community for all beautification projects as opposed to having a mixture of several different "looks" or products used. Beautification is important throughout the entire community, not just the highway corridor; any ideas or themes should be carried into the Downtown District, public parks, and residential neighborhood. If the City works to beautify the community and its highway corridor, it may spark the desire in residents to keep their properties clean. General property up-keep can also be enforced through nuisance abatement and conversations with private property owners to encourage general property beautification.

A partnership could also be created with adjacent property owners to ensure everyone is on the same page aesthetically, and hopefully, with the support of property owners, this goal could be accomplished. As previously mentioned, one group or several groups could work to make this goal become a reality. The most important part is to have an overall plan and vision created before any projects are started; this will ensure a cohesive look throughout the community and every group will know what needs to be done to achieve the community's vision as a whole.

Screening will make the most noticeable improvement due to some unsightly land uses located on both sides of the highway corridors. Screening could also be beneficial for property owners because the screening can act as a sound buffer from the highway traffic. Signage should not only be informational, but also attractive. A cohesive look starting from one entrance sign and carrying through the community to the opposite end creates a distinct appeal and enhances the community brand Oshkosh is developing. The entrance sign located at the intersection of Highway 26 and 27 is a beautiful sign signifying the entrance into the community. Additional signs on the east and west sides of Oshkosh along Highway 26 would help carry this aesthetic throughout the community. Another improvement option could include wayfinding signage to signify and direct traffic to key attractions in the community such as the Downtown District, School, Hospital, parks, Museums, etc. Creating a cohesive, aesthetic plan; forming a group to spearhead the project; balancing partnerships with adjacent property owners, City officials, and other community beautification groups; and aligning funding will be the key steps in beautifying Oshkosh's gateways.



Develop Marketing Campaign

Creating a community brand and marketing that brand to existing and potential residents and visitors is important when trying to develop an image. The current development in Oshkosh's 'marketing campaign' proves that stakeholders' realize this importance of marketing the City. With all Oshkosh has to offer its residents, from amenities to local retail businesses, the community truly is a destination place and does attract visitors. However, the City needs to further develop a marketing campaign to promote existing businesses as well as capitalize on the community's ability to grow.

The City and/or local Chamber office should also focus on marketing to Oshkosh's residents. A "shop local" campaign could involve many different marketing strategies to reach various community members. Marketing the City to existing residents is sometimes just as important as marketing to potential visitors. A "shop local" campaign could consist of yard signs, placement reminders at restaurants, or participation in "Thankful Thursdays" when residents are encouraged to show their support and thanks to local businesses.

Social media marketing is an effective way to share information with existing residents while also marketing the community to potential residents and visitors. Online marketing is a quick and almost instant way to share information. It is also accessible almost anywhere for most people. In today's society, people want instant information; a strong web presence promoting the City and all it has to offer, including both public places and private businesses, allows the City to provide accessible information to these people.

Marketing the City should be an on-going effort made in part by the City of Oshkosh as well as the local Chamber with the assistance of local businesses. The idea is to inform the surrounding area, as well as visitors passing through, of the wonderful amenities the community has to offer. The goal is to let people know that Oshkosh is a community with multiple things to do throughout the day for a variety of age groups. Oshkosh truly does have a lot to offer to its residents and visitors; however, sharing this information is the only way the City will be able to capitalize on all it has to offer. Social media and other internet sources, regional or State-wide visitor's guides or magazines, and marketing brochures and materials are just a few of the ways the community can get the word out about Oshkosh.

In order to develop a marketing campaign for Oshkosh, the City should work to meet the following objectives:

Develop a brand;

By developing a brand for the City to market itself, Oshkosh will have an identifiable image for both residents and non-residents alike. Branding and marketing a community is becoming more and more important in today's society. The brand needs to be instantly recognizable and be representative of the entire community. Developing a brand could include a logo, slogan, color scheme, and theme to represent the community.

Establish responsible roles for marketing;

As with community amenity development, not all of the marketing should be left to the City. Other community groups such as a Chamber or regional Economic Development office should also be instrumental in marketing Oshkosh. These groups, along with the City, should work to establish roles for marketing.

Create marketing pieces;

Using the brand developed for the City, marketing pieces should be created to utilize online as well as for posters, videos (which have been a wonderful marketing currently created and used by the City), brochures, etc. Thinking comprehensively to hit all targeted areas is important when creating marketing pieces. It is also important to continually update the marketing pieces to ensure current information is being utilized and the pieces look modern and up-to-date.

Maintain updated social media and other online marketing materials; and

Social media can be thought of as a way to get information to a large amount of people in a short amount of time. Also, social media sources such as Facebook and Twitter are free resources to use for marketing and most likely a majority of the community's residents and visitors already use some form of social media on their own. Other online marketing tools should also be considered in order to effectively reach potential developers or business owners to show what the City has to offer.

Market within Oshkosh.

Marketing within the City itself is also important. Developing a "shop local" campaign to market to residents and encourage them to support local businesses is important to the success of businesses in the community. Signs, such as a shopping mall directory, could also be placed at key points of interest in the community to display other amenities or businesses in Oshkosh. These kiosks serve as a map showing other possible areas to visit or things to do in the community.

Improve Public Infrastructure

Oshkosh's officials are taking the necessary steps to resolve some of the on-going issues with public infrastructure. Improving and expanding public infrastructure is an on-going task. Although there have been recent improvements made, more work needs to be done. They have been working with Engineers for assessments, looking into funding options, working hard to balance the community's budget. The most important step is to prioritize the tasks required for updating and improving public infrastructure. Once priorities have been set, the City can begin to plan and budget for necessary repairs, updates, and improvements. Public infrastructure needs and improvements are listed below according to each infrastructure system. The City will continue to have infrastructure needs and projects will be adjusted on the priority list as issues or concerns arise. At this time, the City has completed some recent improvements to public infrastructure, but will need to continually assess the City's needs on an annual basis.

Sidewalks/ADA Compliance

Based on the public input sessions, Oshkosh's residents discussed their issues and concerns with the condition and lack of sidewalks in the community. Improving the sidewalks and following ADA compliance guidelines is an important goal for the community. A sidewalk inventory should be used to analyze areas in need of sidewalks and existing sidewalks in need of repair. We know approximately 54 percent of the community is lacking sidewalk infrastructure; in addition, the other 46 percent of the community that does have existing infrastructure may also need improvements. The sidewalk inventory would analyze each sidewalk and ramp (or lack thereof) to determine the overall needs for the community. At that time, the City could formulate a plan for improvements including construction of new and improving existing sidewalks. These improvements require funding as well as support from the residents of Oshkosh to become a reality. An idea for implementing a program feasible for the City to utilize would be to create a cost-share program between the City and the property owner to split costs for the new improvements. Financial assistance may entice residents to put forth some of their funds to assist in the development of ADA accessible sidewalks. The City could budget a set amount each year and residents could apply for funds out of that budgeted amount to assist in making these improvements throughout the City.

Pedestrian accessibility throughout the community is important for residents especially between key features in the City such as the swimming pool/school, the Downtown District, medical facilities, public parks, the Library, etc. To improve accessibility for all pedestrians, the City must continually work to make these improvements a priority. In order to make the best use of public funds, the City should also analyze areas with high pedestrian use and prioritize those areas for improvements. These areas may be the most commonly traveled paths to the schools, the park/pool, and the Library as children most likely walk to most of these areas. Improving accessibility to these key areas should become a first priority for sidewalk improvements. The two main at-grade railroad crossings on West 2nd Street and Main Street should also have improved pedestrian crossings to ensure all pedestrians, especially children crossing from one side of the community to the other, have a safe way to travel.

Federal ADA compliance regulations were updated in 2010. City leaders are aware of the goals they need to accomplish. They are working towards making Oshkosh an ADA compliant community, but like every other item on the list, these goals require time, funds, and community support. The City will continually work to resolve this matter, making it a goal to accomplish accessibility for all residents and visitors.

Water

The City of Oshkosh is currently completing water distribution improvements which include a new public water supply consisting of two wells located north of Oshkosh with a back-up power supply to provide the community with a reliable source of drinking water. A new ground water storage container will also be constructed to replace the elevated water storage facility which was constructed in 1920 and is currently undersized. Other improvements include the construction of approximately 33,000 linear feet of transmission main to the new water source, replacement of existing water mains that have deteriorated and have continuous breaks, construction of new water mains to loop dead-end mains and improve water quality, replacement of existing water meters, upgrading the meter reading system to include radio read, and installing new well controls. The City has received assistance with funding for this approximately four million dollar water distribution system improvement. These improvements are important for the fire safety and protection of residents as well as the quality and reliability of water for residents in the community. Other future improvements include the potential need to extend water main to areas of new development or potential new development in order to provide City services to marketable areas for commercial and residential development.

Sanitary Sewer

As described in the Utilities section of Chapter Two in this plan, the City owns and operates a sanitary sewer collection system. The City is currently under contract to complete a sanitary sewer collection system study to evaluate the lagoon system and determine the best course of action to re-seal the lagoons. Once the study is completed, a course of action and research of funding opportunities should be completed to make the necessary improvements. Future needs for the City's sanitary sewer collection system may include potential expansions to new areas of development.

Paving/Stormwater Drainage

The City's 1 & 6 Year Road Plan can be found in the Transportation section of Chapter Two in this Plan. This map shows road improvements the City is planning for 2015 and the next five years. The one-year project list includes maintenance as needed. The six-year plan includes concrete pavements, curb and gutter, and drainage structures for all six projects depicted on the 1 & 6 Year Road Plan Map. As paving and street improvements are made, the City will also work to improve stormwater drainage throughout the community which can be challenging because of the mostly flat terrain of Oshkosh. Updates will continually need to be made in order to provide the best quality of life for all of Oshkosh's residents. Community support will entrust decision-makers with the tasks of accomplishing these goals in a timely manner; however, funds must be available in order to begin construction on any one of these projects.

Expand Recreational Attractions and Amenities

Oshkosh has many amenities to offer to its residents and visitors; however, residents and community stakeholders realize the value additional amenities can add to the quality of life in the community. Below is a list of potential recreational improvements or enhancements and other recreational development goals. The items listed below do not cover all of the recreational improvements potentially needed or desired in the future, but these were goals or ideas discussed by residents at the several public input sessions held and online and mail-out surveys conducted during the planning process of this Comprehensive Plan.

Oshkosh has a variety of playground and picnic equipment to suit families and children of all ages. Existing park equipment should be periodically monitored to determine times for improvement or replacement to ensure Oshkosh's parks are a safe environment for children to play. In the future it may also be a goal for the City to add additional playground equipment at the park next to the swimming pool. Playground equipment should be accessible for all ages and handicapped-accessible equipment should be considered when installing new park equipment.

Improve the existing ball fields as needed by updating lighting, seating, dugouts, fencing, turf, and infield surfacing was also discussed by residents. These improvements should be assessed and completed as needed, but the ball fields are used regularly and should be improved to ensure the facility is kept up-to-date and remains a desirable amenity in the community.

Hike/bike trail construction throughout the community and south to the North Platte River was discussed by many different residents. An obvious attraction to hike/bike trails is the ease of access and use for all ages. Hike/bike trails provide a safe environment for exercising including walking, running, biking, and skating. Hike/bike trails can be constructed in phases which can add to the appeal of developing an amenity with the ability to grow and expand for residents. Route options are shown in the future land use plan maps.

The North Platte River is also an existing amenity for the City. Some residents discussed their desire to utilize this River to market for recreational purposes like tubing, tanking, kayaking, canoeing, fishing, etc. Other amenities discussed to improve the North Platte River as a recreational amenity were to add a boat launch and parking to provide easier access for non-motorized boats, create a trail to the river, and improve the area near the river by adding picnic benches, tables, and shelters. The North Platte River is a wonderful resource already located in close proximity to the community and many people in Nebraska will travel in order to participate in these types of recreational amenities; therefore, the City could look into to marketing these additional recreational amenities when marketing Oshkosh.

Another amenity that is becoming more popular in Nebraska's communities is a splash pad. A splash pad would be a great addition to Oshkosh's long list of amenities. Splash pads can be designed to attract children at a variety of ages. They should be designed to have special areas to best suit each age group. These specified bay areas allow for a safe play environment for everyone. Splash pads are a way to provide community enhancement as well as a healthy and safe way for families to play. A couple of positive functional attributes to a splash pad are that they do not require lifeguards and they are designed to have the ability to regulate when features are able to be used.

All public restroom facilities should comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure accessibility for all of Oshkosh's residents and visitors. An evaluation of public facilities should be completed in order for the City to effectively budget and plan for the improvement and removal of any physical barriers in public places including recreational facilities. Such updates require planning to ensure funds are available to complete the tasks and guarantee compliance with ADA design guidelines and regulations. The City is aware of these regulations and is working hard to solve any issues.

Another option for an added recreational amenity would be the creation of a dog park. A dog park is not only a benefit for the City's canine residents, but it also adds positive socialization benefits for people. A dog park is a simple addition as far as recreational amenities are concerned because it only requires a fenced-in area to provide a space where dogs can be let off of their leashes to run around. Other amenities could include a doggy-waste bag dispenser, trash receptacle, water source, trees, and picnic tables to add to the overall usability of the space. This amenity is not only beneficial for Oshkosh's citizens, but also for all of the four-legged residents in town.

Vibrant, colorful landscaping helps draw people to an area, and creates a positive first impression. Not only does landscaping add beauty to the parks, but it is also an opportunity for residents to volunteer their time and talent in order to keep the parks beautiful. While considering landscaping improvements, stakeholders should also consider options to add shade trees or structures to areas in need, i.e. near bleachers, at the swimming pool, or near parking. This can help protect and provide relief from the summer sun for visitors of the park.

In order to expand community amenities in Oshkosh, the City should work to meet the following objectives:

Establish locations for each amenity;

With a long list of goals for additional amenities in the City, residents should devise a plan with a potential location for each amenity. Proximity to other community amenities, the general public, and access/visibility for visitors should all be taken into consideration when planning for locations of community amenities. Once each goal has a proposed location it will be simpler to establish a plan for development.

Prioritize projects;

Because the City has many goals for additional recreation and service areas, the City should work to prioritize the list of goals. Once priorities have been set, the City can work with community groups to establish a plan for implementation. It is very important for the City to establish priority projects in order to be effective with implementation of the goals outlined in this Plan.

Set group(s) to be in charge for each project; and

It should not be entirely the responsibility of the City to complete all of the goals outlined in this Plan; therefore, the City should work with community groups to determine which groups will be in charge of or help support certain projects. Once groups are set with their associated goals they can begin to implement projects based on the timeline determined by the City and community groups.

Formulate timeline/funding options.

Because so many groups will be involved in the development of the community amenities, a timeline should be created based on priority projects and funding availability. This timeline should be followed by the City and all community groups involved. Funding options, including grant opportunities should also be determined. Typically grant applications can only be submitted by one community for one project; therefore, it is necessary to determine which goals meet the grant application requirements and how each goal will be funded. Currently, there are a few grant opportunities available for different community amenities; however, these grants are highly competitive and are not available for all types of projects. It is important for the City to have other sources of funding for amenity development because grant funds may not be available or accessible.