



2024 GRUNDY CENTER COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN UPDATE

RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION BY THE GRUNDY CENTER COMPREHENSIVE
LAND USE TASK FORCE ON:

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON: APRIL 15, 2024

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2024 Grundy Center Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2024-26

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE 2024 CITY OF GRUNDY CENTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

WHEREAS, said plan is authorized under Chapter 18B and 414 of the Iowa Code, as amended, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held by the City Council on April 1, 2024 Council Chamber of the City Hall on the proposed adoption of the City of Grundy Center Comprehensive Plan Update, and

WHEREAS, said plan was developed with consideration of the smart planning principles under section 18B.1 of the Iowa Code and includes information specified in section 18b.2, subsection 2 of the Iowa Code,

WHEREAS, said plan is a policy document that considers the community's demographics, public facilities, land use, transportation, housing and implementation procedures, and

WHEREAS, said plan looks at community development by outlining a land use plan and is the basis for the City of Grundy Center's zoning, subdivision, annexation, and urban renewal tools and regulations, and

WHEREAS, an integral part of the plan is providing opportunities for public input in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update process, including the use of Task Force meetings, Grundy Center Planning and Zoning Commission work sessions and public hearing, and an Grundy Center City Council public hearing, and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan has been the subject of, or a discussion item on the agenda of, numerous public meetings, and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan is a primary land use tool of the Grundy Center City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission; Board of Adjustment; and city staff, and

WHEREAS, said plan is in the best interests of the City of Grundy Center, now therefore BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the City Council hereby approves and adopts the City of Grundy Center 2024 Comprehensive Plan as a replacement in its entirety to the existing Comprehensive Plan on this 15th day of April, 2024.

Signed: 

Dr. Paul Eberline, Mayor

Date: 4-15-2024

ATTEST:

Signed: 

Kristy Sawyer, City Clerk

Date: 4-15-2024

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The City would like to thank the following entities, bodies, staff, and volunteers who provided input, time, and financing into the development of this plan. A special thanks to the citizens of Grundy Center who gave their time and effort to make this a better document.

Grundy Center Mayor

Paul Eberline

Grundy Center City Council

Ryan Rasmussen

Erika Lamp

Merideth McDonald

Jason “Butch” Kuester

Rick Smith

Grundy Center Planning and Zoning Commission

Wayne Wrage Jr.

Curt Ramundt

Grundy Center City Staff

Kristy Sawyer – City Clerk

Dan Bangasser – Director of Public Works

Grundy Center Comprehensive Plan Task Force

Jacob Pelham

Andy Ewoldt

Sara Wegmann

Kaitlynn Freese

Ronda Kruger

Katie Hilby

Joel Johnson

Michael Vokes

Pat Brown II

Josh Meggers

Roger & Beth Bockes

Steve & Barb Vanderpol

Rex VanWert

Bob Johanns

Curt Mauer

Steve Cox

Shawn Weber

Randy Phelps

Dave Stefl

Corey Scott

Bill Itzen

Teri Hook

Bob Munson

Keely Harken

Amanda Ross

Dave Weidenbacher

Jeff Carson

Taylor Appel

Lori Burmester

Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG)

Brian Schoon, Executive Director

Sheri Alldredge, Director of Administrative Services

Nick Fratzke, Director of Transportation

Isaiah Corbin, Director of Development

Leon Begay, Community Planner I

Cindy Knox, Housing Planner

Rose Phillips, Housing Planner

Kyle Durant, Transportation Planner

Aldina Dautović, Transportation Planner

Tammy Turner, Environmental Resource Specialist

Brenda Vavroch, Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator

Dan Schlichtmann, Data Services Coordinator

Linda Sires, Transit Operations Manager

Brenda Ponto, Accountant

Hayley Weiglein, Administrative Assistant

Document Prepared by:
INRCOG
229 E. Park Ave
Waterloo, Iowa 50703



INRCOG
Iowa Northland Regional
Council of Governments

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 Grundy Center Comprehensive Plan Update is the result of a collaborative effort between the City Council, Grundy Center Planning and Zoning Commission, City staff, Task Force, citizens, and INRCOG.

This Plan update begins with the 2014 Comprehensive Plan and references the principles and elements of the 2010 Iowa Smart Planning legislation. Based on input from officials, stakeholders, and citizens, the following goals, objectives, and actions were identified for inclusion in the Plan:

The Comprehensive Plan seeks to incorporate the best visions and ideals of the citizens along with realistic needs and aspirations of private development to capitalize upon the city's ongoing productivity and potential.

Furthermore, the Plan promotes managed growth that is cost-effective and sensible. The City hopes to prevent 'leapfrog' development or unmanageable urban sprawl by minimizing conflict between incompatible land uses, especially in areas where differing designations for parcels of land lie directly adjacent to one another. In addition, the Plan establishes a circular process including implementation, review, and amendment for the Plan.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Land Use

Goal #1: The Grundy Center Comprehensive Plan should serve as a guide for making future land use decisions.

Objective A: Land use decisions should be made in accordance with sound planning practices, design, and implementation tools. Sound planning practices include preventing 'leap frog' development or unmanaged urban sprawl development, separation or mitigation of incompatible land uses within the community and requiring adequate public facilities and utilities before growth can occur.

Objective B: Adequate public services should be provided to meet the needs of the community.

Objective C: The community should work to ensure that adequate transportation, water, sewer, and storm sewer infrastructure is made available to residents.

Objective D: The city should encourage appropriate density and development of land such that overcrowding does not occur.

Objective E: Development should be focused on areas of infill to maximize the community's existing infrastructure.

Objective F: Growth should also be balanced, in terms of use and location, within the community.

Goal #2: The city of Grundy Center should consider innovative methods of managing growth whenever possible.

Objective A: The city should encourage compact developments that may reduce service costs associated with growth.

Objective B: The city should research other potential means of managing growth such as impact fees or transfers/purchases of development rights in order to help offset high service costs and reduce land development pressures.

Objective C: Researching new growth management techniques will help to ensure that the city is able to give timely consideration to any new tools made available through legislation of the state of Iowa.

Goal #3: Give consideration to the following factors for each proposal for development:

- 1) Public health, welfare, and safety factors
- 2) Consistency with this plan
- 3) Impacts on adjacent property values

- 4) Density and/or intensity of the proposed use
- 5) Traffic generation and flow patterns
- 6) Ability of the city to provide public services and public works infrastructure
- 7) Infrastructure demands of the proposed use
- 8) Surrounding land uses
- 9) Impact on environmentally sensitive areas
- 10) Landscaping, general design, and aesthetic considerations
- 11) Other factors affecting the general purpose and intent of the Plan

Agricultural & Natural Resources

Goal #1: The City should protect and preserve, whenever possible, its natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, watersheds, and floodplains.

Objective A: Prohibit development in the floodway.

- i. Consider creating “green spaces” – parks, natural vegetation or woodland, or open space – along flood prone areas.*
- ii. Continue to enforce the City’s floodplain ordinance.*

Objective B: Consider alternatives to development of prime agricultural soils when making land use decisions.

Objective C: In areas of new development, encourage adjacent growth to avoid unmanageable sprawl, the expensive cost of “leapfrog development”, and protect natural resources.

Goal #2: The city should promote infill of incorporated land, redevelopment, and revitalization opportunities, whenever possible, as an alternative to urban expansion.

Objective A: Reference Growth Areas of the Community Map in consideration of proposed developments as a tool to encourage best use of available resources.

- i. Distribute Growth Areas of the Community Maps to potential developers.*
- ii. Incentivize development in Primary Growth Areas as defined in the Growth Areas of the Community Map.*

Objective B: Continue to use Urban Revitalization Plans to promote infill development.

- i. It is in the best interest of the city to review and amend Urban Revitalization Plans as is deemed necessary and appropriate.*

Hazards

Objective C: City staff and officials should reference the 2019 Grundy County Housing Needs Assessment to identify opportunities for implementation of this goal.

Goal #1: Continue to participate in the Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

Objective A: Protect the health and safety of residents, visitors, staff, and emergency personnel during and after hazard events.

Objective B: Prevent avoidable disasters.

Objective C: Minimize losses to existing and future structures in hazard areas, especially critical facilities.

Objective D: Maintain, improve, and conduct regularly scheduled testing of local services and infrastructure to reduce community, economic and environmental disruption during and after hazard events.

- i. It is in the best interest of the city to conduct an annual review of GCMUNI Standard Operating Procedures and Emergency Management Plans and Procedures.*

Objective E: Return the community to either pre-disaster or improved conditions in a timely manner in the wake of a disaster.

Objective F: Educate and communicate with the public about hazards and resources available.

Objective G: Use public funds in an efficient, cost effective and fair manner.

Objective H: Incorporate each jurisdiction into the Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Objective I: Coordinate and communicate with the Grundy County Emergency Management Coordinator to maintain a cohesive system for procedures in times of crisis.

Goal #2: Continue to enforce the community's floodplain ordinance.

Objective A: Continue participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Floodplain Insurance Program.

Objective B: Continue to invest in and seek out opportunities to mitigate the effects of flooding on the community.

Objective C: Encourage certification and continued education for area floodplain managers.

Objective D: Actively pursue opportunities to boost the community's FEMA Community Rating System (CSR).

Goal #3: Promote community awareness of storm shelter locations.

Objective A: Provide reference to the city of Grundy Center Appendix in [2017 Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) on the city website.

Objective B: Broadcast storm shelter locations on local news and radio outlets, social media, and in high traffic areas throughout the community prior to and during seasons when shelters are most likely to be utilized.

- i. Encourage citizens to enroll in the [Grundy County ALERT](#) system.*
- ii. Identify opportunities to produce and distribute stickers, magnets, or some other form of media that identify storm shelter locations.*
- iii. Make sure there is a map of these locations included in the plan.*

Objective C: Continue to promote and provide awareness training and guidance in community school district.

Goal #4: Enforce the most current building and utility standards in new construction, redevelopment, and renovation.

Objective A: Update building codes as new editions become available.

Objective B: Require utilities to be buried.

- i. The city should identify opportunities and implement a strategy in the CIP to address this goal.*

Objective C: Ensure that the permitting process and the necessary conformance to standards are well defined and available to all parties involved.

Goal #5: Identify, encourage, and incentivize implementation of fire suppression and spread mitigation measures in the Central Business District.

Objective A: Consider implementation of an Urban Revitalization Plan as an incentive.

Goal #6: Identify opportunities to collaborate with the IDOT and Grundy County Engineer to explore alternatives to congestion and safety issues at the intersection of IA HWY 14 and T37.

Community Character

Goal #1: Whenever practical and feasible, the city should preserve sites with scenic, cultural, or historic interest.

Objective A: Continue to Seek out and utilize programs that aim to preserve, reuse, and reinvest in areas of specific interests.

i. Continue investment in the Historical Preservation Commission through the Cultural and Scientific Preservation tax levy.

ii. Consider adding murals to buildings through historical society.

Objective B: Research innovative techniques and solutions for challenges that arise in proposals for developments of specific interests.

Goal #2: The city of Grundy Center will embrace a shared vision and make all voices a part of the solution.

Objective A: Make a continuous effort to encourage participation of local citizens in City decision-making.

Objective B: Citizen groups should continue to be invited to take part in the development and implementation of City plans.

Objective C: City officials should collaborate, when feasible and possible, with Chamber Main Street in public outreach and decision making

Objective D: Continue to encourage and support citizens involvement in fund raising efforts.

Goal #3: Maintain an ongoing comprehensive planning process in which an informed public is considered an important element.

Objective A: Conduct surveys that would reflect citizens' views concerning major development projects. The surveys should be targeted towards those persons being affected the most by a particular project.

Objective B: Continue to educate the public, whenever possible.

Goal #4: Maintain those aspects of Grundy Center that make it a unique and enjoyable place to live and improve those quality-of-life assets that are missing or need improvement.

Objective A: Promote downtown as the center of the community and its main hub.

Objective B: Maintain infrastructure and city services.

Objective C: Encourage community events that bring the city together. A non-exhaustive list includes:

- i. Felix Grundy Days*
- ii. Chamber Main Street Block Party Events*
- iii. Grundy County Fair*
- iv. Festival of Trees*
- v. Main Street Mingle*
- vi. Girls Night Out*

Objective D: Support the Grundy Center Development Corporation, Chamber Main Street, and Historical Society Commission.

Objective E: Maintain and support outdoor recreational opportunities, such as the Pioneer Trail and the comprehensive trail system, archery range, area parks, sports complex, and public swimming pool.

Goal #5: The City should encourage the Grundy Center Development Corporation to continue working on neighborhood revitalization areas.

Objective A: Explore opportunities to reclaim abandoned or aged industrial and commercial sites so that they may be redeveloped into new appropriate development sites.

Objective B: Encourage and promote neighborhood development and redevelopment opportunities.

Community Facilities

Goal #1: Maintain and enhance the parks and open space in Grundy Center.

Objective A: Continue to provide maintenance and general upkeep to the existing parks and recreational areas.

- i. Regularly review the condition of existing parks and recreation areas.*

Objective B: Encourage development of diversified recreational activities to meet the needs of all the citizens of Grundy Center.

- i. Identify the recreational needs of citizens.*
- ii. Consider and implement, whenever feasible, recreational activities that meet the diverse needs of the community.*

Objective C: Promote the expansion of recreational services such as the golf courses, various passive parks, and recreational areas to best utilize environmentally sensitive areas such as the floodplain and certain soil types.

- i. Seek out diverse funding sources to maintain and expand the City's recreational amenities.*

Goal #2: Continue to provide and support strong public services.

Objective A: Support the continued protection and service of police, fire, and ambulance services.

- i. Consider the expenditure of funds for improved or expanded police, fire, and ambulance services as community needs may require.*
- ii. Support training and continuing education opportunities for EMS individuals.*
- iii. The city should consider development and adoption of an Emergency Operations Plan for continuity in standard operating procedures across situations.*

Objective B: Continue to support the medical services within Grundy Center.

Objective C: Maintain and expand, when needed, facilities that provide vital community services.

- i. Investigate the need to improve City facilities.*
- ii. Consider expanding public works, police, fire, and ambulance facilities.*

Goal #3: Consider community schools and facilities as hubs for development and structure for current and future generations.

Objective A: Support the continued investment in and collaboration with the Grundy Center Community School District.

Objective B: Encourage land use patterns that accommodate mixed use developments and promote inclusionary housing and zoning practices.

Goal #4: Continue to provide support for cultural facilities and museums.

Objective A: The City should recognize the Herbert Quick School House project as an opportunity to promote the benefit of collaborative partnerships.

Goal #5: View the physical facilities of Grundy Center as assets and an opportunity for regional attraction and retention of residents and visitors alike.

Public Infrastructure & Utilities

Objective A: Explore and support placemaking opportunities for the city as a destination for recreation, entertainment, commerce, and leisure.

Goal #1: Provide and improve streets and utilities to assure adequate and efficient services to all persons in the community.

Objective A: Assess on a regular basis the community's sewer and water systems' capacities in light of meeting the needs of future population projections, as well as complying with ever-changing regulations.

- i. Evaluate the need to upgrade wastewater treatment facilities and infrastructure.*
- ii. Continue implementing policies and programs to prevent degradation and contamination of sewer and water systems.*
- iii. Maintain compliance with regulations.*

Objective B: Continue to monitor local street conditions and provide for street improvements through long range planning projects, such as the [RTA 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan](#).

- i. Consider streetscape and beautification projects that improve the appearance of streets and their surroundings.*

Objective C: Continue to utilize an adopted Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), as needed, for managing municipal capital projects.

Goal #2: Work with utility providers on extending services and infrastructure as capacity and demand allow.

Objective A: Inventory areas in the community where expanded or updated infrastructure and utilities are lacking and target those areas for improvement.

Objective B: Continue to explore available funding options for expansion and improvement of public infrastructure and utilities.

Objective C: Encourage collaborative efforts toward the development and implementation of EV charging stations.

Goal #3: Continue to provide affordable and competitive telecommunications and internet options to the city.

Objective A: Explore opportunities for collaborative funding for expanded broadband infrastructure.

Goal #4: Reduce long-term risks associated with traditional energy supply from fossil fuels.

Objective A: Encourage and support the development and use of renewable energy sources to build the local economy and improve the environment.

Objective B: Encourage local production of solar energy.

- i. Continue to structure ordinances and building codes in a manner that is conducive to utilization of renewable energy sources.*

Objective C: Encourage collaborative efforts toward the development and implementation of EV charging stations.

Goal #5: Reduce the impacts of moderate and extreme rain events throughout the city.

Objective A: Continue to implement and encourage stormwater management best practices in local developments and area improvements.

Objective B: Identify areas of historical stormwater inundation for determining and prioritizing projects for CIP

Objective C: Encourage and showcase rain gardens, permeable pavers, and other stormwater and run off diversion methods in city funded projects as well those throughout the community.

Objective D: Explore and evaluate policies that address issues that are found to contribute to stormwater management.

Objective E: Identify financial needs and potential funding sources.

Goal #6: Maintain a high quality, sustainable water supply for current and future generations.

Objective A: Integrate water resources and supply planning for water systems across intergovernmental and regional jurisdictions.

Objective B: View the water supply as a nonrenewable resource and implement policies and procedures that are conducive to conservation best practices.

Objective C: Continue to inspect and monitor the city's water supply for compliance with applicable water quality standards.

Goal #7: Invest in and encourage the expansion of Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure in all areas of the community.

Objective A: Encourage building and development practices that incorporate EV Infrastructure into the design.

Housing

- i. *Review city building codes, design standards, and current practices for opportunities to incorporate provisions for charging stations in public and private uses.*

Goal #1: Maximize the opportunity for diversified choice in residential living while maintaining a pleasant community environment.

Objective A: Provide a diversity of housing for the existing and potential residents of Grundy Center.

- i. *Research and consider options for senior housing.*
- ii. *In addition to traditional single-family developments, consider ways to provide housing for younger families.*
- iii. *Promote and encourage downtown upper-story residential units.*
- iv. *Review the zoning ordinance to consider allowing more flexibility in housing, such as setbacks, lot sizes, density, etc.*

Objective B: Promote and build upon the vibrant downtown atmosphere in Grundy Center.

- i. *Promote infill development, particularly in and around the downtown area.*
- ii. *In existing areas of development, encourage consideration for mixed use development opportunities that are compatible with the surroundings.*

Goal #2: Improve the quality of the community's housing.

Objective A: Provide high-quality, durable construction through the enforcement of the uniform building codes.

- i. *Ensure that building codes are up-to-date and enforced.*
- ii. *Consider changes to codes that would improve the quality of housing.*

Objective B: Provide options for existing housing to be renovated and restored.

- i. *Consider incentives for homeowners to renovate or improve their homes' quality.*

Objective C: Identify and/or implement programs and policies conducive to assisting the community with this goal.

Objective D: Continue to identify vacant and dilapidated properties as opportunities for redevelopment.

Economic Development

Goal #3: Utilize the 2019 Grundy County Housing Needs Assessment in determining current and projected needs in housing stock.

- Objective A: Maintain and improve the quality of Grundy Center's existing housing stock.*
- Objective B: Support infill housing development and redevelopment, especially in older neighborhoods.*
- Objective C: Expand opportunities for Grundy Center's low- and moderate-income homebuyers and homeowners.*
- Objective D: Support increased market-rate housing development.*
- Objective E: Support community development, workforce development, and other efforts integrally related to quality-of-life and housing demand in disinvested neighborhoods.*

Goal #1: Focus on economic development strategies and maintaining a strong Central Business District.

- Objective A: Encourage improvements to existing buildings and continue to seek new occupants for those that are vacant.*
 - i. Continue programs to improve the physical appearance of buildings.*
- Objective B: Continue to support Grundy Center's Economic Development Organizations because their goals are in the best interest of Grundy Center.*
 - i. Maintain status as Chamber Main Street Community.*
 - ii. Identify opportunities and programs for Grundy Center Development Corporation to consider.*
 - iii. Continue collaboration with GNB Economic Development Corporation*
 - iv. Continue partnership with Butler/Grundy Alliance*
- Objective C: Prioritize the promotion of business retention and expansion of Grundy Center's businesses and industries.*
 - i. Consider providing programs and incentives beyond building improvements that may help businesses stay competitive.*
 - ii. Identify the needs of local businesses regarding expansion.*
 - iii. Encourage businesses to utilize programs like IEG, CEEE, and other business improvement tools.*

Objective D: Continue to seek out relocating and expanding businesses.

- i. Consider implementing infrastructure improvements that would provide incentives for businesses to locate in the City.*

Objective E: Continue to invest in industrial developments that are large enough to accommodate expansion and relocation of other businesses and industries.

Objective F: Improve job readiness and skills of City citizens and workers.

- i. Work with institutions, such as Grundy Center School District, Hawkeye Community College, and the University of Northern Iowa, Iowa State Extension, Iowa Workforce Development, and Iowa Source Link to improve access to job training and education.*
- ii. Create and encourage networking events that introduce those individuals seeking employment and/or opportunities to develop further skills and training to local resources.*

Objective G: Continue to promote policies and programs conducive to upper-floor residential redevelopment opportunities, enhancing vibrancy in the Central Business District.

Goal #2: Continue to convert areas of blight or dangerous and dilapidated properties into suitable areas for commercial and industrial redevelopment or revitalization.

Objective A: Create an inventory of properties and areas in the community that would benefit from redevelopment and revitalization.

Objective B: Explore different programs and funding sources that could help to alleviate the potentially prohibitive costs of rehabilitation and revitalization projects for the community and its residents and stakeholders.

Objective C: Review policies, procedures, and ordinances for potential hurdles or deterrents to redevelopment and revitalization efforts.

Goal #3: Look to vacant and underutilized properties as an opportunity for a creative and diverse configuration of commercial and industrial repurposed uses.

Goal #4: Provide an overall environment in the community that is conducive to attracting and retaining a strong labor force.

Objective A: Coordinate with local businesses and educational institutions to promote opportunities for access to job skills training.

Objective B: Provide adequate affordable, quality housing for individuals to live and work in the community.

Objective C: Continue to encourage employers to seek the most qualified candidates that make Grundy Center area business's more attractive and competitive.

Objective D: Publicly recognize companies that partner with area educational institutions to hire local graduates and trainees.

Objective E: Continue to explore and implement economic development strategies that attract a robust and diverse variety of employers with values and goals that align with those of the community.

Objective F: Create and encourage networking events that introduce those individuals seeking employment and/or opportunities to develop further skills and training to local resources.

Goal #5: Provide quality, affordable broadband, and utilities as means to attract and retain drivers of a strong economy.

Objective A: Continue to explore opportunities to provide high quality, affordable service options for the community.

Objective B: Consider local and regional partnerships as potential opportunities for successful implementation.

Goal #6: Consider the impacts of inadequate childcare options in the community as an inhibiting factor to economic development.

Objective A: Examine ordinances, policies, and processes for potential hurdles to the provision of adequate and efficient childcare options in the community and explore creative solutions.

Objective B: Create policies, identify local resources, and work with developers and community partners to offer better childcare opportunities for the community.

Objective C: Encourage area businesses and employers to assist in finding creative solutions to the lack of childcare options.

Transportation

Goal #1: Provide an efficient transportation system for orderly development of the community, while maintaining safety and economy.

Objective A: Require that new developments conform to the existing street system or show that the changes will be an improvement.

Objective B: Seek to adopt a Complete Streets Policy/Program and explore collaborative ways to fund its implementation.

i. Review plans for new developments or improvements for consistency with a Complete Streets Policy.

Inter- governmental Collaboration

Objective C: Investigate future locations of streets to ensure an orderly growth which is consistent with the values and objectives of the community.

Objective D: Maximize the benefits of linkages connecting Grundy Center.

- i. Investigate and consider the creation of trail loop connecting downtown Grundy Center and the Great American Rail Trail.*

Objective E: Improve sidewalk connections in the City.

- i. Study gaps in sidewalk coverage and the state of repairs to existing sidewalks.*

Goal #2: Utilize the [2045 Long Range Transportation Plan for Grundy County Regional Area](#) goals and objectives in determining future projects and demand.

Objective A: Increase the safety of the transportation system.

Objective B: Strategically preserve the existing infrastructure.

Objective C: Support an efficient transportation system.

Objective D: Provide a high degree of multimodal accessibility and mobility.

Goal #3: Continue to support the accessibility to regional transit system to further accommodate the evolving needs of the community.

Objective A: Continue to examine gaps in services and exploring creative methods for solutions.

Goal #4: Maintain and enhance the multi-use trail network in the community.

Objective A: Continue to provide maintenance and general upkeep to the existing multi-use trail network.

- i. Regularly review the condition of existing multi-use trails.*

Objective B: Examine the trail network for gaps in connectivity and opportunities for access to local and regional attractions.

Goal #1: Whenever feasible, community development plans should be coordinated with those of adjacent communities and/or overlapping jurisdictions, including state, and federal agencies.

Objective A: Work with neighboring jurisdictions, in the interests of all involved, to find workable solutions that are mutually beneficial.

Objective B: Publicize existing and proposed collaborations to encourage utilization and cooperation.

Objective C: Promote formal and informal networking opportunities across jurisdictions and community organizations to encourage further interaction.

Goal #2: A collaborative effort could be made to create a platform (social media, website inclusion, etc.) that highlights past collaborations, future efforts, and incorporates a database of regional jurisdictions, organizations, and partnerships involved in the betterment of the community.

Objective A: Provide a more inclusive and efficient network of area stakeholders with like interests.

Objective B: Promote awareness of resources and encourage collaboration rather than duplication of similar services.

Goal #3: Continue collaborative efforts to evaluate community boundaries, varying levels of governmental responsibility, common necessities, and a better means of public administration in support of most efficient practices.

Objective A: Encourage annual or biannual work sessions with local agencies and organizations to work to better understand the common goals, future interests, and desired level of involvement in collaborative efforts.

Public Participation

Goal #1: The city should encourage citizen involvement in the planning process.

Objective A: The city of Grundy Center will continue to be inclusive of public input regarding the adoption and amendment of this Plan, the city's zoning and subdivision ordinances, neighborhood plans, and other growth management tools.

Goal #2: The city should continue to publicize open meetings and promote awareness of land use policies procedures, and proposals.

Objective A: Post meeting schedules, agendas, and supplemental information pertaining to land use and development on the city website, social media accounts, in printed publications and media outlets.

Implementation

Goal #1: Consider the Grundy Center Comprehensive Plan as a flexible, general guide to reference during the land use decision making process, rather than a blueprint for development.

Objective A: Continual review and amendment should be considered to meet the evolving conditions and needs of the residents of Grundy Center.

Objective B: Give careful consideration to proposed amendments to ensure that they are an improvement to the prior plan and not a change to accommodate special interests.

Goal #2: Ensure that any changes in zoning, subdivision, or other development requirements approved by City Council are in accordance with this Comprehensive Plan.

Objective A: City staff should thoroughly review all proposed changes and provide reports and recommendations to city officials as necessary.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

LEGAL BASIS OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Grundy Center Comprehensive Plan (or “Plan Update 2024” or “Plan”) is a long-term planning document. Each update to this Plan is designed to meet the statutory requirements of the State of Iowa. The ability of the city to plan and regulate land use within its borders is granted through Chapter 18B of the Code of Iowa, which may also be referred to as “state enabling legislation” for planning powers.

This Plan is intended to meet planning requirements for its implementation tools, chief among those being the community’s zoning ordinance (Code Chapter 414), land subdivision ordinance (Code Chapter 354), and urban renewal program (Code Chapter 403), as well as the Iowa Smart Planning Principles (Code Chapter 18B).

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

This Plan will provide an update to the 2014 Comprehensive Plan revision. This large-scale planning effort was undertaken with the direction of the Mayor of Grundy Center; City Council; Planning & Zoning Commission; and a Task Force comprised of citizens and stakeholders.

The city of Grundy Center completed the development of the Plan through assistance from the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG). Input and guidance provided by the Task Force, city staff, and Grundy Center Planning and Zoning Commission was shared with INRCOG planners to ensure the direction of the update was consistent with citizens of the city and current development trends.

EXISTING DOCUMENTS IN GRUNDY COUNTY, IOWA

The Grundy Center Comprehensive Plan, and its updates, are intended to be an umbrella plan for all these documents. This Plan is not meant to substitute existing or future planning documents and any misrepresentation by this Plan is unintentional. Specific questions regarding a particular plan or specific details of that source’s ideas, concepts, or implementation should be directed to that document.

Other existing Grundy Center’s studies and plans include:

- Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 2019 Grundy County Housing Needs Assessment
- Grundy County Health Department Community Health Needs Assessment and Plan

THE SMART PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Iowa's Smart Planning Principles are presented below, in no particular order.

- ✓ Collaboration - Governmental, community, and individual stakeholders, including those outside the jurisdiction of the entity, are encouraged to be involved and provide comment during deliberation of planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions and during implementation of such decisions. The state agency, local government, or other public entity is encouraged to develop and implement a strategy to facilitate such participation.
- ✓ Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to provide efficient, transparent, and consistent outcomes. Individuals, communities, regions, and governmental entities should share in the responsibility to promote the equitable distribution of development benefits and costs.
- ✓ Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should be undertaken to promote clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency.
- ✓ Occupational Diversity – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote increased diversity of employment and businesses opportunities, promote access to education and training, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and promote the establishment of businesses in locations near existing housing, infrastructure, and transportation.
- ✓ Revitalization – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should facilitate the revitalization of established town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that conserves land, protects historic resources, promotes pedestrian accessibility, and integrates different uses of property. Remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures, and infrastructure is preferred over new construction in undeveloped areas.
- ✓ Housing Diversity – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should encourage diversity in the types of available housing, support the rehabilitation of existing housing, and promote the location of housing near public transportation and employment centers.
- ✓ Community Character – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote activities and development that are consistent with the character and architectural style of the community and should respond to local values regarding the physical character of the community.
- ✓ Natural Resource and Agricultural Protection – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should emphasize protection, preservation, and restoration of natural resources, agricultural land, and cultural and historic landscapes, and should increase the availability of open spaces and recreational facilities.
- ✓ Sustainable Design – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote developments, buildings, and infrastructure that utilize sustainable design and construction standards and conserve natural resources by reducing waste and pollution through efficient use of land, energy, water, air, and materials.
- ✓ Transportation Diversity – Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote expanded transportation options for residents of the community. Consideration should be given to transportation options that maximize mobility, reduce congestion, conserve fuel, and improve air quality.

STRUCTURE OF THIS PLAN

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes foundational understandings of land use planning in Iowa including the legal basis to enact zoning and planning authority by municipalities. Iowa's legislature developed a framework for municipal governments to consider while they develop land use regulation and planning goals. Through these principles, 13 elements are introduced as separate comprehensive planning components determined by Iowa State Code 18B. The planning process is shown in this section with information regarding the approach to incorporating public participation in the community.

CHAPTER 2: PLAN ELEMENTS

- ✓ Introduction – provides a brief overview of the specific context of the section.
- ✓ Existing Conditions – examines the current conditions specific to elements in discussion.
- ✓ Key Issues and Opportunities – provides a summary of the identified issues and opportunities that would impact future development of the city.
- ✓ Goals, Objectives, and Action Strategies – provides formulated strategies for resolving the major issues of the city.

CHAPTER 3: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter implementing the identified goals, objections, and action strategies. This chapter also discusses the adoption and amendment processes, how to evaluate and effectively participate in continued—and in some cases—improved collaboration events with local, county, and regional agencies and organizations.

These main assumptions were used in developing the Action Plan.

- ✓ The plan must be concise, user-friendly, and visionary.
- ✓ The plan must be reasonably internally consistent, well integrated, financially feasible and generally capable of implementation.
- ✓ The plan must be developed on strong public insight.

SETTING GOALS

The goals, objectives, and action strategies are the heart of each section, as well as the entire comprehensive plan. Much time and considerable effort by numerous people have been invested in developing goals, objectives, and action strategies, as documented in Chapter 2 and in the Action Plan in Chapter 3. The Plan considers past planning efforts and comments received during task force meetings, recommendations of the various citizens' commissions, and the guidance of the city's Planning & Zoning Commission, department heads, and city staff.

All goals, objectives, and action strategies take into consideration the ten Iowa Smart Planning Principles, of the Iowa Code, and Grundy Center's overall vision.

COMPONENTS OF GOAL SETTING

The principle statement describes the current condition which formulate the goal(s), the goals' associated objectives, and action strategies that are necessary. The statement also explains how these goals, objectives, and strategies address the problem or condition.

Goals are broad statements of a community's desires. Goals tell us where we want to go. The language of a goal statement includes directives, such as "ensure", "provide," and "retain." "Ensure" in this plan means the city will do whatever they can within their physical, legal, and financial means.

Objectives are more specific and measurable activity, a benchmark, to be reached in pursuit of the goal.

Action Strategies express a commitment to a course of action in one of three ways:

- ✓ The action strategies themselves, as they appear in an adopted comprehensive plan, provide clear guidance for decision making when a situation arises;
- ✓ They form the basis for revised development regulations (i.e., zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, building codes, etc.); and
- ✓ They provide the overall direction for implementation of a strategy or course of action.

GOAL SETTING

This section describes the defines the roles and responsibilities of different citizens, stakeholders, and groups involved in the planning process. It also summarizes the public involvement opportunities used to gather public input.

Smart Planning Element - Public Participation

This is a process element that includes: Information relating to public participation during the comprehensive plan or land development regulations, including documentation of the public participation process, a compilation of objectives, policies, and goals identified in the public comment received, and identification of the groups or individuals comprising any work groups or committees that were created to assist the planning and zoning commission or other appropriate decision-making body of the municipality.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process used to update the city of Grundy Center's Comprehensive Plan engaged a diverse group of community stakeholders, concerned citizens, elected and appointed officials, city staff, and various organizational representatives. The process allowed numerous opportunities for participation and involvement throughout the project. Throughout the project, the process sought to balance the act of preservation and improvement to Grundy Center's qualities. Those qualities included its existing strengths; enhanced economic opportunities; sustained community character and quality of life; interest in redevelopment or infill development; and the work to create a community that is "livable".

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) worked closely with the city of Grundy Center throughout the course of this project. To ensure public education and involvement throughout the comprehensive planning effort, a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was developed. The PIP identified an approach using planning techniques that have demonstrated successful outcomes with previous planning projects and strategies applicable to the city and its citizens.

Encouraging active public participation during plan development was the primary goal of the PIP. The PIP adhered to the Iowa's Smart Planning Principles of Collaboration, Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency. The PIP identified task force meetings and public hearings for the Planning, Programming, and Zoning Commission and City Council. The PIP also identified methods of communication to inform the community of this planning effort such as public notices, flyers, city website postings, and city newsletters. Below are details of the roles, responsibilities, and outcome of the PIP efforts.

TASK FORCE MEETINGS

Three structured and facilitated Task Force meetings were held between August and October 2022. These meetings provided facilitated discussion by INRCOG that focused on a single plan element as the main topic. Feedback from participants is the source that was used to formulate the existing conditions, objectives, and draft recommendations for each of the Plan Elements. Each meeting ran approximately one and one-half hours from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00p.m. Members of the Task Force consisted of the city mayor, city clerk, city department heads, city council members, school board officials, Grundy Center Chamber-Main Street representative, economic development department staff, historic preservation department staff, health care providers, utility board members, public works department staff, active business owners, and various other members of the community.

TABLE 1: TASK FORCE MEETINGS		
Meeting Dates	Location	Discussion Topics
August 23rd, 2022	Community Center	Benefits of a Comprehensive Plan, legal requirements, components of Plan, project schedule, and the role of Task Force and public in planning process. Identifying and discussing existing conditions, key issues, opportunities, and potential goals regarding - community character, community and intergovernmental collaboration, agricultural and natural resources.
September 13th, 2022	Community Center	Identifying and discussing existing conditions, key issues, opportunities, and potential goals for community facilities and services, public infrastructure and utilities, and hazards.
October 12th, 2022	Community Center	Identifying and discussing existing conditions, key issues, opportunities, and potential goals for housing, transportation, economic development, and land use.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETINGS

Five work sessions were held with the Planning and Zoning Commission between January and May 2023 to develop goals and objectives for the Plan. Insight and recommendations were taken from these work sessions with the commission to draft Grundy Center's Future Land Use Map. Each meeting ran approximately one and one-half hours from 5:30 pm to 7:00pm. A final meeting with the Commission was held for a final review of the Plan document and Land Use Maps.

TABLE 2: PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETINGS		
Meeting Dates	Location	Discussion Topics
January 24, 2023	City Hall	Comprehensive Plan overview, role of Commission and public in planning process. Review of Task Force meetings: existing conditions, key issues, opportunities, and potential goals
February 22, 2023	City Hall	Discussion of proposed goals and objectives for the Plan.
May 4, 2023	City Hall	More discussion of proposed goals and objectives. Review of current land use map.
April 1, 2024	City Hall	Review of current and future land use maps. Review of draft Plan document.

JOINT TASK FORCE, PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION, AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Following meetings with the Planning and Zoning Commission, the draft Plan was revised based on the Commission's comments and presented to a joint meeting of the Task Force and City Council on April 1, 2024.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing on April 1, 2024. Following discussion, the commission recommended adoption of the draft Plan to the City Council.

The City Council held a public hearing on April 15, 2024, after which the Council adopted the Comprehensive Plan by resolution.

TABLE 3: PUBLIC HEARINGS			
Meeting Dates	Location	Body	Actions Taken
April 1, 2024	City Hall	Planning and Zoning Commission	Recommended adoption of the Plan.
April 15, 2024	City Hall	City Council	Adopted the Plan.

CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

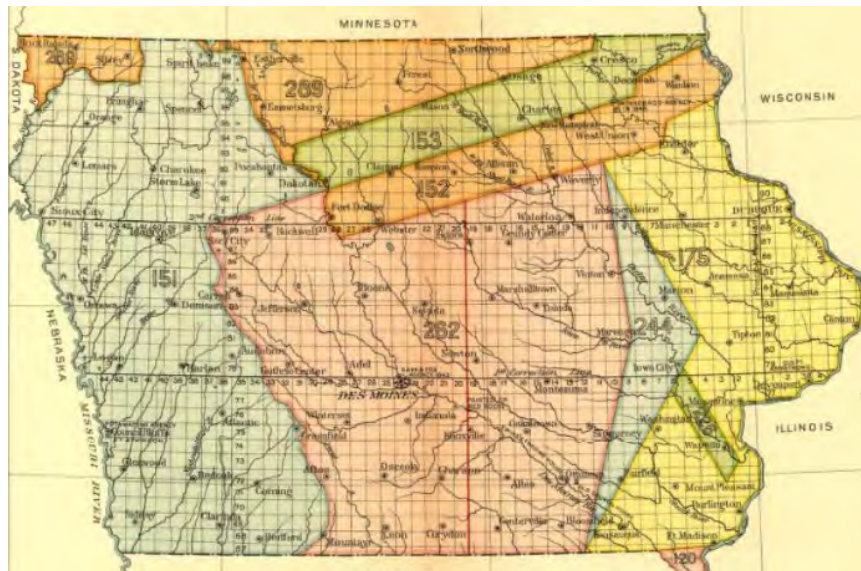
BACKGROUND

Grundy Center is located in Grundy County, Iowa situated in the northeast region of the state. Located south of U.S. Highway 20 and at the intersection of Iowa Highways 14 and 175, Grundy Center sits in the vast and abundant open views of corn crops that extended into the horizon. Black Hawk Creek bisects the northeast corner of the city boundary. Map 1 illustrates the location of the city in relation to the county, region, and state.

HISTORY OF GRUNDY CENTER, IOWA

Before the arrival of European settlers, Grundy County was the territory of the Sac and Fox Tribes, who were a closely held alliance between two different tribes that called themselves the Sauk and Meskwaki. Following the Black Hawk Wars, the Sauk and Meskwaki ceded large portions of their territory. In 1842, the Sauk and Meskwaki tribes ceded all lands in Central Iowa (shown in red in Figure 1) with Cession 262 and relocated west. The following year, the State of Iowa was created in Des Moines. Grundy Center was incorporated on April 17, 1877, and was named after Felix Grundy, a congressman, a senator, and a former US Attorney General from Tennessee. Grundy Center is the county seat of Grundy County, Iowa.

FIGURE 1: MAP OF LAND CESSIONS BY IOWAN TRIBES



Source: Library of Congress

FIGURE 2: MAIN STREET IN GRUNDY CENTER, IOWA IN 1908.



Source: Library of Congress

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

Grundy Center has a Mayor-Council form of government. The Council consists of five members, who are elected for two-year terms staggered from one another. The Mayor is elected to a two year term also.

PLANNING FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

A community's infrastructure is the built environment. The road network in a community is creating access for people to interact with their community. How people may interact with their built environment has a direct impact on their health. Access to natural features and assets such as trees, open space, and an active ecological urban environment is an important, often overlooked, component of a quality of life to improve health of residents. Future residents looking to move to Grundy Center may consider walkability and access to services like healthy and affordable foods, parks, and diverse transportation options. Understanding how the built environment affects public health is critical to creating vibrant, active communities. While this plan does not specify a section for healthy community planning, consideration is given to the goals and objectives of each Smart Planning Element. This Plan is informed by the 2021 Grundy County Health Improvement Plan developed by the Grundy County Public Health Department.



GRUNDY CENTER'S DOWNTOWN STREET

Source: City website www.grundycenter.com

POPULATION

This section of the plan will provide a variety of information that describes demographic trends and projections compiled for the City of Grundy Center.

TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

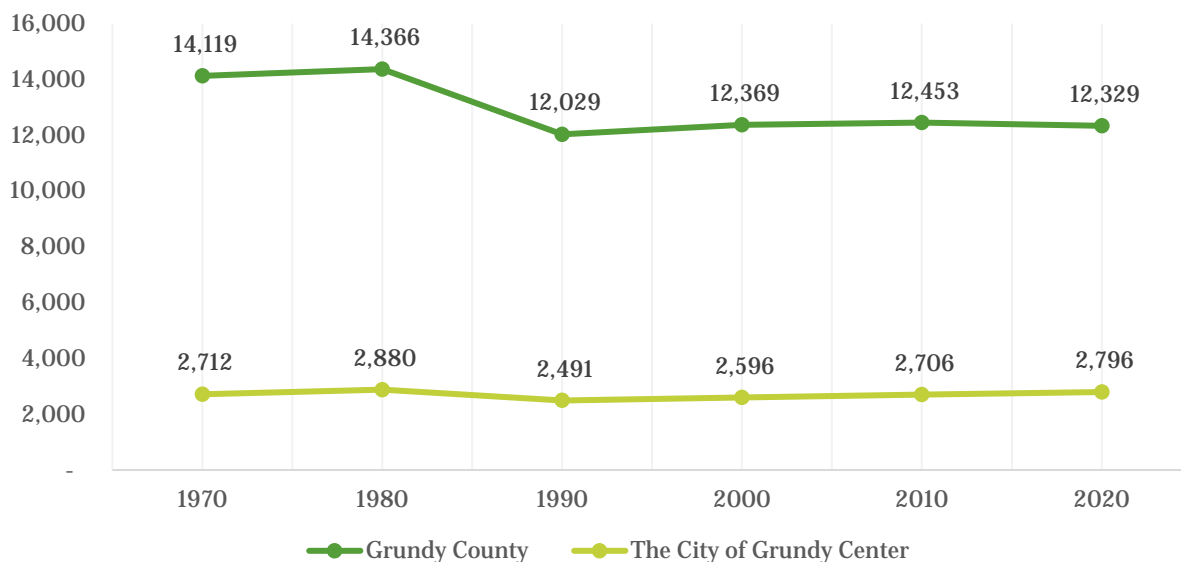
Population trends are influenced by several indicators, such as employment (local and regional), regional economic factors, income, housing, and quality of life. These factors may occur together, and our analysis of past trends may draw some suggestions or hypothesis of what may have influenced these changes in population. For Iowa, small towns have had a steady decline in population for decades following the 1980's

Farm Crisis, which many are still recovering from. Shrinking populations are a concern for many because this trend may lead to disinvestment.

A summary of population trends from 2010 to 2020 are as follows:

- Grundy Center had growth +3%.
- The County declined by -1%.
- Similar sized communities in Iowa declined by an average of -2.1%.
- Grundy Center is one of the top 3 growing communities in the County, by population.

FIGURE 2: POPULATION TREND FOR GRUNDY CENTER AND GRUNDY COUNTY



Source: Decennial Census Data

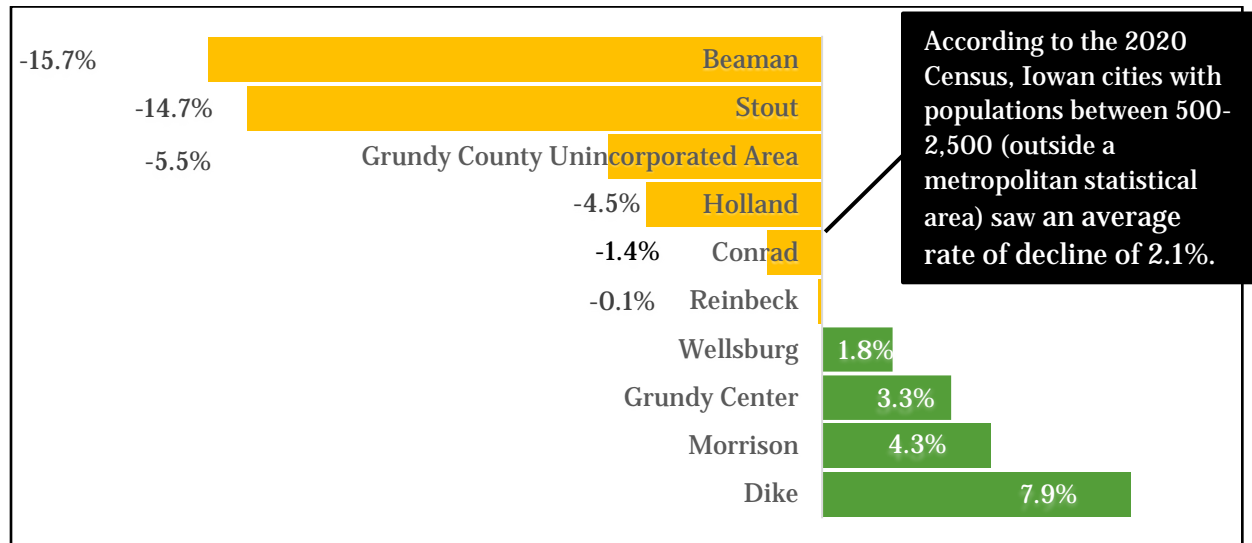
TABLE 4: POPULATION TRENDS						
Community	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	Population Change 2010-2020 (Persons)
Beaman	219	183	210	191	161	-30
Conrad	1,133	964	1,055	1,108	1,093	-15
Dike	987	875	944	1,209	1,304	95
Grundy Center	2,880	2,491	2,596	2,706	2,796	90
Holland	278	215	250	282	269	-13
Morrison	146	125	97	94	98	4
Reinbeck	1,808	1,605	1,751	1,664	1,662	-2
Stout	190	192	217	224	191	-33
Wellsburg	761	682	716	707	720	13
GRUNDY COUNTY AND IOWA						% CHANGE
Grundy County (Total)	14,366	12,029	12,369	12,453	12,329	-1%
State of Iowa	2,913,808	2,776,755	2,926,324	3,046,355	3,190,369	4.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Compared with other municipalities, Grundy Center is one of the County's top growing communities. Compared to all similarly sized communities across Iowa where the average rate of change (-)2.1%, Grundy Center is doing well and maintaining their residents. People are moving to Grundy Center even as the region lost population.

If we consider the number of people rather than the rate of change, the decline is not as drastic as the changing rate suggests. In Table 4, the population trends for all incorporated communities in Grundy County since 1980, as well as the total for the county and the State of Iowa are presented with the actual change in the number of people over the same 10 year period. Grundy Center's population has fluctuated over this time and has found challenges in rebounding from the decline in the 1980s.

Figure 4: Change in Population for Municipalities in Grundy County (2010-2020)



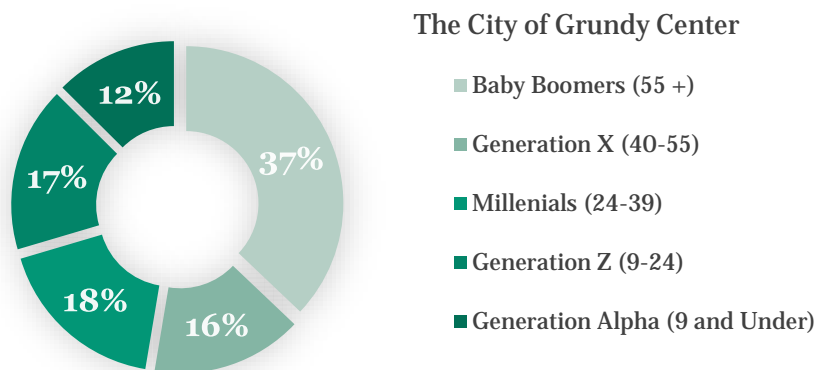
CHARACTERISTICS

Population characteristics are the specific elements that make the community unique and diverse. This section examines *age, race, sex, natural change trends, and dependency ratio*.

Age, Sex, and Race

Age groups are shown in Figure 5 for Grundy Center based on 2020 Census data. The Baby Boomer generation group is the largest age group in Grundy Center and makes up over a third of the local population. Gen X'ers and Millennials make up 34%. The youngest groups are Gen Z and Gen Alpha that together make up 29% of the population. Based on 2020 American Community Survey Estimates, the median age can be compared. With a greater number of older age groups (55+), the median age of Grundy Center is 39.9 years, which is higher than Iowa's median age of 38.3 years but lower than the County's median age of 42.4 years.

Figure 5: Age Generation Groups of Grundy Center (2020)



Source: 2020 U.S. Census Data

TABLE 5: POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE COHORTS (2010-2020)					
Age Cohort (in years)	2010		2020*		% Change between 2010-2020
	#	% of Total	#	% of Total	
< 5	194	7.2%	117	4.2%	-40%
5-9	179	6.6%	211	7.5%	18%
10-14	140	5.2%	252	9.0%	80%
15-19	146	5.4%	164	5.9%	12%
20-24	121	4.5%	91	3.3%	-25%
25-34	334	12.3%	291	10.4%	-13%
35-44	292	10.8%	369	13.2%	26%
45-54	347	12.8%	223	8.0%	-36%
55-64	338	12.5%	349	12.5%	3%
65-74	242	8.9%	267	9.5%	10%
75-84	229	8.5%	222	7.9%	-3%
85+	144	5.3%	115	4.1%	-20%
Total	2,706	100	2,796	100	3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau & American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2015-2020)

In Table 5, the changes in age cohorts within Grundy Center reveal two drastic changes in two age cohorts. The largest change was measured among young teens (10-14 years old) which grew by 80%. Next, among GenX (ages 35 to 44) grew by 26%.

Figure 6: Age Pyramid for Grundy Center (2020)

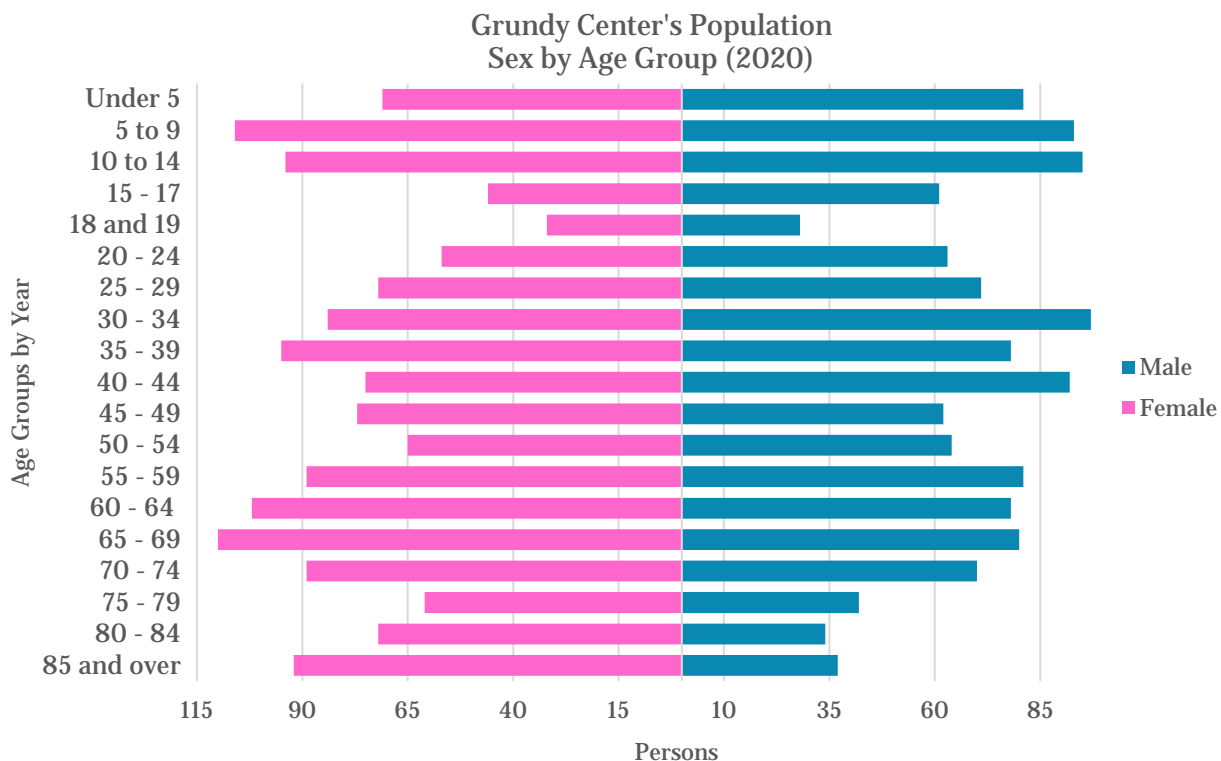


Figure 7: Population by Race of Grundy Center (2020)

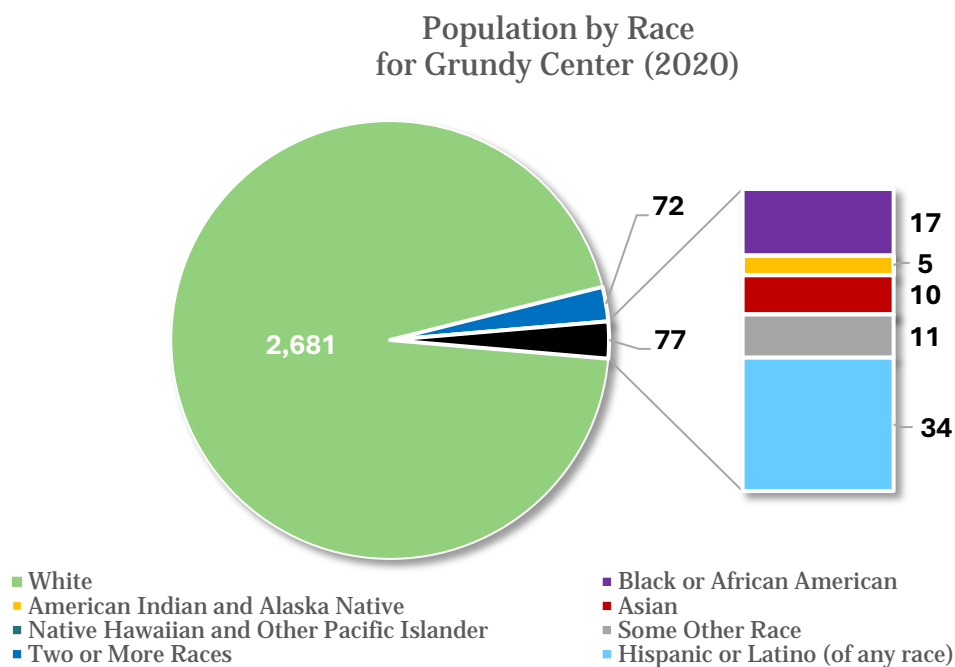


Figure 6 & 7 Source: 2020 Census Data

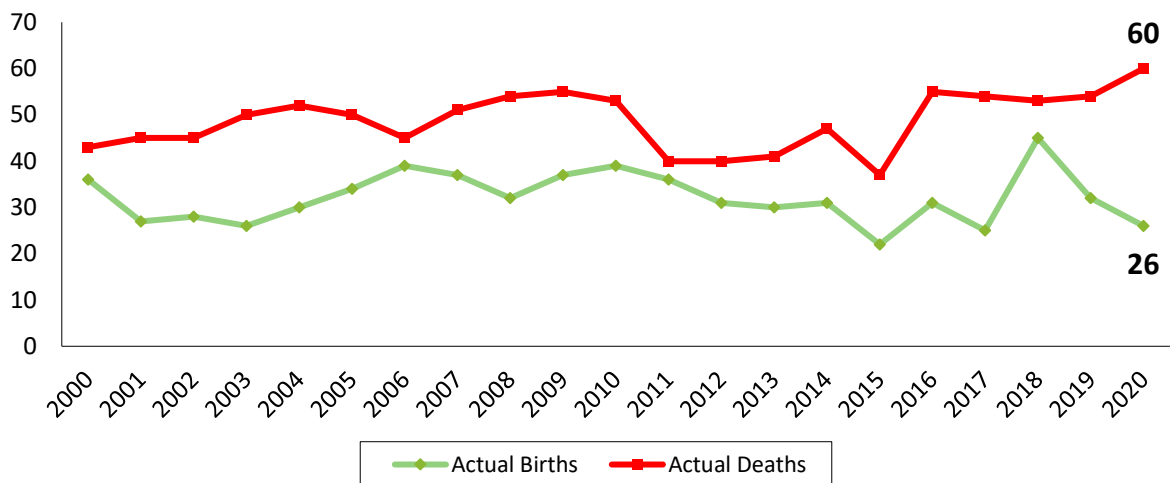
Figure 6 shows an age pyramid of Grundy Center. The ratio of male to females for most age groups are relatively balanced except for older groups from 75 years and over. There are more women than men for those 75 years and over.

Figure 7 shows the population by race of Grundy Center based on 2020 Census data. As is shown, Grundy Center is predominately White (96%). Non-White racial groups make up only 4% of the population. From that group, people who identify with 2 or more races are the highest, yet only account for 2.6% of the city's population. The Hispanic or Latino racial group has been at 1.2%, Black (0.6%), Native American (0.2%), and Asian (0.4%). Overall, the table indicates that the city remained predominantly White at 96% in 2020 with slightly more females than males.

Natural Change Trend

The population trend is expected to have more births than deaths and that would define the growth rate. Grundy Center's births and deaths, or natural change, is shown in Figure 4. The natural change is the difference between births and deaths which has been declining (-) since 2000.

Figure 8: Natural Change Trends (2000-2020)



Dependency Ratio

Trends for Grundy Center indicate that the population is decreasing, and the elderly population is expected to grow. Generational birth rates have declined over time and family sizes have shrunk. Looking ahead we can expect a growing older generation that will need more care and options for their needs and quality of life. This has implications for the economic burden in the working aged populations. How does that trend measure between the county and state?

This can be determined with the dependency ratio, which is a metric of a community's dependent populations. The dependency ratio is used to understand the relative economic burden for working aged populations and has ramifications for taxation. As people may feel more economic burden, they are less likely to support tax levy options for their city. A high dependency ratio means those of working age, and the overall economy, face a greater burden in supporting the aging population. Readers should note that this ratio is based on a singular economic projection that does not account for other factors such as inflation and should be used with other data to understand the city's overall future condition.

TABLE 7: PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 15 AND OVER THE AGE OF 64								
Year	2010				2020			
Age Range	< 15		>64		< 15		>64	
Population	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Grundy Center	485	18%	635	24%	580	22%	604	23%
Grundy County	2,386	19%	2,350	19%	2,327	19%	2,548	21%
State of Iowa	596,336	20%	446,630	15%	605,633	19%	537,401	17%
<i>Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates</i>								

Table 7 analyzes the number and share of the population that are under the age of 15 and over the age of 64 for Grundy Center, Grundy County, and the State of Iowa. In Grundy Center, the number and percentage of persons under 15 is estimated to have increased slightly from 2010 (18%) to 2020 (22%) while the number and percentage of persons over 65 is estimated to have decreased slightly (24% down to 23%). Comparatively, the dependency ratio of Grundy Center is slightly greater than the percentages across county and state trends from 2010 and 2020.

This comparison indicates that the share of the economic burden of the working aged population to care for an older population was greater in Grundy Center than the share measured across the county and state in last decade. The dependency ratio value for Grundy Center falls within a range of +/- 5 percentage points of the county and state's ratios.

Population Estimates & Projections

How should Grundy Center prepare or think about how their community will transform in the future? This Plan provides a projection for readers and stakeholders to consider. This population projection does not account for natural trends, losses, changes, etc. that may be typical for data scientists. Our approach uses two mathematic models (linear and geometric projections) to determine population in years ahead, then averaging their values to provide a rate of change in population. This approach considers past population trends and assumes stability with growth over time without economic instability or downturn.

TABLE 8: POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE CITY OF GRUNDY CENTER		
Type of Projection	2030	2040
Linear		
1910-2020	3,099	3,221
1940-2020	2,944	3,027
1960-2020	2,781	2,813
Geometric		
1910-2020	3,278	3,474
1940-2020	2,988	3,095
1960-2020	2,785	2,819
Mean or Average	2,979	3,075
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, INRCOG Population Projection Calculations</i>		

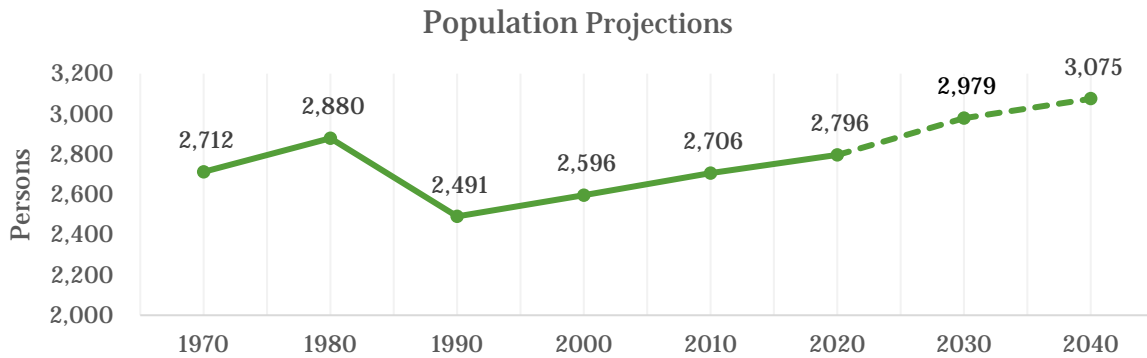


Table 8 provides 20-year population projections or estimates for the city of Grundy Center. These projections were made using historical population trends as their basis and do not express an exact population figure for the years 2030 and 2040. An explanation of each of the types of projections follows.

Linear and Geometric projections are straight-line or averaging methods of predicting population change. The Linear method uses the actual change in the total number of persons over a predetermined period of time in the community. Conversely, the Geometric method utilizes the percent change in population over that same period of time. For both of these projections, this Plan uses trend information from three time periods, between 1910 and 2020, between 1940 and 2020, and between 1960 and 2020 for determining the figures shown in Table 8. The former period looks at population trends over the past 100 years while the latter looks at the trend over the past 50 years.

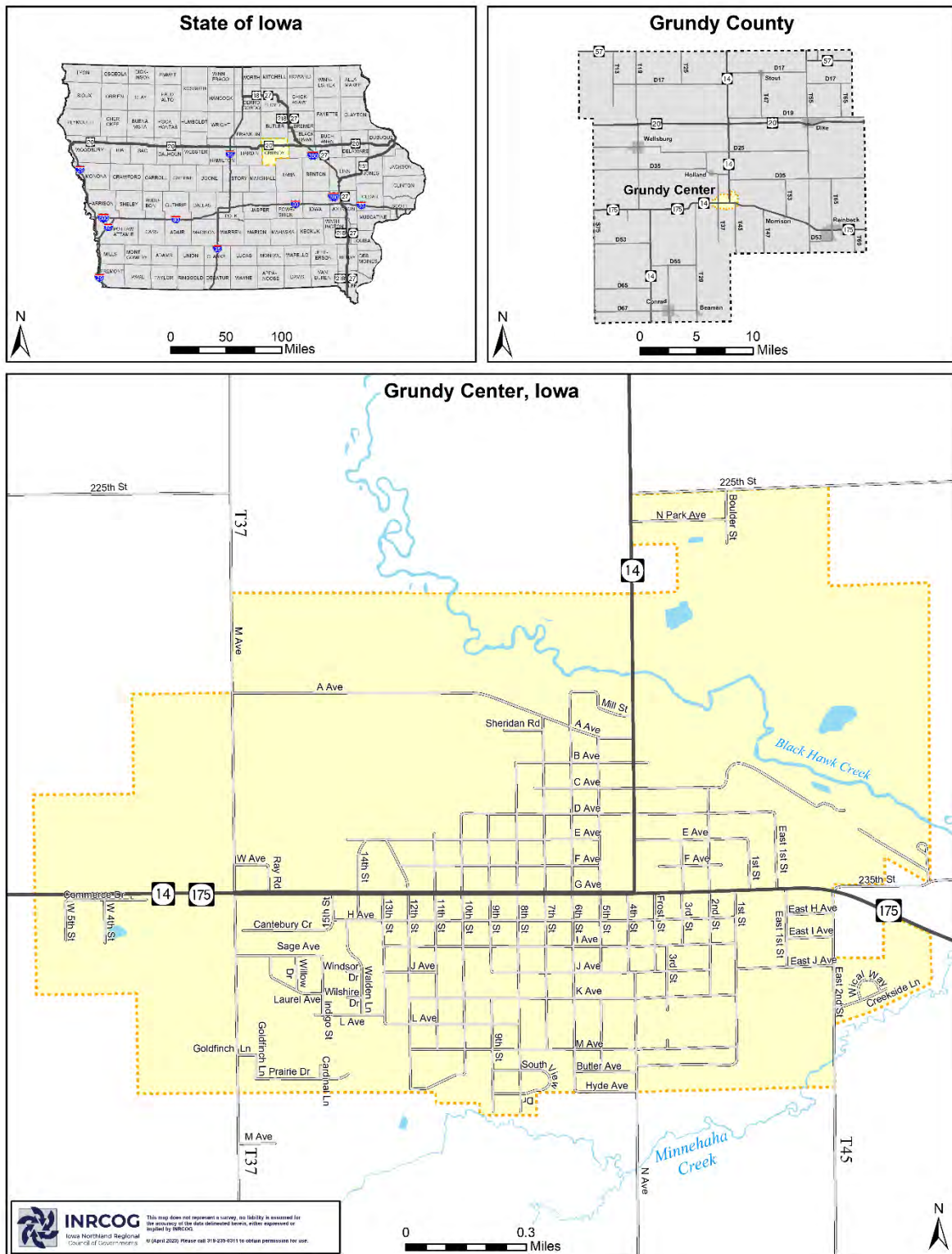
In reviewing Table 8, it is important to note the similarities and dissimilarities in the figures for each of the projection years. It is also important to identify any unusual or unique projection figures that may have been calculated. Caution should be used when considering one of these unusual figures for planning purposes. The projection averages indicate that the city's 2030 population may be approximately 2,979 persons, while the city's 2040 population may be approximately 3,075 persons. This Plan anticipates that Grundy Center will experience growth at approximately 3 to 6 percent per decade.

Population Summary

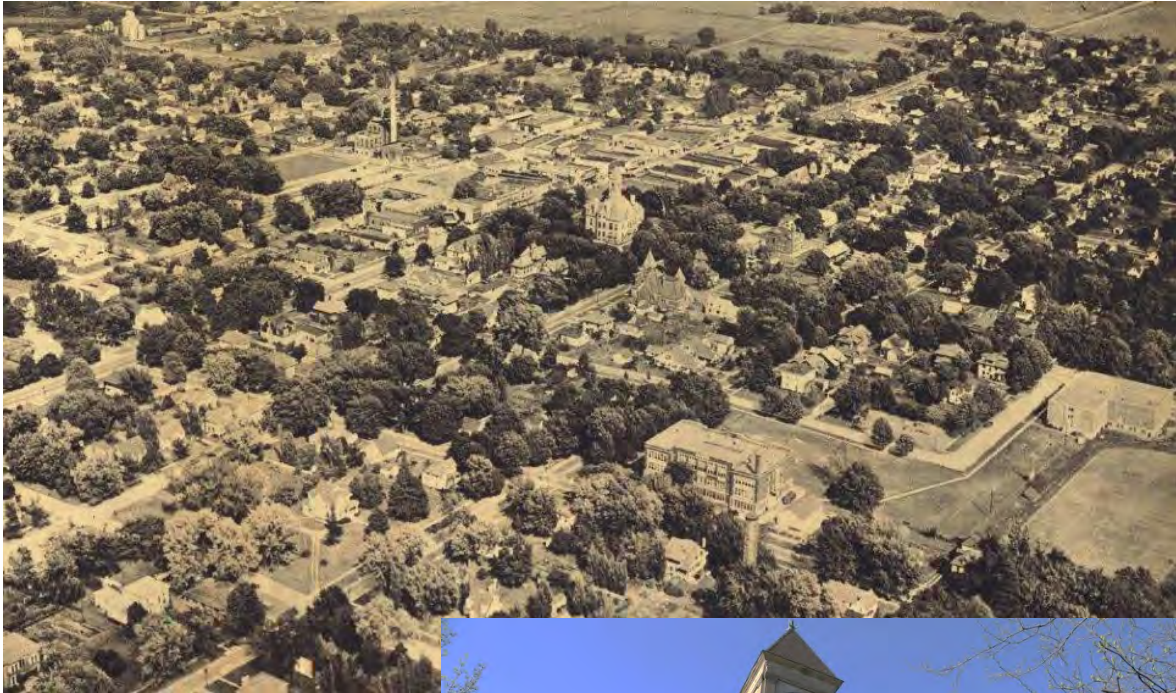
Grundy Center's population has steadily grown at a rate of 3% since the economic crisis of the 1980s. This resilience and growth differ from a growing trend regionally where Midwestern rural communities are shrinking and losing population. An aging Baby Boomer population will outgrow other age groups in the next 10-15 years. Based on the dependency ratio from past trends, there will be a need for more care takers and workers to care for this growing older population. These are considerations for any stakeholders or City leaders leading efforts to attract a work force or prevent population loss.

Most of the County's cities are growing. Population shrinkage across Midwestern communities in the region will continue but for Grundy Center there is slow steady growth. Efforts to attract families, young professionals, and a qualified work force in health care will prepare for an aging population's needs and increase the tax base. With any population growth, the City should promote racial diversity and celebrate cultural heritage of all residents. Diversity and inclusion create innovation and opportunity which is how Grundy Center continues a path of resilience and opportunity.

MAP 1: LOCATION OF THE CITY



CHAPTER 3: PLAN ELEMENTS



AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCE

The Agricultural and Natural Environment element serves two purposes. The first is to clarify the relationship between the natural environment and developed environment. The second is to secure a balanced or sustainable approach to future development. To help complete these purposes, the following guiding principles and assumptions were used, as well as the Smart Planning Principle identified below:

- ✓ The cultural landscape where we work, live, and play is shaped by the natural surroundings.
- ✓ The economic base of agriculture products is dependent upon the city and county's natural setting and its' resources.
- ✓ To protect the long-term capacity of the environment to support growth, the limits of natural systems and their carrying capacities must be determined.
- ✓ Responsible growth requires the city to work with and within their natural setting. We must work with nature rather than against it.
- ✓ Grundy Center must recognize their limits. Humankind's problems, especially regarding the natural setting, cannot always be solved with better science or a technological fix.
- ✓ Understanding the linkages between the natural and cultural landscapes is an important dimension of sound growth management.

The natural environment of Grundy Center is comprised of multiple factors that combine to form the environmental setting. The importance and status of the man-made elements or the state's roads, water, sewer, businesses, and residential areas are commonly viewed, or mistaken, as being independent of the natural environment. Such misconceptions have led to the residential and commercial development of floodplains and prime agricultural land, and loss of irreplaceable natural elements such as native prairies, forests, prominent vistas, and other scenic resources.

Smart Planning Element – Agriculture & Natural Resources

Objectives, policies, and programs addressing preservation and protection of agricultural and natural resources.

The following section will identify the physical elements that make up the environmental setting of Grundy Center and Grundy County. From the identification and analysis of the individual elements, areas can be identified as sensitive, or in need of protection. The City of Grundy Center, like all government bodies, must learn from past mistakes and implement simple rules and regulations to ensure the protection of elements that have been destroyed in the past.

The health and stability of Grundy Center and Grundy County, and both the natural and man-made environments, can be measured by the diversity within the system and the ability of the city and county to develop responsively to the natural systems, which shape its ultimate path.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Grundy Center's agricultural and natural resources existing conditions include agricultural lands, topography, waterways, climate, vegetation, and soils.

Agriculture

Grundy Center has agricultural lands located along the northwest and southwest quadrants of its corporate boundaries. The primary row crops in the city are usually either corn or soybeans, with other open areas producing hay, alfalfa, or set aside for land conservation programs.

Topography

Grundy Center's landscape can be characterized as an urban community with pockets of open or agricultural cropland along the northwest and southwest portions.

As is shown in Map 2, the topography of the community is generally a flat to rolling slope topography that characterizes the agricultural areas of northeast Iowa. There are several areas of steeper than normal slope with these being dispersed throughout the county adjacent to watercourses.

The most visible geographic feature within the community is Black Hawk Creek. Black Hawk Creek flows through Grundy Center's northern section of town.

Waterways & Watershed

Black Hawk Creek runs eastward through the northern section of Grundy Center. The entire incorporated area of Grundy Center lies within the Middle Cedar River Watershed.

Climate

Grundy Center's climate is like climates of most upper Midwest cities. Due to its location in the central portion of North America, the climate is of continental character. Because the city is far away from the moderating influence of a large body of water, a wide variation is experienced in both temperature and precipitation during four distinct seasons.

The distribution of precipitation through the year is very favorable for agriculture with an average 72 percent of the annual total falling in the April to September crop season. The annual temperature range is large. January, the coldest month, averages near 14 degrees and July, the warmest month, averages about 74 degrees. Extreme temperatures range from about -35 to 110 degrees.

Grundy Center averages approximately 194 sunny days yearly. Precipitation in the area averages around 33 inches of rain and 33 inches of snowfall annually (Source: Iowa Community Quick Reference Data Sheet).

Summer precipitation results primarily from thunderstorm activity, although longer less intense rains are not uncommon in the area. Other forms of precipitation recorded in the area include: snow, hail, sleet, and ice.

Vegetation

Trees along streets and city parks make up the urban forest landscape of Grundy Center. In the 2014 Urban Forest Management Plan prepared by Iowa Department of Natural Resources, a GPS tree inventory of the city's street and park tree canopy was conducted. Grundy Center had 1,326 trees inventoried within the city's limits which accounted for 26 different species of trees with the most common genus: Maple (36%), Ash (17%), and crabapple (11%). The age distribution of the city's trees were in a pattern that is not favorable for a city to maintain its tree canopy cover. There were not enough younger trees to replace older trees that may die from natural aging and Emerald Ash Borer insect infestation. Tree canopy cover is important for cities because of their heat mitigation benefits, energy reducing benefits, stormwater management benefits, and air quality benefits.

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) insect is an invasive species that grew over the last decade and is found in most of Iowa. The EAB devastated the ash tree population of Grundy Center. The planned removal of dead ash trees is an ongoing city effort to mitigate risks and danger to the population and property.

Grundy Center also has a few row crops as existing agricultural land along the city's borders.

Soils

The soils in the Grundy Center area, as shown in Map 3, are typical of those found in Northeast Iowa and some of the most productive in the world. Seventy-five (75) percent of the soil in Grundy Center (Map 3) has slopes measuring five percent or lower. The community is abundantly supplied with a variety of soils other than productive agricultural soils. There are seven soil classifications in Grundy Center. Specifically, the soil types that exist with the city of Grundy Center are primarily classified as the Marshan-Coland-Flaggler, Cresco-Kenyon-Clyde, Dickinson-Sparta, Dinsdale-Klinger-Maxfield, Mt. Carroll-Downs-Garwin, Kenyon-Clyde-Floyd, and Rockton-Ostrander Associations. As was noted above, the soil is a valuable agricultural resource of the community. One soil factor that is used as a standardized measure of agricultural value is Corn Suitability Rating (CSR). The CSR ratings range between 5 and 100 that measure favorability of the land to support corn production. After reviewing the county soil survey, the CSR of the primary soils within the city range from 63 to 96, which are high categories rated with prime favorability in agricultural production.

This Plan focuses on CSR because the city's land mass includes soils suitable for farming and may be considered open for development. Soils with high CSR scores, often labeled as prime agricultural lands, tend to have significant development potential. The Plan acknowledges two key points: most soils in the city are agriculturally valuable or prime, and urban development is likely. Consequently, as the city plans development, it may sacrifice valuable agricultural soils. Policy decision-makers will need to assess each proposal, balancing the agricultural value of the soils against the site's development potential.

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Grundy Center recognizes the integral link between the health of the natural setting and the health of its inhabitants; therefore, a thorough discussion was conducted with the Task Force on what is currently being done, what can be done, and what can be improved upon in the future.

To maintain the present quality of life as defined through the natural surroundings, certain measures must be taken while accommodating growth over the next 20 years.

Opportunities Include:

- Plan for flood mitigation in future development to avoid hazard risks associated with life, property, and quality of life while also using natural based solutions to managing flood plains or flood infrastructure such as berms to be opportunities to integrate into the community's infrastructure to serve a physical or cultural landscape.

During the Task Force meetings, members were asked to identify the current natural resource issues and opportunities. To focus the dialogue, members were presented these questions: *"Is enough being done to protect, preserve, and restore the community's natural resources? What can be done to protect environmentally sensitive areas (floodplain, wetlands, wooded areas, habitat, unstable soils, etc.) from encroachment?"* Responses to these questions contributed to the following issues and opportunities.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Flooding has not historically been a problem for the City, and current flood mapping affects new development in only a small area of the floodplain. It is important that development be restricted in these

areas to mitigate potential flood damage. “Green spaces” – natural vegetation, woodland, or parks – along streambanks allow these areas to absorb the impact of flooding. Agricultural land use may also serve this purpose. In addition to enforcing the City’s floodplain ordinance, future land uses in these environmentally sensitive areas should be carefully considered, if not restricted.

AGRICULTURAL & NATURAL RESOURCE GOALS

Agriculture/Natural Resource Goal #1: The City should protect and preserve, whenever possible, its natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, watersheds, and floodplains.

Objectives:

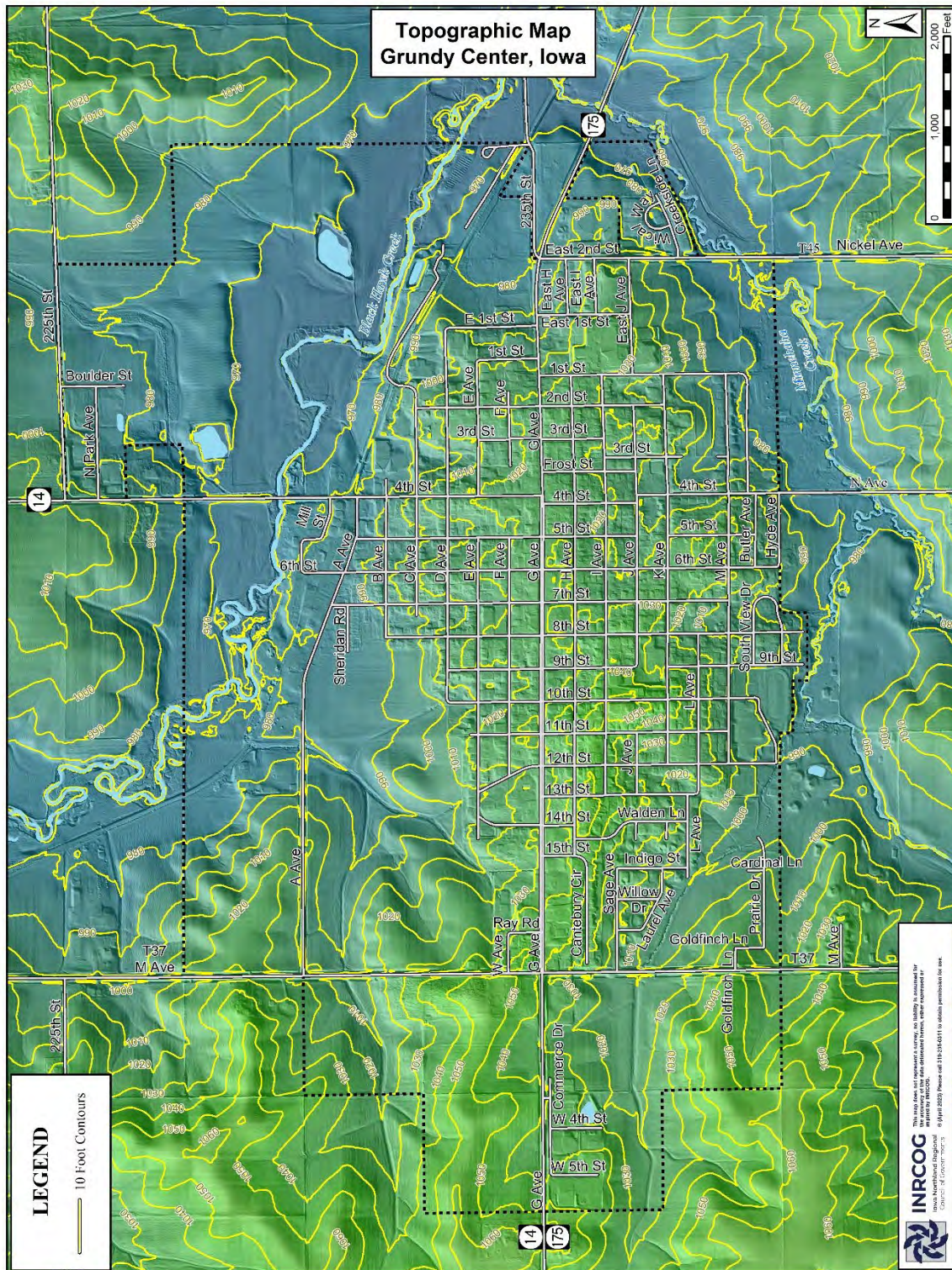
- a. Prohibit development in the floodway.
 - i. Consider creating “green space” – parks, natural vegetation or woodland, or open space – along flood prone areas.
 - ii. Continue to enforce the City’s floodplain ordinance.
- b. Consider alternatives to development of prime agricultural soils when making land use decisions.
- c. In areas of new development, encourage adjacent growth to control sprawl and avoid the costly effects of “leapfrog development” on city infrastructure, while protecting natural resources.

Agriculture/Natural Resource Goal #2: The City should promote infill of incorporated land, redevelopment, and revitalization opportunities, whenever possible, as an alternative to urban expansion.

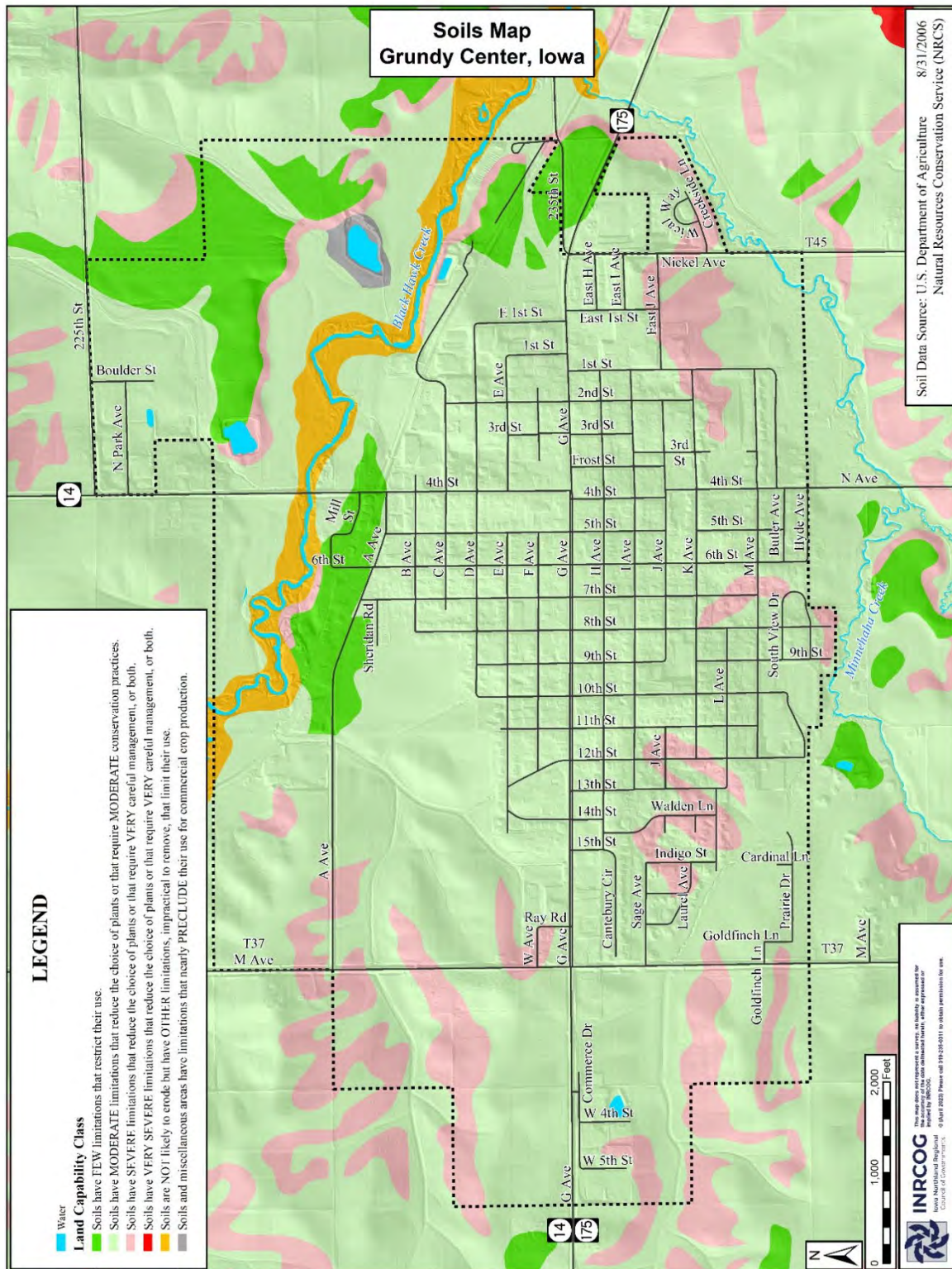
Objectives:

- a. Reference Growth Areas of the Community Map in consideration of proposed developments as a tool to encourage best use of available resources.
 - i. Distribute Growth Areas of the Community Maps to potential developers.
 - ii. Incentivize development in Primary Growth Areas as defined in the Growth Areas of the Community Map.
- b. Continue to use Urban Revitalization Plans to promote infill development.
 - i. It is in the best interest of the city to review and amend Urban Revitalization Plans as is deemed necessary and appropriate.
- c. City staff and officials should reference the [*2019 Grundy County Housing Needs Assessment*](#) to identify opportunities for implementation of this goal.

MAP 2: TOPOGRAPHIC MAP OF THE CITY



MAP 3: SOILS MAP



HAZARDS

This section addresses the goals, policies, and actions that mitigate the risk of future hazards (natural or man-made) with the city of Grundy Center.

Grundy Center shares a small portion of its boundaries with Black Hawk Creek's floodplain. Flood potential is minimal. Additional details on other hazards can be found in the *2023 Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* (HMP). It is also important to note that during the development of this plan update, Grundy County began the *Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* update, anticipated for completion Spring of 2024.

Smart Planning Element – Hazards

Objectives, policies, and programs that identify the natural and other hazards that have the greatest likelihood of impacting the municipality or that pose a risk of catastrophic damage as such hazards that relate to land use and development decisions, as well as the steps necessary to mitigate risk after considering the local hazard mitigation plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Natural disasters have a devastating impact on a community and Grundy Center is no stranger to the power of mother nature and the impact these events can have on a community. Overall, Grundy Center has taken advantage of its opportunities to become a better and stronger community as they move forward from the lessons learned during previous hazard events.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following existing conditions were taken from the *2023 Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

Flooding

Portions of Black Hawk Creek located within city limits is the main body of water for the city. Based on the latest flood zone maps from FEMA, less than 5% of parcels are located within the 100-year flood plain. Due to the relatively low volume of water that may inundate Black Hawk Creek at any given time, the likelihood of flooding is greatly reduced yet this should continually be considered with future development so flood risks remain low for Grundy Center.

Tornados

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, there have been five tornado events within a five-mile radius of Grundy Center in 1960. In 1973, an EF1 tornado passed directly through Grundy Center, measuring 10 yards in width, with no reported casualties. Additionally, in 2004, an EF1 tornado with a width of 100 yards swept north of the city, while another EF0 tornado, 50 yards wide, swept north of the city directly through Holland. In 2016, an EF0 tornado with a width of 25 yards swept west of the city. Fortunately, there were no casualties in any of these tornado events.

Historically, tornado activity has had a low impact on the community, yet tornadoes and high wind weather remain top hazards to Grundy Center. Early warning systems and up to date Emergency Management communication systems and equipment will also benefit the city of Grundy Center in such events.

Additional Hazards

The *2023 Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* lists other hazards that include thunderstorms, severe winter storms, hailstorms, extreme heat, and grass or wildland fire that affect all of Grundy County. The risk associated with each hazard is ranked according to factors found in the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Key Issues & Opportunities

The following are the key hazard issues and concerns for Grundy Center.

Vulnerable Populations

Social vulnerability refers to a community's capacity to prepare for or respond to the stress of a hazardous event. A variety of factors can influence or define populations that are more vulnerable than others during or after a hazardous event such as tornados, blizzards, or heat waves. Community data such as age groups, household characteristics, access to safe housing, language barriers, lack of mobility, and access to a vehicle are a few examples that may make a population more susceptible to hazards when it occurs.

According to 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 600 residents of Grundy Center are older than 65 years old and 580 are under the age of 15. In Grundy Center, 240 people are estimated to have disabilities that require assistance during emergencies. About 17% of households in Grundy Center are people 65 years old living alone. Nearly 12% of the population is below the poverty threshold. There are 329 people living in renter occupied housing and approximately 5 mobile homes throughout the city. Most people have access to vehicles since less than 1% of people who are working age (16 years older) have no access to a car. Limited English-speaking households are estimated to be 4-8 households that speak Asian or Pacific Island languages.

Flooding Vulnerability

Nearly all development in Grundy Center is located out of flood prone areas. The community can expect minimal flood damage during 100- and 500 – year flood events. Map 4 shows the flood-prone areas of the City which remain contained to the east of the community.

An existing commercial agricultural facility is located within Grundy Center along the flood zone. This is the Heartland Cooperative facility located at 509 A Avenue.

Future Development

Mitigating future hazards takes a cohesive approach where risk informed planning can meet development needs with appropriate land use designations. Future or new development in conformance to the State Building and Fire Code, along with local land use ordinances and regulations (zoning, subdivision, floodplain management, building codes, etc.) will help to mitigate the effects of natural hazards to Grundy Center.

Repetitive Loss Properties

FEMA defines a repetitive loss property as an insurable building that has experienced no losses in a 10-year period in which each loss is \$1,000 or more. According to available FEMA data (as of 09/30/19), Grundy Center participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and has 1 repetitive loss property. This property is known to the flood management official with Grundy County and may be contacted for further mitigation related efforts.

HAZARD MITIGATION GOALS IN GRUNDY CENTER

The following goals are from the [*2023 Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*](#). Developed by a local hazard mitigation planning committee, the goals were adopted by resolution from Grundy Center's City Council in 2023. These goals prioritize the development of broad-based goals that would address a multitude of hazards and encompass a variety of mitigation activities, as well as numerous strategic action steps.

Hazards Goal #1: Continue to participate in the Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

Objectives:

- a. Protect the health and safety of residents, visitors, staff, and emergency personnel during and after hazard events.
- b. Prevent avoidable disasters.
- c. Minimize losses to existing and future structures in hazard areas, especially critical facilities.
- d. Maintain, improve, and conduct regularly scheduled testing of local services and infrastructure in order to reduce community, economic and environmental disruption during and after hazard events.
 - i. It is in the best interest of the city to conduct an annual review of GCMUNI Standard Operating Procedures and Emergency Management Plans and Procedures.
- e. Return the community to either pre-disaster or improved conditions in a timely manner in the wake of a disaster.
- f. Educate and communicate with the public about hazards and resources available.
- g. Use public funds in an efficient, cost effective and fair manner.
- h. Incorporate each jurisdiction into the Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- i. Coordinate and communicate with the Grundy County Emergency Management Coordinator in order to maintain a cohesive system for procedures in times of crisis.

Hazard Goal #2: Continue to enforce the community's floodplain ordinance.

Objectives:

- a. Continue participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Floodplain Insurance Program.
- b. Continue to invest in and seek out opportunities to mitigate the effects of flooding on the community.
- c. Encourage certification and continued education for area floodplain managers.
- d. Actively pursue opportunities to boost the community's FEMA Community Rating System (CSR).

Hazard Goal #3: Promote community awareness of storm shelter locations.

Objectives:

- a. Provide reference to the city of Grundy Center Appendix in 2023 Grundy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan on the city website.
- b. Broadcast storm shelter locations on local news and radio outlets, social media, and in high traffic areas throughout the community prior to and during seasons when shelters are most likely to be utilized.
 - i. Encourage citizens to enroll in the Grundy County ALERT system.
 - ii. Identify opportunities to produce and distribute stickers, magnets, or some other form of media that identify storm shelter locations.
 - iii. Make sure there is a map of these locations included in the plan.
- c. Continue to promote and provide awareness training and guidance in community school district.

Hazard Goal #4: Enforce the most current building and utility standards in new construction, redevelopment, and renovation.

Objectives:

- a. Update building codes as new editions become available.
- b. Require utilities to be buried.

- i. The city should identify opportunities and implement a strategy in the CIP to address this goal.
- c. Ensure that the permitting process and the necessary conformance to standards are well defined and available to all parties involved.

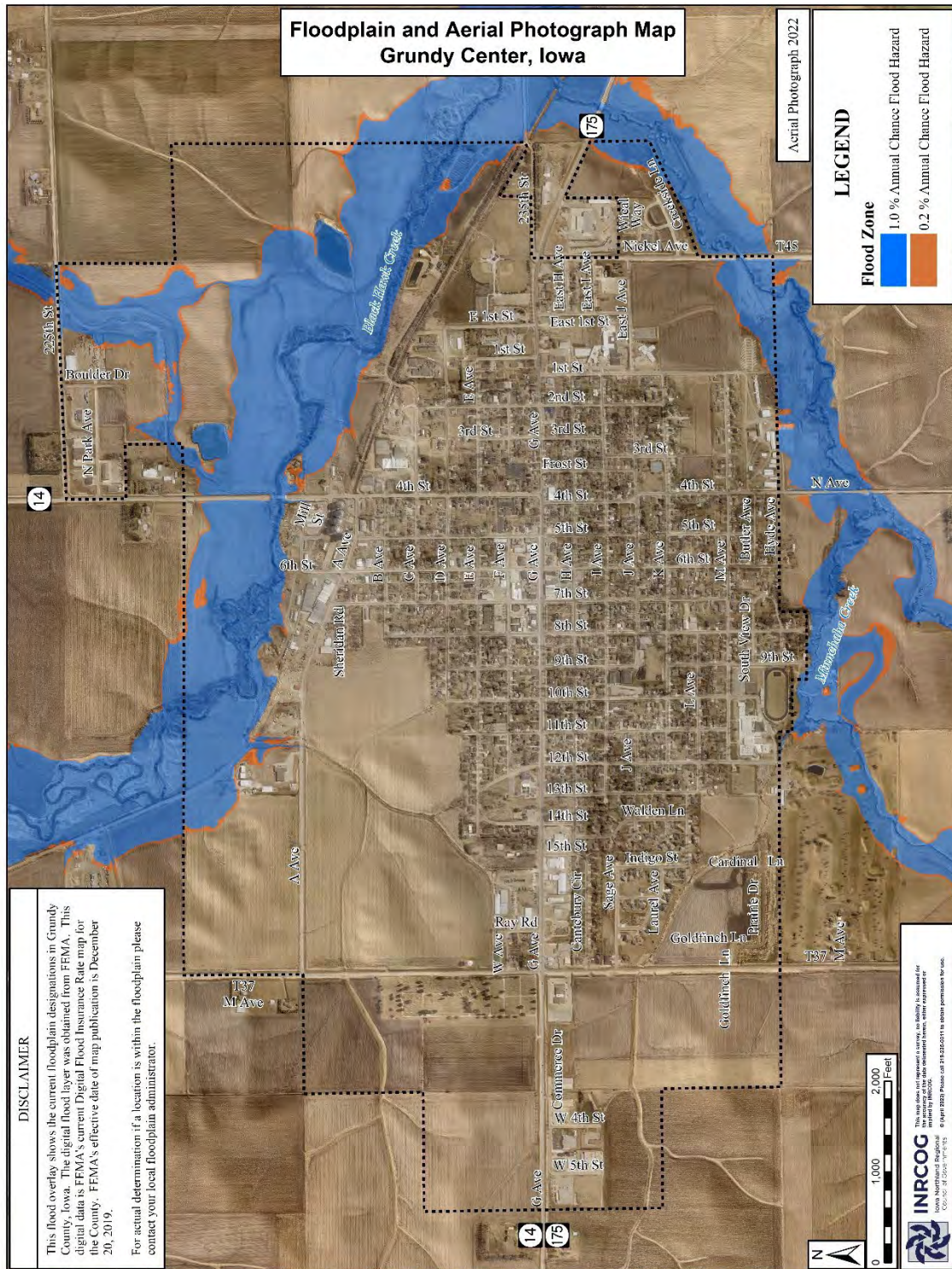
Hazard Goal #5: Identify, encourage, and incentivize implementation of fire suppression and spread mitigation measures in the Central Business District.

Objectives:

- a. Consider implementation of an Urban Revitalization Plan as an incentive.

Hazard Goal #6: Identify opportunities to collaborate with the IDOT and Grundy County Engineer to explore alternatives to congestion and safety issues at the intersection of IA HWY 14 and T37.

MAP 4: FLOODPLAIN MAP



COMMUNITY CHARACTER

An attractive, well-designed city will attract quality development, instill civic pride, improve the visual character of the community, and create a strong, positive image for the city of Grundy Center. The Community Character Element contains the community design goals and their action strategies that encourage innovation and imagination in building design and site planning, while ensuring that certain universal principles of good community design are upheld.



Source: Iowa Farm Bureau

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Below are the existing conditions, commissions, and events of the City's community character as identified by stakeholders throughout the planning process.

Historic Preservation

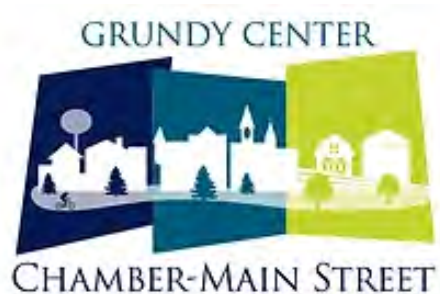
The city of Grundy Center has a Historic Preservation Commission who promotes the City's historic, aesthetic, and cultural heritage through designation, enhancement, and perpetuation of historic districts. The Commission has five members who serve three-year staggered terms. All the members of the Commission are residents or are employed by the city of Grundy Center with special permission.

Smart Planning Element – Community Character

Objectives, policies, and programs to identify characteristics and qualities that makes the municipality unique and that area important to the municipality's heritage and quality of life.

Chamber Main Street Designation

The Chamber Main Street is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that identifies resources and allocates them to the economic development of Grundy Center. Their emphasis is on historic preservation, economic vitality, and community development. GCCMS offers cooperative advertising, marketing, business training, technical assistance, and design services to businesses and organizations in downtown Grundy Center and beyond.



The Main Street Four Point Approach is as follows:

- *Design:* Support a community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.
- *Organization:* Involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.
- *Promotion:* Positions the downtown or commercial business district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics.
- *Economic Vitality:* Focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economics.

Community Events

The events that are put on every year within the city of Grundy Center are focused on the rich history of the community, which allows for residents to invest in the traditions important to city's development and resiliency (**list is not exhaustive**).

- Felix Grundy Festival
- Chamber Main Street Block Party Events
- Grundy County Fair
- Festival of Trees
- Main Street Mingle
- Girls Night Out

Key Issues & Opportunities

During the planning process, city task force members and stakeholders were asked the following questions: *What makes your community unique? What quality of life assets does it have? What quality of life assets do you believe are missing, need improving, or are lacking? What can be done to improve your community's character?* Answers to these questions helped inform the community character issues, opportunities, and goals of the Plan.

Sense of Community

One theme that came out of the planning process was the feeling of a close-knit community in Grundy Center. Task Force members commented on how community groups worked together to benefit each other and generally were supportive. Other comments speaking to this sense of community included the availability and variety of local services and locally owned businesses. It was noted that community members show up to support each other for common goals.

There were also positive comments on the design and unique features of the community. Members of the Task Force mentioned that the city was "clean and orderly" and that there were regulations in place supporting orderly growth. Design features that received praise included parks and recreation areas, trails, school facilities, vibrancy of the downtown area, and the walkability of the community.

These unique features and the sense of community present in Grundy Center should be taken into consideration by the city leaders when addressing the community's design in the future. Future development should protect and enhance these attributes that have been identified as central to Grundy Center's character.

Downtown Character

Continued improvement to the offerings of the downtown district was identified by the Task Force as an opportunity to enhance the city's character. In keeping with the City's character as a walkable, close-knit community, close attention should be given to enhancing downtown, attracting businesses downtown, and diversifying the types of businesses located in the area. Efforts should be made to continue historic preservation, promote the city and downtown, and utilize beautification and streetscape projects.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER GOALS

Community Character Goal #1: Whenever practical and feasible, the city should preserve sites with scenic, cultural, or historic interest.

Objectives:

- a. Continue to Seek out and utilize programs that aim to preserve, reuse, and reinvest in areas of specific interests.
 - i. Continue investment in the Historical Preservation Commission through the Cultural and Scientific Preservation tax levy.
 - ii. Consider adding murals to buildings through historical society.
- b. Research innovative techniques and solutions for challenges that arise in proposals for developments of specific interests.

Community Character Goal #2: The city of Grundy Center will embrace a shared vision and make all voices a part of the solution.

Objectives:

- a. Make a continuous effort to encourage participation of local citizens in City decision-making.
- b. Citizen groups should continue to be invited to take part in the development and implementation of City plans.
- c. City officials should collaborate, when feasible and possible, with Chamber Main Street in public outreach and decision making
- d. Continue to encourage and support citizens involvement in fund raising efforts.

Community Character Goal #3: Maintain an ongoing comprehensive planning process in which informed public is considered an important element.

Objectives:

- a. Conduct surveys that would reflect citizens' views concerning major development projects. The surveys should be targeted towards those persons being affected the most by a particular project.
- b. Continue to educate the public, whenever possible.

Community Character Goal #4: Maintain those aspects of Grundy Center that make it a unique and enjoyable place to live and improve those quality-of-life assets that are missing or need improvement.

Objectives:

- a. Promote downtown as the center of the community and its main hub.
- b. Maintain infrastructure and city services.
- c. Encourage community events that bring the city together. A non-exhaustive list includes:
 - i. Felix Grundy Days
 - ii. Chamber Main Street Block Party Events
 - iii. Grundy County Fair
 - iv. Festival of Trees
 - v. Main Street Mingle
 - vi. Girls Night Out
- d. Support the Grundy Center Development Corporation, Chamber Main Street, and Historical Society.

- e. Maintain and support outdoor recreational opportunities, such as the Pioneer Trail and the comprehensive trail system, archery range, area parks, sports complex, and public swimming pool.

Community Character Goal #5: The City should encourage the Grundy Center Development Corporation to continue working on neighborhood revitalization areas.

Objectives:

- a. Explore opportunities to reclaim abandoned or aged industrial and commercial sites so that they may be redeveloped into new appropriate development sites.
- b. Encourage and promote neighborhood development and redevelopment opportunities.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities are structures or places that the people of Grundy Center live their life as a resident. This can include civic centers like a city hall or courthouse. This can include amenities such as aquatic centers. These will be the major attractions for people visiting Grundy Center or considering moving to the community.

A brief overview of Grundy Center's community facilities is given below, including city buildings, parks, and schools. Maps 5 through 8 show the location of public assets and facilities throughout the City.

Smart Planning Element – Community Facilities

Objectives, policies, and programs to assist future development of educational facilities, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, law enforcement and fire protection facilities, libraries, and other governmental facilities that are necessary or desirable to meet the projected needs of the municipality.

Grundy Center's City Hall & Community Center

Grundy Center's City Hall and Community Center is located at 705 F Avenue. The city clerk, public works director, and chief of police operate from City Hall. City Council Chambers for Grundy Center is located in this building. The city's government consists of a part-time Mayor and five part-time city council positions.

The municipal utilities board has 3 members appointed to 6-year terms. The park board of trustees consists of 7 elected members on 6-year terms. The planning and zoning commission consists of 4 members appointed to 5 years. The zoning administrator for Grundy Center is appointed among the 4 planning and zoning commission members annually.



**GRUNDY CENTER CITY HALL AND POLICE STATION
LOCATED AT 703 F AVENUE**

Grundy Center Police

The Grundy Center Police Department operates out of the same building as city hall. The department consists of an interim police chief and three police officers. There is close relationships with local residents and the police officers of Grundy Center. Officers are able to meet the demands of their job for Grundy Center's size and needs. Grundy County Sheriff's officers are available and assist with Grundy Center's

police department. The sheriff's office also takes calls and responds to emergencies during the weekends or nights when the police offices are closed in Grundy Center.

Grundy Center Fire/Rescue

The Grundy Center Fire Rescue Department is located at 507 F Avenue in Grundy Center. Volunteer firefighters serve the community with fire response, and the station is staffed by the city's fire chief. The fire rescue department has 31 volunteers currently. Their mission is to save lives, reduce injuries, educate, and prevent property loss to the citizens that are served. The Department is working to build a safety conscious community through education, prevention, code enforcement, investigation, and community service. It should also be noted that the Department has identified specific objectives and needs in four planning areas: Facilities, Fire Apparatus and Equipment, Customers, and Community Services.

Because maintaining a four-minute response time is critical to its effectiveness, it is important that the Department remain an adequately staffed and flexible service. In fact, the Department is able to provide four-minute response time to 90 percent of its service area.

The Department also provides emergency hazardous material response to nine counties through the Northeast Iowa Response Group. Counties that are included in the group are: Grundy, Bremer, Butler, Chickasaw, Grundy, Hardin, Howard, Tama, and Winneshiek.



GRUNDY CENTER FIRE DEPARTMENT LOCATED AT 507 F AVENUE

YMCA

The Grundy YMCA became a branch of the Family YMCA of Black Hawk County in 2003 through a partnership with Grundy Center School District. The fitness center was located at the local high school from 2003-2016. In 2016, the Grundy YMCA moved to a new facility because of their partnership with Grundy County Memorial Hospital. The Grundy YMCA provides before and after school care, adult fitness programming, and youth programs.

Aquatic Center

The Grundy Family Aquatic Center features two diving boards, a large deep end area, and a play area for young children. Season passes and daily passes are sold for customers to use. The center is open daily from 1pm to 8pm.



Golf Course

The Town & Country Golf Course was built in 1967 and located just outside of the city's limits near the southwestern boundary. The 9-hole golf course includes a public golf club house serving food. This amenity offers recreation for locals and visitors, alike, that has a viewscape of the surrounding agricultural land. A 7-lot small housing subdivision is located within the golf course accessible by M Avenue on the west boundary of the property.



Town & Country Golf Course in Grundy Center
Source: www.golfpass.com

Kling Memorial Library

Kling Memorial Library is located at 708 7th Street built and opened in 1998. Built in the American architectural influence of Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Style, the 9,036 sq-ft structures houses approximately 200,000 items, in a variety of formats, for check out. The library has a collection of genealogical records for local family history, cemetery records, and plat maps.

Book clubs are held regularly, and a virtual reality (VR) system is available for patrons. The Youth Department of the library features a variety of special programs throughout the year for children of all ages. Trained staff will assist children and their parents in finding reading material, or information on school assignments. A preschool story time is held weekly. An active teen advisory board meets to give input for programming, address teen and young adult topics, and displays in the library.



Kling Memorial Library located at 708 7th Street

EDUCATION

Grundy Center Community School District

The Grundy Center Community School District (GCCSD) covers public education for K-12 grade students. GCCSD operates and maintains 20 buildings across 2 campuses within their district. Table 9 shows current enrollment, by facility, in the district. The offices for the district are also located across 12th Street from Grundy Center High School.

Parochial Schools

Parochial education refers to the schooling obtained in elementary and secondary schools that is affiliated with a religious organization. Parochial schools operate separately from the public school systems. There are no such schools located within Grundy Center.

Preschool

The Grundy Community Preschool and Childcare Center is located at 1001 8th Street. The center is a non-profit community organization providing early childhood education. Childcare is available on weekdays for children of 6 weeks to 12 years of age. The center's programs are licensed by the Iowa Department of Human Services. Healthy meals and snacks are provided for children through the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The upper levels of Grundy Center Elementary School are being rehabilitated for preschool and child care.

TABLE 9: SCHOOLS FOR STUDENTS IN GRUNDY CENTER, IOWA		
Building	Grades	Enrollment – 2021/2022
Grundy Center Elementary School	KG-4	274
Grundy Center Middle School	5-8	222
Grundy Center High School	9-12	224
Total		720

Source: Iowa Department of Education

Community Facilities Key Issues & Opportunities

The following key issues and opportunities were identified at Task Force meetings held during the planning process. Task Force members were asked: *What are the key concerns and/or needs regarding schools, parks, playgrounds, library, recreational opportunities, and municipal services in general?* Input received from the public and current planning documents also assisted in identifying the following issues and opportunities for Grundy Center.

School buildings expansion

Task force members noted that the school buildings accommodate the current student population but expansion for any significant growth in population would require building expansion. Existing school buildings for the GCCSD include the secondary school (Grundy Center Middle-High School) and Grundy Center Elementary School. In 2024, K-12 Renovations + Additions school building construction was funded by a recent bond measure. The city may continue to examine future bond measures to fund school building expansions in order to ensure the school's capacity will meet the forecasted population growth.

Parks and a Pioneer Trail Connection

Continual investment in city park improvements has been favorable to Grundy Center's residents. Recreation at city parks and facilities increase quality of life for residents. New parks and open space should be considered with new city developments. Possible improvements to consider include a designated dog park or paved bike/walking trails. Trails should consider connecting to existing nearby trails or walking corridors in order to build out a city-wide trail system that is orderly and accessible to all parts of the community.

Such trail systems will require planning out of future land use. Easements may be designated and a continuous configuration can be pursued toward a common community vision during a planning process. The Pioneer Trail is a regional trail system that was built on a former railroad bed where railroad tracks once laid as vital link to the growing agricultural communities of Holland, Morrison, Reinbeck, and Grundy Center in the 19th and 20th century.

Today, the trail stretches twelve (12) miles from Reinbeck to Holland while passing through four communities. Opportunities to incorporate this regional trail system in a city-wide trail system would connect the people of Grundy Center with the countryside. Cycling and hiking tourism is a potential benefit for all connecting communities.

The trail has a surface of crushed and compacted limestone. Outdoor recreation activities include hiking, running, biking, and cross-country skiing while horseback riding is also permitted along a mowed grass trail that parallels the limestone trail.

Facilities

Grundy Center City Hall and Community Center is a dual-purpose building. This has worked well for the City of Grundy Center. City hall offices include a limited number of offices for each department. Issues with facility conditions include poor shape of roof and aging interiors.

Emergency response services are at capacity with the current buildings. There is a need to add additions to the ambulance services facility to accommodate sleeping quarters for on-call and night staff. Possible future actions may build another location for the ambulance service with favorable ingress/egress for vehicles. The police department can move into a possible-former ambulance services building. The police department shares a dual-purpose space with the city.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS

Community Facilities Goal #1: Maintain and enhance the parks and open space in Grundy Center.

Objectives:

- a. Continue to provide maintenance and general upkeep to the existing parks and recreational areas.
 - i. Regularly review the condition of existing parks and recreation areas.
- b. Encourage development of diversified recreational activities to meet the needs of all the citizens of Grundy Center.
 - i. Identify the recreational needs of citizens.
 - ii. Consider and implement, whenever feasible, recreational activities that meet the diverse needs of the community.
- c. Promote the expansion of recreational services such as the golf courses, various passive parks, and recreational areas to best utilize environmentally sensitive areas such as the floodplain and certain soil types.
 - i. Seek out diverse funding sources to maintain and expand the City's recreational amenities.

Community Facilities Goal #2: Continue to provide and support strong public services.

Objectives:

- a. Support the continued protection and service of police, fire, and ambulance services.
 - i. Consider the expenditure of funds for improved or expanded police, fire, and ambulance services as community needs may require.
 - ii. Support training and continuing education opportunities for EMS individuals.
 - iii. The city should consider development and adoption of an Emergency Operations Plan for continuity in standard operating procedures across situations.
- b. Continue to support the medical services within Grundy Center.
- c. Maintain and expand, when needed, facilities that provide vital community services.
 - i. Investigate the need to improve City facilities.
 - ii. Consider expanding public works, police, fire, and ambulance facilities.

Community Facilities Goal #3: Consider community schools and facilities as hubs for development and structure for current and future generations.

Objectives:

- a. Support the continued investment in and collaboration with the Grundy Center Community School District.
- b. Encourage land use patterns that accommodate mixed use developments and promote inclusionary housing and zoning practices.

Community Facilities Goal #4: Continue to provide support for cultural facilities and museums.

Objectives:

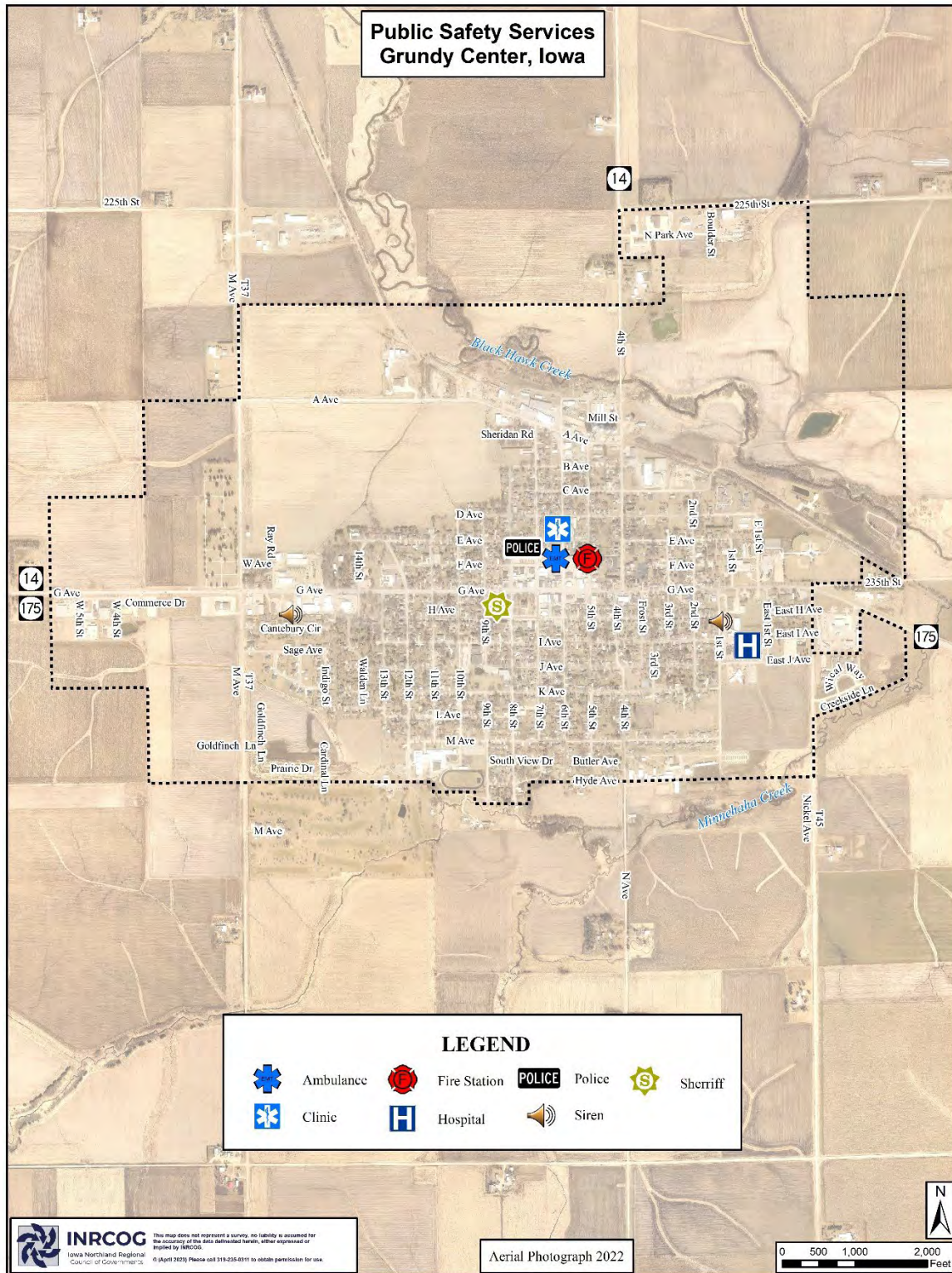
- a. The City should recognize the Herbert Quick School House project as an opportunity to promote the benefit of collaborative partnerships.

Community Facilities Goal #5: View the physical facilities of Grundy Center as assets and an opportunity for regional attraction and retention of residents and visitors alike.

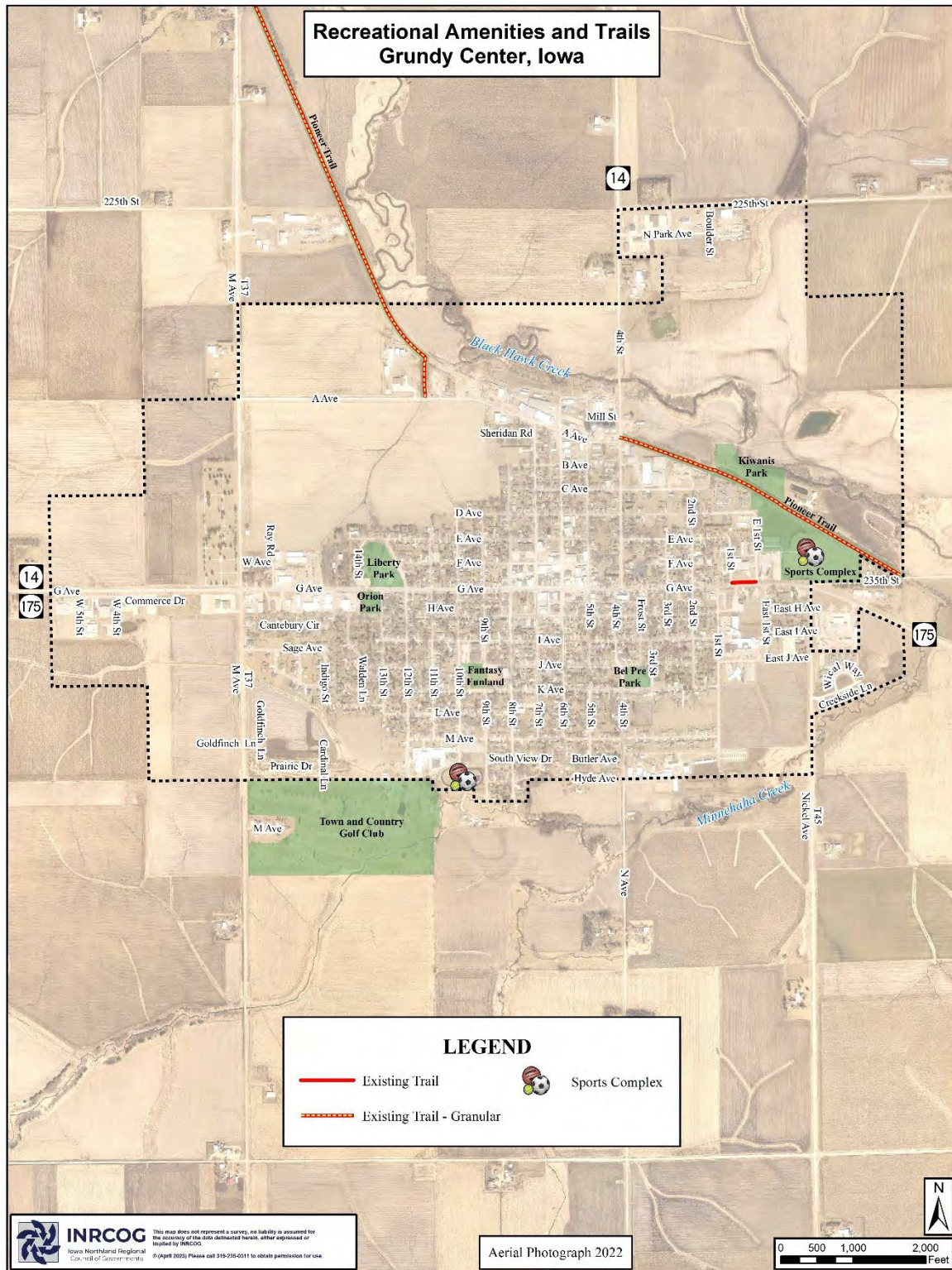
Objectives:

- a. Explore and support placemaking opportunities for the city as a destination for recreation, entertainment, commerce, and leisure.

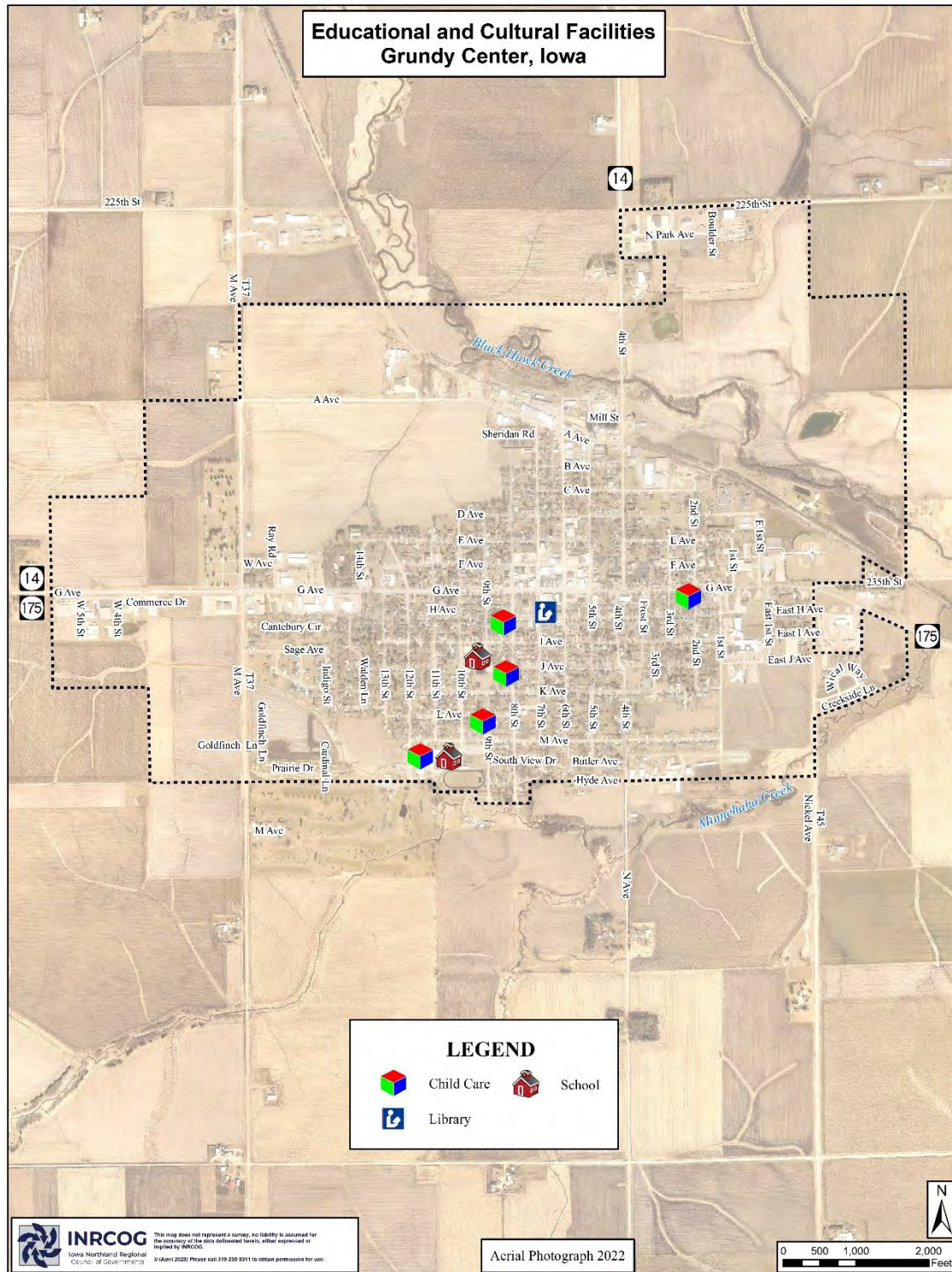
MAP 5: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES



MAP 6: RECREATIONAL AMENITIES



MAP 7: EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL ASSETS



PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

The infrastructure and utilities of the community are the backbone of a city. Without a proper, up-to-date infrastructure, the quality of life in the city is reduced, not to mention the loss in potential for the community. To reduce the migration to more urban areas, Grundy Center needs to determine the quality of the services, facilities, and systems throughout the community and maintain them as well as bring any that may not be current up to date to the best of their ability.

***Smart Planning Element –
Public Infrastructure & Utilities***
Objectives, policies, and programs to guide future development of sanitary sewer service, stormwater management, water supply, solid waste disposal, waste water treatment technologies, recycling facilities, and telecommunications facilities. The Plan may include estimates regarding future demand for

EXISTING CONDITIONS

A summary of public infrastructure and utilities (below) include both Maps 8 and 9 showing infrastructure and utilities.

Water Service

The City of Grundy Center currently purchases its water through a bulk connection with Iowa Regional Utilities Association (IRUA). Grundy Center's drinking water source originates from two aquifers: the Buried Sand and Gravel Aquifer and the Mississippian Aquifer. The locations of these wells are shown in Map 10. The Marshalltown Water Works draws the City's drinking water from these aquifers located on the north side of the Iowa River. Marshalltown sends water drawn from aquifers to water plant facilities that disinfect source water before sending it out through the municipal water system.

The City's water supply has a maximum design capacity of 625,000 gallons per day (gpd). A population equivalent (*assuming 100 gallons-per-person-per-day*) for this design capacity would be at 6,250 residents. In 2020, Grundy Center's population of 2,800 was at 45% of the existing water supply capacity. Based on the population projections in Chapter 1, Grundy Center will not even exceed half of this maximum capacity by 2040. Grundy Center will be able to meet future demand.

Grundy Center distributes the water to their residents while storing the water in a 500,000 gallon water tower. Two standby wells for the city are within city boundaries for emergencies. Any future water system expansion should be designed in a looped or grided configuration to ensure numerous ways that water may flow to the consumer regardless of shut down lines. Maintenance of the existing water line system and facilities ensure affordable and safe drinking water will remain available for Grundy Center. Hydrant flushing should also continue as a method of regular maintenance.

Sewer Service

The City of Grundy Center manages wastewater through the Easton Avenue Water Pollution Control Facility and a Satellite Treatment Facility. The city has renovated and updated the sewer treatment plant extensively over the past decade, spending several million dollars on improvements. The plant was originally constructed in 1939. Under normal operations and conditions, the new facility will treat an average daily load of 14.0 million gallons per day (MGD). Under these same conditions, the design capacity of the service is 35.6 MGD. The sanitary sewer assets, excluding individual sewer lines, are shown in Map 10.

The sanitary sewer collection system includes over 800 miles of sanitary and storm sewers collection lines and mains including force mains, 7,000 manholes, 25 sanitary lift stations and 21 storm sewer lift stations. The city of Grundy Center sanitary sewer system provides service to all of its residents.

Stormwater Management

The City has an extensive storm sewer system. Existing storm sewer systems are designed to accommodate a five-year maximum frequency rainfall. The sanitary and storm sewer systems are connected. Going forward, the city aims to create two separate systems that meet efficient system design and costs.

In the future, the city will have to comply with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations. Specifically, this regulation will require the city to implement storm water quality control measures that prevent or minimize the amount of pollution introduced by storm water into receiving waters.

Telecommunications

During the Task Force discussion, there were many positive comments received regarding the quality of telecommunications and internet service. Grundy Center Municipal Utilities Board provides telecommunication services for the City. The 2023 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan includes an action item to encourage utility providers to underground their electric lines from overhead line designs. This is a long-term goal and recommended by emergency management planning outcomes. Hazard mitigation for underground lines will reduce loss of power during storms, tornados, or ice.

Solid Waste

Solid waste disposal service is provided to residents by the city. Other private contracted providers include Grundy Waste Disposal, Corkery Sanitation, and Waste Management. Grundy Center residents are required to transport their solid waste to the Black Hawk County Landfill. The Customer Convenience Center collects solid waste only from residents in non-incorporated rural county land.

Recycling

The City contracts Rite Environmental for recycling services for Grundy County.

Other Utilities

Table 10 shows which utility providers provide electric, natural gas, telephone, and cable TV services to City residents and businesses.

TABLE 10: GRUNDY CENTER UTILITY PROVIDERS	
Electric	MidAmerican Energy
Natural Gas	MidAmerican Energy
Telephone	Century Link, Mediacom
Cable TV	Mediacom, Satellite Providers
Internet	Mediacom, CenturyLink, Windstream, Dish Network
Water	Grundy Center Waterworks

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

To develop this section of the Plan, participants in the planning process were asked the following: *What are the key concerns and needs with regard to public infrastructure and utilities?* Answers helped shape the following key issues, opportunities, and goals.

The city's public utilities are meeting the current demands of the community and providing high quality services. While the current situation is good, meeting future needs will require more investments in public infrastructure and investigation of other means of providing these services. Maintaining the current quality of services, minimizing flood damage, and complying with state and federal requirements for water and sanitary sewer will challenge the community in the future.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES GOALS

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #1: Provide and improve streets and utilities to assure adequate and efficient services to all persons in the community.

Objectives:

- a. Assess on a regular basis the community's sewer and water systems' capacities in light of meeting the needs of future population projections, as well as complying with ever-changing regulations.
 - i. Evaluate the need to upgrade wastewater treatment facilities and infrastructure.
 - ii. Continue implementing policies and programs to prevent degradation and contamination of sewer and water systems.
 - iii. Maintain compliance with regulations.
- b. Continue to monitor local street conditions and provide for street improvements through long range planning projects, such as the [RTA 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan](#).
 - i. Consider streetscape and beautification projects that improve the appearance of streets and their surroundings.
- c. Continue to utilize an adopted Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), as needed, for managing municipal capital projects.
- d. Encourage overhead electric utility lines to be installed underground in all new improvements and subdivisions to improve disaster resiliency and meet hazard mitigation goals.

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #2: Work with utility providers on extending services and infrastructure as capacity and demand allow.

Objectives:

- a. Inventory areas in the community where expanded or updated infrastructure and utilities are lacking and target those areas for improvement.
- b. Continue to explore available funding options for expansion and improvement of public infrastructure and utilities.
- c. Encourage collaborative efforts toward the development and implementation of EV charging stations.

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #3: Continue to provide affordable and competitive telecommunications and internet options to the city.

Objectives:

- a. Explore opportunities for collaborative funding for expanded broadband infrastructure.

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #4: Reduce long-term risks associated with traditional energy supply from fossil fuels.

Objectives:

- a. Encourage and support the development and use of renewable energy sources to build the local economy and improve the environment.
- b. Encourage local production of solar energy.
 - i. Continue to structure ordinances and building codes in a manner that is conducive to utilization of renewable energy sources.
- c. Encourage collaborative efforts toward the development and implementation of EV charging stations.

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #5: Reduce the impacts of moderate and extreme rain events throughout the city.

Objectives:

- a. Continue to implement and encourage stormwater management best practices in local developments and area improvements.

- i. Identify areas of historical stormwater inundation for determining and prioritizing projects for CIP
 - ii. Encourage and showcase rain gardens, permeable pavers, and other stormwater and run off diversion methods in city funded projects as well those throughout the community.
- b. Explore and evaluate policies that address issues that are found to contribute to stormwater management.
- c. Identify financial needs and potential funding sources.

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #6: Maintain a high quality, sustainable water supply for current and future generations.

Objectives:

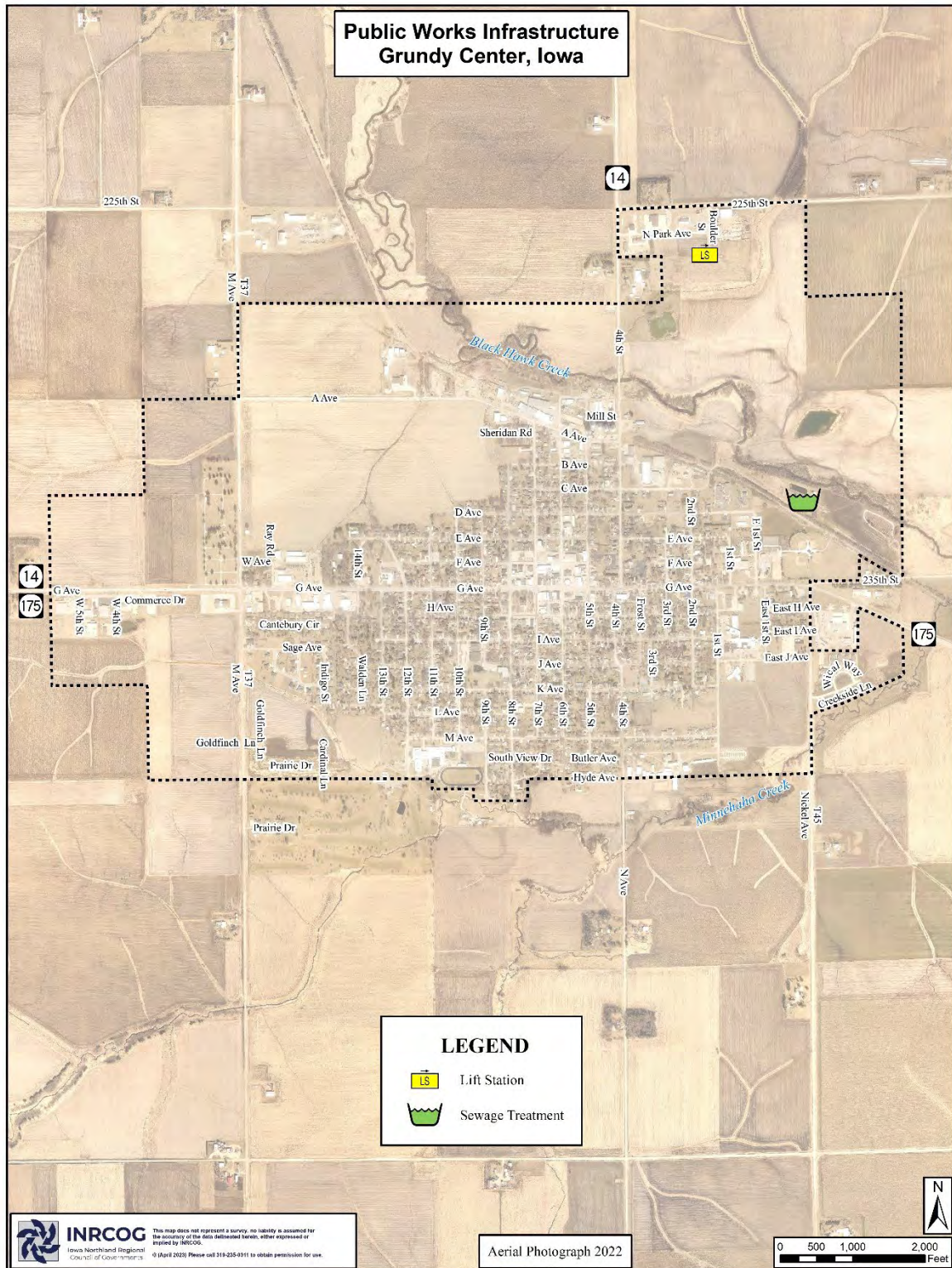
- a. Integrate water resources and supply planning for water systems across intergovernmental and regional jurisdictions.
- b. View the water supply as a nonrenewable resource and implement policies and procedures that are conducive to conservation best practices.
- c. Continue to inspect and monitor the city's water supply for compliance with applicable water quality standards.

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Goal #7: Invest in and encourage the expansion of Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure in all areas of the community.

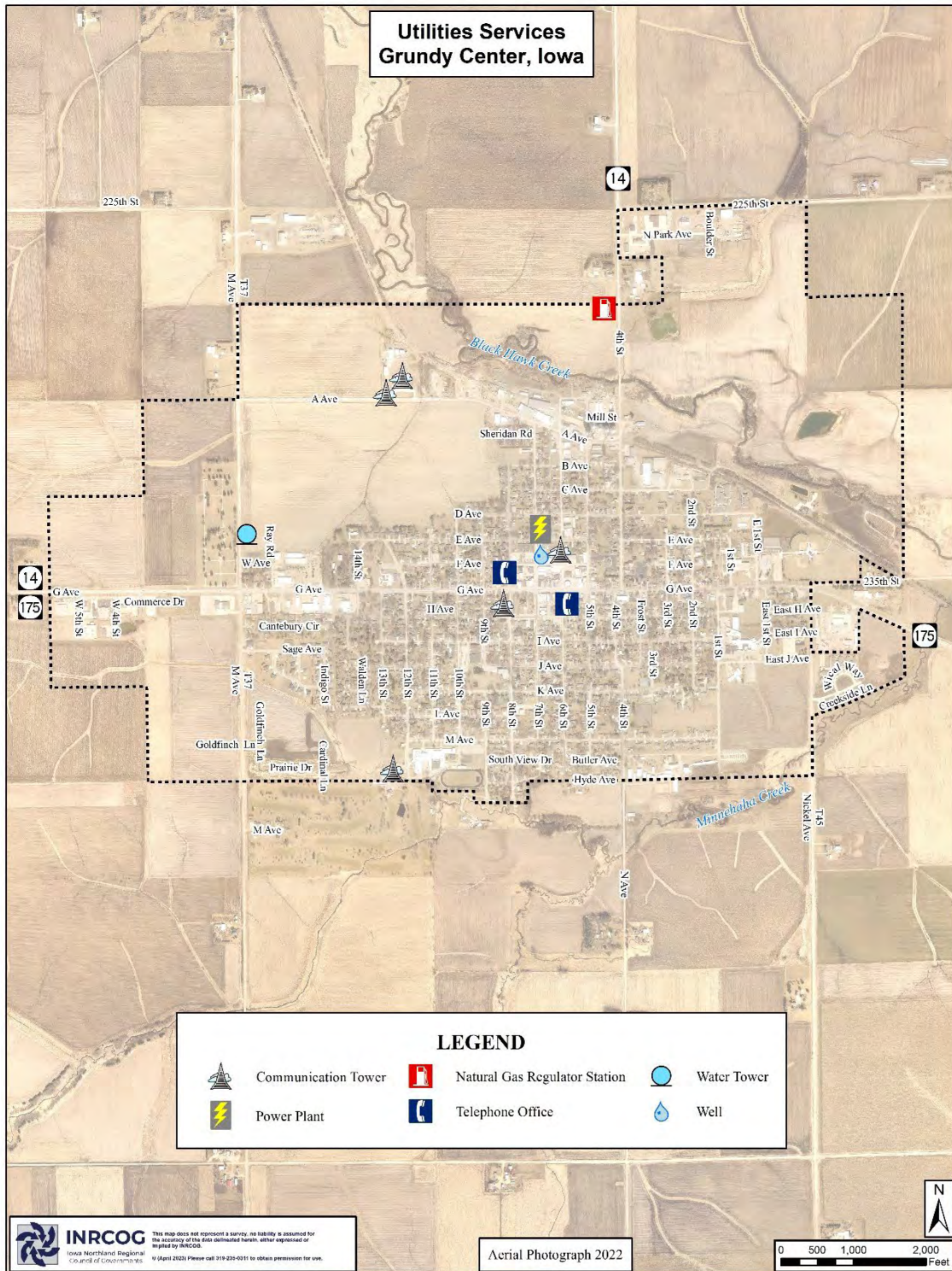
Objectives:

- a. Encourage building and development practices that incorporate EV Infrastructure into the design.
 - i. Review city building codes, design standards, and current practices for opportunities to incorporate provisions for charging stations in public and private uses.

MAP 8: PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE



MAP 9: UTILITIES SERVICES



HOUSING

This section addresses the goals, policies, and actions related to housing diversity and opportunities for residential land use in Grundy Center. This section also briefly discusses the existing housing trends, including new subdivisions, areas in need, and forecasts for residential demand and development.

The goals and policies addressing Grundy Center's housing also help the city achieve its goal to maintain and improve the quality of life or sense of place that the residents of the community value and enjoy. These goals align with existing housing strategies for Grundy Center and are outlined in greater detail in the 2019 Grundy County Housing Needs Assessment.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Housing is the foundation of building a community and the local economy. As a basic need, housing is also part of the largest US industries that will be influential on land use in most cities.

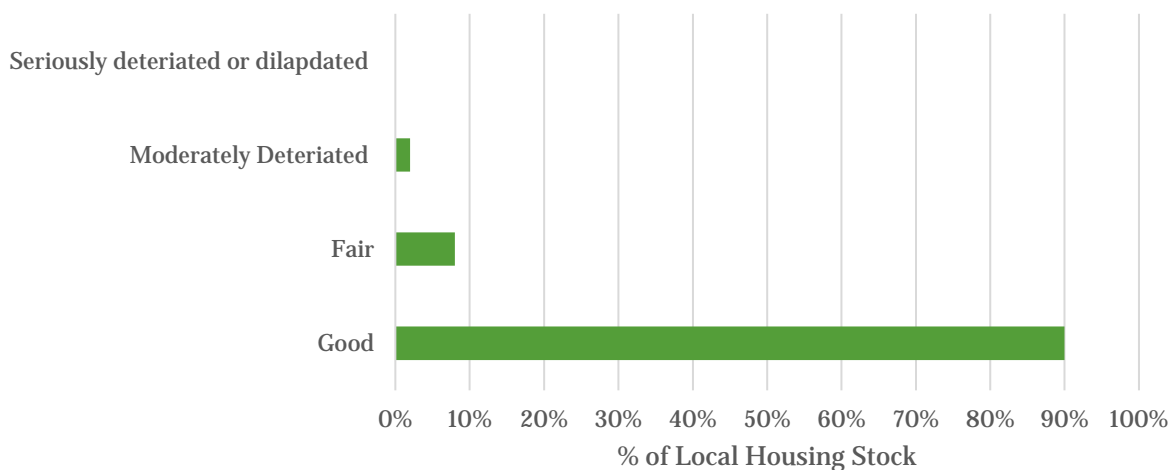
Grundy Center's Windshield Survey

A windshield survey was conducted in 2019 for the Grundy Center Housing Needs Assessment. The survey evaluated 1,143 properties in Grundy Center in accordance with the study's methodology that determined the overall housing condition rating for the community. Of the structures evaluated, the majority (90%) of residential structures were in good condition while about 8% of the residential structures were in fair condition. Only 2% of homes were moderately deteriorated while no homes were in a seriously deteriorated condition.

Smart Planning Element – Housing

Objectives, policies, and programs to further the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods and new residential neighborhoods and plan to ensure an adequate housing supply that meets both the existing and the forecasted housing demand. The plan may include an inventory and analysis of the local housing stock and may include specific information such as age, condition, type, market value, occupancy, and historical characteristics of all the housing within the municipality. The plan may identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of new housing and maintenance or rehabilitation of existing housing and that provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of the residents of the municipality.

Figure 9: Quality Ratings of Grundy Center's Housing Stock (2019)



Source: 2019 Grundy Center Housing Needs Analysis

Descriptions of each category are shown below. Further information for this survey can be found in the 2019 Grundy Center Housing Needs Analysis.

Windshield Survey Category Condition Criteria	
Condition Category	Description
Good (Appears well maintained and structurally sound)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation, porch, roof are structurally sound Siding, gutters, trim, windows and doors should be in good repair Non structural issues (some peeling paint, moss, mildew) may be present but not affect the house condition/structure
Fair (Appears structurally sound but needs some maintenance and repair.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or two major components may need replacement or major maintenance. (cracks, settling, roof) Worn, loose, unsightly siding needing replacement or maintenance. Some window/door maintenance needed (e.g. repainting and repairing frames, glazing)
Moderately Deteriorated (Appears Visibly Neglected with Structural Defects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more visible structural defects, such as uneven roof lines, a broken porch, broken windows/ doors, or major cracks in the foundation. Requires major repairs which would be difficult to correct through normal maintenance.
Seriously Deteriorated or Dilapidated (Appears to have severe neglect and structurally unsound)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not fit for human habitation in its current condition. Multiple windows and/or doors may be boarded up. The building may be considered for demolition, or, at minimum, major rehabilitation will be required.

Source: 2019 Grundy Center Housing Needs Analysis

Housing Occupancy

As shown in Table 11, Grundy Center's housing stock shrunk by 75 housing units between 2010 and 2020. The occupancy rate remained the same over that same period. The vacancy rate represents the percentage of all total housing units that are vacant ready to be leased or units not available to the market due to repairs and renovations. Over this last decade, the vacancy rate decreased from 7.5% to 6.8%. Several factors could lead to a housing occupancy rate in a city remaining the same over this decade despite the housing stock shrinking and the vacancy rate decreasing. Economic conditions may have led to fewer new housing developments or renovations, resulting in a stagnation of available housing units. Existing residents may continue to occupy their homes, keeping the occupancy rate constant even as the city size shrinks.

TABLE 11: HOUSING OCCUPANCY IN GRUNDY CENTER			
Unit Status	2000	2010	2020
Occupied (Occupancy Rate)	1,176 (94.2%)	1,163 (92.5%)	1,088 (92.5%)
<i>Owner-Occupied</i>	<i>884</i>	<i>893</i>	<i>888</i>
<i>Renter-Occupied</i>	<i>219</i>	<i>270</i>	<i>200</i>
Vacant (Vacancy Rate)	73 (5.8%)	94 (7.5%)	80 (6.8%)
Total	1,249	1,257	1,176
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and ACS 1-Year Estimates			

Age of Housing Stock

Table 12 shows an estimate of when each housing unit in Grundy Center was built. Most of the city's housing stock is old and built between 1950 to 1959. The median year for structures built in Grundy Center is 1961, meaning that half of the housing units were built at or before this time and half after. Similarly, comparing the state's median year for all housing structures built is also at 1961.

TABLE 12: ESTIMATED GRUNDY CENTER HOUSING UNITS BY YEAR BUILT	
Time Period	Percentage of Total Units
2014 or Later	1.2%
2010 to 2013	1.6%
2000 to 2009	7.2%
1990 to 1999	8.9%
1980 to 1989	6.7%
1970 to 1979	16.4%
1960 to 1969	9.3%
1950 to 1959	20.6%
1940 to 1949	9.6%
1939 or earlier	18.5%
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 ACS 5 - year estimates</i>	

Housing Values & Gross Rent

What is “affordable” when we discuss housing? The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses a measure of affordability for housing based on tenure type: owner occupied and renter occupied. Households will likely afford their housing costs or rent when this is less than 30% of gross monthly income for the household.

For renter occupied housing: Using Grundy Center's median household income, the average family makes about \$5,786 per month. For housing to be considered affordable, the average family should not pay more than about \$1,930 per month in housing costs.

For owner occupied housing: Several factors may be included in this determination of a potential homebuyer such as location, financial goals, local housing market, and other costs of living. However, for this Plan, typical “affordable” price ranges for Grundy Center will look at 2 or 3 times the local 2020 median household income of \$36,672. The range of this analysis is between \$73,300, for an income multiplied by two, and \$110,000, for an income multiplied by three. Based on Table 13, less than 31% of owner-occupied housing units may be within this range. Table 13 shows that Grundy Center homes are generally below this recommended amount with a median home value of \$134,500.

TABLE 13: ESTIMATES FOR OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS IN GRUNDY CENTER

Value	% Units
Less than \$50k	5%
Between \$50K - \$100K	31%
\$100K – \$149K	23%
\$150K - \$199K	23%
\$200K - \$299K	8%
\$300K - \$499K	9%
\$500K - \$999K	0%
Greater than \$1,000,000	0%
Median (dollars)	\$134,500
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 ACS 5-year estimates</i>	

TABLE 14: ESTIMATED MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS

Range of Housing Costs	Owner-Occupied Units with a Mortgage	Range of Housing Costs	Renter-Occupied Units
Less than \$500	1.8%	Less than \$250	2.2%
\$500 to \$999	32.5%	\$250 to \$399	39.2%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	35.3%	\$400 to \$599	43.1%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	21.3%	\$600 to \$799	11.4%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	3.0%	\$800 to \$999	3.1%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	1.5%	\$1,000 or more	1.1%
\$3,000 and more	4.6%		
Median (dollars)	\$1,201	Median (dollars)	\$444
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates</i>			

Table 14 shows monthly housing costs for occupied housing units in Grundy Center. While renter-occupied housing costs are looking at gross rents, owner-occupied housing costs include units with and without a mortgage. In general, owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage pay higher monthly costs than those without a mortgage. Based on the financial information in the table, households that may make the average area income would find affordable housing in Grundy Center.

Development Trends

Grundy Center's housing stock is predominantly single-family type homes. About 88 percent of housing units are detached/attached 1-unit structures, 1% are mobile homes, and the rest are multi-family housing units. To accommodate housing needs for all people in Grundy Center including low to medium-income households, the benefits of housing diversity will lead to more opportunities for development. Whether the city is looking to grow a workforce to meet any growth in services and retail, this workforce will require affordable housing options.

From Task Force member comments, Grundy Center offers a good environment for developers, in general. While it is less favorable towards non-traditional development, there may be a desire for more flexibility in things such as setbacks, lot sizes, density, etc.

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

The following is a synopsis of the major issues and opportunities facing Grundy Center with respect to its housing needs based on input from the public and participants in the planning process. City stakeholders were asked these questions to inform the issues, opportunities, and goals of housing in Grundy Center:

What is the current housing environment regarding ordinances, regulations, policies, programs etc. for homeowners/renters/developers? Is it favorable for non-traditional development? Is there a desire for more flexibility – setbacks, lot sizes, density? What could or should be done to foster additional housing choices?

Housing Quality

There was an expressed desire for more “quality”, affordable homes in the community. The City’s housing stock is aging with most housing units more than 64 years old. Because there is a shortage of available lots to build on, the city should investigate programs or opportunities to emphasize renovation of current housing units or reuse of in-fill development. The continued adoption and enforcement of a uniform building code will serve the city well in areas of new construction and renovation, however, a comprehensive rental inspection program and more incentives to maintain and improve rental housing could aid in retention of quality housing stock in the community.

Housing Affordability

In Task Force meetings and from feedback received from participants, concern was expressed for the need of more affordable housing options in Grundy Center. Grundy Center lacks both: homebuying opportunities for median range incomes, and available decent, safe rental housing options that do not require improvement and repair. Task Force members also commented on the positive effect more affordable housing options could have on the labor market in Grundy Center. Adding a more attractive and diverse housing stock, could benefit Grundy Center in, not only, attracting a quality workforce but also adding future residents that contribute to the city’s overall tax base.

Senior Housing

Due to a lack of available land, subdivision development projects have not been built in the community recently to provide new housing. During the planning process, stakeholders commented on the lack of senior housing options in the community that would give elderly residents the ability to move from their homes and remain a part of the community. City leaders should carefully examine opportunities to increase housing options for both young first-time homeowners, professionals, and elderly households.

Upper-Floor Units

Many commercial buildings in downtown Grundy Center have upper-level spaces which are unoccupied residential or nonresidential units which can be turned into residential housing units. That may be a typical street level commercial and upper-level residential development which adds to a vibrant and activated downtown district with that is favorable for many city centers. These units provide an additional housing choice for residents that want non-traditional single-family type housing. The City should continue to collaborate with downtown groups and organizations to create a common vision that may promote the construction, maintenance, and occupancy of downtown residential units.

HOUSING GOALS

Housing Goal #1: Maximize the opportunity for diversified choice in residential living while maintaining a pleasant community environment.

Objectives

- a. Provide a diversity of housing for the existing and potential residents of Grundy Center.
 - i. Research and consider options for senior housing.
 - ii. In addition to traditional single-family developments, consider ways to provide housing for younger families.
 - iii. Promote and encourage downtown upper-story residential units.

- iv. Review the zoning ordinance to consider allowing more flexibility in housing, such as setbacks, lot sizes, density, etc.
- b. Promote and build upon the vibrant downtown atmosphere in Grundy Center.
 - i. Promote infill development, particularly in and around the downtown area.
 - ii. In existing areas of development, encourage consideration for mixed use development opportunities that are compatible with the surroundings.

Housing Goal #2: Improve the quality of the community's housing.

Objectives

- a. Provide high-quality, durable construction through the enforcement of the uniform building codes.
 - i. Ensure that building codes are up-to-date and enforced.
 - ii. Consider changes to codes that would improve the quality of housing.
- b. Provide options for existing housing to be renovated and restored.
 - i. Consider incentives for homeowners to renovate or improve their homes quality.
- c. Identify and/or implement programs and policies conducive to assisting the community with this goal.
- d. Continue to identify vacant and dilapidated properties as opportunities for redevelopment.

Housing Goal #3: Utilize the 2019 Grundy County Housing Needs Assessment in determining current and projected needs in housing stock.

Objectives:

- a. Maintain and improve the quality of Grundy Center's existing housing stock.
- b. Support infill housing development and redevelopment, especially in older neighborhoods.
- c. Expand opportunities for Grundy Center's low- and moderate-income homebuyers and homeowners.
- d. Support increased market-rate housing development.
- e. Support community development, workforce development, and other efforts integrally related to quality-of-life and housing demand in disinvested neighborhoods.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This section discusses the current economic trends such as employment, the supply of retail, office, and industrial space, and considers market forecasts and marketable areas for future development. This section provides guidance only on the types of economic development the city may wish to foster through the next 10-20 years, as well as actions the city can take, in partnership with local economic development organizations, to encourage these efforts.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section looks at the existing condition of various factors related to economic development in Grundy Center. These factors include industry trends, major employers, and residents' income and education.

Smart Planning Element – Economic Development

Objectives, policies, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of economic development and employment opportunities. The plan may include an analysis of current industries and economic activity to identify economic growth goals for the municipality. The plan may also identify locations for future brownfield or grayfield development.

Trends & Statistics

Table 15 shows Census estimates for the number of employed persons by industrial category in Grundy Center and Grundy County. The top industries where Grundy Center's workers are employed include "Education, Health, and Social Services" and "Manufacturing" as the 1st and 2nd largest, respectively. There is also a sizeable portion of the local workforce employed in the "Retail Trade" industry (10%). This data shows what industries the local workforce is employed in. It is important to note that some of Grundy Center's workers may be commuting to jobs in the Waterloo/Cedar Falls metro area, which is a major metropolitan area nearby where many residents commute to for work on a daily basis.

TABLE 15: ESTIMATED ECONOMIC BASE OF GRUNDY CENTER IN 2018				
Industrial Category	City of G.C.		County	
	#	%	#	%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Mining	36	3%	495	8%
Construction	100	8%	623	10%
Manufacturing	203	16%	801	13%
Wholesale Trade	37	3%	191	3%
Retail Trade	120	10%	613	10%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	56	4%	302	5%
Information	0	0%	80	1%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	59	5%	289	5%
Professional and Scientific	58	5%	386	6%
Educational, Health, Social Services	385	31%	1,637	26%
Art, Entertainment, Recreation	65	5%	245	4%
Other Services	95	8%	412	7%
Public Administration	44	3%	160	3%
Total Employed Persons	1,258	100.0%	6,234	100.0%
Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2015-2020 Estimates				

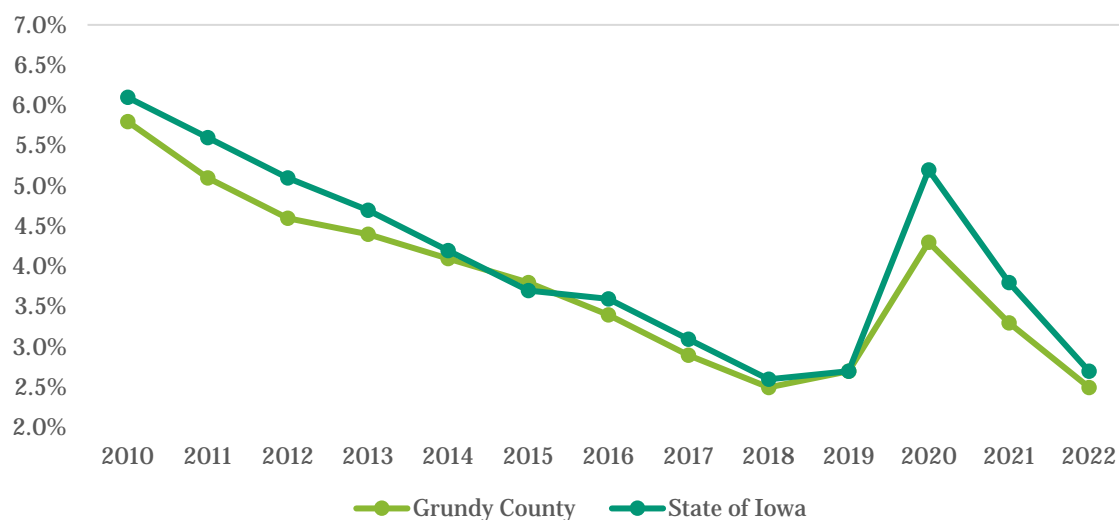
Education may be the largest industry among employed persons in Grundy Center because of Grundy Center School District having schools located in the city. Manufacturing is the second largest for Grundy Center; this would be likely because people are employed at UniFirst, a uniform manufacture.

Table 16 classifies employees into general employment categories. The occupations of Grundy Center's employed persons roughly parallel those in Grundy County as a whole. The largest occupation categories in the city and county are Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations; Sales and Office Occupations; and Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations.

TABLE 16: ESTIMATED OCCUPATION CLASSIFICATION OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN 2018				
Occupational Categories	Grundy County		The City of G.C.	
	#	%	#	%
Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations	2,490	40%	512	41%
Service Occupations	877	14%	186	15%
Sales and Office Occupations	1,146	18%	244	19%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	749	12%	120	10%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations	972	16%	196	16%
Total Employed Persons	6,234	100.0%	1,258	100.0%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2020 Estimates				

Most communities that are not major city centers do not have unemployment data. However, a regional look at unemployment trends from county and state data provides a snapshot of employment conditions. Based on annual average unemployment rates by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Iowa and Grundy County are showing a return to normal conditions following the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent worldwide economic shock. Grundy Center can expect more job opportunity with low unemployment under current conditions.

FIGURE 10: ANNUAL AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR GRUNDY COUNTY AND IOWA



Major Employers

Leading employers in the community include Grundy County Memorial Hospital by UnityPoint Health, Grundy County Community Schools, Grundy County, Grundy Care Center, Richelieu, Casey's Stores, Unifirst, GNB Banking, HEM Paving, and Brother's Market. Many workers commute to Waterloo/Cedar Falls for work.

Income and Education

Median household and per capita income levels for selected communities are provided in Table 17. Grundy Center's median household income is one of the top in the County. The City's average household income is less than the County, but greater than the state's average.

TABLE 17: CHANGES IN PER CAPITA AND MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR SELECTED COMMUNITIES				
Community	Per Capita Income		Median Household Income	
	2010	2020	2010	2020
City of Beaman	\$17,281	\$31,230	\$35,625	\$63,929
City of Conrad	\$30,565	\$31,580	\$49,583	\$57,931
City of Dike	\$29,276	\$46,490	\$68,125	\$80,625
City of Holland	\$18,279	\$27,923	\$43,750	\$60,625
City of Morrison	\$24,991	\$23,620	\$48,125	\$51,250
City of Reinbeck	\$27,550	\$37,536	\$51,290	\$70,682
City of Stout	\$19,215	\$27,699	\$53,500	\$70,625
City of Wellsburg	\$27,576	\$29,488	\$50,875	\$46,667
City of Grundy Center	\$25,079	\$31,910	\$54,955	\$69,432
The County	\$26,916	\$37,360	\$56,184	\$71,760
State of Iowa	\$23,335	\$33,021	\$48,872	\$61,836
Source: U.S. Census Bureau/American Community Survey				

Table 18 compares estimates for educational attainment between Grundy Center, Grundy County, and the State of Iowa residents in 2020. Residents of Grundy Center reported higher percentages of the population attaining at least a high school level of education than the overall profile for both Grundy County and the State of Iowa. While the city reported higher percentage of solely high school graduates, including equivalency, than the county and state, the city reported a median percentage of residents with a college degree (Associate's degree or higher): 41 percent for Grundy Center, 40 percent for the county, and 42 percent for the state.

TABLE 18: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR PERSONS 25 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER IN 2020						
Category	City		County		State of Iowa	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 9 th Grade	32	2%	90	1%	61,329	3%
9 th to 12 th Grade, No Diploma	102	6%	333	4%	97,072	5%
High School Graduate, includes GED	706	39%	2,730	32%	648,371	31%
Some College, No Degree	248	14%	1,786	21%	433,481	21%
Associate's Degree	256	14%	1,337	16%	248,496	12%
Bachelor's Degree	387	21%	1,793	21%	415,048	20%
Graduate or Professional Degree	105	6%	553	6%	202,067	10%
Total	1,836	100%	8,622	100%	2,104,864	100%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau/2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates Subject Tables						

Economic Development Partnerships

The Grundy Center Chamber Main Street is a partnership between the Chamber of Commerce and Main Street investors to market opportunities through a collective capacity. Economic vitality in the downtown district must also include historic preservation. This organization services to unite these two common visions and create common goals that may benefit the local economy and local cultural landscape.

The Butler/Grundy Development Alliance (BGDA) serves to promote and develop businesses within the community and shared regional base between Butler County and Grundy County. BGDA was created to merge the Butler County Development Corporation and Grundy County Development Alliance. This organization works to provide resources and build relationships to attract, retain, and support the business community.

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

These issues and opportunities were identified by stakeholders during the planning process while considering these questions: *How is the current economic development environment in regard to objectives, policies, programs for existing and new businesses? What are current efforts and challenges in the community to retain and attract businesses? What should the city focus on about economic development?*

Task Force members believed that local government in Grundy Center has been proactive in applying for grants that may benefit local businesses and economic growth. The City has supported the Butler Grundy Development Alliance (BGDA) which has been responsible of a majority of new housing for Grundy Center. Capacity building by business owners in the downtown area has worked well for collaboration and business retention efforts. It was noted that more could be done to formalize more specific strategies to encourage and incentivize growth and development.



Source: Grundy Center Chamber Main Street Website

Improving and Promoting Grundy Center's Downtown

The City has invested in the preservation and restoration of the downtown district. In 2017, the City received a downtown revitalization grant from the Community Block Development Grant program of \$500,000. Combined with local funds of \$547,000, this investment helped revitalize the store fronts and historic buildings in downtown Grundy Center. Task Force members suggested that the development of the downtown district remain a commercial center for the City.

The downtown district is characterized by older buildings that have been restored to retain their historic nature. Street level commercial spaces activate the sidewalks with walking traffic. Attractive street designs with trees and other street scaping components such as benches, public art, and gatherings squares invite locals and tourists.

Many commercial buildings in downtown Grundy Center have street-level commercial space with upper levels. Taking into consideration the feedback from the Task Force, street level commercial is often the primary commercial prime space that is common in downtown districts. Since there is a lack of non-single

family type housing in the area, creating a downtown district with upper-level residential units may serve multiple benefits to the City in economic development, activating community life, preserving historical buildings, and adding to a diverse housing stock. Continuously promoting and encouraging growth for revitalization of Grundy Center's downtown can be an important endeavor that can benefit multiple stakeholders.

Promoting Local Investment in Business

Grundy Center should continue to foster a “shop local” environment in the community. This includes supporting locally owned businesses and seeking a diversity of business types. Based on input from the Task Force members, there is a desire to see more restaurant options and vibrancy in the downtown area. More efforts to understand local retail tastes and preferences will require some community outreach and surveying for information to analyze. A goal with city leaders and task force members was to promote a “shop local” marketing effort by local leaders, residents, and businesses.

Expand Educational Opportunity

Opportunity to obtain education is important for community development. A qualified workforce will need knowledge, skills, and innovation that will sustain a resilient and healthy economy. Basic education includes high school and GED degrees. The city should work to provide for residents that want access to higher education including the University of Northern Iowa, Hawkeye Community College, apprenticeship programs, online certification programs, technological colleges, trade, and vocational schools.

As shown by Table 18, Grundy Center has a higher percentage of residents with college degrees compared to Grundy County. The hospital and school system may have some impact to this community data on the education attainment of residents.

Business and Industrial Parks

There may be businesses that do not fit into the downtown commercial spaces. Larger retail, office buildings, or large industrial businesses will need commercial spaces to develop. Choosing the location with the availability of land will be crucial in developing an industrial or business park. Identifying areas with accessibility and adequate infrastructure will have clear market potential for tenants and their specific needs.

Strategizing to gain a clear understanding of the feasibility will need to occur. This will analyze expected costs from the city. Other crucial factors such as the existing capacity of the city's roads, utilities, and infrastructure will need to be assessed. Overall, the city can invest in a planned development approach by visioning where this type of development may be appropriate and located for future development.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Economic Development Goal #1: Focus on economic development strategies and maintaining a strong Central Business District.

Objectives:

- a. Encourage improvements to existing buildings and continue to seek new occupants for those that are vacant.
 - i. Continue programs to improve the physical appearance of buildings.
- b. Continue to support Grundy Center's Economic Development Organizations because their goals are in the best interest of Grundy Center.
 - i. Maintain status as Chamber Main Street Community.
 - ii. Identify opportunities and programs for Grundy Center Development Corporation to consider.

- iii. Continue collaboration with GNB Economic Development Corporation
 - iv. Continue partnership with Butler/Grundy Alliance
- c. Prioritize the promotion of business retention and expansion of Grundy Center's businesses and industries.
 - i. Consider providing programs and incentives beyond building improvements that may help businesses stay competitive.
 - ii. Identify the needs of local businesses regarding expansion.
 - iii. Encourage businesses to utilize programs like IEG, CEEE, and other business improvement tools.
- d. Continue to seek out relocating and expanding businesses.
 - i. Consider implementing infrastructure improvements that would provide incentives for businesses to locate in the City.
- e. Continue to invest in industrial developments that are large enough to accommodate expansion and relocation of other businesses and industries.
- f. Improve job readiness and skills of City citizens and workers.
 - i. Work with institutions, such as Grundy Center School District, Hawkeye Community College, and the University of Northern Iowa, Iowa State Extension, Iowa Workforce Development, and Iowa Source Link to improve access to job training and education.
 - ii. Create and encourage networking events that introduce those individuals seeking employment and/or opportunities to develop further skills and training to local resources.
- g. Continue to promote policies and programs that are conducive to upper-floor residential redevelopment opportunities as a means to promote vibrancy in the Central Business District.

Economic Development Goal #2: Continue to convert areas of blight or dangerous and dilapidated properties to areas suitable for commercial and industrial redevelopment or revitalization.

Objectives:

- a. Create an inventory of properties and areas in the community that would benefit from redevelopment and revitalization.
- b. Explore different programs and funding sources that could help to alleviate the potentially prohibitive costs of rehabilitation and revitalization projects for the community and its residents and stakeholders.
- c. Review policies, procedures, and ordinances for potential hurdles or deterrents to redevelopment and revitalization efforts.

Economic Development Goal #3: Look to vacant and underutilized properties as an opportunity for a creative and diverse configuration of commercial and industrial repurposed uses.

Economic Development Goal #4: Provide an overall environment in the community that is conducive to attracting and retaining a strong labor force.

Objectives:

- a. Coordinate with local businesses and educational institutions to promote opportunities for access to job skills training.
- b. Provide adequate affordable, quality housing for individuals to live and work in the community.
- c. Continue to encourage employers to seek the most qualified candidates that make Grundy Center area business's more attractive and competitive.
- d. Publicly recognize companies that partner with area educational institutions to hire local graduates and trainees.
- e. Continue to explore and implement economic development strategies that attract a robust and diverse variety of employers with values and goals that align with those of the community.
- f. Create and encourage networking events that introduce those individuals seeking employment and/or opportunities to develop further skills and training to local resources.

Economic Development Goal #5: Provide quality, affordable broadband, and utilities as means to attract and retain drivers of a strong economy.

Objectives:

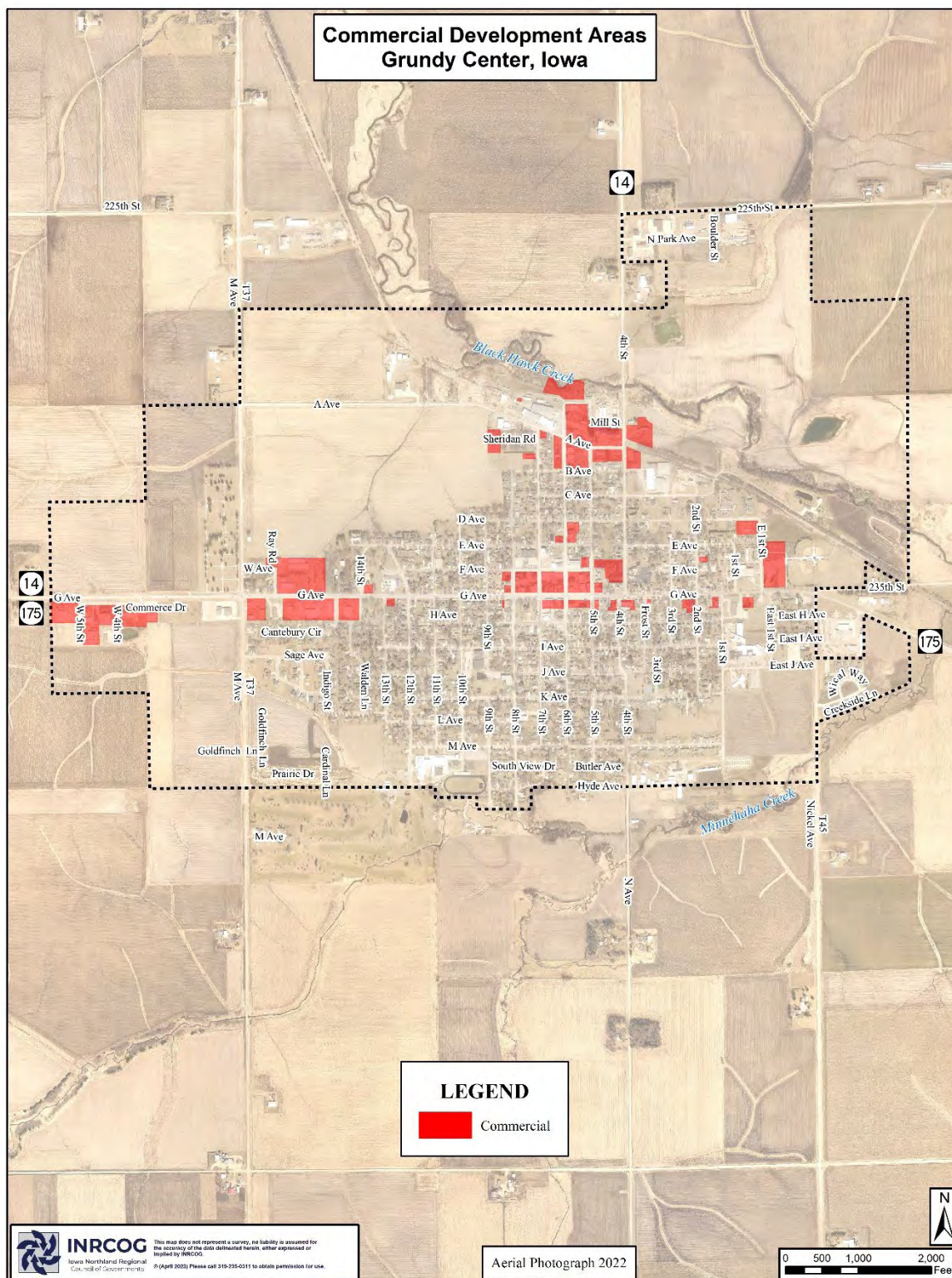
- a. Continue to explore opportunities to provide high quality, affordable service options for the community.
- b. Consider local and regional partnerships as potential opportunities for successful implementation.

Economic Development Goal #6: Consider the impacts of inadequate childcare options in the community as an inhibiting factor to economic development.

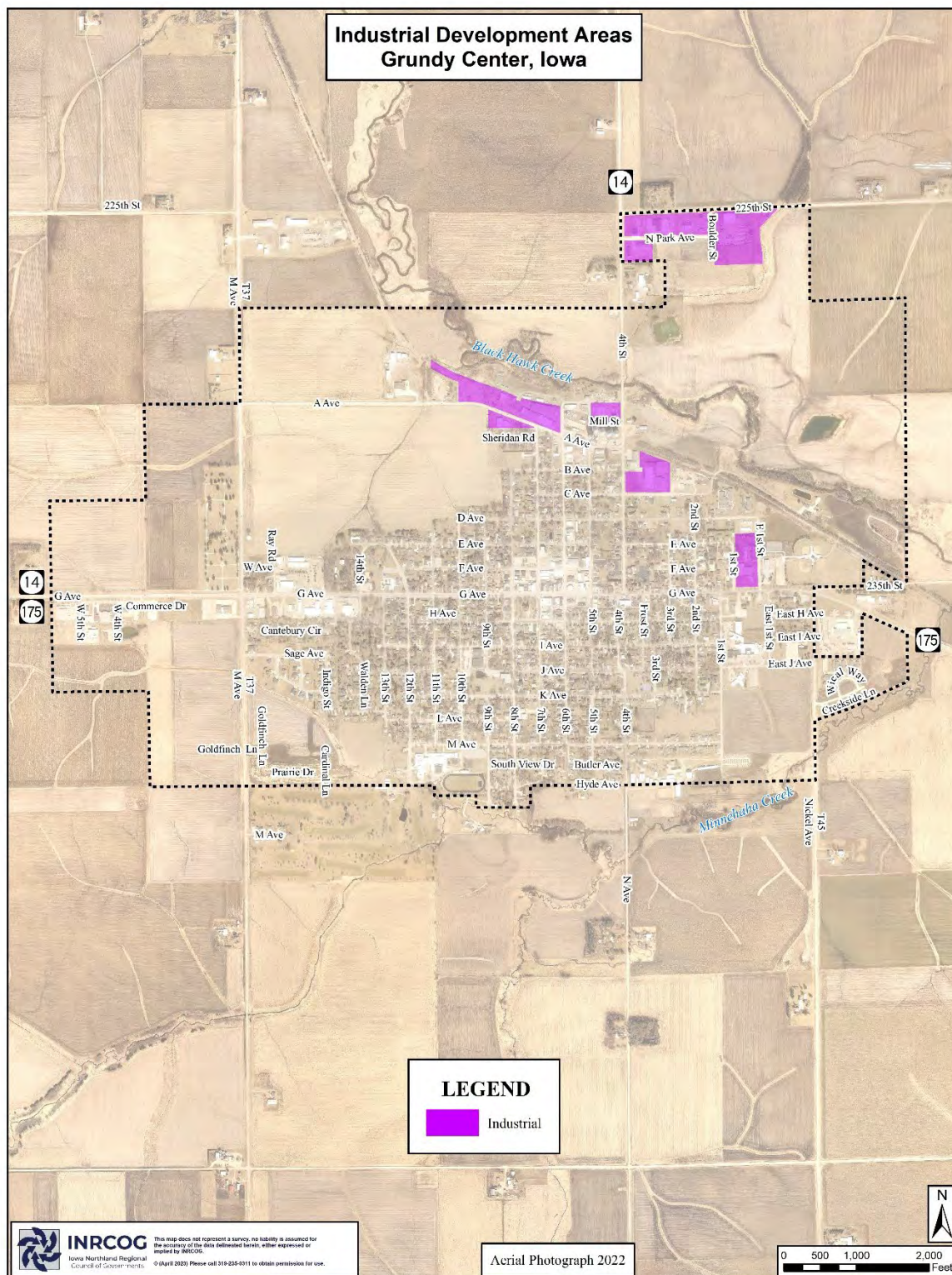
Objectives:

- a. Examine ordinances, policies, and processes for potential hurdles to the provision of adequate and efficient childcare options in the community and explore creative solutions.
- b. Create policies, identify local resources, and work with developers and community partners to offer better childcare opportunities for the community.
- c. Encourage area businesses and employers to assist in finding creative solutions to the lack of childcare options.

MAP 10: CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND OTHER COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS



MAP 11: INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS



TRANSPORTATION

Transportation planning is a broad and active part of building the community. To accurately plan for the future transportation needs of Grundy Center, an inventory of existing facilities has been prepared and analyzed.

Transportation facilities are the roadways, parking lots, highways, intersections, and any structure needed for a vital ground transit industry. The connection of Grundy Center to other regional commercial hubs is important for business and industry growth. For this reason, the transportation inventories will briefly overview the transportation facilities for vehicular, freight, air, rail, public, and recreation.

Smart Planning Element – Transportation

Objectives, policies, and programs to guide the future development of a safe, convenient, efficient, and economical transportation system. Plans for such a transportation system may be coordinated with state and regional transportation plans and take into consideration the need for diverse modes of transportation, accessibility, improved air quality, and interconnectivity of the various modes of transportation.

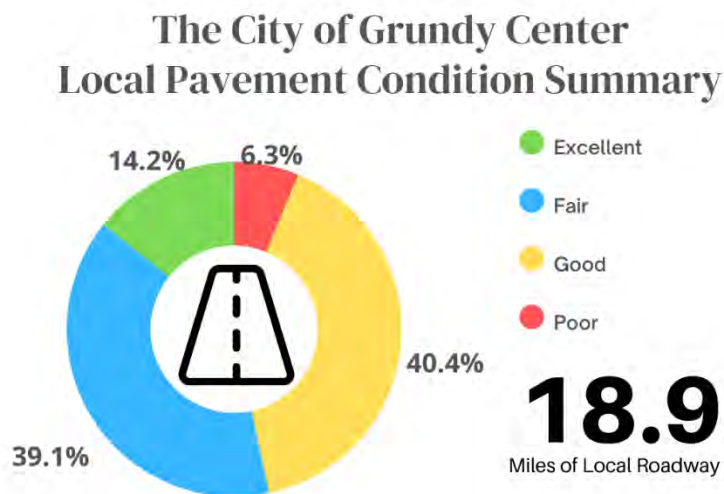
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Much of the information provided in this section derives from the 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan, Maps 13, 14, and 15 show the transportation infrastructure and development corridors in the city.

Streets & Highways

Roadway conditions within the urban area were assessed based on the Pavement Condition Index, International Roughness Index, and Annual Daily Traffic as part of the 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan. The City of Grundy Center maintains approximately 18.9 miles of paved roadway. In general, nearly 94% of the local paved roadway was surveyed with conditions in the Good, Fair, and Excellent Category. Only 6% of paved roadway had poor conditions.

Figure 11: Local Road Conditions Survey (2022)



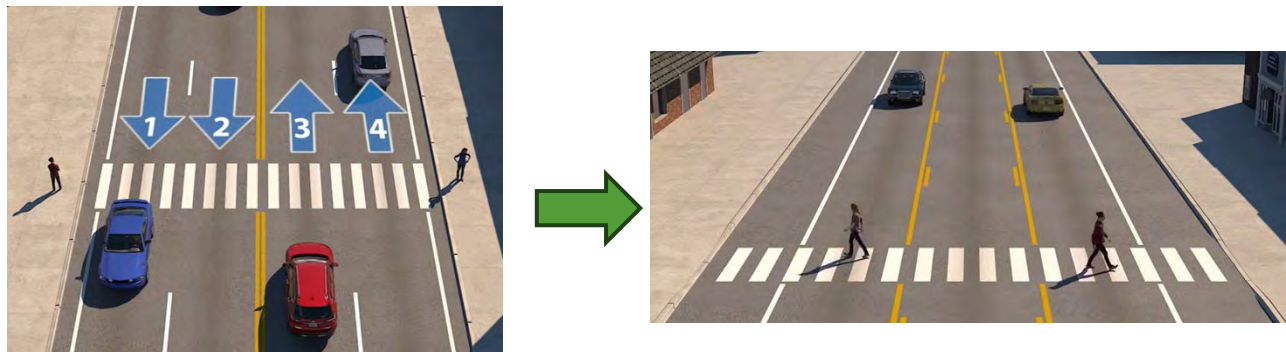
Source: 2022 Iowa Local Road Condition Survey, Iowa Pavement Management Program Web Portal
<https://ctre.iastate.edu/ipmp/ipmp-web-portal/>

Source: Iowa Pavement Management Program Web Portal
<https://ctre.iastate.edu/ipmp/ipmp-web-portal/>

Overall, participants in the planning process agreed that transportation is convenient and efficient. Road diets and 4-lane conversions in areas of the community were also suggested to improve congestion and improve pedestrian safety.

Concern was also expressed for Iowa Highway 14 and County Road T-38 in the west edge of Grundy Center citing safety concerns and excessive wait times as the main issues. The Iowa DOT had conducted a study at this location in recent years and determined that a conversion to 3 lanes would be the most impactful solution in this circumstance.

FIGURE 12: “FOUR-LANE CONVERSION” FOUR LANE TO A THREE LANE INCLUDING A TURNING LANE AND BUFFERS



Source: Iowa DOT

Sidewalks

Residents need additional sidewalks and pedestrian corridors in the community. As mentioned previously in the plan, road reconfigurations in some areas of the city could be designed to better accommodate pedestrian transportation and should be coordinated with Iowa DOT when applicable. Improvements to the bike and sidewalk networks will reduce the disjointed system. There are gaps in this network to each other that it was characterized as “fragmented.” Concerns were also mentioned as to the safety of the pedestrian and bicycle transportation network.

Airport

The Grundy Center Municipal Airport is a small non-commercial service airport located three miles west of Grundy Center. The primary users of the Grundy Center Municipal Airport include farmers using cropper planes, emergency workers using air evacuation for critical purposes, and flight training.

Freight

Trucking logistics and freight industries are vital for Grundy County’s agricultural production industry. The highway intersection of State highways 14 and 175 may see more trucking traffic with the expansion of transportation facilities. As such, consideration should be given to areas of the transportation network and land use patterns that would benefit from design and development standards that complement these factors.

Trails – Pedestrian, Bicycle, Water

Grundy Center is located along the Pioneer Trail. This trail was an active railroad that connected the cities of Holland, Grundy Center, Morrison, and Reinbeck. This trail stretches for 12 miles from Reinbeck to Holland connecting these four towns. The trail has paved surfaces and compacted aggregate limestone for nonpaved sections.

Transit Options

Regional transit operations are offered to the City of Grundy Center through OnBoard Public Transit. OnBoard Public Transit provides connection services between Grundy Center and neighboring counties and communities to patrons ranging from children to senior citizens. Per mile fares, vouchers, and insurance pay are used to ride the bus system. The services provided by the OnBoard Public Transit are open to the public, including persons with disabilities.

Comments from residents regarding transit ranged from not knowing a great deal about options and concerns availability. This transit option is not in service during evening hours or weekends.

Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority (INRTA)

The INRTA is responsible for conducting ongoing transportation planning and programming and participating in studies and projects, as well as completing a number of other transportation documents. Planning documents include:

- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**- Includes all projects programmed for federal transportation funding in the RTA in the next four fiscal years; updated annually.
- **2024 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**- Reviews the current condition and future needs of the transportation system and provides guidance for transportation investment decisions; updated every five years.
- **Passenger Transportation Plan (PTP)**- Provides coordination between passenger transportation providers and human service agencies and recommends projects to improve passenger transportation; full document update every five years; joint document with the Iowa Northland Regional Transportation Authority.

The planning and programming processes required for INRTA is outlined in the FAST Act and requires that an extensive, ongoing, and cooperative planning effort for the programming of federal funds be undertaken. The INRTA's overall transportation planning goal is to provide for the adequate, safe, and efficient movement of persons and goods in the urban area. It would serve the city well to continue to coordinate its transportation planning efforts with those of the INRTA.

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

The following issues and opportunities are based on input received from city stakeholders. During the planning process, these questions were asked to facilitate discussion: *What are the key transportation concerns and/or needs regarding traffic, transit, air, pedestrian, bicycle, and other modes of transportation?*

Many comments were received regarding the desire for a more connected, pedestrian friendly network of transportation. Comments suggested the need for more sidewalks and more focus on bikeable infrastructure. Respondents to Task Force meeting materials also expressed the need for continued maintenance and upkeep of the existing automobile transportation network, potential for collaboration with the Iowa DOT on Hwy 14, and the necessity to plan for electric vehicle infrastructure. In general, respondents were favorable to the introduction of EV integration into the community.

TRANSPORTATION GOALS

Transportation Goal #1: Provide an efficient transportation system for orderly development of the community, while maintaining safety and economy.

Objectives:

- a. Require that new developments conform to the existing street system or show that the changes will be an improvement.
- b. Seek to adopt a Complete Streets Policy/Program and explore collaborative ways to fund its implementation.
 - i. Review plans for new developments or improvements for consistency with a Complete Streets Policy.
- c. Investigate future locations of streets to ensure an orderly growth which is consistent with the values and objectives of the community.
- d. Maximize the benefits of linkages connecting Grundy Center.
 - i. Investigate and consider the creation of trail loop connecting downtown Grundy Center and the Great American Rail Trail.
- e. Improve sidewalk connections in the City.
 - i. Study gaps in sidewalk coverage and the state of repairs to existing sidewalks.

Transportation Goal #2: Utilize the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan for Grundy County Regional Area goals and objectives in determining future projects and demand.

L RTP RTA Goals:

- a. Increase the safety of the transportation system.
- b. Strategically preserve the existing infrastructure.
- c. Support an efficient transportation system.
- d. Provide a high degree of multimodal accessibility and mobility.

Transportation Goal #3: Continue to support the accessibility to regional transit system to further accommodate the evolving needs of the community.

Objectives:

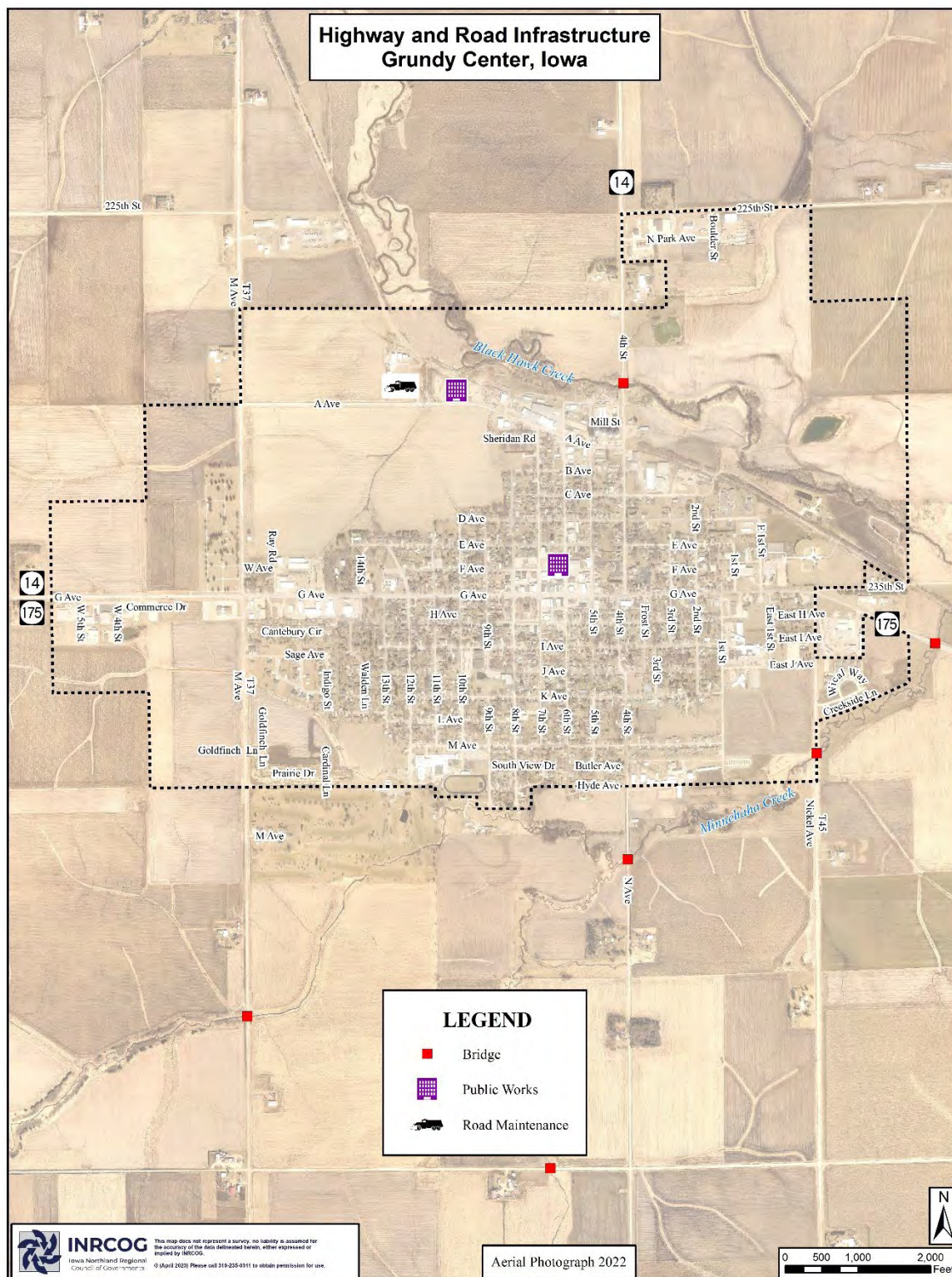
- a. Continue to examine gaps in services and exploring creative methods for solutions.

Transportation Goal #4: Maintain and enhance the multi-use trail network in the community.

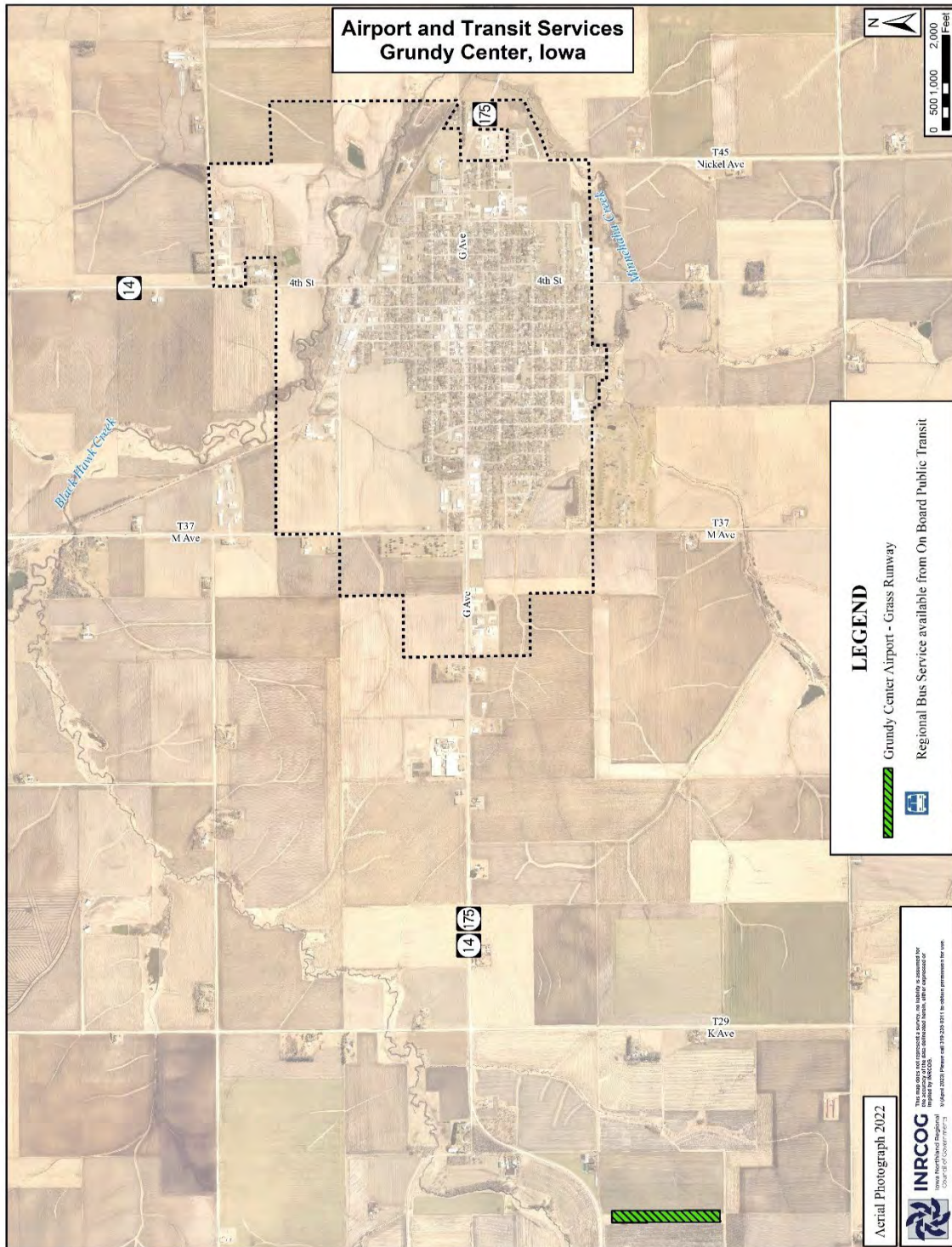
Objectives:

- a. Continue to provide maintenance and general upkeep to the existing multi-use trail network.
 - i. Regularly review the condition of existing multi-use trails.
- b. Examine the trail network for gaps in connectivity and opportunities for access to local and regional attractions.

MAP 12: HIGHWAY AND ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE



MAP 13: AIRPORT, TRAILS, AND TRANSIT SERVICES



LAND USE

Smart Planning Element – Land Use

Objectives, policies, and programs that identify current land uses within the municipality and that guide future development and redevelopment of property, consistent with the municipality's characteristics identified under the issues and opportunities sections of each section in the plan. The plan may include information on the amount, type, intensity, density of existing land use, trends in the market price of land used for specific purposes, and plans for future land use throughout the municipality. The plan may identify and include information or property that has the possibility for redevelopment, a map of existing and potential land use and land use conflicts, information and maps relating to the current and future provision of utilities within the municipality, information and maps that identify the current and future boundaries for areas reserved for soil conservation, water supply conservation, flood control, and surface water drainage and removal. Information provided under this paragraph may also include analysis of current and potential impacts on local watersheds and air quality.

Deciding how to interact with the physical land is an important community responsibility. For Grundy Center, this is also a source of revenue from property taxes that will go on to fund the growing needs for a thriving community. The Land Use element of the Plan provides the existing and future land use map of Grundy Center. The goals and policies of this section are intended to weigh the adverse environmental impacts of growth against the benefits of growth.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Land Use Patterns

Agriculture or open land uses are prevalent surrounding all corporate boundaries of the city. The majority of the City's developed land is categorized as single-family residential use with pockets of multi-family residential use. Public uses, such as parks, schools, and government buildings, are also scattered throughout the City. Commercial districts are clustered in two areas: in the western area of the community, along Highway 14 and in the City center. Industrial areas are in the northern area of the city.

Existing Land Use Map

The Existing Land Use Map (Map 16) provides a snapshot of how Grundy Center looked at the time this Plan was being developed. Table 19 shows the amount of land in each land use category within the City.

TABLE 19: EXISTING LAND USE IN GRUNDY CENTER		
Land Use Category	Acres	% of Total Land
Agricultural/Vacant	813	49%
Low Density Residential	308	19%
Multi-Family Residential	24	1%
Public Areas, Gov. Facilities, Utilities, Hospitals, Schools, Religious	138	8%
Parks / Open Space	44	3%
Commercial	68	4%
Industrial	48	3%
Right of Way	199	12%
Total	1,643	100%

Source: INRCOG

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Potential Annexation

Annexation is a land development process where county land is re-established as city owned land. Following procedures from Iowa State Code Chapter 368. Stakeholders in the Task Force have identified limited availability of land as a barrier to Grundy Center's growth.

Compatible Land Uses

Where pockets of one type of use are adjacent to differing uses, development or redevelopment that is similar or complimentary to the prevailing surrounding uses should be encouraged within those pockets.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Grundy Center has portions of land within the floodplain. Uses that are compatible with the floodplain, such as parks and recreational areas, should be encouraged within these areas.

FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Map (Map 18) focuses on infill development in areas of the City as is necessary and feasible. It suggests that single-family residential uses be encouraged next to existing residential uses, as well as for commercial redevelopment to be focused within and next to the existing downtown commercial district.

Relationship of Zoning and Future Land Use

City zoning consists of both a zoning map and a written ordinance that divides the jurisdiction into zoning districts, including residential, commercial, and industrial districts. The zoning regulations describe what type of land use and specific activities are permitted in each district and also regulate how buildings, signs, parking, and other construction may be placed on a lot. The zoning regulations also provide procedures for rezoning and other planning applications.

The zoning map and zoning regulations provide properties in Grundy Center's planning and zoning jurisdiction with certain rights to development, while the Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for future development of the property. The Future Land Use Map and related policies contained in this Plan should be used as a guide for future rezoning decisions undertaken by the City.

Future Land Use Map

With input from the Task Force and Planning and Zoning Commission, Grundy Center's Future Land Use Map was created. This map shows a vision of how Grundy Center may look 15-20 years in the future.

FUTURE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

General descriptions of the land use classifications shown on the Future Land Use Map follow:

- **Agriculture/Open Space:** Agricultural land and green/open spaces where future development would not occur.
- **Low Density Residential:** Single-family housing that may exist, is planned, or that may develop in the community.
- **Multi-Family Residential:** All varieties of residential uses with greater densities than single-family housing.
- **Public:** Parks, schools, churches, and City buildings that may be used by the general public.
- **Commercial:** Uses that involve the retail or wholesale of goods and/or services to the public for purpose of a profit.

- **Industrial:** Intensive uses classified by the fact that they produce, manufacture, or assemble product. These uses usually generate significant traffic, noise, dust, and/or excessive light.
- **Right of Way:** Land used for roads and railroads.
- **Potential Annexation:** Not a typical land use classification, but it would be advantageous to the community to identify potential areas immediately adjacent to the City that may be annexed during the life of this Plan.
- **Water:** Distinguishes Black Hawk Creek and other water bodies from surrounding uses.
- **Floodway:** The channel of a stream plus any floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachment.
- **1.0% and 0.2% Annual Chance of Flooding:** Although not typically considered a land use category, Grundy Creek and the Cedar River have a profound impact on development in Grundy Center. Specifically, development in the floodways with 1.0% and 0.2% annual chance of flooding, as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is prohibited. Current land uses may continue in the floodway, but any further development or redevelopment in this area is restricted and unlikely. Thus, we have shown the floodway on the Future Land Use Map so that residents and City staff may be aware of it and understand its impact on potential development.

Table 20 shows the estimated amount of land in each land use as demonstrated on the Future Land Use Map.

TABLE 19: FUTURE LAND USE IN GRUNDY CENTER		
Land Use Category	Acres	% of Total Land
Agricultural/Vacant	693	42%
Low Density Residential	338	20%
Multi-Family Residential	104	6%
Public Areas, Gov. Facilities, Utilities, Hospitals, Schools, Religious	138	8%
Parks / Open Space	45	3%
Commercial	72	4%
Industrial	53	3%
Right of Way	199	12%
Future Annexation	24	1%
Total	1,667	100%

Source: INRCOG

*Total Includes ROW

LAND USE GOALS

Land Use Goal #1: The Grundy Center Comprehensive Plan should serve as a guide for making future land use decisions.

Objectives:

- a. Land use decisions should be made in accordance with sound planning practices, design, and implementation tools. Sound planning practices include the avoidance of leapfrog and sprawl development, separation or mitigation of incompatible land uses within the community and requiring adequate public facilities and utilities before growth can occur.
- b. Adequate public services should be provided to meet the needs of the community.
- c. The community should work to ensure that adequate transportation, water, sewer, and storm sewer infrastructure is made available to residents.

- d. The city should encourage appropriate density and development of land such that overcrowding does not occur.
- e. Development should be focused on areas of infill to maximize the community's existing infrastructure.
- f. Growth should also be balanced, in terms of use and location, within the community.

Land Use Goal #2: The city of Grundy Center should consider innovative methods of managing growth whenever possible.

Objectives:

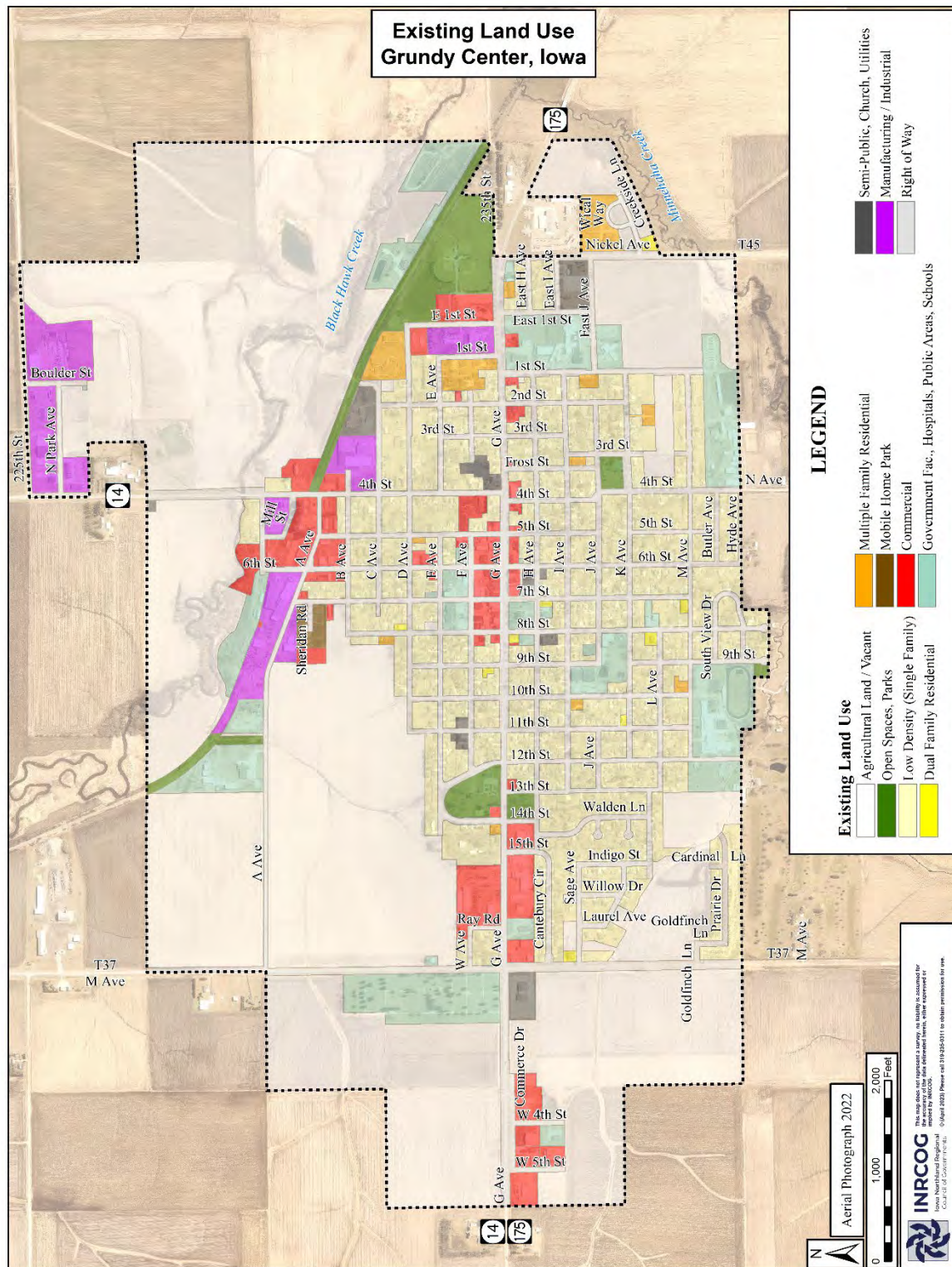
- a. The city should encourage compact developments that may reduce service costs associated with growth.
- b. The city should research other potential means of managing growth such as impact fees or transfers/purchases of development rights in order to help offset high service costs and reduce land development pressures.
 - i. Researching new growth management techniques will help to ensure that the city is able to give timely consideration to any new tools made available through legislation of the state of Iowa.

Land Use Goal #3: Give consideration to the following factors for each proposal for development:

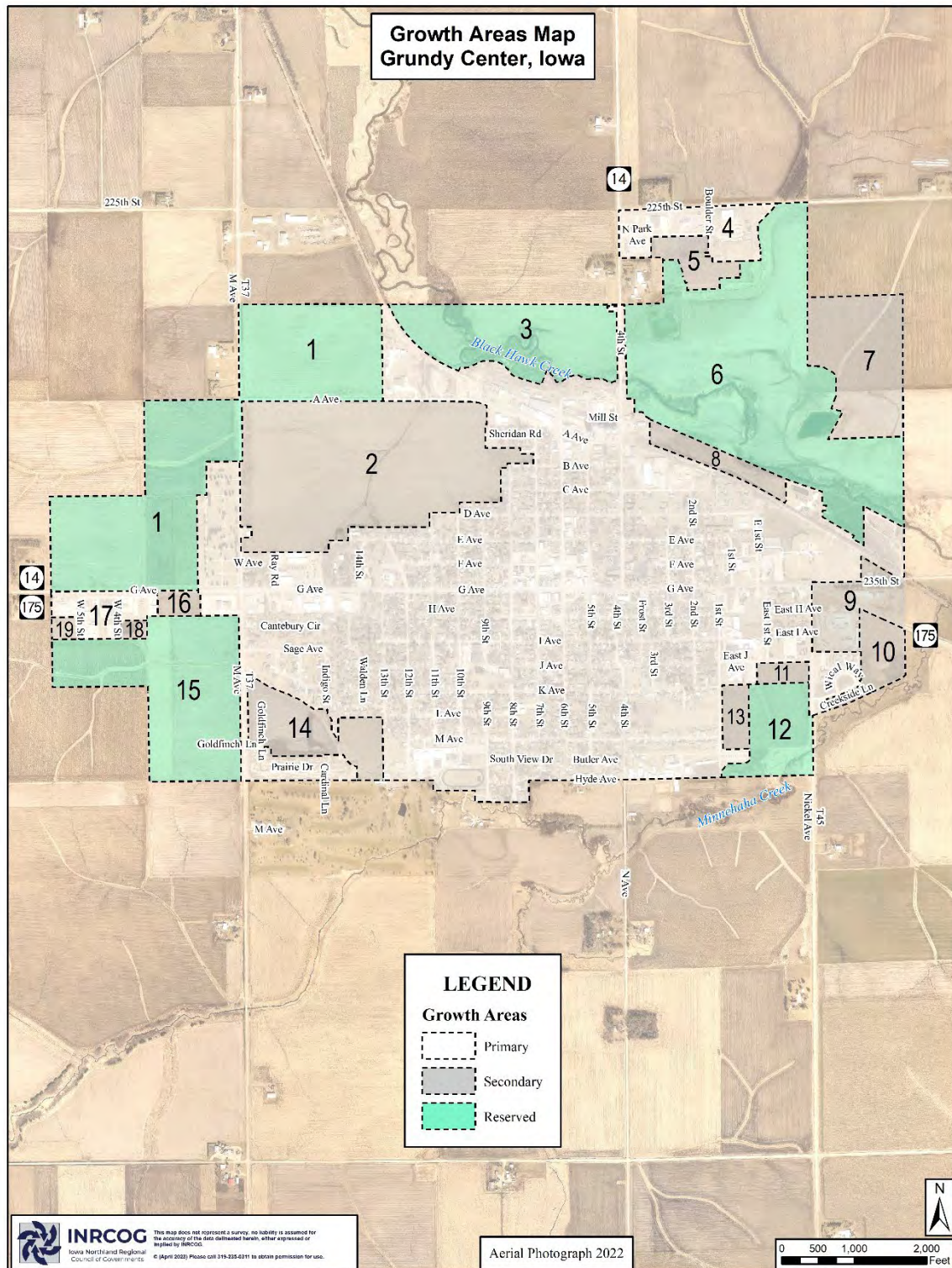
Objectives:

- a. Public health, welfare, and safety factors
- b. Consistency with this plan
- c. Impacts on adjacent property values
- d. Density and/or intensity of the proposed use
- e. Traffic generation and flow patterns
- f. Ability of the city to provide public services and public works infrastructure
- g. Infrastructure demands of the proposed use
- h. Surrounding land uses
- i. Impact on environmentally sensitive areas
- j. Landscaping, general design, and aesthetic considerations
- k. Other factors affecting the general purpose and intent of the Plan

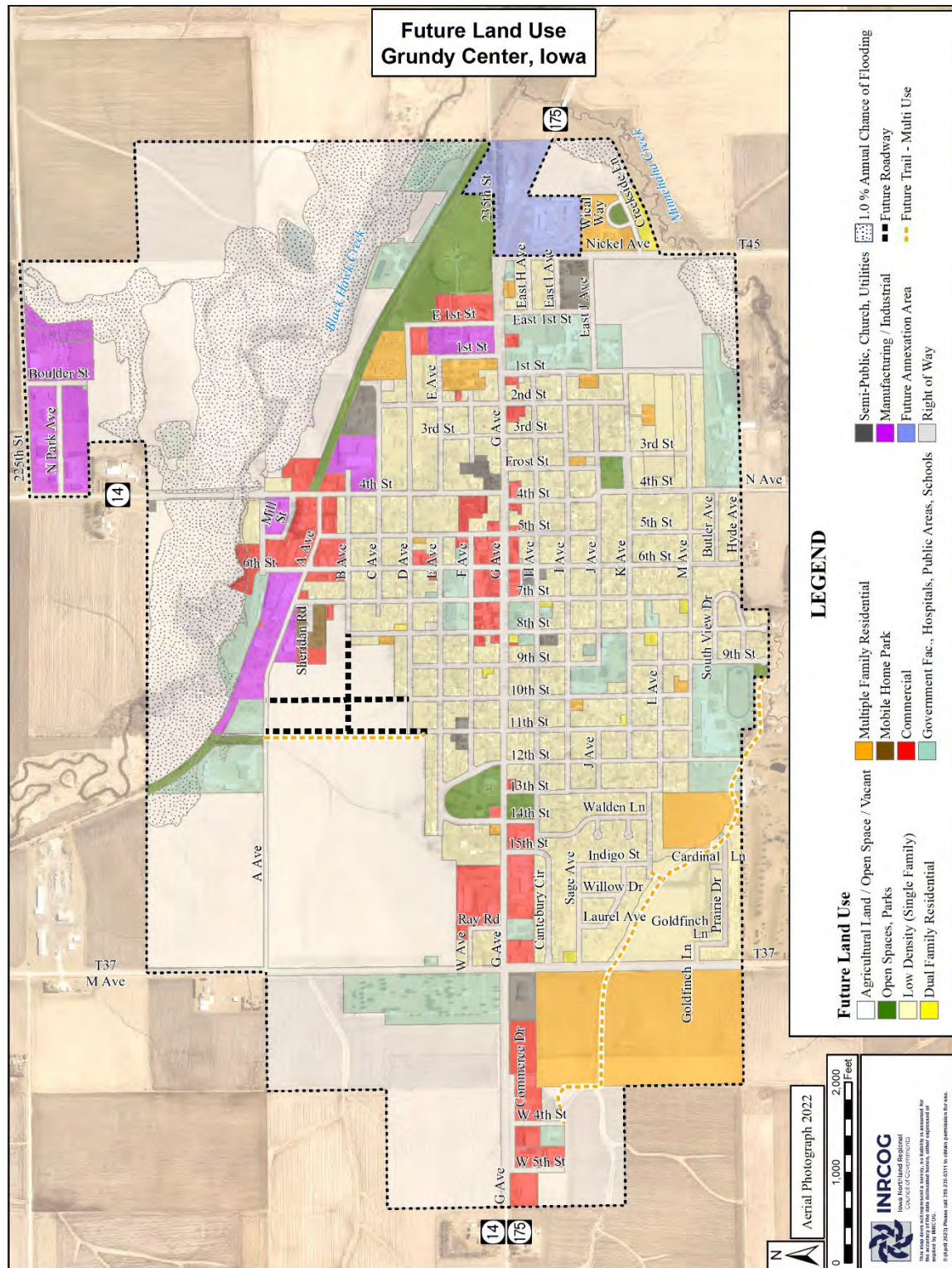
MAP 16: EXISTING LAND USE



MAP 17: FUTURE GROWTH AREAS



MAP 18: FUTURE LAND USE



INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

Success in any type of planning relies on the ability of a community to come together as a whole to achieve a common goal. Historically, Grundy Center has a good working relationship with internal parties. Individual agencies, groups, boards, committees, and the like have been able to cooperate to complete projects of mutual interest to the community. These entities also work together to share information, resources, and are active in several regional organizations. However, communities could also be taking advantage of many opportunities for collaboration in economic development, environmental and agricultural protection, and resource sharing. This section will outline some of the current collaboration efforts within the city, county, and profile several regional organizations that facilitate collaboration. The section will also discuss past conflicts and identify opportunities to further collaboration. Recommendations included in this section will allow Grundy Center to prevent and resolve conflicts and help everyone continue to work together to achieve their goals for the future.

BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION

Cost Savings

Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication. Cooperation can enable some communities to provide their residents with services that would otherwise be too costly. Examples include shared services, police and fire protection, recycling of household hazardous waste, water service, and shared government buildings (such as shared community center).

Addressing Regional Issues

By communicating and coordinating their actions, and working with local, regional and state agencies, local communities are able to address and resolve issues which are regional in nature. Examples include the construction and maintenance of highways, provision of transit service, and planning and construction of facilities for wastewater, stormwater management and water supply.

Early Identification of Issues

Cooperation enables jurisdictions to identify and resolve potential conflicts at an early stage, before affected interests have established rigid positions, before substantial funds have been expended, before the political stakes have been raised, and before issues have become conflicts or crises.

Consistency

Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions of internal groups, neighboring communities and other jurisdictions.

Predictability

Jurisdictions that cooperate provide greater predictability to residents, developers, businesses, and others. Lack of predictability can result in lost time, money, and opportunity.

Understanding

As jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become more aware of one another's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to avoid them.

Trust

Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust and good working relationships.

History of Success

When jurisdictions cooperate successfully in one area, the success creates positive feelings and an expectation that other intergovernmental issues can be resolved as well.

Enhanced Service to Citizens

The biggest beneficiary of intergovernmental cooperation are the people for whom government was created in the first place. All residents can appreciate their benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, and a strong economy.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Grundy Center has collaborated with many groups and organizations. These range from local connections within the city to working relationships with state agencies. This section provides an overview of these collaborative relationships.

Local Partnerships

Several organizations, agencies, and committees work with the city to provide the highest level of service to their citizens and visitors. These partnerships work towards meeting many of the goals within the City's comprehensive plan (**list not exhaustive**).

- Grundy Center Chamber-Main Street
- Butler/Grundy Economic Development Alliance
- GNB Development Corporation
- Grundy Center Community School District
- Grundy Center Municipal Utility

Smart Planning Element – Intergovernmental Collaboration

Objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and joint decision-making with other municipalities or governmental entities, including school districts, for site and constructing public facilities and sharing public services. The plan may identify existing or potential conflicts between the municipality and other governments related to future development of the municipality and may include recommendations for resolving such conflicts. The plan may also identify opportunities to collaborate and partner with neighboring jurisdictions and other entities in the region for projects of mutual interest.

Regional Partnerships

Regional partnerships can also benefit the City and some have been identified throughout this document. Key regional agencies that can help implement strategies in this plan include (**list not exhaustive**):

- Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) provides services in community planning, government grant writing (community facilities, sewer/water, downtown revitalization, and housing), workforce, housing rehab and rental assistance programs and transportation projects.
- RTA
- RTC

State Partnerships

The following is a list of state agencies whose departments and areas of expertise could assist the City as it moves forward with the implementation of this plan (**list not exhaustive**).

- Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT)
- Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD)

Intergovernmental Agreements

Formal agreements between Iowa governments, commonly referred to as 28E agreements, for the Iowa Code Chapter under which they are governed, can provide the framework for multiple local governments and/or entities to work together. The chapter permits “state and local governments in Iowa to make efficient use of their powers by enabling them to provide joint services and facilities with other agencies and to co-operate in other ways of mutual advantage.” Agreements formed under Chapter 28E, in Iowa, may also be defined as Mutual Aid Agreements.

Mutual aid agreements provide the procedures for sharing of resources between communities. Grundy Center has entered into agreements for sharing/providing water service, fire response, ambulance services, and law enforcement assistance. Other examples of 28E agreements may define responsibilities for road maintenance, public transportation, landfill operation and maintenance, and building and facilities maintenance, among others.

KEY ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

Good planning is a result of collaborative efforts between and within governments. Grundy Center has cultivated and developed relationships in the community, region, and state and will need to maintain these relationships while actively seeking out new opportunities.

City and Utility Provider Collaboration

One partnership that could be improved is between the City and utility providers in the use of equipment. The City performs some functions that require the use of equipment available to utility providers; however, some providers are reluctant to allow the City to use their equipment requiring the City to buy additional vehicles or equipment. Solutions should be discussed that benefit both parties.

COLLABORATION GOALS

Intergovernmental Collaboration Goal #1: Whenever feasible, community development plans should be coordinated with those of adjacent communities and/or overlapping jurisdictions, including state and federal agencies.

Objectives:

- a. Work with neighboring jurisdictions, in the interests of all involved, to find workable solutions that are mutually beneficial.
- b. Publicize existing and proposed collaborations to encourage utilization and cooperation.
- c. Promote formal and informal networking opportunities across jurisdictions and community organizations to encourage further interaction.

Intergovernmental Collaboration Goal #2: A collaborative effort could be made to create a platform (social media, website inclusion, etc.) that highlights past collaborations, future efforts, and incorporates a database of regional jurisdictions, organizations, and partnerships involved in the betterment of the community.

Objectives:

- a. Provide a more inclusive and efficient network of area stakeholders with like interests.
- b. Promote awareness of resources and encourage collaboration rather than duplication of similar services.

Intergovernmental Collaboration Goal #3: Continue collaborative efforts to evaluate community boundaries, varying levels of governmental responsibility, common necessities, and a better means of public administration in support of most efficient practices.

Objectives:

- a. Encourage annual or biannual work sessions with local agencies and organizations to work to better understand the common goals, future interests, and desired level of involvement in collaborative efforts.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION, MAINTENANCE, AND ADOPTION

The goals and objectives developed in this Plan were developed with consultation of the Task Force and Grundy Center City Council. Any proposed Action Plan developed by the City can utilize the goals and objectives in this document. Each goal and objective for the associated planning element is important in achieving Grundy Center's community vision and focused on community development.

The two components can drive strategic priorities among stakeholders. These priorities will lay the foundation for developing future capital improvement plans and annual departmental work plans for the City and inform the organizing and prioritizing of future implementation efforts. An effective action plan provides a prioritized set of actions or activities to achieve objectives and reach an overall goal. Time horizons to achieve intended goals are typically arranged in the immediate (1-3 years), short-term (3-5 years) and long-term (5-10 years).

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

Throughout the course of developing Plan and past efforts, community input focused on creating a more sustainable community that manages growth, revitalizes the Central Business District, improves community facilities, diversifies, and expands economic development and housing, embraces its natural resources, while maintaining and enhancing the small-town atmosphere of Grundy Center – not a small task. Listed below are the major implementation efforts to reach the goals community stakeholders and citizens have agreed upon for the future of the City.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Many of the identified goals, objectives, and action strategies will only be met through the expenditure of public funds. Achieving the components of the Action Plan should lead to more efficient use of both public and private resources. Each project should be viewed with the full range of funding alternatives and technical assistance available to it before action is taken. These sources must not only provide sufficient funds to accomplish the goals and action strategies intended, but they should be tapped in ways that are as equitable as possible in balancing costs against benefits received.

Another method for implementing the elements of the Plan could be developed through a system of incentives and compensation. The benefits and costs involved in the achievement of public objectives should be considered, which are equitable to the individual and to the general public. Specific steps should be taken to enable progress to be made in each area of the plan.

PLAN MAINTENANCE

The Plan is designed to be a working document. Adoption by the Grundy Center City Council is a commitment to the outcomes of this community's long-range planning effort. Stakeholders provided visioning, feedback, and direction of how their city may develop over the next 10-15 years. City staff, residents, nonprofits, public agencies, and the private sector may use the Plan as a dynamic tool to manage growth over the next 10-15 years to keep the betterment to a quality of life for all and foster a healthy economy for Grundy Center.

An updated plan is a critical element to any ongoing planning success. To maintain public and private sector confidence, evaluation and modifications based on sound judgments should be made to the planning document as necessary. To keep the Plan updated, the City Council of Grundy Center should consider

amendments every 5 years in accordance with City rules and regulations. Updates to maps or other community data may occur and this Plan has a process to incorporate these changes.

CONTINUED PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP

Broad public support and involvement are required as a prerequisite to the development and use of virtually any implementation policy or program. If adequate support is to be developed, a vigorous and continuing program of discussion, education, and participation must take place. Moreover, people who are in a position to understand the needs of the city and ways of meeting those must take the initiative to stimulate the interest and the understanding that must be involved to assure that support and action is developed.

To produce the levels of consensus required, vigorous and continuing public involvement will be required in such areas as:

1. Detailing of plans and proposals to clarify their impact on specific areas, groups, and individuals;
2. Developing of specified implementation activities and organization arrangements; and
3. Continuing monitoring and interpretation of the Plan.

Amendment Process

To consider an amendment or update to this plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall first consider the proposed amendment at a public hearing. A public notice shall be published once, not less than seven (7) nor more than twenty (20) days before the date of the hearing, in a newspaper with local circulation. The Commission shall make a recommendation on the proposed amendment or update, after the public hearing. Said recommendation of the Commission shall be carried by an affirmative vote of a simple majority of its members. The Commission shall send its recommendation, either for approval or denial of the proposed amendment or update, to the City Council for consideration.

After receiving the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission, the City Council shall also hold a properly noticed public hearing on the proposed amendment. The notice shall follow the same publication guidelines as those prescribed for the Commission above. The City Council is authorized to make the final decision, including alterations to the amendment or update prior to adoption. Adoption shall require an affirmative vote of a simple majority of the membership of the Council.