

Resilient Mason City 2027

Mason City Comprehensive Plan Update

Jordan Brown
Priyanka Rayamajhi

Rachel Serslev
Akanksha Tiwari

Faculty Advisors: Charles Connerly, Steven Spears
Field Problems in Planning | School of Urban & Regional Planning

In partnership with
City of Mason City



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Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities

Provost's Office of Outreach and Engagement

The University of Iowa

111 Jessup Hall

Iowa City, IA, 52241

Email: iisc@uiowa.edu

Website: <http://iisc.uiowa.edu/>



MASON CITY

2027

MASON CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



Acknowledgment

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING TEAM

Jordan Brown

Priyanka Rayamajhi

Rachel Serslev

Akanksha Tiwari

MASON CITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND PLANNING, AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

Steven Van Steenhuyse

Tricia Sandahl

MASON CITY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

John Groninga, Chair

Gary Anderson, Vice Chair

Gary Christiansen

Bushra Fazal

Lori Jorgensen

Rick Mathes

Dan Worden

MASON CITY CITY COUNCIL

Eric Bookmeyer, Mayor

Paul Adams

Bill Schickel

John Lee

Travis Hickey

Brett Schoneman

Janet Solberg

THE IOWA INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Travis Kraus

SCHOOL OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING FACULTY ADVISORS

Charles Connerly

Steven Spears

Executive Summary

This comprehensive plan update aims to address changes that have occurred in Mason City since the 2006 Mason City Comprehensive Plan. Since 2006, Mason City has undergone environmental, social, and economic changes that have implications on long-term growth. This comprehensive plan update addresses these changes and sets forth goals that aim to make Mason City resilient in the future.

This plan is a result of many public outreach efforts, described in greater detail within the document. The plan also explains the evaluation and examination of these efforts.

The plan also contains an examination of Mason City today, as characterized by the following categories: land use, housing, transportation and mobility, city facilities and utilities, environmental resilience, economic prosperity, parks and trails, and community character.

This plan also establishes goals and objectives for Mason City to work to achieve in the future. These goals and objectives are categorized in the same fashion as the existing conditions analysis.



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Report Overview

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The introduction of this plan demonstrates the need for an updated comprehensive plan and the tools necessary to do so. This section also describes how the planning team gathered public input and how it fit in to the planning process.

PART 2: MASON CITY TODAY

Part two of this comprehensive plan dicusses existing conditions and the implications of these conditions for the community. Existing conditions analyses are done for land use, housing, transportation, city facilities, environmental resilience, economic prosperity, parks and trails, and community character.

PART 3: MASON CITY TOMORROW

Mason City Tomorrow sets forth the goals, objectives, and action items necessary for guiding Mason City to a resilient future. This section also presents an implementation chart that describes the timeframe for each objective and action item necessary to the complete the relevant goal.

PART 4: APPENDIX

Additional information.

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Part 1: Introduction

RESILIENT MASON CITY 2027 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Mason City, Iowa, has experienced a number of environmental, social, and economic changes since the adoption of The Mason City Comprehensive Plan in 2006. The flood of 2008 left many of Mason City's comprehensive plan goals unattainable or low in priority, while demographic changes have also required the reassessment of long-term goals.

It is necessary to update the comprehensive plan to reflect the current realities of the city and the values of its residents, to achieve productive growth. The primary objectives of this document are to provide updated existing conditions and set forth community goals that are obtainable and reflect residents' vision for resilient, long-term growth in Mason City.



STATE GUIDANCE FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING: THE IOWA SMART PLANNING ACT

THE IOWA SMART PLANNING ACT

In 2010, the State of Iowa adopted the Iowa Smart Planning Act (Iowa State Code Chapter 18B – Land Use) and its subsequent components. These components are smart planning principles, comprehensive plan guidance, and establishment of the 'Iowa Smart Planning Task Force.'

To best formulate this comprehensive plan update, the Plan will utilize Iowa Smart Planning Principles and Elements. Iowa State code encourages the use of 10 principles and 13 elements in local comprehensive plan development. The Principles aim to focus comprehensive planning on economic health, environmental stability, and improving quality of life, while the elements are aspects that should be included in a successful comprehensive plan. The 'Resilient Mason City 2027 Comprehensive Plan Update' incorporates these principles and guiding elements throughout.

The 10 Smart Planning Principles are:

- **Collaboration:** All members who are involved and affected by the plan are encouraged to participate and have an active voice in plan formulation and implementation. The Resilient Mason City 2027 Comprehensive Plan Update will collaborate with the public and other stakeholders to ensure that the vision and goals fit with the values of the community.
- **Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency:** The plan should have an efficient and equitable outcome. Individual and government entities along with community members are expected to play an equal role in securing justifiable results. Following this principle, the updated plan will ensure the feasibility of the goals and will keep the community involved and informed.
- **Clean, Renewable, and Efficient Energy:** The planning process should be carried out in a way that utilizes clean and renewable energy for a sustainable future. The development of the plan update will encourage sustainable activities especially given the primary guiding principle of the plan is resiliency.
- **Occupational Diversity:** Planning and development should occur as such that it promotes the welfare of the community by increasing job opportunities through education and training. The updated plan aims to address such activities and promote opportunities for the city that will bring social and economic resiliency.
- **Revitalization:** Plans should work towards revitalizing existing city infrastructure through protection of valuable structures, properties, or areas. Mason City contains areas with distinct community characteristics and this principle will help to plan for the preservation of such sites within the city. Likewise, it will guide the rectification or reuse of existing sites, structures and infrastructures in the city.
- **Housing Diversity:** The planning and development process should promote diversity in the types of housing, including the rehabilitation of existing housing establishments and the promotion of housing centers near transportation and business establishments. The updated comprehensive plan will gauge the demand of housing diversity and use the principle to guide housing goals.
- **Community Character:** Conserving small town characteristics and preserving unique architectural features is a main vision of the updated comprehensive plan. It also aims to promote and develop neighborhood characteristics valued and appreciated by community residents.
- **Natural Resources and Agricultural Protection:** Along with the protection of natural resources and landscapes, planning and development should provide sufficient open spaces and recreational areas. The updated plan will study the present natural resources and develop goals for their protection and recreational use.



- **Sustainable Design:** The planning process should actively focus on sustainability throughout the project and maintain a standard by reducing land, water, and air pollution. The plan for Mason City will consider this principle in the update and encourage the protection of natural resources.
- **Transportation Diversity:** An effective planning process should yield a wide range of transportation options for maximized mobility while achieving reduced fuel consumption. The updated plan for Mason City will study and analyze transportation alternatives and aim to promote walk-ability and active transportation throughout the city.

The Iowa Smart Planning Act also outlines guidance for comprehensive plan formulation by establishing 13 elements that may be included in any comprehensive plan.

The 13 guiding elements are:

- **Public Participation:** Information relating to public participation during the creation of the comprehensive plan. Documentation of the public outreach process and results is included in this plan.
- **Issues and Opportunities:** Information relating to the primary characteristics of the municipality and the description of how each of those characteristics impacts future development of the municipality.
- **Land Use:** Information relating to current land uses within the municipality and objectives and program that guide the future development of the city. This plan includes analysis of current land use patterns and potential impacts of suggested development in the future.
- **Housing:** Information related to the availability of accessible and affordable housing within the municipality. The plan includes analysis of the categories, as well as identifying types, structures, occupancy, and historical characteristics.
- **Public Infrastructure and Utilities:** Information to guide future development of sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, and telecommunications facilities.
- **Transportation:** Information to guide the future development of a safe, convenient, efficient, and economical transportation system. This plan identifies existing transportation trends and offers future goals for the city.
- **Economic Development:** Information related to the stabilization, retention, or expansion of economic development and employment opportunities. This plan includes analysis of current economic trends of the city, as well as goals for the future of the municipal economy.
- **Agriculture and Natural Resources:** Information addressing preservation and protection of agricultural land and natural resources. This plan includes strategies for environmental protection and resiliency.
- **Community Facilities:** Information concerning the future development of educational facilities, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, law enforcement and fire protection facilities, libraries, and other governmental facilities. This plan includes an analysis of current municipal facilities.
- **Community Character:** Information relating to characteristics and qualities that make the municipality unique and that are important to the municipality's heritage and quality of life.
- **Hazards:** Information that identifies 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 relate to land use and development decisions. This plan includes information about environmental resiliency and protection.
- **Intergovernmental Collaboration:** Information relating to joint planning and joint decision-making with other municipalities or governmental entities, including school districts and drainage districts, for siting and constructing public facilities and sharing public services. This plan includes measurable objectives and goals that insist upon the cooperation between government entities.
- **Implementation:** Information relating to the implement any provision of the comprehensive plan, including changes to any applicable land development regulations, official maps, or subdivision ordinances.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PURPOSE

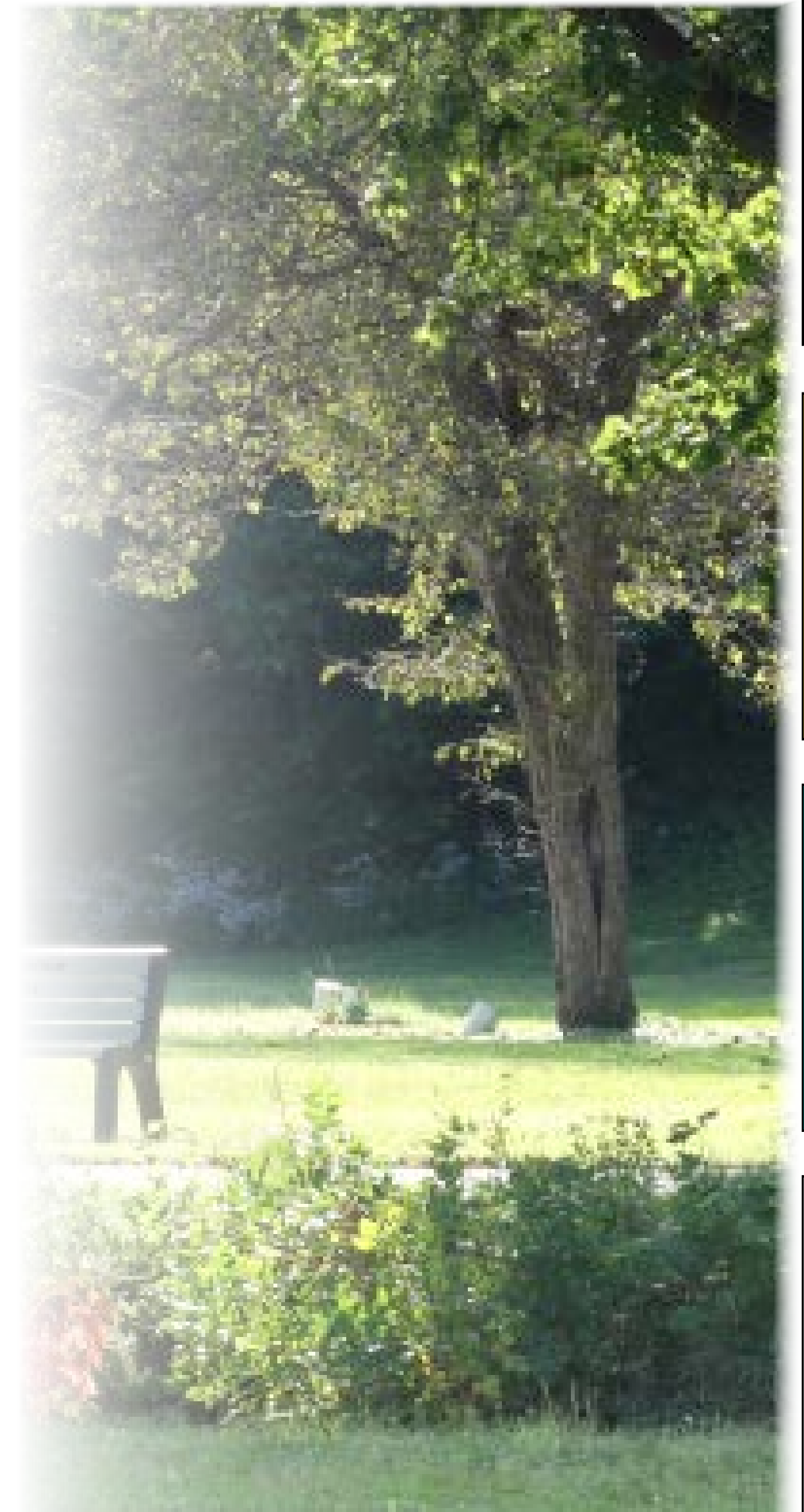
A comprehensive plan provides the legal basis for land use regulations, such as zoning and subdivision control. The State of Iowa allows communities to establish comprehensive plans in order to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the community. Comprehensive planning provides the framework for smart and sustainable growth in a community.

A city may not adopt land use ordinances without first adopting a comprehensive development plan. This requirement derives from the premise that land use decisions should not be arbitrary, but should follow an accepted and reasonable concept of how the city should grow.

The 2006 Mason City Comprehensive Plan requires an update due to changing conditions in Mason City. The city experienced floods in 2008 that made some comprehensive plan goals unattainable and the changed vision for the city. Shifts in demographics, such as population loss and an aging population, also support the need for an updated plan.

The Resilient Mason City 2027 Comprehensive Plan Update provides the City with guidance for planning for resilient growth in the next 10 years. Mason City faces rapidly changing environmental, demographic and economic challenges that the City will prepare for and adapt to by considering resilience in their plans for growth.

A comprehensive plan has a significant role in shaping the growth and development of a community over time. Based on a shared vision for future Mason City, this comprehensive plan establishes goals and actions for the city, derived from existing conditions analyses and public input. This plan acts as a guide for the City and its residents, providing a working program to help realize the great potential of Mason City.



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WHY RESILIENCY MASON CITY 2027?

The 2008 floods prove the need for resilience as the primary guiding principle of this comprehensive plan update. Resilience for Mason City involves preparing the built environment for future changes that may affect the stability of the community's economic, social, or environmental systems. Flood risks, and changing demographics and population dynamics, make resilience important for ensuring a prosperous future for the community. By focusing on resilience, Mason City aims to better prepare for a future where environmental risks are unknown. Furthermore, demographic and population changes further the need for Mason City to also be economically and socially resilient. The goals outlined in this plan will help Mason City's residents transition through different life phases while continuing to be a part of the Mason City community.

Important Definitions:

Resiliency: "The ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover, from or more successfully adapt to actual or potential adverse events" (Disaster Resilience – National Academies)

Aging in Place: "The ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

MASON CITY PLANNING EFFORTS: EXISTING PLANS

WILLOW CREEK MASTER PLAN

The Willow Creek Master Plan (2004) identifies the Willow Creek area, just south-west of downtown, as a gateway into Mason City. The Plan focuses on developing the Willow Creek Area to compliment the downtown by proposing strategies for improvement. The Plan proposes a mix of land uses, residential conversions to office use, and a higher percentage of residential rental property in the Willow Creek Area. The Plan recommends focusing on programs and policies that assist with housing rehabilitation, ownership, and reinvestment in the neighborhoods.

MASON CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Mason City Comprehensive Plan (2006) was developed to guide future growth and development in the city for a 20-year period. It provided a legal basis for land use regulation, such as zoning and subdivision control, and utilized a vision to guide the goals for Mason City. During the community input process, Mason City residents identified their hopes for Mason City. These topics included:

- Need for a more business-friendly environment to attract a qualified work-force
- Importance of creating an aesthetically attractive community
- Social and economic significance of the downtown as a cultural core of the city
- Need for housing choices
- Need for park improvements
- Need for a variety of transportation enhancements for traffic flow and safety
- Preserving and enhancing the city's natural environment
- Incorporating mixed-use development principles to create walkable neighborhoods

Based on residents' hopes for future Mason City, the Plan Steering Committee identified seven general goals for Mason City:

- Economic development
- Attracting and retaining young professionals
- Revitalizing downtown
- Protecting against blight
- Continuing as a business center for North Central Iowa
- Improving the appearance of the city, including key corridors

DOWNTOWN PLAN

The Downtown Plan (2007) contains a comprehensive vision for downtown, and discusses programs that aim to improve the area. The Downtown Plan highlights unique characteristics that make downtown Mason City special and memorable. These characteristics are important to the development of downtown given citywide economic benefits that are a result of this uniqueness. The Plan outlines goals regarding traffic circulation and wayfinding, enhancement of downtown as a cultural district, and revitalization of the downtown core.



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CERRO GORDO COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Cerro Gordo County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2013) establishes a set of regulations to prepare participating communities for potential natural hazards. The plan pertains to 10 cities, Mason City, Clear Lake, Dougherty, Meservey, Plymouth, Rock Falls, Rockwell, Swaledale, Thornton, and Ventura. To reduce long-term hazard vulnerabilities, the plan aims to minimize impacts of hazards on human life and property, protect critical facilities, infrastructure and other community assets, improve community outreach and education regarding hazards, and strengthen communication between various agencies and the community

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2014) provides a background on the city's important recreational assets and bicycle transportation system, including the Willow Creek, Winnebago River, East Park, and Trolley trails. The Plan emphasizes using streets, drainage ways, parks and open spaces, abandoned rail lines, and 2008 flood buyout properties to expand its trail system. Goals of the plan include improving bicycle and pedestrian connections among key community destinations, improving access to city's pathway system, and capitalizing on its destination-based bicycle transportation system to attract new residents and investments in the city.

COMMUNITY INPUT AND PLANNING PROCESS

Community participation is the foundation of the recommendations made by this plan. The issues and ideas collected through this public participation process informed the goals and objectives established by this plan. Community members and stakeholders were engaged in the comprehensive planning process through participation at many community events, focus group meetings, and a public open house. A range of public input was successfully collected at these events and is described in the following sections.



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GREAT RIVER CITY EVENT

In September 2016, the comprehensive plan team (herein referred to as “the planning team” or “team”) began the community input process at a two-day event at The Great River City Festival and Friday Night Live in Mason City. This kick-off event introduced the Mason City planning projects to the public and explained the need for a comprehensive plan update. The purpose of participating in the event was to begin gathering community member’s opinions on the strengths and challenges facing Mason City through casual conversation. Team members used a conversation guide to direct discussions with the public and to gather information from community members (Figure 1). The team engaged a total of sixty-four Mason City residents and visitors from Clear Lake and neighboring cities.



Figure 1: Conversation Guide for the Great River City Event

Hi my name is _____

-Intro IISC -Work for Mason City, Gathering community information. -May I ask you a couple of questions?

1. Where do you **live**? Where do you **work**?

Mason City: Mason City Other

Downtown/Central
Northeast
Northwest
Southeast
Southwest

Clear Lake
Cerro Gordo County
Other -> If outside of county/state: How often do you visit Mason City

What brings you here?

2. What are the **best** things about living/visiting in Mason City now?

Schools Parks Health Raise family Culture/Arts Shopping Jobs Community Aging/Retirement Politics

3. What are the most **frustrating** things about living/visiting in Mason City?

Traffic Parking Small town Jobs Shopping Education/schools Poverty Identity Pork Plant Politics Crime

4. What are your **hopes** for Mason City in the future?

Economy/jobs:

Environment:

Culture:

Social Equity:

Transportation/Mobility:

5. How many years have you lived in Mason City? Do you **rent** or **own** your home?

Gender: M/F Employed/Retired/Student

Kids <18? Y/N

Age: 18-34 35-54 55-70 71+



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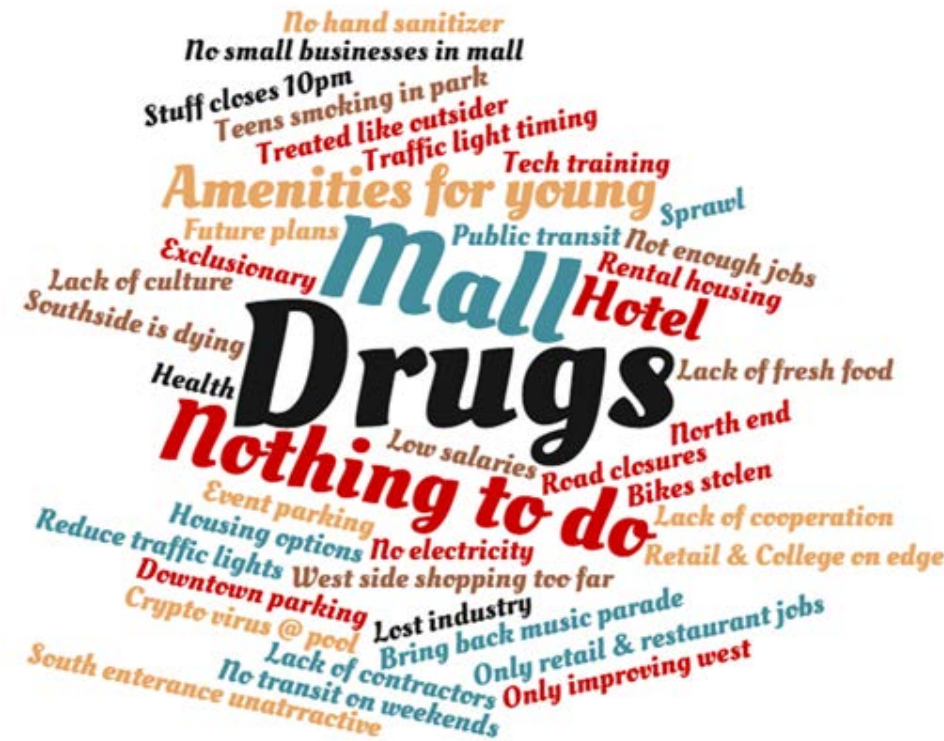
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Figure 2: Best Attributes of Mason City Word Cloud



Figure 3: Frustrating Attributes of Mason City Word Cloud



Feedback gathered from the community at the Great River City Event is represented in word clouds in Figure 2 and Figure 3. Word clouds have the capability of illustrating the most common ideas or topics said. These word clouds demonstrate what community members think are the best and most frustrating things about living in Mason City. The most common “best” things mentioned, include the downtown, trails, the city size, architecture, community amenities, and the social and friendly qualities of the community. The challenges of living in Mason City were also brought up in conversation. As noted by attendees of the event, frustrating things about living in Mason City include the Southbridge Mall, issues with drugs and crime, and a lack of amenities that attract a younger population. Other general issues were a declining population, and employment and political issues.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

To further engage Mason City residents, the planning team conducted eight focus group meetings in November 2016, each of which included 3 to 12 stakeholders. The purpose of the meetings was to gather input on the city's key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to provide direction for the comprehensive planning process. The planning team also gauged stakeholders' future vision for future Mason City which provided the basis for formulating the comprehensive plan goals. Each meeting included stakeholders who were selected to represent the interests of the wider community in the following eight focus groups.

- Government and Law Enforcement
- Business
- Faith and Minority groups
- Social Service Agencies
- Public Health
- Landlords/Neighborhood Associations and Service Clubs
- Education
- Arts and Culture

Stakeholders who participated in the focus groups were identified by reaching out to organizations or agencies that aligned with one of the eight focus groups. By emailing and calling these organizations, the planning team was able to identify multiple stakeholders who were willing to participate in the focus groups. Engaging participants from different organizations in each of these groups allowed the planning team to obtain a variety of input that was more likely to be representative of the entire community's interests.

The questions posed in the focus group meetings pertained to housing, land use, transportation, economic development and other social and resilience issues. Each group was asked about their general impressions about Mason City and some specific questions that were tailored to their area of interest or expertise. The more tailored questions were formulated by considering strengths and challenges identified at our previous outreach event, The Great River City Event and from the project partners. The input gathered at The Great River City Event was helpful in identifying the broad issues that Mason City faces. Broad identification of these issues was beneficial to having productive focus group meetings because a more in depth discussion was possible.

To analyze the information gathered during the focus groups, discussion topics were organized into identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Topics categorized as strengths related to what focus group attendees identified as good things about Mason City, while negative things were categorized as weaknesses. Opportunities were categorized by topics that have potential positive outcomes for the community and threats were topics that have potential negative consequences for Mason City. Once topics of discussion were categorized, the number of times the topic was mentioned was recorded. The breakdown of information and frequency of discussion are presented in Tables 1 through 4. A SWOT analysis was then developed incorporating all public outreach up to that point (Figure 4).



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Table 1: Focus Group Identified Strengths

Strengths	Frequency
Bike facilities and trails	11
Park space	10
Architecture	10
Schools	7
Downtown	7
Small town feel	7
Large retail hub	6
Mercy hospital and health system	5
Macnider Museum	5
NIACC	4
Safe	4
Family town	4
Art	4
YMCA	3
Lime Creek nature center	3
Music Man Square	3
City events	3
Library	2
Community theater	2
Diverse community	2
Breweries	2
Senior resources	2
Job opportunities	2
Outdoor sports	1
Railroad quiet zones	1
New street lights	1
Sidewalk improvements	1
Streetscape improvements downtown	1
Tornado shelters	1
early warning systems	1
Location	1
Affordable bus service	1
Transit	1
Community awareness of resilience	1
Blue zones project	1
Churches	1

Table 2: Focus Group Identified Weaknesses

Weaknesses	Frequency
Lack of housing diversity	11
Public transportation	7
North end	5
Mall	5
Substance abuse	3
Quality rental	3
Connectivity	3
Biker safety	2
Residents stuck in their ways	1
Crime	1
Infrastructure capacity	1
Lack of maintained park space	1
Crisis shelter closed	1
Unappealing city entrances	1

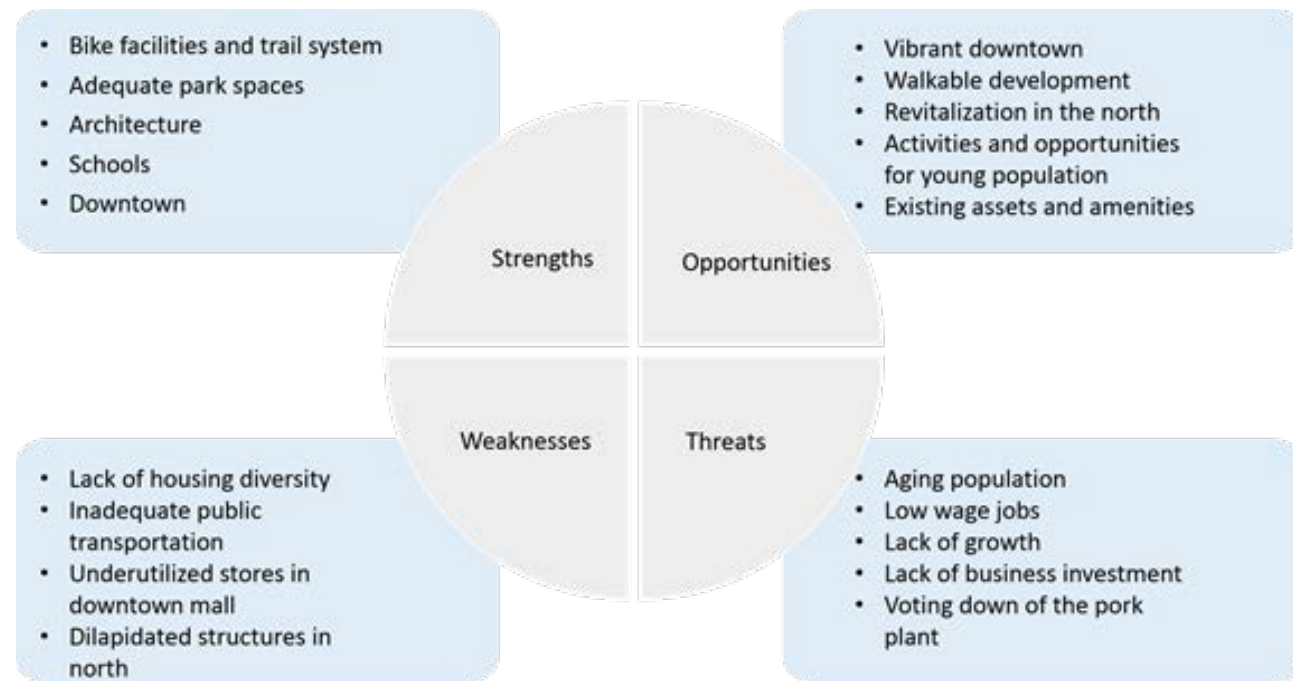
Table 3: Focus Group Identified Opportunities

Opportunities	Frequency
Downtown	12
Walkable development and downtown	8
More activities and opportunities for the young	5
Existing assets and amenities	5
North end	4
Art and culture	3
Partnerships and collaboration	3
Potential industrial development	3
Increasing diversity	2
Protection of historic architecture	2
Small lot development	1
Public education on hazards	1
Water treatment plant	1
Community's existing assets	1
Concurrent events downtown	1
Mini town centers	1
Redevelop south	1
Parks	1
Conference center downtown	1
Better connectivity	1
Affordable housing	1
Green building	1
Mixed use development	1
Empty commercial development	1
Mall	1
Possibility of future growth (infrastructure/land)	1
Family activities	1
Jacycees	1
Regional planning	1

Table 4: Focus Group Identified Threats

Threats	Frequency
Low wage jobs	4
Voting down of the pork plant	3
Aging population	3
Reduction in population	3
Lack of growth	3
Storm sewer capacity	2
Cost of public transit	2
Lack of amenities	2
Loss of young population	2
Negative changes in work ethic	2
Declining downtown	2
Food desert	2
Big blue	1
Skate park	1
Dilapidated housing	1
South end	1
Physical separation of NIACC and DT	1
Access to downtown	1
West side development	1
Lack of job opportunities	1
Loss of locally owned businesses	1
Buildings in the floodplain	1
Lack of industrial development	1

Figure 4: SWOT Analysis



ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC INPUT

Based on the input gathered from the entire community outreach process and analysis done by the planning team, common issues regarding Mason City’s development were identified. The sections of this comprehensive plan categorized these specific issues to ensure that all issues were fully addressed. These primary issues are flood vulnerability, storm water run-off, strict separation of land uses, sprawl, lack of accessible housing, housing diversity, lack of connectivity, disconnect between transportation and land use, lack of business investment throughout the city, and deteriorated development along the corridors and in neighborhoods (Figure 5). These primary concerns informed the subsequent planning process including the development of future land use scenarios and plan goals.

Figure 5: Identified Issues



DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO PLANNING PROCESS

Upon gaining a substantial level of input from the public outreach process and developing the preliminary goals and objectives, the team's next steps included considering alternate development scenarios that would guide the future land use and the goals and objectives of this comprehensive plan. Our first step in this process was to consider some of the possible ways that Mason City could develop in the future. This consideration resulted in four alternate development scenarios, each of which depict different options for future land development within Mason City. These scenarios are a current trend scenario, a district development scenario, a corridor development scenario, and a nodal development scenario. The specific land use pattern, characteristics, and implications of each scenario were carefully considered as a part of this process.

CURRENT TREND DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

The current trend scenario assumes that Mason City will continue to develop following its current policies and land use practices. Following the current trend scenario would mean maintaining the status quo in Mason City. Currently, the western boundary of Mason City is approximately 2.5 miles from Clear Lake along US-18. The proximity to Clear Lake has contributed to the "pull" of commercial development on the west side because of the demand that Clear Lake residents have for the retail amenities in Mason City (Figure 6). If this status quo were to be the model for future growth, development on the west side would continue to expand resulting in more sprawl and potentially, future annexation of land on the west side (Figure 6).



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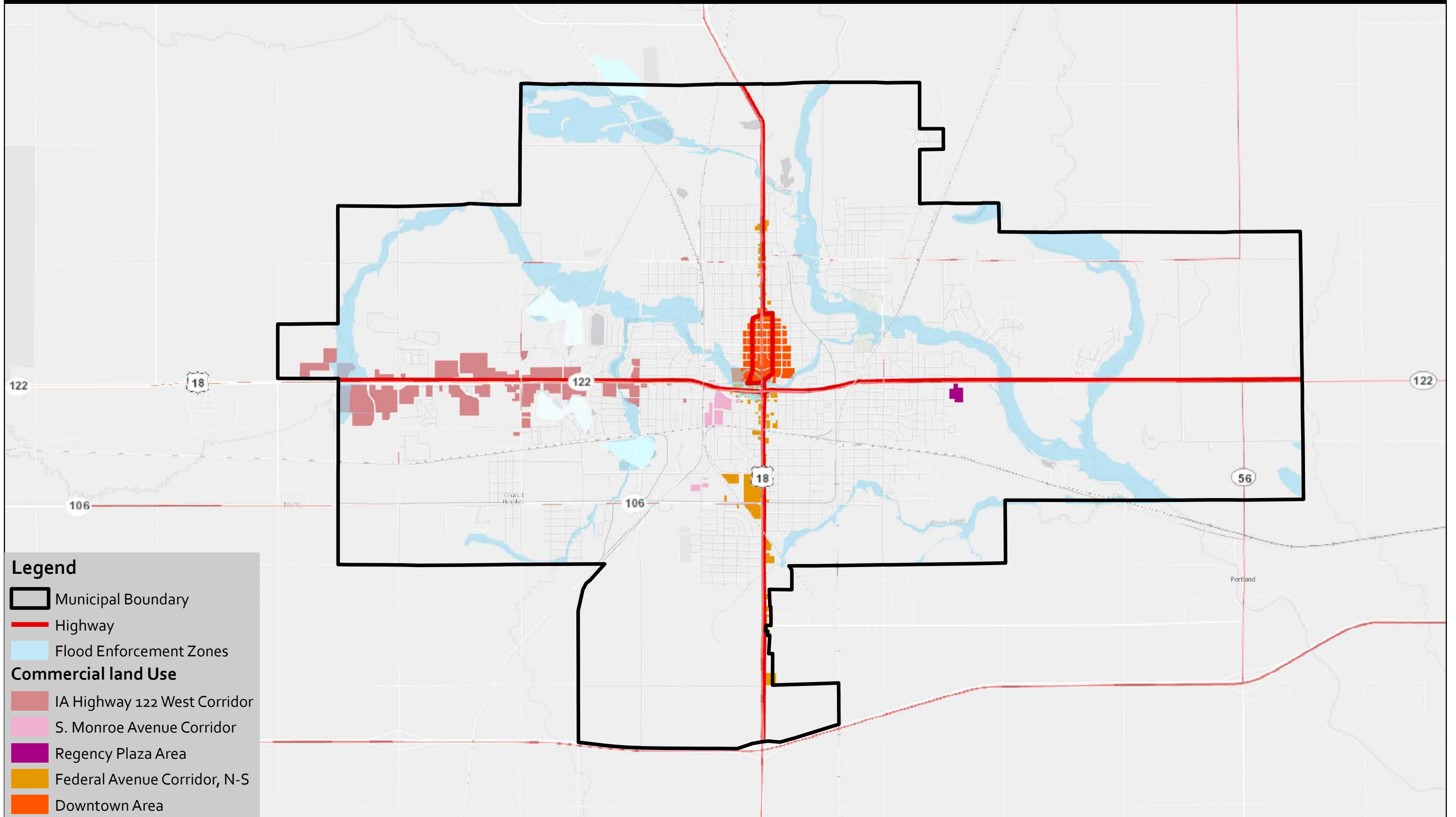
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Figure 6: Westward Commercial Development as of 2015

MAJOR COMMERCIAL AREAS

Sources: Esri Basemaps, City of Mason City

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Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Highway
- Flood Enforcement Zones
- Commercial land Use**
- IA Highway 122 West Corridor
- S. Monroe Avenue Corridor
- Regency Plaza Area
- Federal Avenue Corridor, N-S
- Downtown Area

DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

The District Development Scenario divides the community into geographic areas that are distinguishable by a particular activity or amenity found in the area. By distinguishing districts in Mason City, development can be planned for on a district by district basis. For instance, districts can be categorized as business or industrial, public institution, or a neighborhood district that capitalizes on a specific neighborhood attribute, such as a unique amenity or natural feature. By designating these districts, Mason City could plan for the future based on the “identity” of each district. This would ensure that future development was guided by residents or property owners’ perception and vision for their district.

CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

The corridor scenario is characterized by focusing future land use growth around and along major and minor corridors throughout the city. Development efforts of this scenario would be directed toward major transportation and utility corridors, as well as the downtown area. Use of this development scenario type has the potential to increase convenient access and visibility of highly used development, such as commercial establishments. This focus would also be applied to many types of corridors throughout the city in order to address future development in all neighborhoods and areas.

NODAL DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

The Nodal Development Scenario aims to incorporate neighborhood level development, such as mini town centers, near the crossroads of two thoroughfares. These neighborhood nodes focus on having more compact commercial and residential development to increase access to amenities throughout Mason City neighborhoods. This land use pattern promotes pedestrian accessibility and would require shorter trips for frequently used amenities. The key aspects that distinguish the Neighborhood Nodes Scenario from other development patterns is its emphasis on connectivity, accessibility, and neighborhood scale in relation to the existing and surrounding built environment.

CHOSEN DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

Upon consideration of the public input and the four possible development scenarios, the planning team implemented the Nodal Development Scenario as the template for future land use decisions. The public outreach process revealed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in Mason City that are addressed by employing a nodes concept for future development. Specifically, nodal development addresses the accessibility of amenities, walkability of neighborhoods, housing diversity, and opportunities for revitalization in certain areas of the city. These topics surfaced many times throughout our public outreach process.

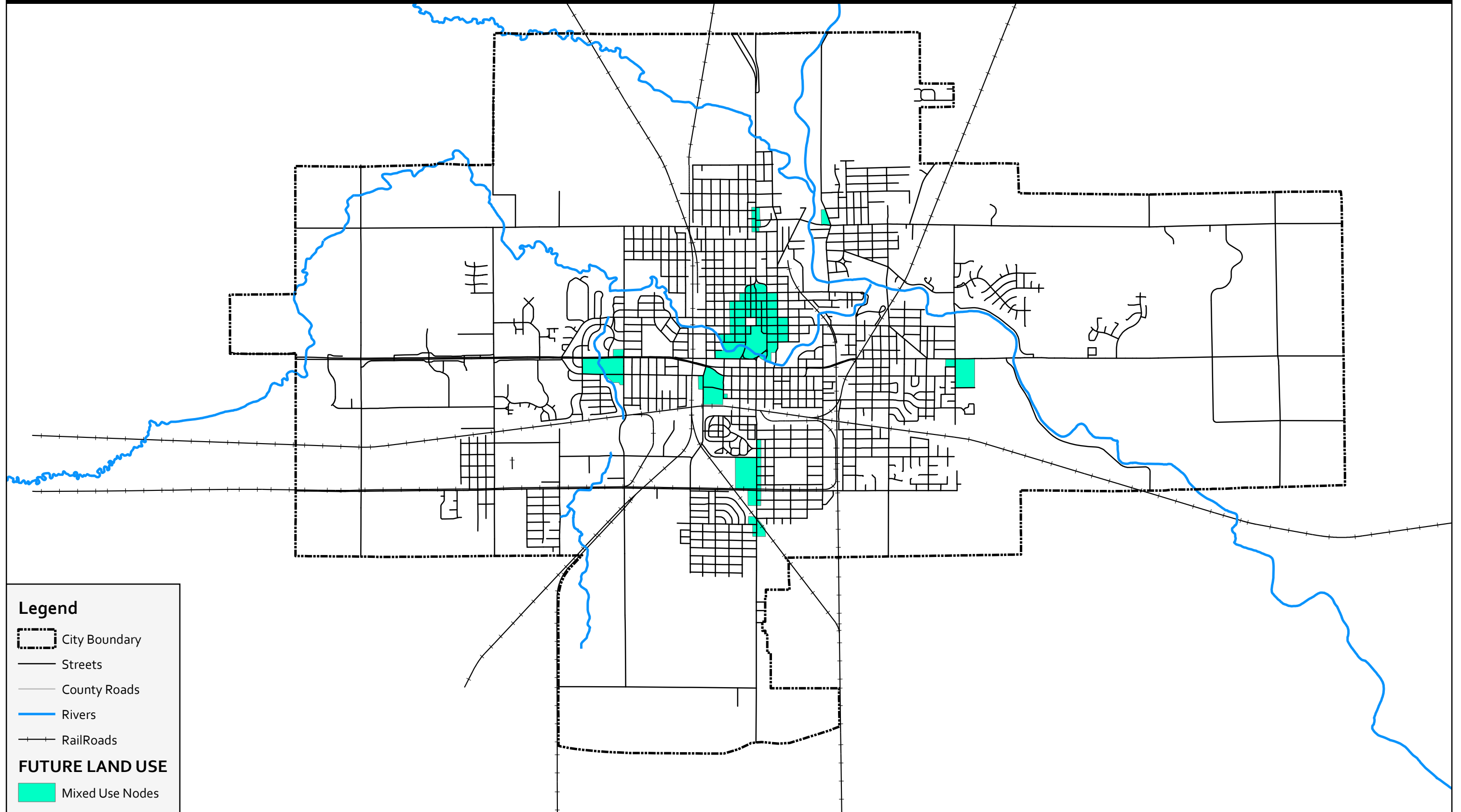
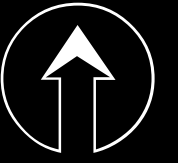
The Nodal Development Scenario addresses challenges such as limited connectivity and concentrated land uses by encouraging mix-use development in neighborhood nodes. The location of neighborhood nodes was determined by identifying deteriorated areas and underutilized land within the city. Establishing nodes in these areas encourages infill development and revitalization with more compact residential development in surrounding areas (Figure 7). Improved accessibility to neighborhood retail services, walkability, and an integration of land uses is also a priority for an age-friendly community. The development scenario promotes a ‘life cycle community’ that accommodates residents of all abilities and ages by incorporating improved connectivity and pedestrian access to centralized, neighborhood retail and community services.



Figure 7: Proposed Mixed Use Development Nodes

PROPOSED LAND USE CHANGES

Sources: City of Mason City



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

The planning team held a public open house on March 2, 2017, where approximately 70 people attended to give their input on proposed concepts for future land use. A press release and a distribution of flyers to residents on an email list, consisting of subscribers of Mason City's Blue Zones project, were used to advertise for the event. Stakeholders from the team's previously held focus groups were also invited to the open house. Flyers were displayed in City Hall and the Mason City Public Library, and the event was advertised on social media outlets. The meeting was meant to inform the public on the chosen development scenario and allow them to give feedback on proposed node placement. By having an open house, the planning team was able to verify and justify that the Nodal Development Scenario aligned with the resident's vision for future a Mason City.

A citywide map of the proposed nodal development was displayed and team members conversed with the public, providing explanation and rationale for the proposed nodes. Attendees were free to navigate between interactive stations where they were encouraged to make land use suggestions by drawing on maps or writing on comment cards. The purpose of comment cards was to allow members of the public to not just vote on the proposal made by our team but to also give suggestions for what they would like to see regarding the future growth of Mason City. This event provided a platform for open discussion between the public and team members that not only allowed for the presentation of the team's suggestions but also allowed the public to critique the proposals and voice their own ideas.

The results of the open house were overall successful. Attendees of the open house were receptive to the nodal development scenario and of future land use suggestions. Through this public open house, the planning team's proposals for a future Mason City were well received, given that all comment card feedback and input gathered from interactive maps addressed the team's ideas in a positive light. No comment cards or feedback indicated that any attendee was unhappy with the proposals. Furthermore, constructive feedback was gathered in this process via the comment cards. These cards provided community members the option to give written feedback and submit suggestions for future land use.

In summary, the entire public outreach process, from The Great River City Event to this open house, proved to be successful. Throughout this process, the planning team was able to engage a wide range of stakeholders and community members, and create a dialogue that brought to light issues in Mason City and cultivated conversation surrounding how residents wished to see these issues solved through long-term comprehensive planning.



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Part 2: Mason City Today



This section consists of the existing conditions analysis for each chapter of the comprehensive plan, as well as preliminary background data, useful for extrapolating future trends for the city.

MASON CITY BACKGROUND

This section of the plan uses demographic analysis to examine past and current population trends, and outlines several scenarios for future population change. The trends presented in this chapter provide a foundation for subsequent land use, transportation, housing, and economic development analyses, and is influential to the goals established by this plan.

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Mason City has experienced declining population over the last 40 years, after peaking in the 1960's (Figure 8). Several factors account for this trend, including natural changes in births and deaths, and migration patterns in and out of the city. State trends have also factored into changing population for Mason City, as statewide outmigration patterns (considerably more so during the recessions of the 1980s and 2008) have affected population in the city.

Figure 8: Mason City Population from 1900 to 2014

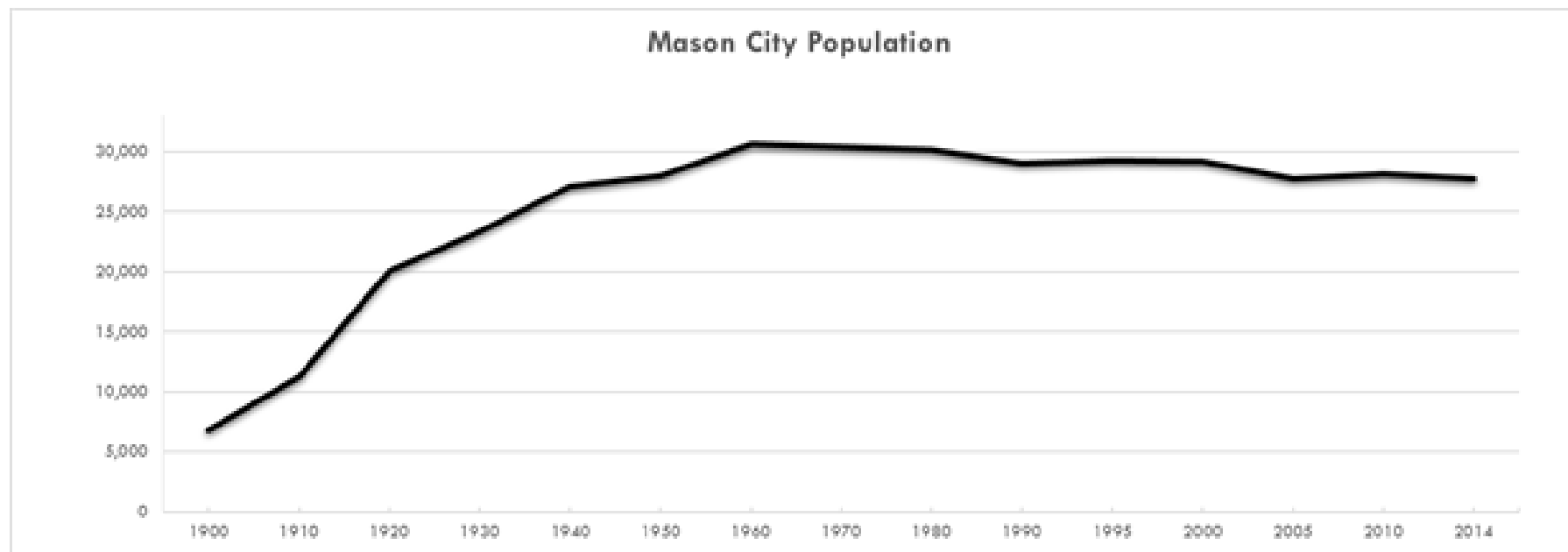


Table 5: Population Trends for Mason City

Year	Population	Percent Change From Previous Year
1900	6,746	-
1910	11,230	67%
1920	20,065	79%
1930	23,304	16%
1940	27,080	16%
1950	27,980	3%
1960	30,642	10%
1970	30,379	-0.9%
1980	30,144	-0.8%
1990	29,040	-4%
1995	29,219	0.6%
2000	29,172	0.5%
2005	27,771	-5%
2010	28,125	1%
2014	27,775	-1%

Mason City's population throughout the 20th century to 2014 (the most recent year for U.S. Census Bureau data) demonstrates past and present population conditions. After peaking at just over 30,000 residents during the 1960s, 27,775 people resided in Mason City in 2014 (Figure 8 and Table 5). Mason City boomed during the first half of the century due to industrial expansion, but declined in population towards the latter half of the century, a trend observed in many similarly-sized, Iowa cities (Table 6). Comparable cities were selected based on similar demographics, however, comparison to larger urban areas was important to put Mason City's trends in perspective.



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The outmigration from smaller towns and communities into the larger cities has occurred throughout Iowa in recent decades. Many communities within Iowa (except for Iowa City and Ames, both of which have large public universities) saw the same decrease in population during the 1970's and onward. However, Mason City lost a smaller proportion of its population during the 1980's than several comparable cities (Tables 6 and 7). Although the state's population increased by just over 6% during the 1960's and 1970's, most of this gain occurred in and around three of the state's major metropolitan areas: Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, and Davenport.

According to an Iowa State University study titled *Economic & Social Indicators for Iowa's Micropolitan Counties and Cities*, Mason City ranks low in population change among micropolitan cities in Iowa. From 2010-2014, Mason City's population experienced a 1% decrease. During this time, the entire state experienced a population growth of 2.4%, a smaller rate of growth than the national rate of 3.9%. As rural and non-metropolitan cities are predicted to experience further decline over the next decades, Mason City must be prepared to face these challenges.

Table 6: Percent Population Change for Mason City and Comparable Cities

	% Change 1940-1960	% Change 1960-1980	% Change 1980- 2000	% Change 2000- 2010	% Change 2010-2014
Mason City	13%	-2%	-3%	-4%	-1%
Ames	115%	70%	11%	13%	7%
Fort Dodge	24%	4%	-15%	1%	-2%
Iowa City	95%	51%	23%	7%	6%
Marshalltown	17%	20%	-3%	4%	2%
Ottumwa	7%	-19%	-9%	-0.4%	-0.1%
Waterloo	39%	6%	-10%	-1%	0.7%
Iowa	9%	6%	0.4%	3%	2%

Table 7: Population Change for Mason City and Comparable Cities

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2014
Mason City	30,642	30,379	30,144	29,040	29,172	28,125	27,775
Ames	27,003	39,505	45,775	47,198	50,731	57,343	61,276
Fort Dodge	28,399	31,263	29,423	25,894	25,136	25,323	24,846
Iowa City	33,443	46,850	50,508	59,735	62,220	66,758	70,597
Marshalltown	22,521	26,219	26,938	25,178	26,009	27,096	27,749
Ottumwa	33,871	29,610	27,381	24,488	24,998	24,889	24,847
Waterloo	71,755	75,533	75,985	66,467	68,747	67,893	68,392
Iowa	2,757,537	2,824,376	2,913,808	2,776,755	2,926,324	3,016,267	3,078,116

AGE TRENDS

In addition to population, an important consideration for the plan are age trends in Mason City, which show an increasingly older population. In 2014, 18% of the population was 65 years or over whereas 15% of the state population lies in the same age group according to 2010-2014 ACS survey data (Figures 9 and 10). The city's percentage of population over 85 years is one percentage point higher than the state's elderly population. The 45 to 54 age group held the highest percentage of Mason City's population. Children below the age of 14 years was also 3 percentage points lower than that of the state. The median age in the city is 42 years, which is higher than Iowa's median age of 38 years, according to 2010-2014 ACS survey data.

The old-age dependency ratio in Mason City is 30, which is higher than Iowa's old-age dependency ratio of 25. However, child-age dependency ratio of Mason City is 35, which is lower than Iowa's ratio of 39. A higher old-age ratio indicates that the number of elderly people as a share of working age population is greater. These trends indicate that consideration of an aging population is necessary in future planning.

Figure 9: Age composition, Mason City, Iowa (2010-2014)

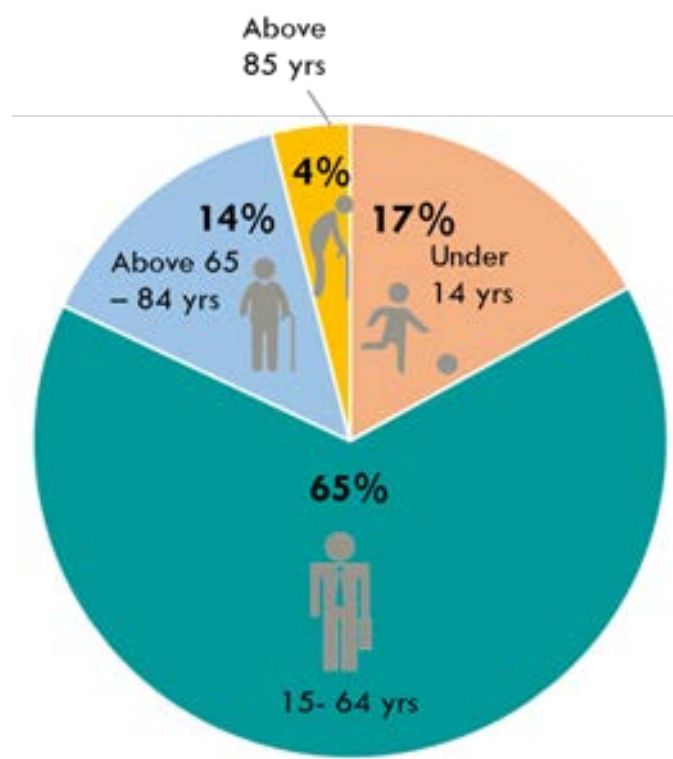
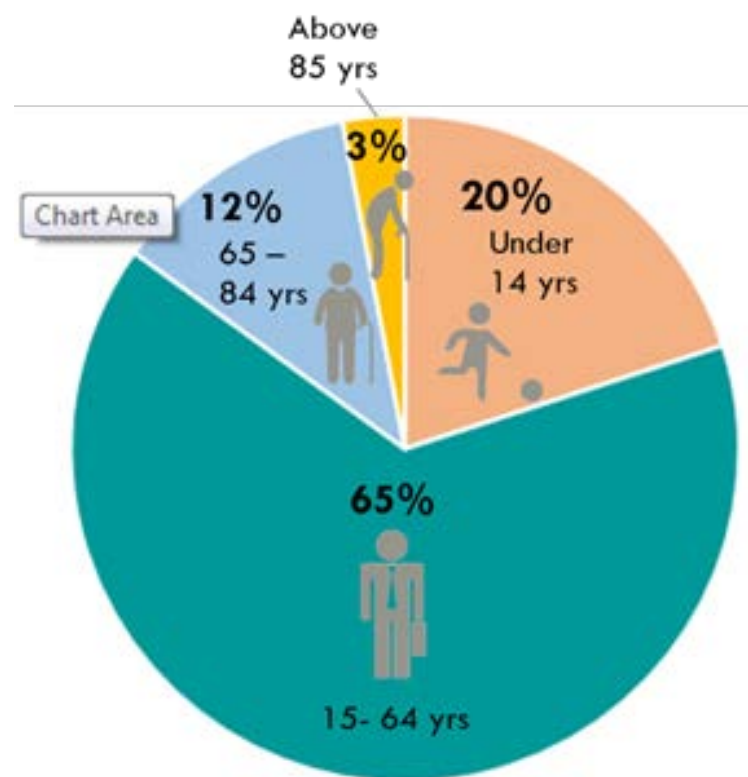


Figure 10: Age composition, Iowa (2010 - 2014)



Important Definitions:

Dependency Ratio: The dependency ratio relates the number of children (0-14 years old) and older persons (65 years or over) to the working-age population (15-64 years old) (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs).

The term 'older' refers to population 65 years or over

'Elderly' refers to population above the age of 85 years who might require personal assistance with everyday activities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

Old-age dependency ratio: A ratio of population over 65 years by population between 16-64 years (Wisconsin Department of Health Services, 2015).

Child-age dependency ratio: A ratio derived by dividing the population under 18 years by population aged between 18-64 years (American Community Survey, n.d.).

Based on a breakdown by age cohort, the largest subset of the population lies between the ages of 45 and 54 years for both males and females (Figures 11 and 12). A significant trend in this distribution is the high proportion of the population that is middle aged, between 40 and 65 years old. These trends indicate that as this cohort ages, Mason City will have an increasingly older population. Other trends demonstrated by the population pyramid, is the small proportion of the population in the under 5 and 5 to 9 age cohorts. A small population of children is a concerning trend because it indicates slow growth for future population. Furthermore, there is a large decrease in population after the 20 to 24 age cohort. This decrease demonstrates a small young-adult cohort, and may be a result of the population moving for educational reasons. The continued low population after the 20 to 24 cohort indicates that young-adults are not returning to Mason City after they complete their higher education.

Important Definition:
Population pyramid: A graphical demonstration of the age and sex of a population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016).

Figure 11: Population Pyramid for Mason City in 2007

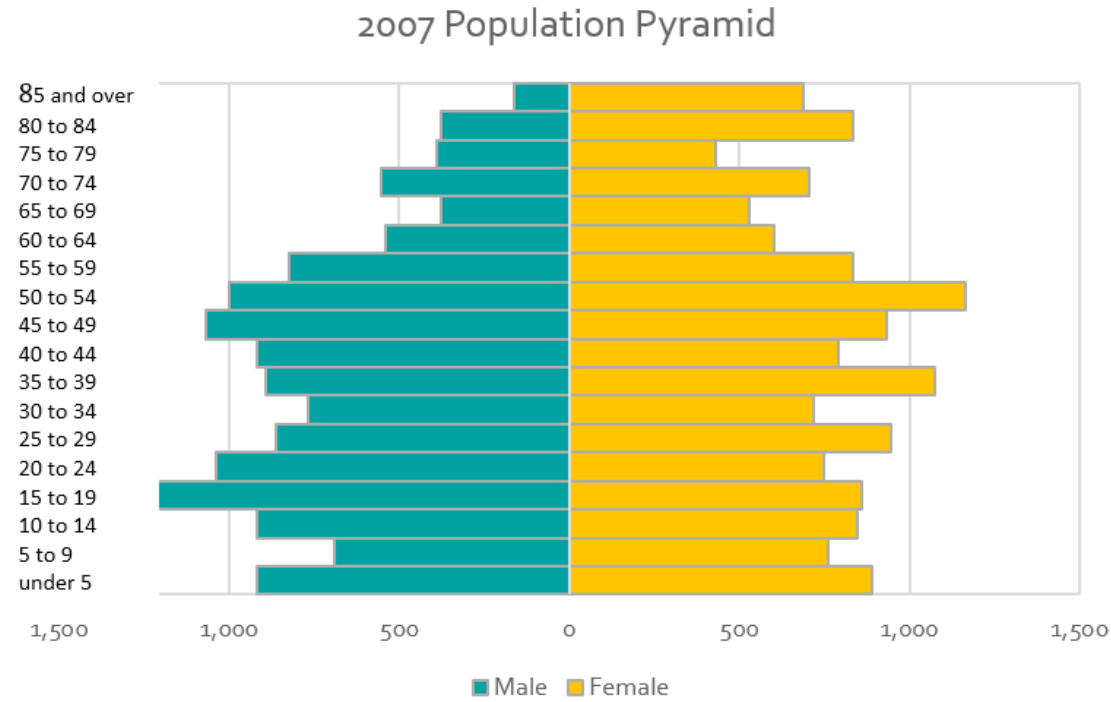
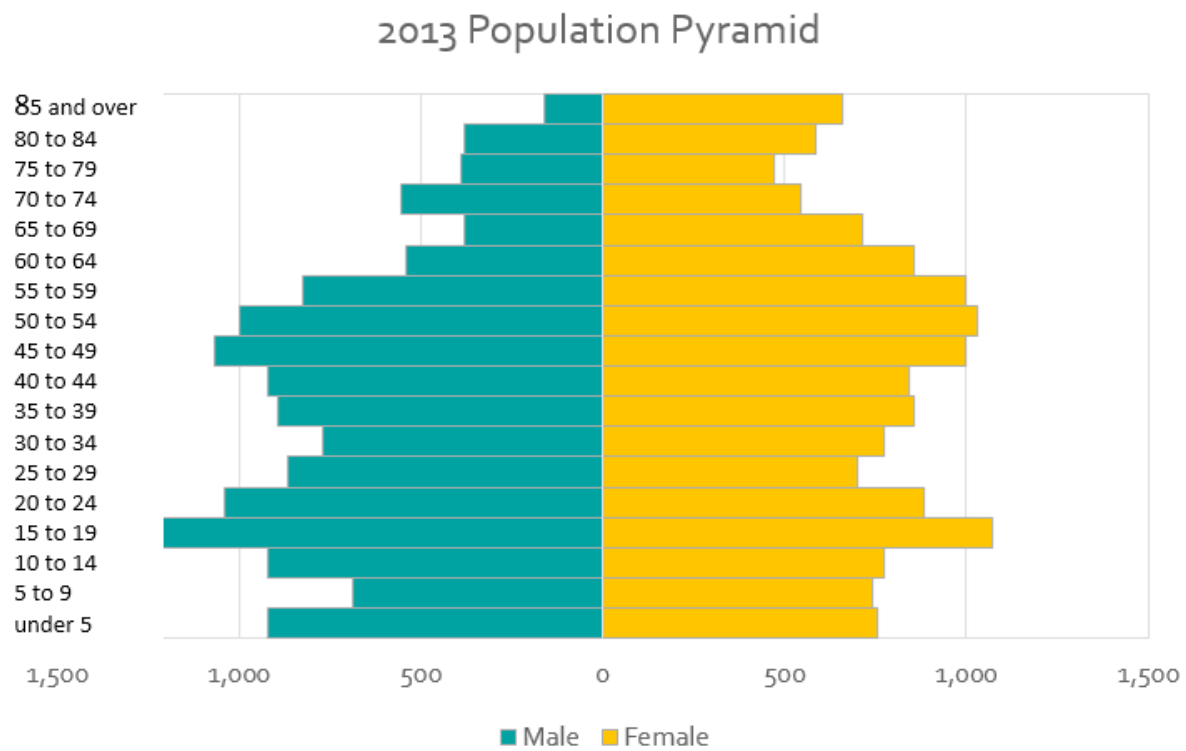
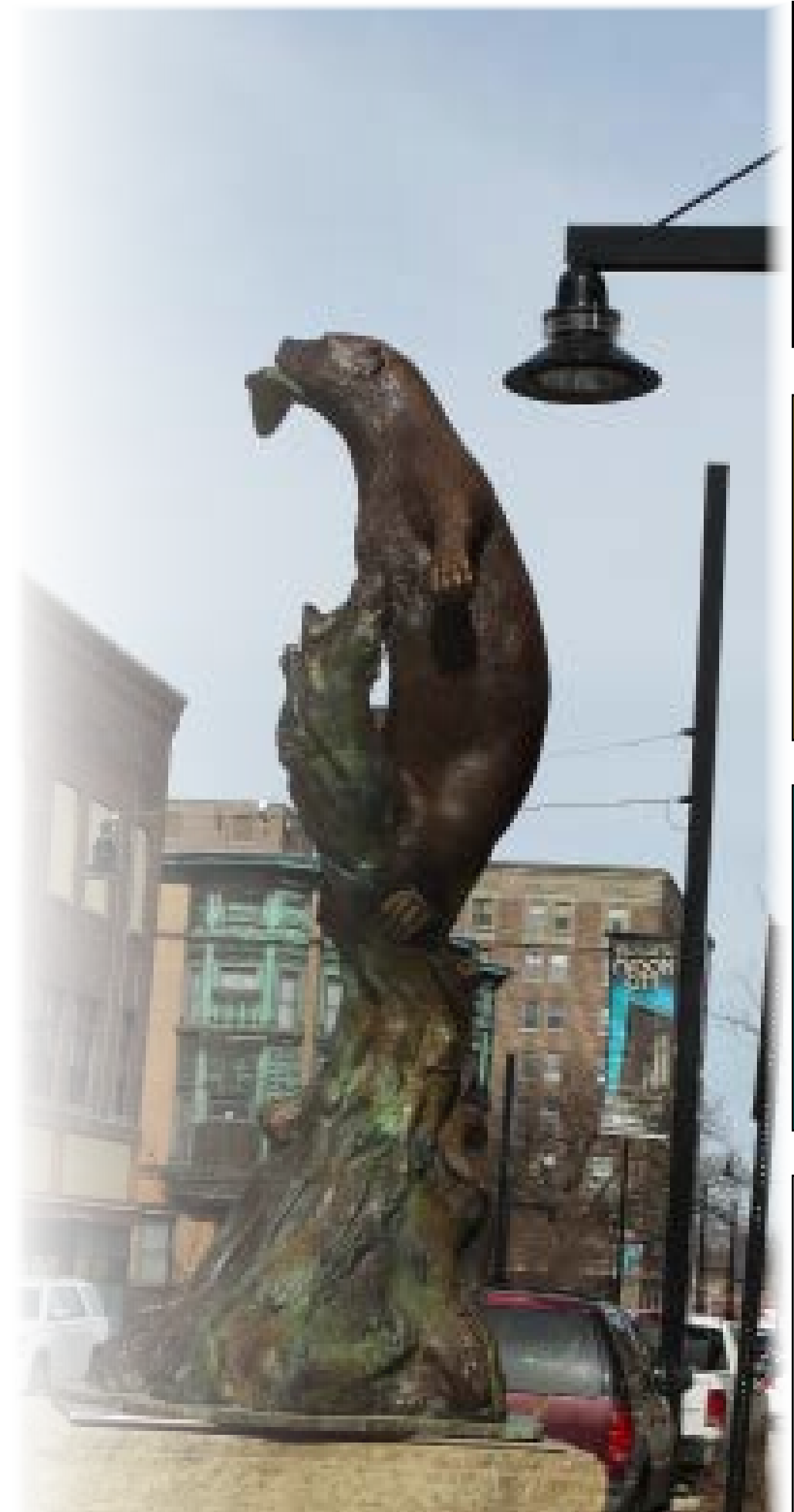


Figure 12: Population Pyramid for Mason City in 2013



The spatial distribution of the older population in Mason City shows a higher percentage live outside the downtown area and generally the west side. Mobility and transportation trends demonstrate that 14% of Mason City's senior households do not have access to a vehicle and live alone according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Data from the 2014 U.S. Census Bureau show that at least 41% of households have at least one person over 65 years of age. These households are primarily in the west and south-west areas of the city. This trend indicates that a large percentage of the aging population in Mason City lives away from downtown and/or have limited mobility (Figure 13). The older and aging population in Mason City demonstrates the need to better accommodate this population through land-use and transportation planning, especially for residents who are elderly and have reduced physical mobility.



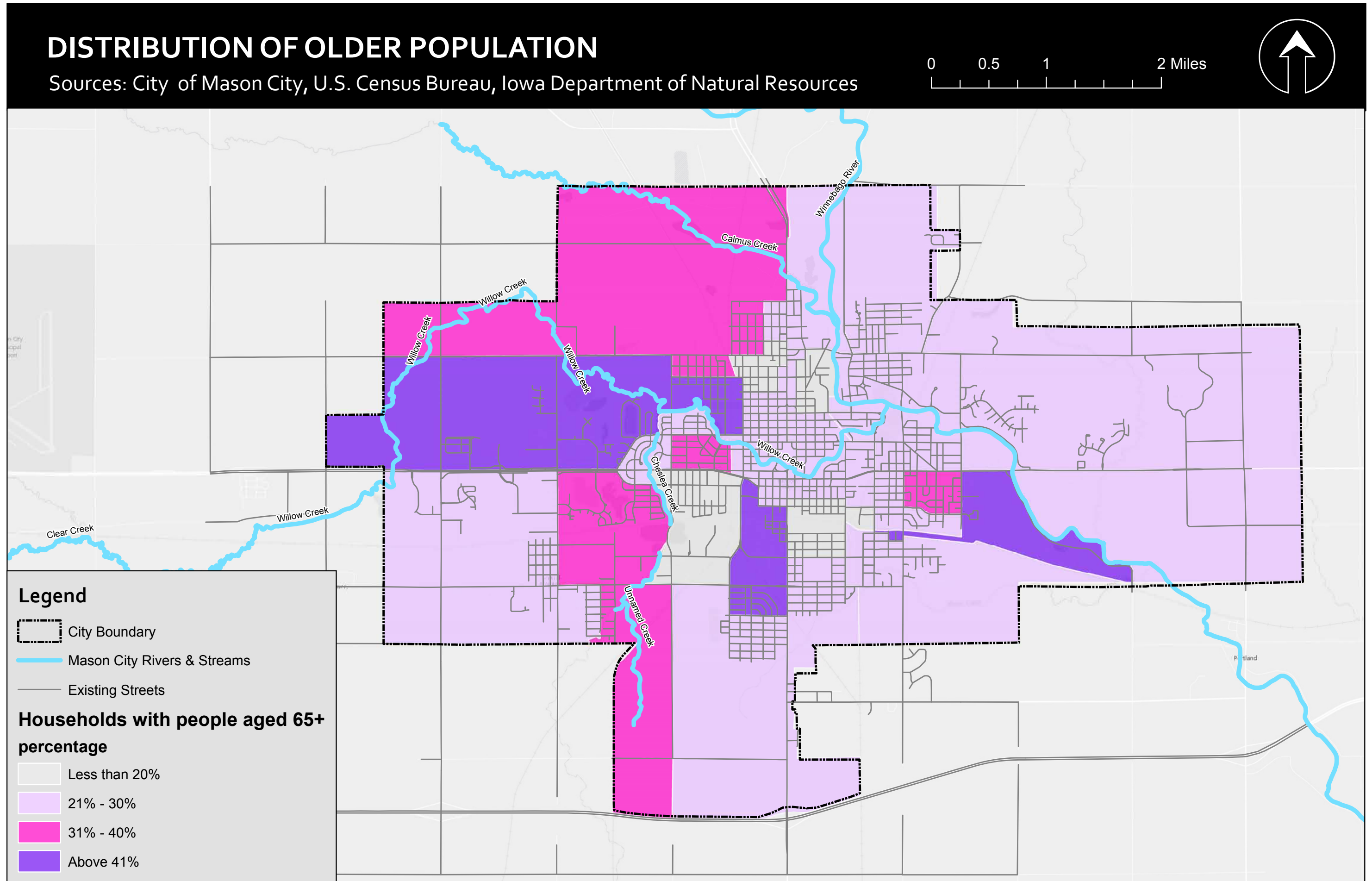
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Figure 13: Proportion of households with one or more people over the age of 65 (2014 U.S. Census Bureau)



POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Projecting the future size and makeup of Mason City’s population is beneficial for planning for future growth and development. Future population for the city is forecast through several methods. Alternative scenarios depicting substantial growth, continued population decline, and population stabilization are considered in projecting future populations. Table 8 demonstrates the different scenarios for future population changes.

Table 8: Population Projections for Mason City, Iowa

	2010 (From Census)	2015 (From Census)	2020 (Estimate)	2025 (Estimate)	2030 (Estimate)
0.75% Annual Growth	28,125	27,366	28,408	29,489	30,612
0.25% Annual Growth	28,125	27,366	27,710	28,058	28,410
Population Stabilization	28,125	27,366	27,366	27,366	27,366
0.25% Annual Decline	28,125	27,366	27,026	26,689	26,358
0.75% Annual Decline	28,125	27,366	26,355	25,381	24,444

Mason City has seen population decrease over the last decade, especially in contrast with the State of Iowa, which has experienced growth. From 2013 to 2014, Iowa as a state experienced population growth of 0.5%, but lagged behind the national average of 0.7%. While Iowa has maintained a steady increase in population through the last decade, it has typically been less than national growth. Assuming that Mason City grows at a conservative annual growth rate of 0.25%, the city will reach 28,410 residents by 2030. Mason City could also experience growth close to the nation’s average at 0.75% leading to 30,612 residents by 2030. An annual decline of 0.75% would lead to 24,444 residents within the city by 2030, and an annual decrease of 0.25% would lead to 26,358 residents by 2030 (Table 8). Based on previous analyses and population projections, population stabilization or decline over the next ten years is the most likely outcome for the city.



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RACE AND ETHNICITY CHARACTERISTICS

The majority of Mason City's population is predominantly white with a small share of other races (Figure 14). Hispanic or Latino residents comprise 5% of the city's population. Similarly, 6% of the statewide population is Hispanic or Latino, according to the Iowa Data Center and U.S. Census Bureau. Since 2010, Mason City's population has experienced a small in-migration of Asian residents (Table 9).

Figure 14: Population Pyramid for Mason City in 2013

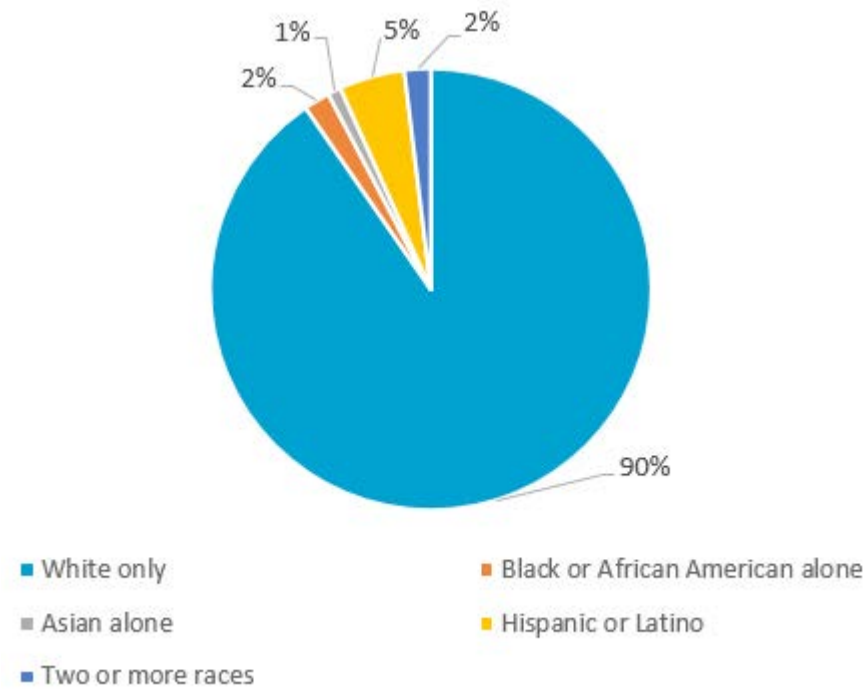


Table 9: Racial Composition comparison, Mason City and Iowa

Race	2010		2014	
	Mason City	Iowa	Mason City	Iowa
White only	94%	93%	94%	91%
Black or African American alone	2%	4%	2%	3%
Asian alone	1%	2%	1%	2%
Hispanic or Latino	5%	5%	5%	6%
Two or more races	2%	2%	2%	2%

LAND USE AND GROWTH

INTRODUCTION

Land use policy is the focus of comprehensive planning, as it guides the growth of a city to ensure efficient and orderly land development. By regulating land use, cities have a direct effect on land management and preservation of valuable community assets, such as parks and open spaces, historic districts, and downtown areas. Land use decisions also have influence on transportation, housing, and community development. Therefore, it is important to consider such aspects when establishing land use policy.

Land use plays an important role in adapting and preparing for the possibility of future changes, and therefore makes resilience an essential part of future land use decisions. Considering resilience in land use involves limiting development in high-risk areas and focusing development in areas where environmental, social, and economic benefits are possible. Additionally, proper land use planning can reduce population vulnerability by facilitating improved access to goods, services, and community resources. This future land use plan will use Smart Planning Principles, specifically compact development, to promote resilient future development. This section provides analysis of existing land use characteristics that set the basis for future land use policy.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Land uses in Mason City consist of undeveloped and developed lands that fall into various uses. Currently, 54% of land within municipal boundaries is undeveloped, while 46% is developed (Figure 15). Much of the undeveloped areas are agricultural land located at the periphery of the city (Figure 17), while developed land is broken down into several categories with the largest being residential, transportation, and open spaces (Figure 16). Residential areas consist of primarily single-family housing and some multi-family housing. Transportation land uses include roads and parking lots, as well as sidewalks and other transportation uses. Parks are the third largest land use and provide open spaces and recreation opportunities for residents.

Figure 15: Undeveloped Land Breakdown

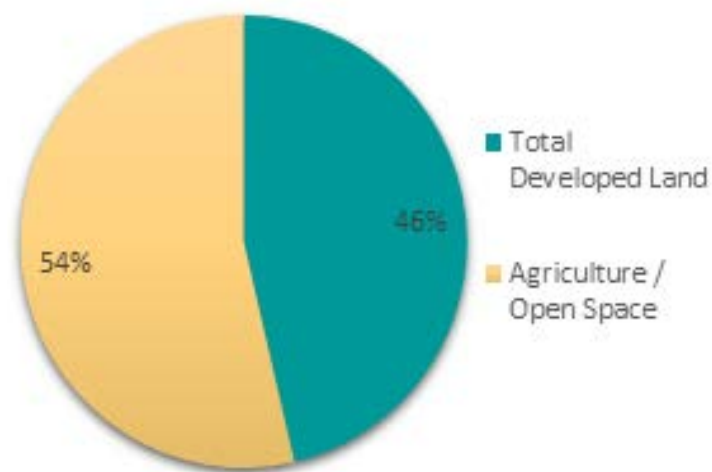
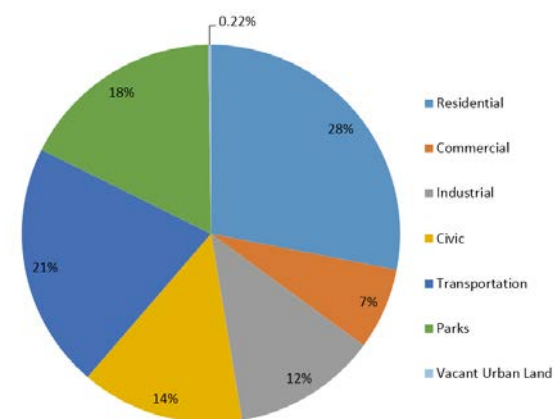


Figure 16: Developed Land Use Breakdown



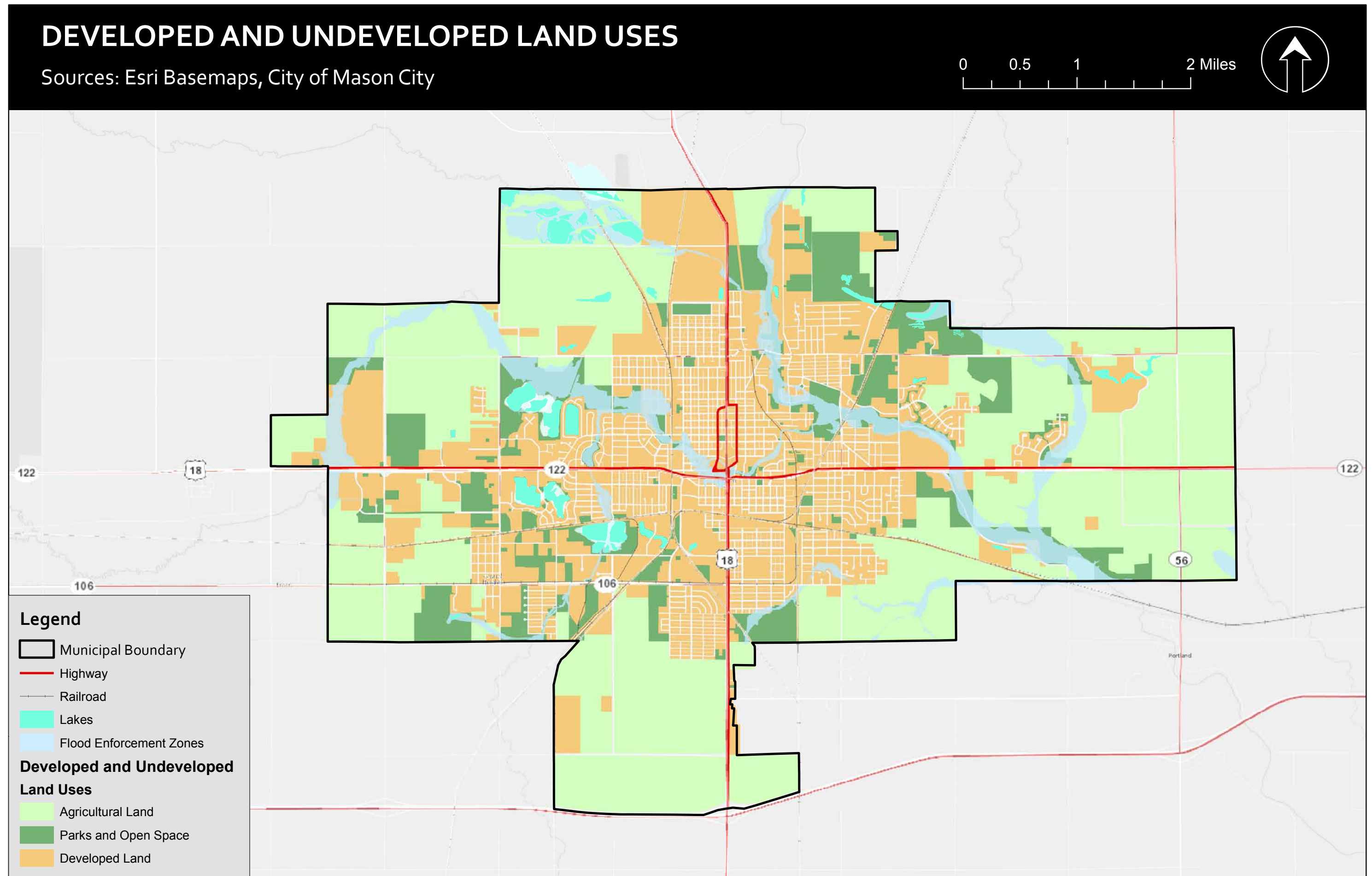
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Figure 17: Developed and Undeveloped Land Uses in Mason City



EXISTING LAND USE MAP

Figure 18 demonstrates the existing land use map created in 2006 as part of the Mason City Comprehensive Plan. This map specifically identifies land uses throughout Mason City at the time of plan formulation. The 2006 plan was important as a reference point for discussing Mason City's current land uses. This existing land use map contains 21 land use categories, many of which were condensed from the 2006 plan or the following discussion of existing land uses.



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Figure 18: 2006 Analysis of Land Use

EXISTING LAND USE MAP from 2006

Sources: Esri Basemaps, City of Mason City data files.

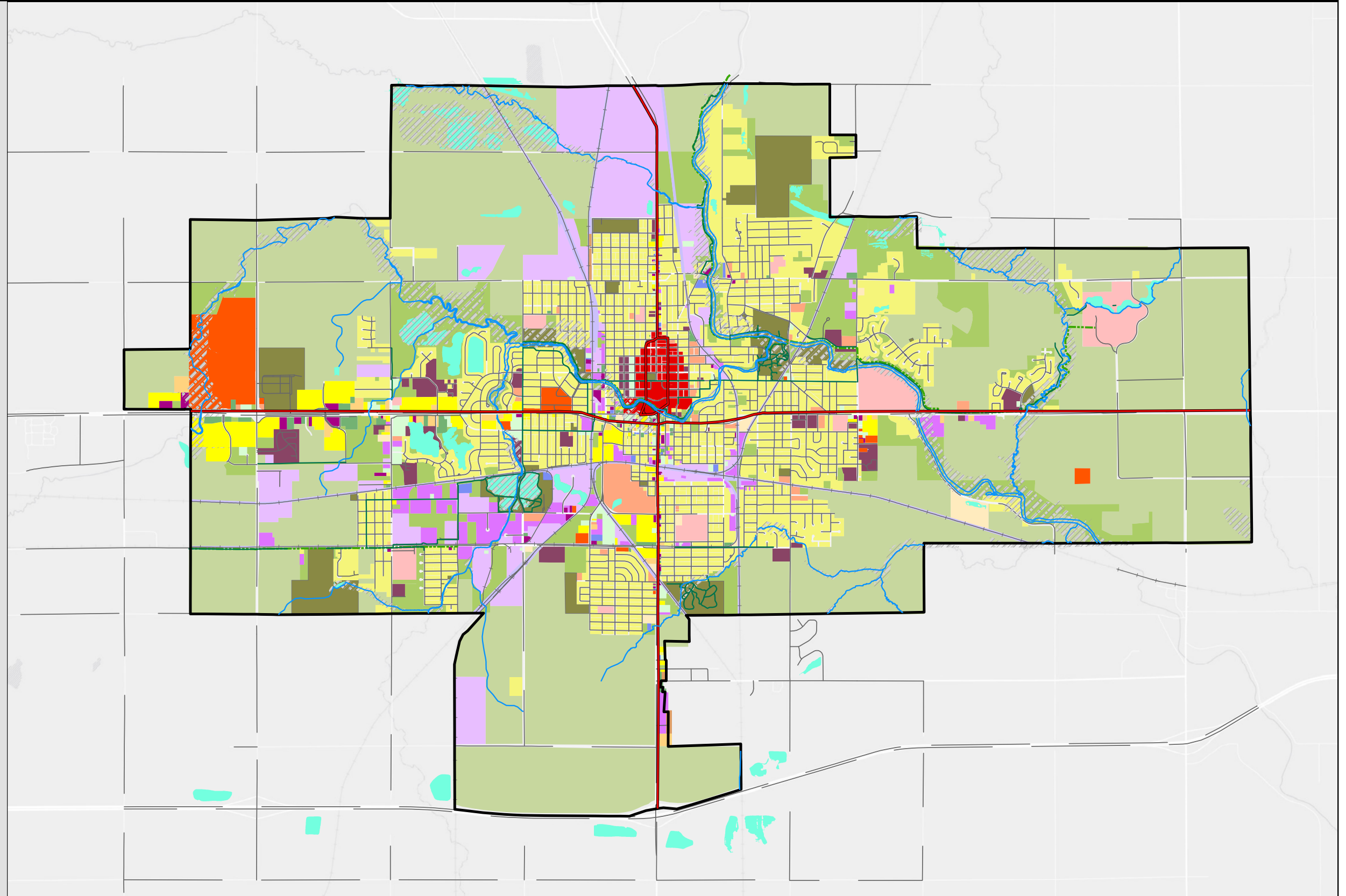


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- Municipal Boundary
- Highway
- Railroad
- Existing Streets
- Existing Trails
- River/ Stream
- Lakes
- Flood Enforcement Zones

Existing Land Use

- Agricultural
- Open Space
- Park / Recreational
- Commercial/ Recreational
- Mixed Use (Downtown)
- Hospital and Clinics
- Civic Use
- Public / Utilities
- Schools
- Services
- Financial/ Office
- Automotive
- General Industrial
- Light Industrial
- Manufacturing
- Mobile Home
- Eatings and Entertainments
- Retails
- Low Density Residential
- Vacant Buildings



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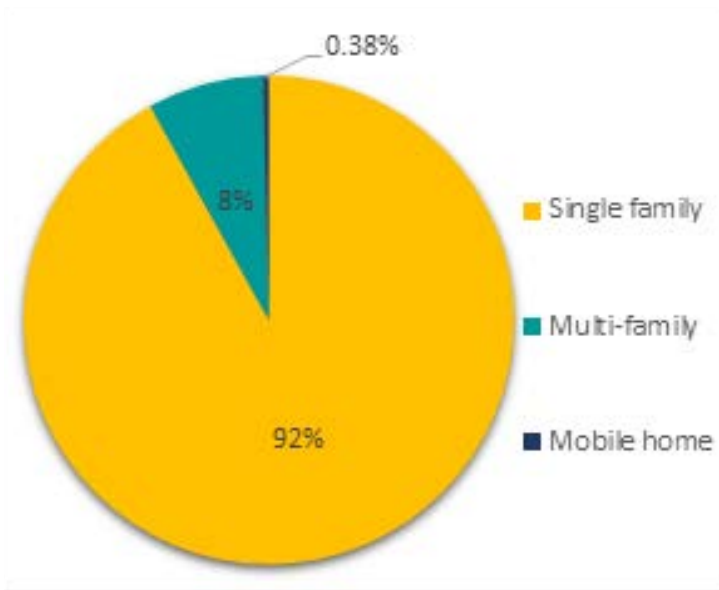
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APPENDIX

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Residential is the most predominant land use category, comprising 28% of developed land. Residential land use is comprised of 92% single-family homes, 8% multi-family dwellings, and 0.38% mobile homes (Figure 19 and 20). Mason City's land is also divided into five historic districts that cover around 1% of the total land use. 236 single family homes are within a Mason City historic district, most of which are in the Forest Park Historic District. Many single-family residential areas also lie within flood enforcement zones, making these homes susceptible to property damage, discussed more in the Environmental Resilience chapter.

Figure 19: Residential Land Use Breakdown



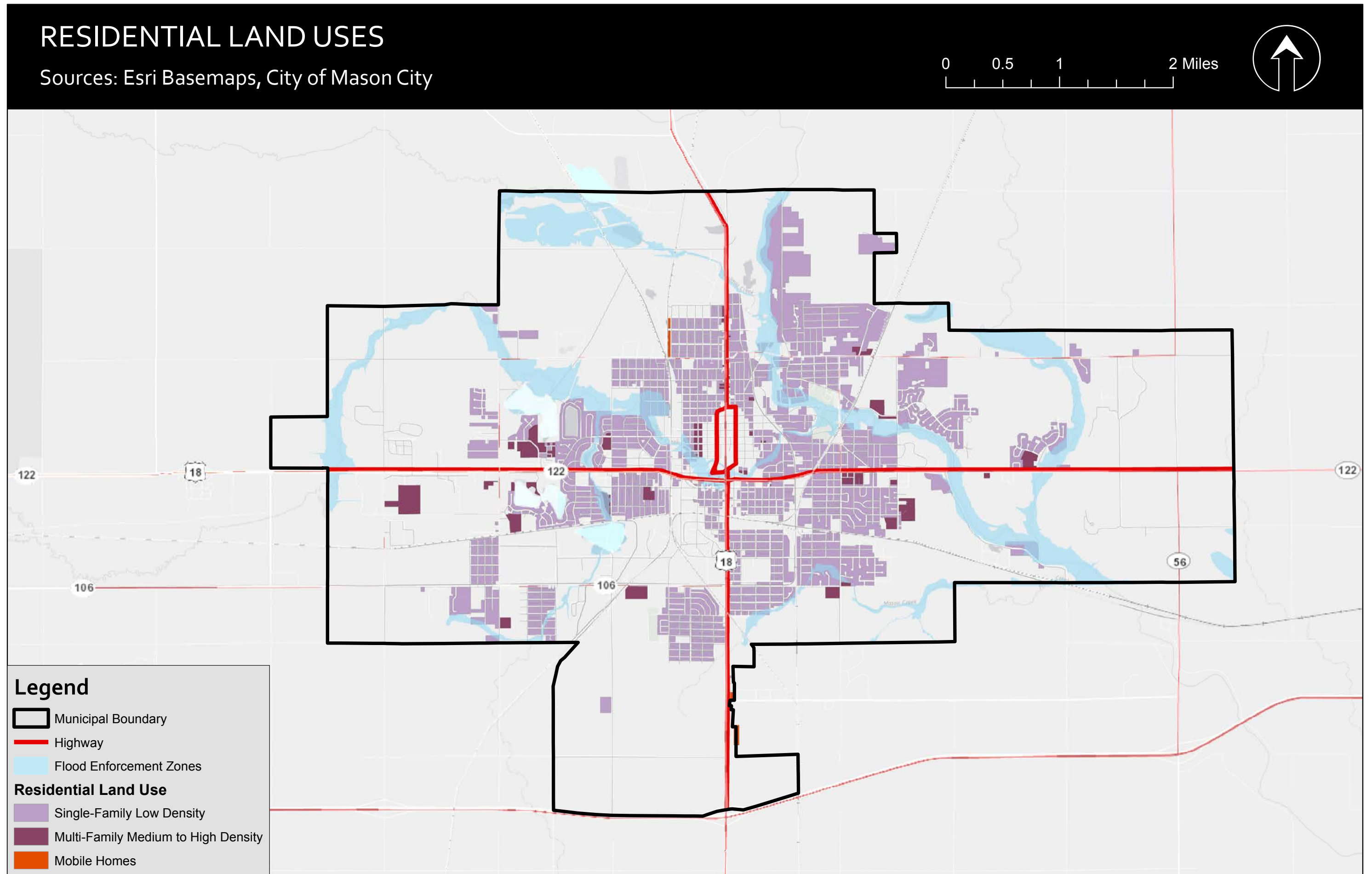
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Figure 20: Residential Land Use



COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Commercial areas of Mason City include uses such as retail, restaurants, and offices, and account for 7% of developed land uses. The major commercial areas in the city exist along Highway 122/4th Street SW on the west side of the city, and along north and south Federal Avenue. Other commercial areas are along South Monroe Avenue, and at Regency Plaza (Figure 21). Large-scale commercial and retail development is located primarily on the west side of town and generates a strong regional draw. This draw encourages more development of commercial, retail, and residential uses on the west side of the city, and contributes to sprawl and leapfrog development.

Downtown Mason City is another major commercial area that contains many community assets and a mix of uses, such as commercial, residential, and civic. A highly mixed-use downtown allows for diverse levels and types of activity, and allows for the integration of housing and retail or light commercial uses, thus increasing accessibility.



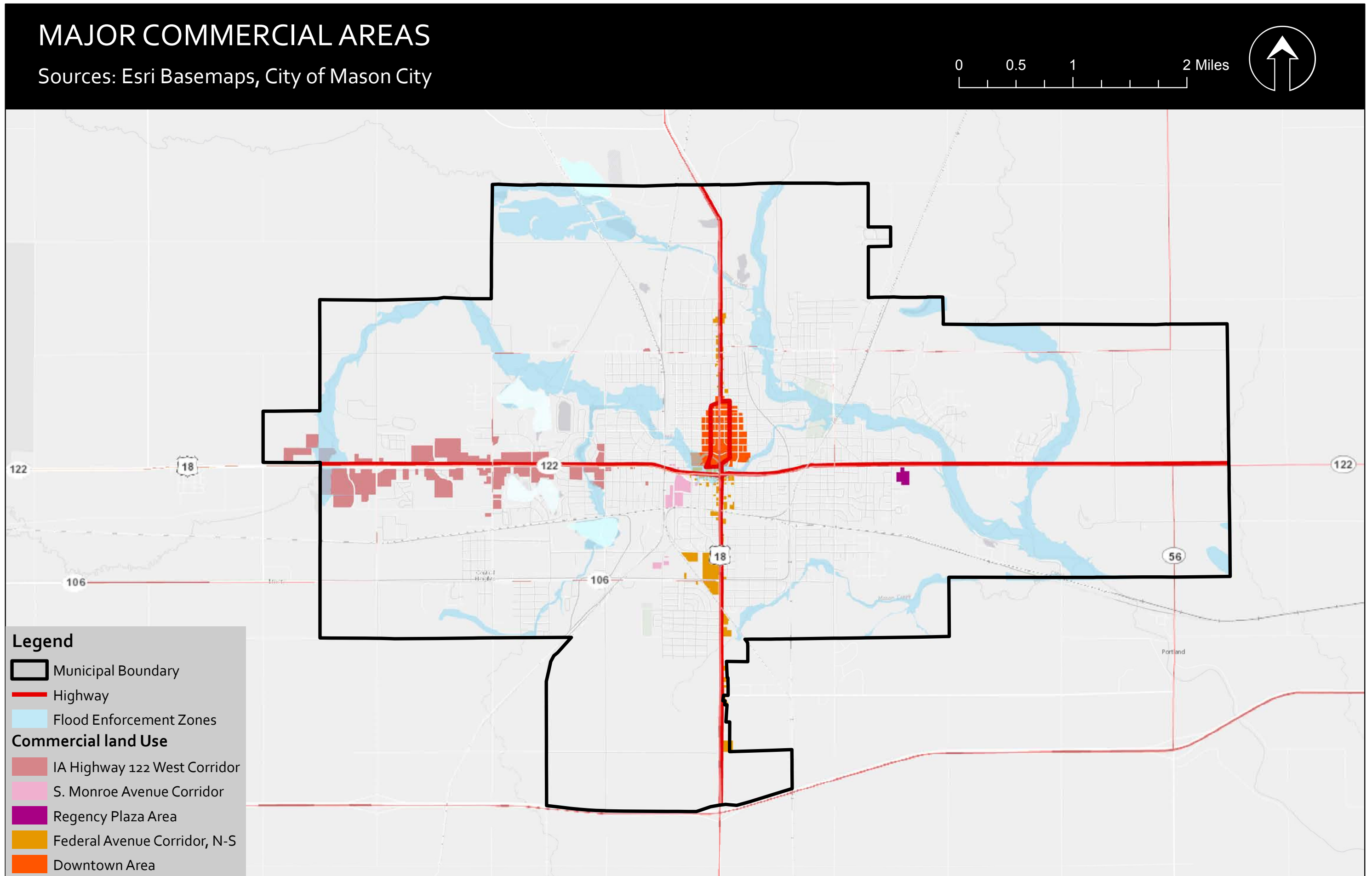
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Figure 21: Commercial Areas



CIVIC AND PUBLIC LAND USES

Civic and public uses are important in the development of land as they serve not only the purpose for what they are built but also act as a place for community gathering and create an identity for the neighborhood. Figure 22 shows the breakdown of the civic and public land uses. The neighborhood schools in any city are important part of a community that contributes to the social connections and quality of life. Every new school has a potential to draw a new residential development and every existing schools has a tendency to influence the decision of residents in owning a land or deciding where to live. Thus, such uses not only strengthen the neighborhood but also help to build the surrounding land value. Figure 23 identifies areas of the city that contain major civic and public land uses.

Figure 22: Civic and Public Land Use breakdown

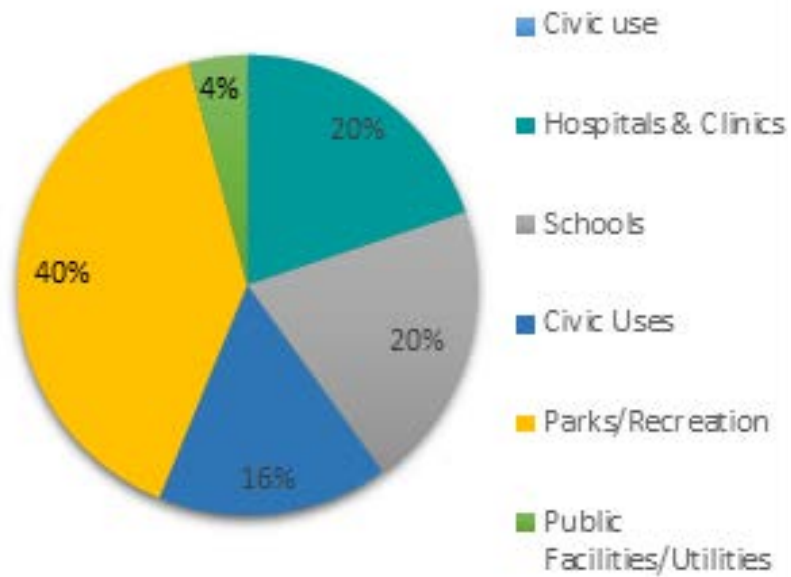
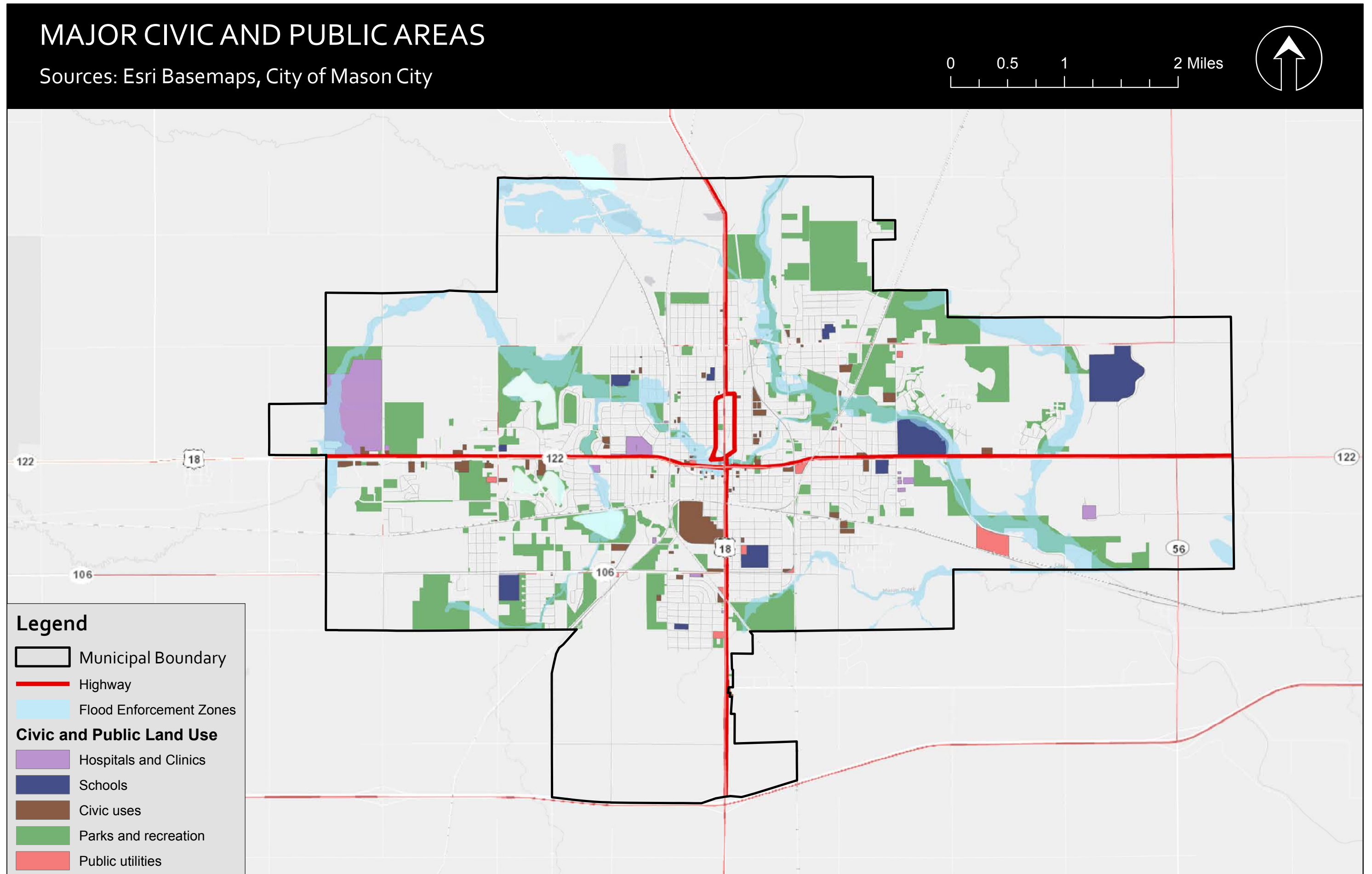
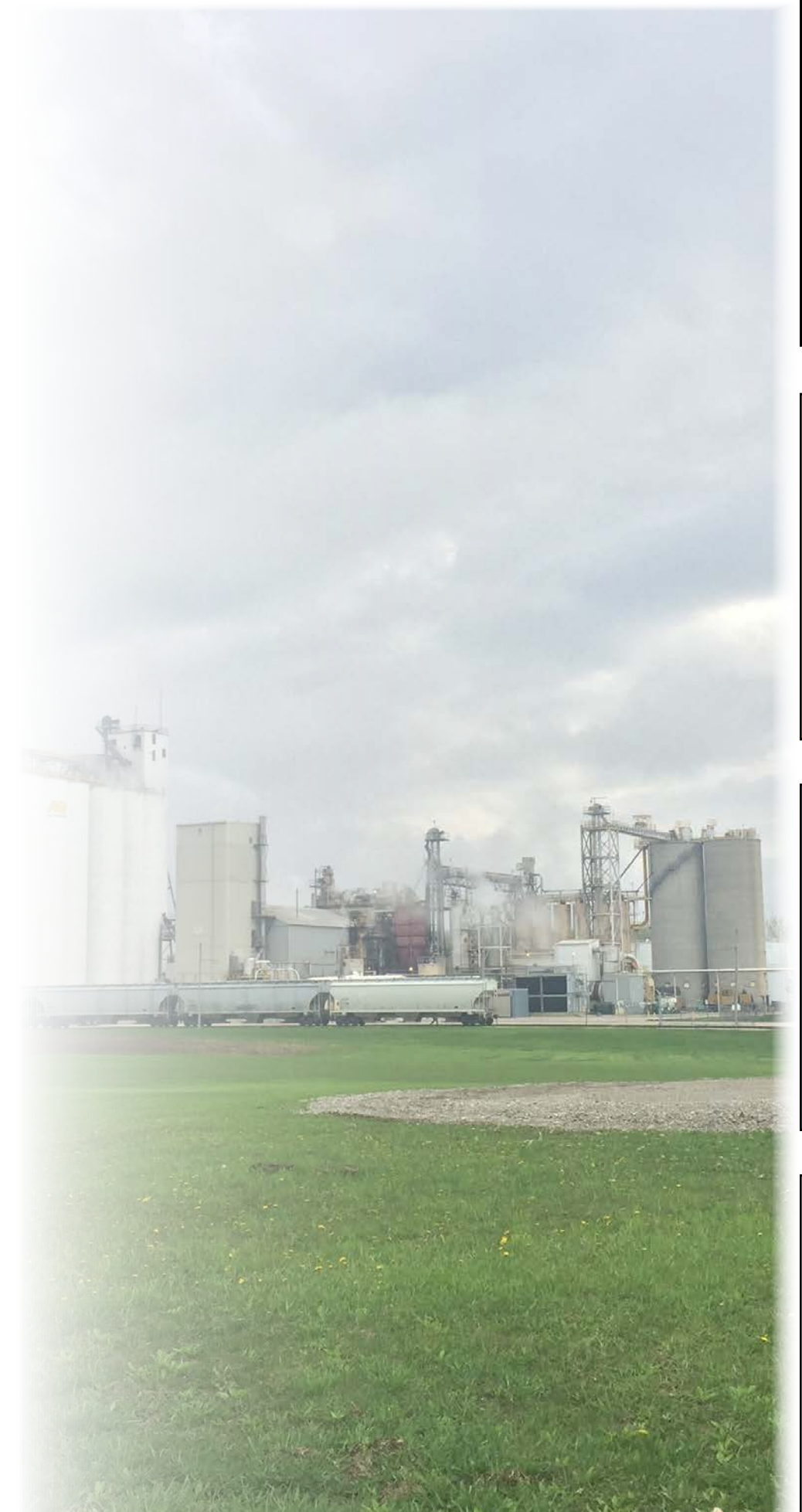


Figure 23: Major Civic and Public areas in Mason City



INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

Industrial land use comprises 12% of developed land and includes general industry, warehouses, and agricultural industry. Some of the leading industrial employers are Cargill, Smithfield, Graham, Golden Grain Energy and Kraft. Industry in Mason City is generally concentrated at the South Eisenhower Avenue Industrial Area, the 19th Street and 9th Street Industrial Area, the North End Industrial Area, and along railroad connections throughout the city (Figure 24). Mason City has planned industrial development away from residential areas given the possible negative impact it can have on residential neighborhoods. Based on the nature of industry (light or heavy), Mason City has planned developments to minimize the effects of air and noise pollution, and congestion on other land uses. Proper land use planning and zoning plays an important role in mitigating the negative effects of industrial development while also gaining economic benefits from such industries.



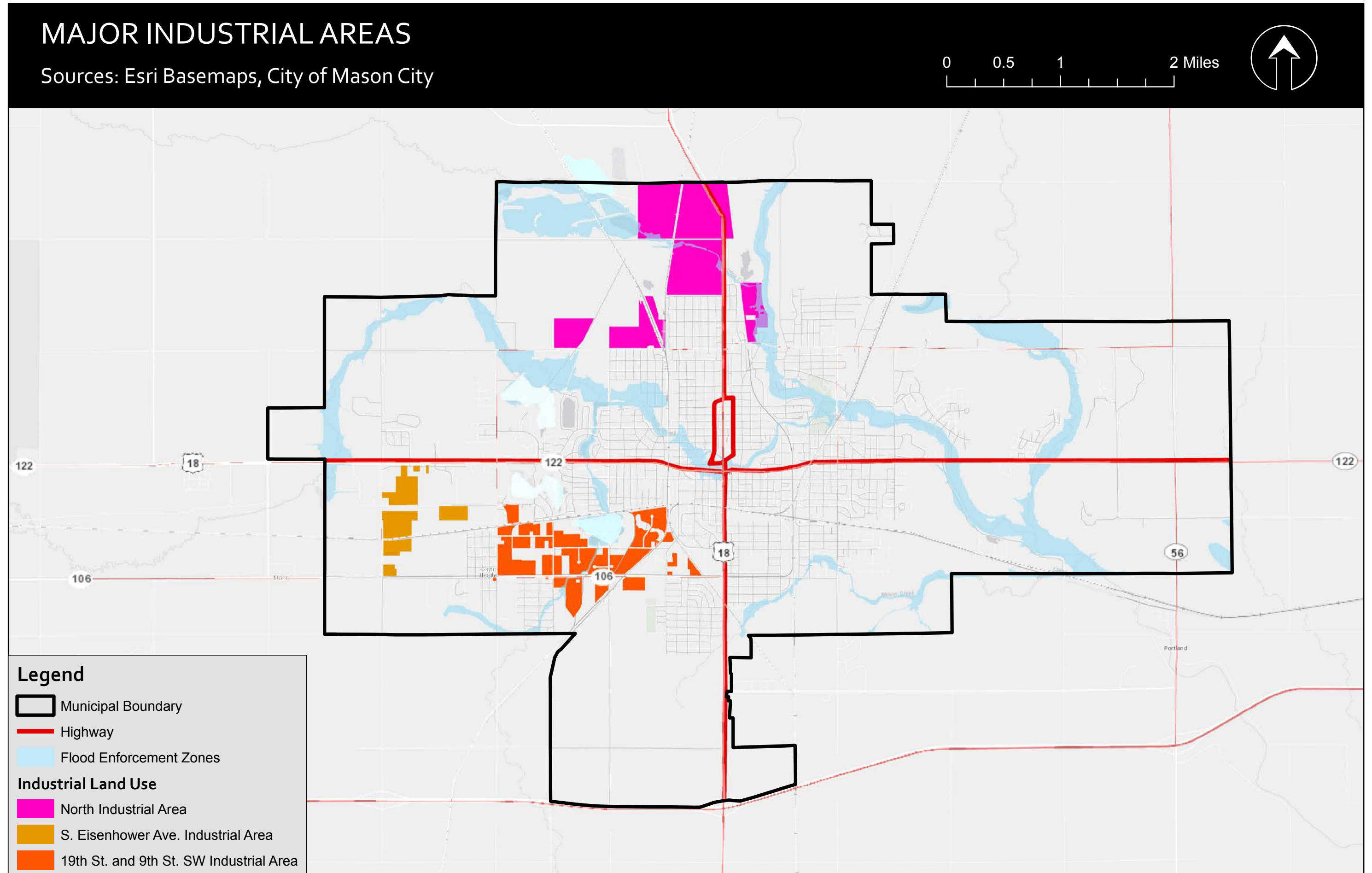
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Figure 24: Major Industrial Areas



ZONING REGULATIONS

Title 12 of Mason City Code outlines the Mason City Zoning Ordinance that aims to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community as required by the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act. The zoning ordinance incorporates form-based districts with regulations for each district that provide flexibility in the application of ordinance requirements. As described by City Code, the Zoning Ordinance for Mason City “regulates the forms and functions of all structures, lands, and waters, to regulate lot coverage, population distribution and density, and the size and location of all structures in accordance with the Mason City comprehensive plan”. It is Mason City’s policy that the enforcement, amendment, and administration of this Ordinance be accomplished with due consideration of the recommendations contained in the Mason City Comprehensive Plan, as developed and amended from time to time by recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and approval by the City Council. If a land use is neither specifically permitted nor denied within the section 12-8-1 1 and 12-8-2 of Title 12 in City Code, it is considered prohibited. However, the City Council, on their own initiative or upon request, may conduct the study to analyze the standards and conditions related to that development and if appropriate, may initiate an amendment to the zoning regulation thus allowing for flexibility.

Mason City is comprised of seven Zoning Districts, Z1 to Z7 (Figure 25), each consisting of a form and function. The current zoning districts of Mason City are as follows:

- **Z1 Agricultural District:** Z1 identifies an Agricultural District, which supports agricultural and related uses. This zone also intends to preserve natural ecosystems, prevent soil erosion, protect water quality, and support biodiversity.
- **Z2 Sub-Urban District:** Z2 provides space for a limited range of primarily residential lot sizes, limited neighborhood commercial uses and public park spaces. It consists of low-density development, which may be detached single-family residential, corner store, or corner office.
- **Z3 General Urban District:** Z3 is primarily used to support a mix of residential building types at medium densities with corner offices, corner stores, small retail buildings, home offices, parks and playgrounds.
- **Z4 Multi-Use District:** Z4 supports a mixture of retail, personal and business service, office, lodging, automotive service, civic, and medium to high-density residential uses.
- **Z5 Central Business District:** Z5 consists of higher density, multi-story mixed-use or single use commercial buildings that accommodate a variety of retail, entertainment, business and personal service, office, lodging, residential and civic functions.
- **Z6 Industrial District:** Z6 consists of mix of utilitarian and industrial buildings. This zone promotes the management and preservation of existing industrial facilities within the city as well as the development and management of new ecologically responsible, sustainable employment centers. It is divided into Restricted Industrial District and Open Industrial zones. The Open Industry zone consists of large, relatively self-contained and isolated facilities whose potential nuisance or hazard generation is moderately high. Restricted Industry Districts consists of industrial and manufacturing activities that do not create nuisances or hazards.
- **Z7 Specific Use District:** Z7 supports the ongoing operation and future expansion of specific areas within Mason City. Any future expansion within these specific districts shall require conformance to an approved site plan as per ordinance. It consists of single uses including college campuses, hospitals and medical centers that primarily function independently from other districts. Examples of such designated districts in the city include Mercy Medical Center, NIACC, and Cerro Gordo County Fairgrounds.

The zoning regulations in Mason City assist in establishing land use and preventing the incompatibility of uses. The form-based aspect of the zoning ordinance helps preserve community character and identity, while providing greater development flexibility.



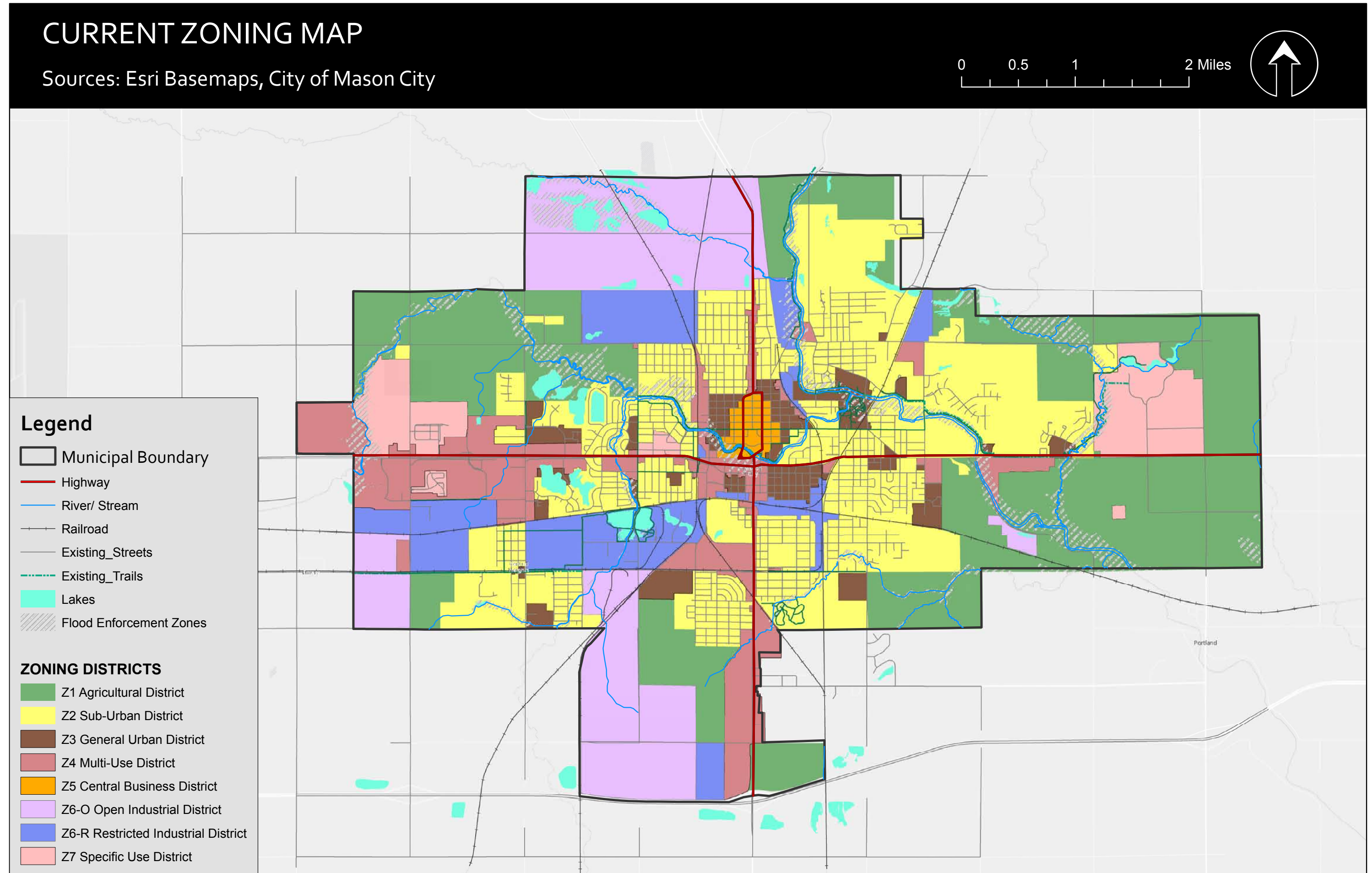
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Figure 25: City of Mason City, IA, Current Zoning Map



IMPLICATIONS

As demonstrated through existing land use and zoning, Mason City has dedicated a significant amount of land to low-density, single use development. Many residential properties located on the east side of the city are physically separated from retail, commercial and employment centers located on the west side of the city, resulting in heavy reliance on personal vehicles. As this development pattern progresses, more neighborhoods become vulnerable during emergency events, when access to resources is critical. Furthermore, reliance on personal vehicles comes with numerous negative health and environmental effects.

Given that Mason City is a regional retail and commercial hub, future land use planning is critical to direct growth. A large portion of existing land use is agricultural land with future development potential. However, it is important to be aware of sprawl and its negative effects when designating future land use. More commercial and industrial development in Mason City will undoubtedly have economic development benefits for the community, but the City should be aware that these benefits may be diminished by the negative effects of sprawl. By establishing a balance between economic development and land development, Mason City can create a more resilient community.



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HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Housing policies that address quality, diversity, and affordability of housing are important for increasing the quality of life for all residents in a community. An analysis of the current housing conditions in Mason City identifies housing issues within the community. This analysis will set the basis for goals and objectives aimed at improving housing diversity and the housing stock.

For Mason City, considering resilience in housing means offering a variety of housing options for all ages and life-cycles. Changing demographics could affect housing availability and affordability in Mason City, and having a variety of housing choices would help prepare the city to address these changes.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

OCCUPANCY AND TENURE

According to the 2014 U.S. Census data, Mason City has 13,411 total housing units. Of these, 538, or 4%, are vacant. Since 2000, the total number of housing units has increased by 382 units. This nearly 3% increase in the number of housing units is far below that state average increase of 9.38% for the period. Vacant housing has decreased in Mason City since 2000, while it has increased at the state level (Table 10).

For Mason City, the median year all housing was built is 1955, compared to 1966 for the state of Iowa and 1979 for the entire United States. The older housing stock is primarily located downtown and along the northern and southern corridors of the city, while newer housing is generally located on the east and west sides of the city (Figure 26).

Other important housing statistics demonstrate that average household size for both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing has decreased since 2000 and a slight increase in the percentage of renter-occupied units has occurred. This trend demonstrates that families are smaller in size and more residents are renting. Increases in renter-occupied units reflects the state-wide trend (Table 10). However, Mason City has a higher percentage of renter-occupied units in comparison with the rest of the state and higher proportions of these rental units are found in the center of the city (Figure 27).

Table 10: Occupancy and Tenure for Mason City and the State for 2000 and 2014

	2000		2014	
	MASON CITY	IOWA	MASON CITY	IOWA
Total Housing Units	13,029	1,232,511	13,411	1,348,151
% Vacant Units	5% (661)	7%	4% (538)	9%
% Owner-Occupied	67%	72%	66%	72%
% Renter Occupied	33%	28%	34%	28%
Average household size				
Owner-Occupied	2.44	2.57	2.27	2.51
Renter Occupied	1.92	2.15	1.74	2.17

Important Definitions:

Housing Stock: Housing and other places of residence that exist within a given area

Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy: Datasets that demonstrate the extent of housing problems and housing needs, particularly for low-income households.

Housing costs for renters: A combination of the monthly contract rent and utilities

Housing costs for homeowners: Select monthly owner's costs including mortgage payments, utilities, association fees, insurance, and real estate taxes.

Figure 26: Housing Year Built

MEDIAN YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

Sources: US Department of Agriculture, Iowa State University, Census

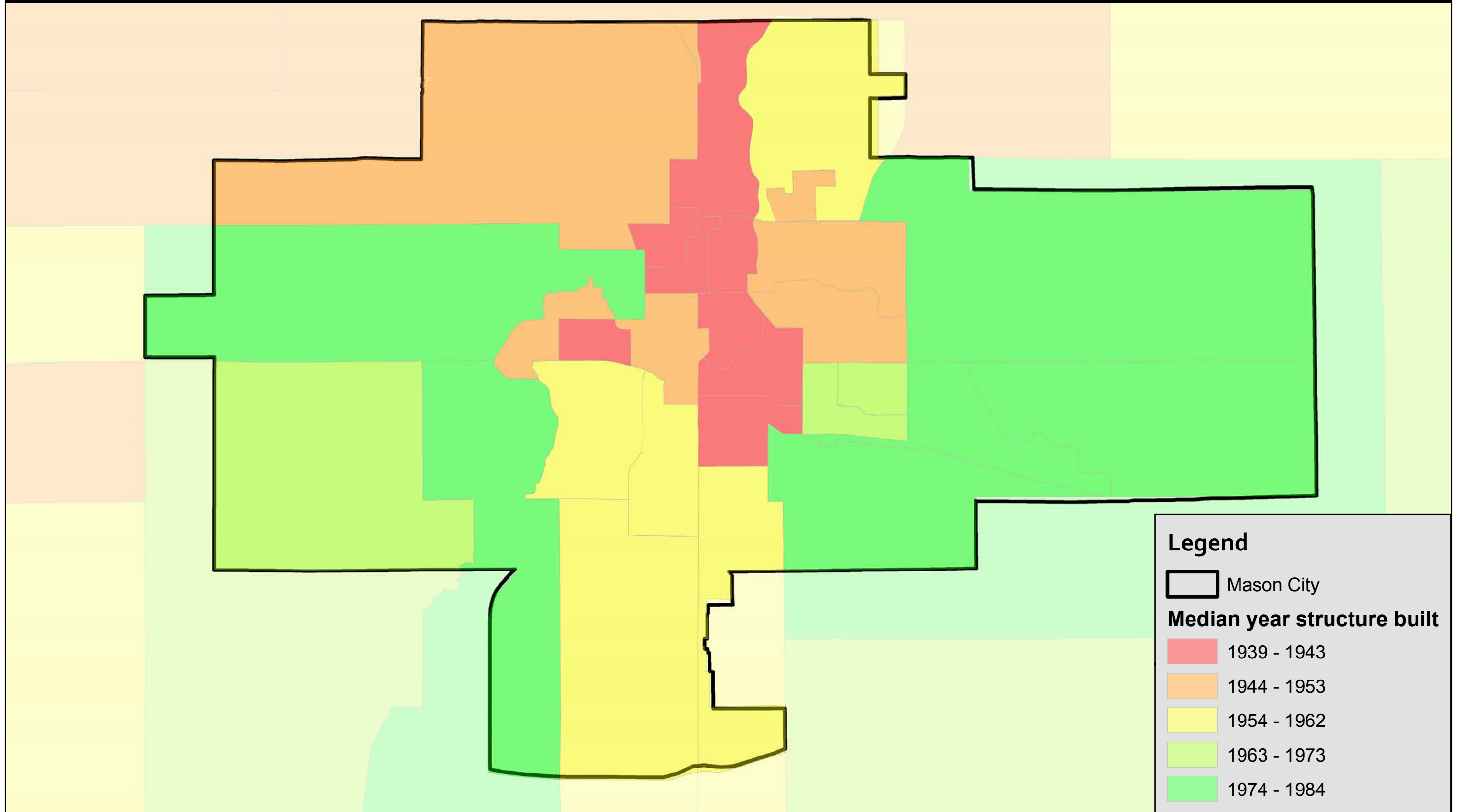
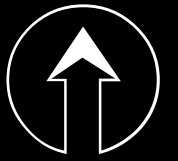
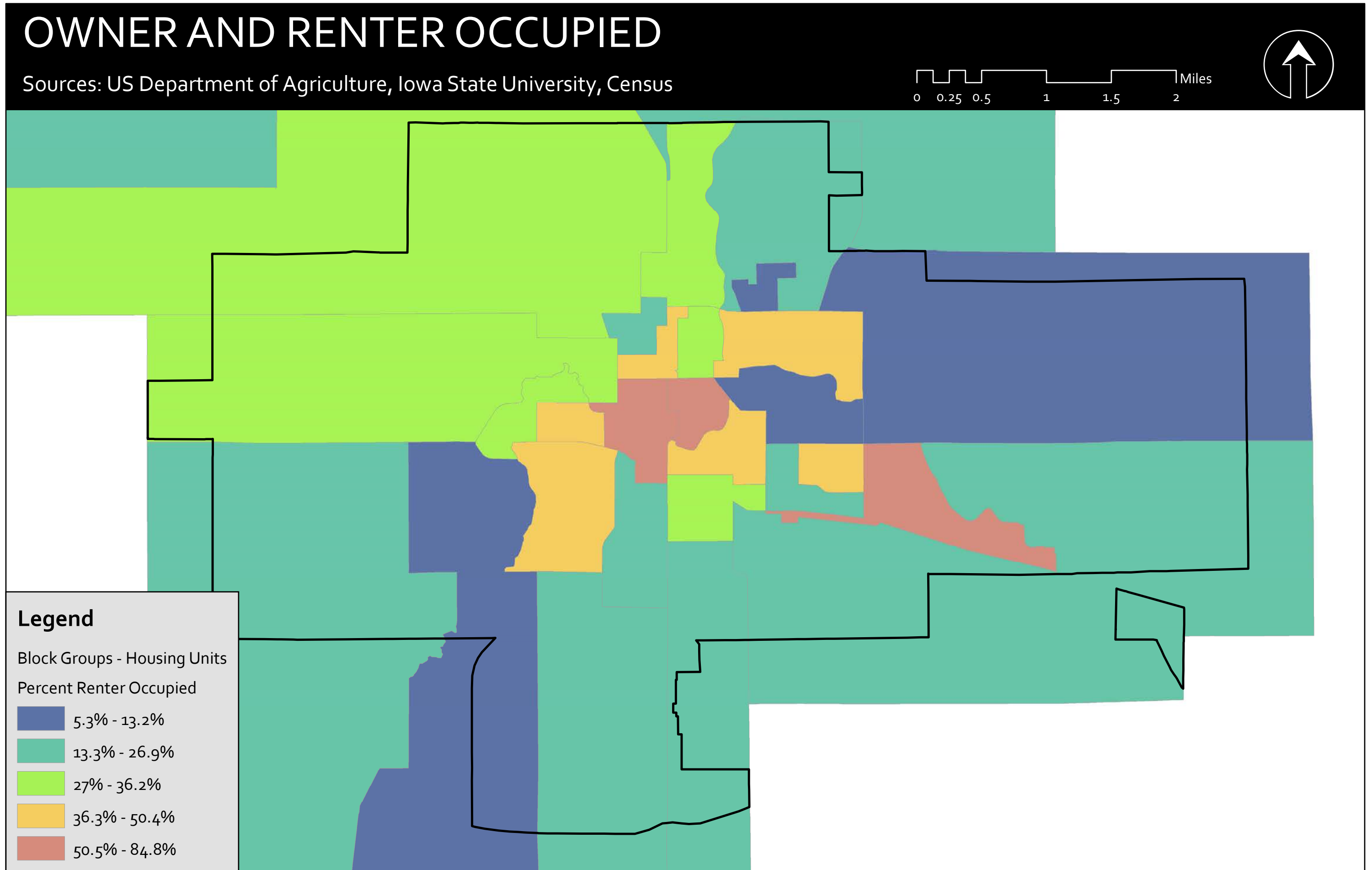


Figure 27: Owner and Renter Occupied



HOUSING VALUES AND RENTAL RATES

Mason City has seen moderate growth in median housing values since 2000, which have increased 36% from \$72,500 to \$98,300. Housing value in Mason City is comparable with similarly sized cities across the state, but is lower than in larger, more populous cities. Median housing value has also grown at a slower pace than the state's average increase of 53%.

The city has also seen growth in median rent values from \$405 in 2000 to \$611 in 2014, a 50% increase. This was higher than the average state increase of 47%, but lower than many of the larger cities within the state (Table 11). Increases in median rent indicate more demand for rental units in Mason City.

Table 11: Median Housing Value and Rent for Mason City and Comparable Cities

	MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE (\$)			MEDIAN CONTRACT RENT (\$)		
	2000	2014	% Change	2000	2014	% Change
Mason City	72,500	98,300	36%	405	611	51%
Ames	125,300	172,600	38%	532	774	45%
Fort Dodge	65,600	79,700	21%	338	469	39%
Iowa City	128,300	185,500	45%	507	758	50%
Marshalltown	68,800	98,000	42%	375	645	72%
Ottumwa	47,900	70,700	48%	351	462	32%
Waterloo	65,400	101,900	56%	386	551	43%
State of Iowa	82,500	126,300	53%	470	689	47%



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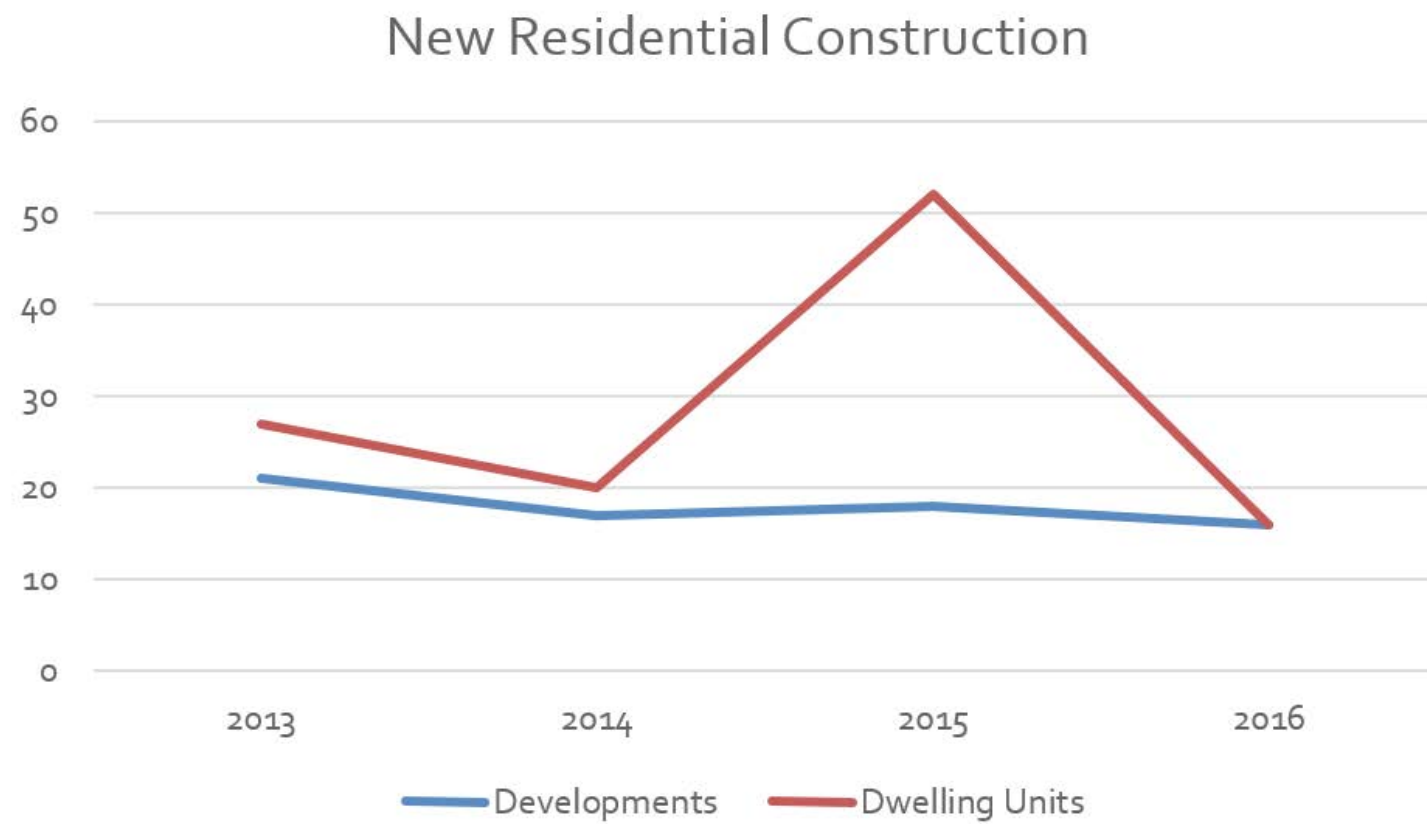
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HOME CONSTRUCTION RATE

To propose housing policy and predict future housing development, a baseline is necessary for past construction trends. Over the last 4 years, there were a total of 72 new residential developments within the city, with a total of 115 dwelling units (Figure 28).

Figure 28: New Residential Development



Of all new developments, 81% were single-family residential homes, with the remaining 19% as twin homes and one multi-family development built in 2015. Continued construction of primarily single-family housing may contribute to sprawl away from the central city. This can create issues of accessibility for residents, primarily the elderly and disabled, who may not be able to rely solely on private vehicle transportation.



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The affordability of housing is an important issue for the City as changing demographic, social, and cultural aspects of Mason City affect housing. These issues are examined using the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) datasets provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In this analysis, it is used to determine the levels of housing affordability issues based on data from the 2009-2013 Census.

According to this data, Mason City has 2,030 households or 15.65% of all households where between 30% and 50% of total monthly family income goes toward housing costs. The data also shows that 1,389 households or 10.71% of households pay more than 50% of total monthly family income towards housing, labeled severe cost burdened (Table 12).

For comparison, during the same period, the state of Iowa had 163,515 households or 13.33% of households where between 30% and 50% of total monthly family income goes toward housing costs, while 124,050 households or 10.11% of households pay more than 50% of total monthly family income towards housing costs (Table 13). State-wide trends are similar for severely cost burdened households, while a much higher percentage of households are in the "cost burden" category in Mason City than at the state level.

Table 12: Housing Cost Burden for Mason City

Housing Cost Burden	Owner	Renter	Total Households	Total %
No Cost Burden (<=30%)	6,950	2,415	9,365	72%
Cost Burden (>30% to <=50%)	1,070	960	2,030	16%
Severe Cost Burden (>50%)	580	809	1,389	11%
Cost Burden not available	65	110	175	1%
Total	8,670	4,300	12,970	100%

Table 13: Housing Cost Burden for Iowa

Housing Cost Burden	Owner	Renter	Total Households	Total %
No Cost Burden (<=30%)	729,320	199,535	928,855	76%
Cost Burden (>30% to <=50%)	99,350	64,165	163,515	13%
Severe Cost Burden (>50%)	53,330	70,720	124,050	10%
Cost Burden not available	3,945	6,185	10,130	1%
Total	885,940	340,605	1,226,545	100%

Furthermore, most of these cost burdens are borne by lower-income families, with a small number of cost burdens held by higher income families (Table 14). This was derived by examining the HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) of households and the cost of housing. HUD calculates the HAMFI for each jurisdiction, in order to determine Fair Market Rents (FMRs) and income limits for HUD programs. This number is not necessarily the same as other median income indicators, such as those used by the Census, due to adjustments by HUD. This housing affordability data suggests the need for housing policy that address the disparity in housing cost for low-income families.

Table 14: Income by Cost Burden for Mason City

Income by Cost Burden (Owners and Renters)	Cost Burden	Severe Cost Burden
Household Income ≤ 30% HAMFI	1440	995
Household Income >30% to ≤50% HAMFI	890	190
Household Income >50% to ≤80% HAMFI	810	140
Household Income >80% to ≤100% HAMFI	145	50
Household Income >100% HAMFI	140	15
Total	3425	1390



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TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

INTRODUCTION

Transportation networks play an important role in the development of any community. They enable connections between regions allowing for the flow of people as well as commerce, which is essential to the development of urbanized areas. Transportation systems also move people throughout a city, providing access to goods and services, employment, and recreation.

It is essential to consider the interaction between land use and transportation because land use decisions are influential to the availability of transportation options. Improvements in the transportation system, the availability of transit, and commute times effect residents' decisions on where to live or work. Furthermore, transportation facilities can influence property values based on the level of accessibility and connectivity.

Resilience in transportation is an important connection given the significance of having a complete transportation system during a disrupting event. During a disaster, isolated neighborhoods are more vulnerable due to lack of connectivity and the resulting difficulty of evacuation. Transportation facilities should also focus on increasing accessibility for more vulnerable populations, such as the elderly or disabled. This can be addressed through compact, well-connected neighborhoods and multi-modal transportation facilities. Thus, connectivity is essential to resilience in transportation.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

COMPLETE STREETS

Streets in Mason City make up one of the largest public spaces, making efficient design and function critical to having an effective transportation system. Mason City is currently implementing its own Complete Streets policy. As defined by Smart Growth Principles, complete streets are designed to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This includes implementing proper signals, sidewalks, curb cuts, crosswalks, bike lanes, and transit stops (Figure 29). Having complete streets ensures that, not only motorists, but also pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users have access to a safe and efficient transportation. Alternately, streets lacking complete street designs discourage residents from walking and biking, increasing trips made by automobile.

Figure 29: Example of a complete street, source: National Association of City Transportation Officials



Important Definitions:

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT): Annual average traffic averaged on a daily basis.

Complete Street: "Streets for everyone that are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities." (American Planning Association)

Walkability: A measure of how suited an area is for walking. Transit oriented development defines walking distance as less than a half mile, bicycling distance as less than two miles, and a quarter to a half mile as walkable distance from transit.

Connectivity: The state or extent of being connected or interconnected. Connectivity is measured by ease of access and having many route possibilities.

STREET CLASSIFICATION

The transportation facilities make up 21% of Mason City's developed land use, making it influential to the urban form. To understand transportation systems, it is important to understand street classification and networks. Urban Federal Functional Classifications categorize streets into principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local streets. Functional classifications are helpful to understand issues related to land use planning, connectivity, highway corridor evaluation, traffic safety and operations, and design features. In addition, such classification of streets helps to identify roadway function. A description of each street classification follows, and Figure 30 demonstrates the classification of Mason City streets in relation to zoning designation.

PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS

Principal Arterials are streets or highways that connect major centers within the city and connect cities to the wider region. They are designed for high volume and high speeds, ensuring steady movement of traffic. The principal arterials for Mason City include US 65/Federal Avenue and Highway 122/Highway 18 that intersect in downtown Mason City. These major gateway streets play an important role in providing regional access to Mason City. The primary zoning designation along principal arterials in Mason City is a Multi-Use District that commonly holds retail or commercial establishments.

MINOR ARTERIALS

Minor arterials are streets connecting major activity centers to principal arterials. They are generally spaced at a half to one mile in developed urban areas. Minor arterials are designed for moderate volumes and moderate speeds. In Mason City, minor arterials provide important connections between specific activity areas in the city, such commercial areas or the hospital, to principal arterials. Zoning designations adjacent to minor arterials are primarily General Urban District, Multi-Use District, or Sub-Urban District.

COLLECTORS

Collectors exist to link neighborhoods together and connect neighborhoods to principal and minor arterials. Like minor arterials, collectors also serve the dual functions of moving traffic and land access. They are designed for low volumes and low speeds of 30 to 35 MPH. Collectors typically designate space for parking on one side and include sidewalks to enhance connectivity to and within neighborhoods. Zoning districts along collectors in Mason City are primarily General Urban District or Sub-Urban District.

LOCAL STREETS

Local streets provide access to individual properties by providing the link to collector streets. They are designed for low volumes and low speeds of generally 25 to 30 MPH and facilitate short trips. These streets provide access within neighborhoods and should be designed to promote low speeds. Most of these streets in Mason City are of grid layout except for low-density residential development with cul-de-sacs and curvilinear streets. The zoning designation observed surrounding most local streets in Mason City is Sub-Urban District zoning.



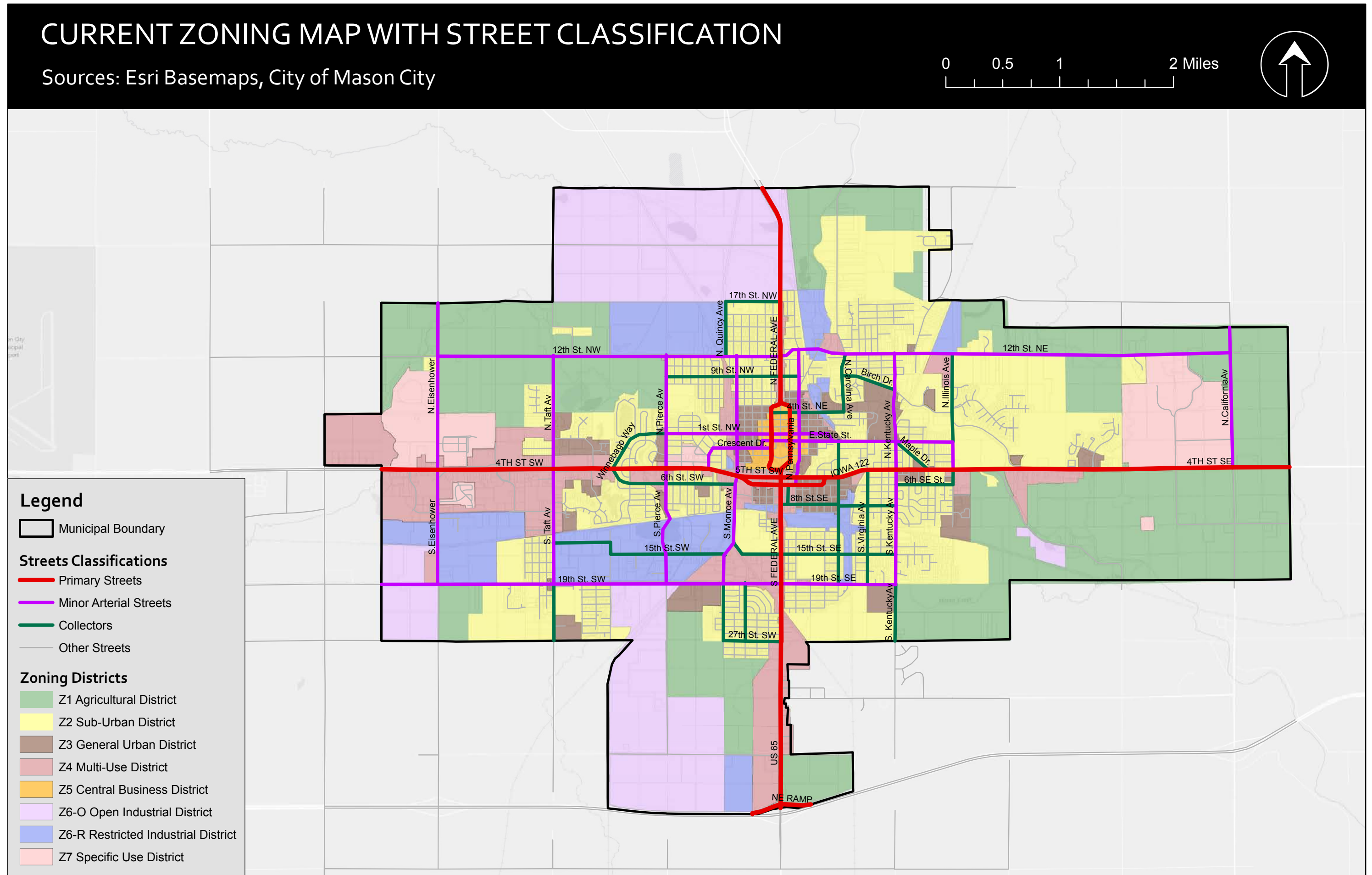
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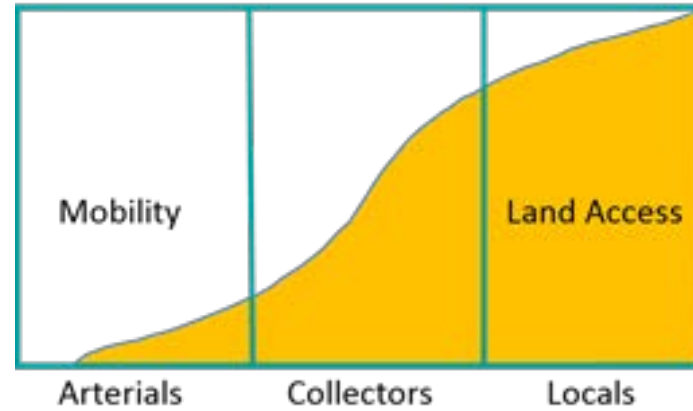
Figure 30: Map with street classification for Mason City



The hierarchical classification of streets accommodates traffic flow and ensures the safety of the community through proper distinction of street type. This is achieved through design considerations such as number of lanes, speed, volume, intersection spacing and driveway access. This tool also helps to integrate multi-modal transportation systems with correct roadway environment.

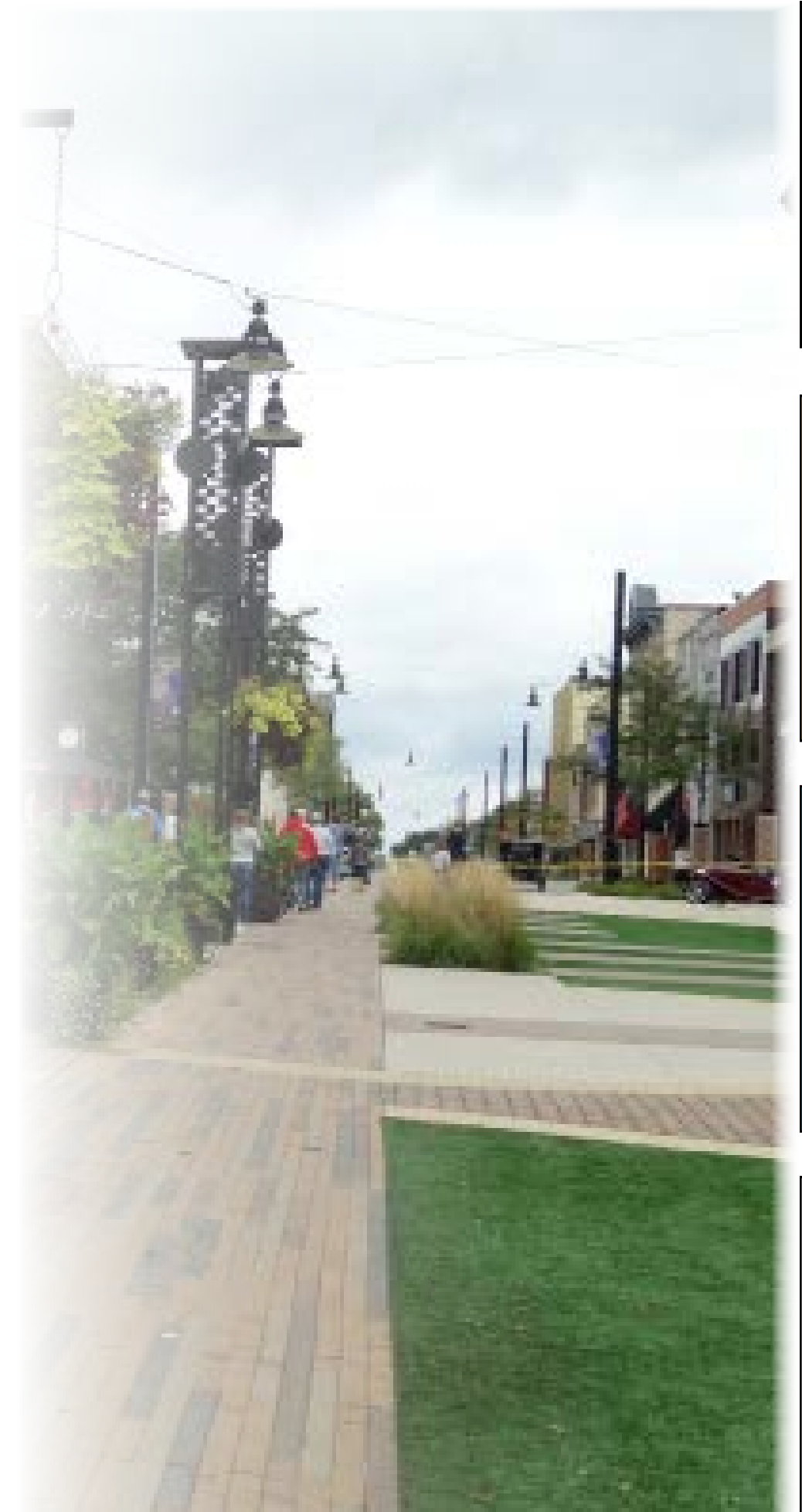
Land access and mobility are the primary factors for identifying street hierarchy (Figure 31). As stated by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation, arterials should function for high level of mobility, collectors should provide a balance between mobility and land access, while local streets should emphasize land access.

Figure 31: Relationship of functionally classified systems and traffic mobility and land access (Source: ASHTO)



WALKABILITY AND CONNECTIVITY OF HIGH USE AREAS

Mason City's neighborhoods, historic districts, civic uses, public spaces and major open spaces should be linked by a balanced transportation network that integrates different transportation modes, including walking, cycling, and public transit. To increase connectivity, it is important to demonstrate access to high use areas like health centers, neighborhood schools and other public uses. Figure 32 identifies the walkable distances around schools and critical facilities (such as city buildings) with a quarter mile buffer. Most schools and critical facilities are located along primary streets, arterials and collectors that improve connectivity in such areas. Figure 33 demonstrates areas in the city that may have connectivity issues and are identified by analyzing existing streets. These locations lack multiple access points, resulting in limited connectivity, increased travel time, and possibly, congestion. These issues prevent resilience primarily because multiple access points inhibit quick response and reduce public safety during an emergency. These identified areas are either individual streets or group of streets that may need to be extended or redesigned for better connectivity.



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Figure 32: Walkable distance and connectivity within quarter mile distance of existing schools and critical facilities in Mason City

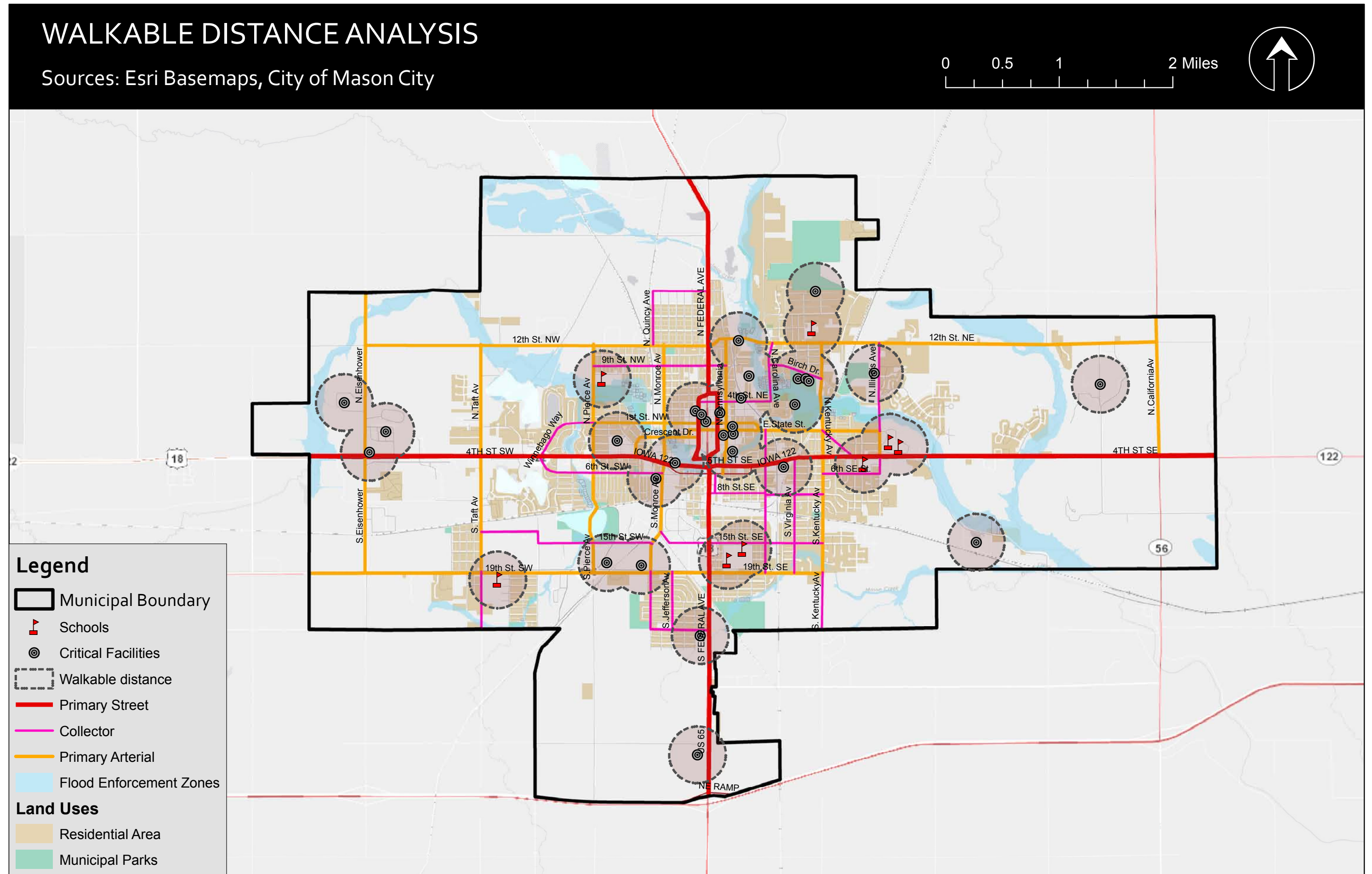
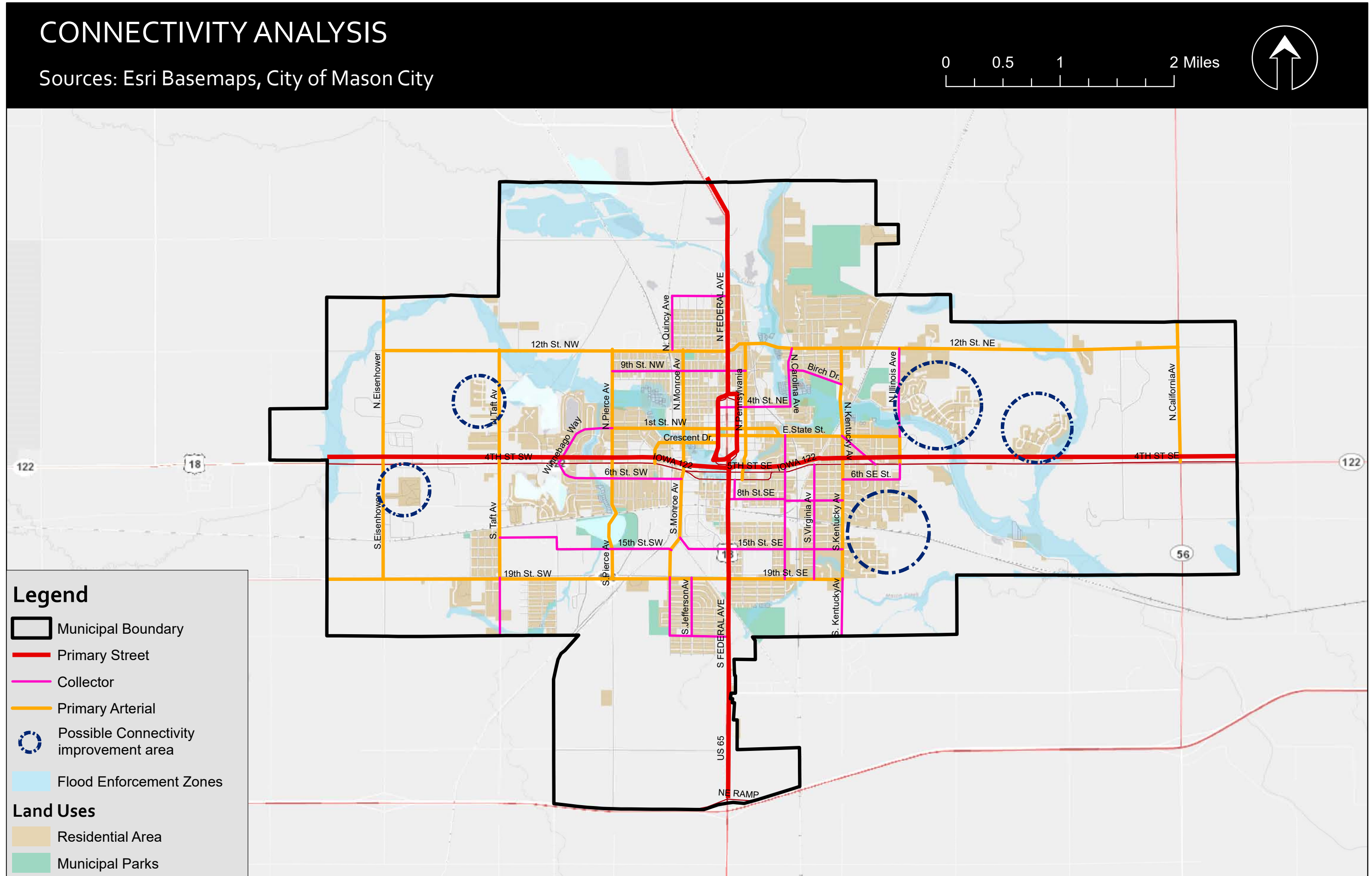


Figure 33: Possible connectivity improvement areas for existing as well as future growth



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Mason City is currently implementing the 2014 Mason City Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that provides goals to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety, and access to key community destinations. Mason City has a gentle topography that provides opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to engage in active transportation, whether it be walking or bicycling. The physical attributes of Mason City and the progress being made in bicycle and pedestrian facilities make active transportation a feasible option for residents. The City has established on street bike routes and off street bike trails to serve cyclists. However, some of the existing multi-use trails lack continuity, further addressed in the Parks and Trails sections of this plan.

Currently, attention has been given to maintaining a continuous network of sidewalks to improve walkability and promote walking as a transportation option. The City is implementing their Complete Streets Policy to achieve increased walkability in areas that areas that have lack sidewalks. Downtown Mason City provides a model for improved walkability, and the City aims to use downtown as a template for other underserved areas of the city.

Figure 34: Example of bike lane and pedestrian design. Source: National Association of City Transportation Officials.

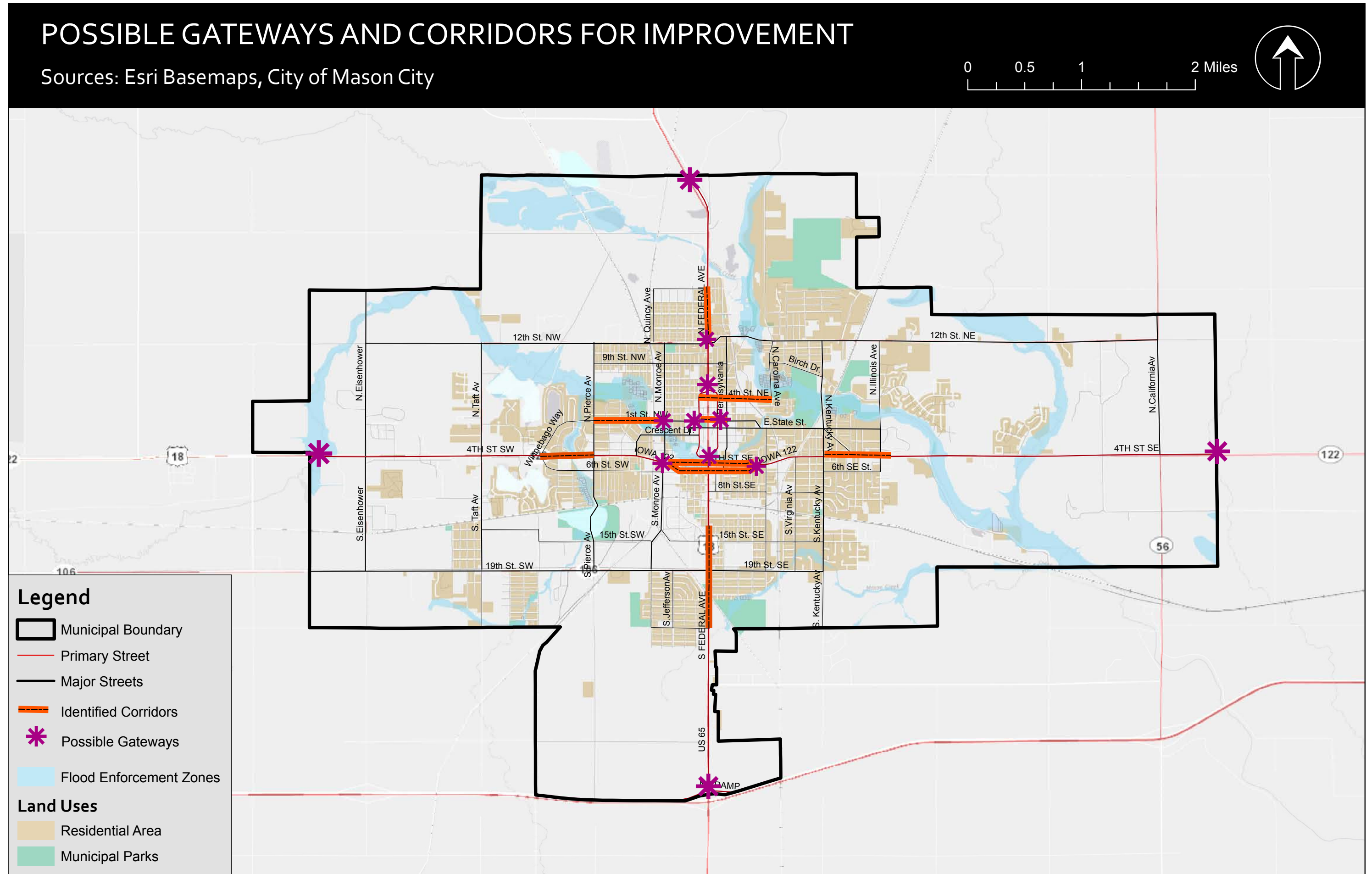


CORRIDOR PLAN, GATEWAYS AND STREETSCAPING

Upgrading the aesthetics and infrastructure of primary corridors and entrances to Mason City can have transportation benefits, as well as economic benefits. The primary arterial streets and gateways are 4th Street SW and South Federal Ave in Mason City. These are major corridors for commerce and provide regional connections. Likewise, the Willow Creek Corridor, adjacent to downtown and bounded by Monroe and Pennsylvania Avenues, is another major commercial corridor. Federal Avenue is a key entrance to the city given its connection to U.S. Highway 18, located on the south boundary of Mason City. Improvements along these corridors should not only address aesthetics, but also safety, congestion, wayfinding, and multimodal improvements. These corridor improvements add value to surrounding properties, strengthen neighborhoods, and encourage walking and biking.

Gateways influence the first impressions of visitors entering the city or its neighborhoods. Proper signage and markers, combine with landscaping, or art installations are all possible gateway improvements. Mason City's primary gateways include areas where Highway 65 meets city boundaries. Stone "Welcome to Mason City" signs are located at these points. Other primary entryways are Highway 18 at the east and west boundaries of the city, however these points are not denoted by any signage. Other landmarks that identify Mason City are two water towers. Water towers are located along South Federal Avenue near 19th Street SW, and North Eisenhower Avenue near the eastern boundary of the city. Figure 35 demonstrates important corridors, and existing and possible gateways in Mason City.

Figure 35: Possible gateways and gateways for future improvements.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Mason City's fixed-route transit system currently has five routes serving the entire city, all of which are connected to the downtown (Figure 36). Though the City has connected its transit system to the downtown, there are still low-density residential neighborhoods that lack transit services and must depend on private transportation. However, the transit system provides service along most major corridors in the city, improving transportation options and connectivity. Additionally, door-to-door paratransit service exists for elderly and disabled residents who need more accommodating service than Mason City's bus transit.



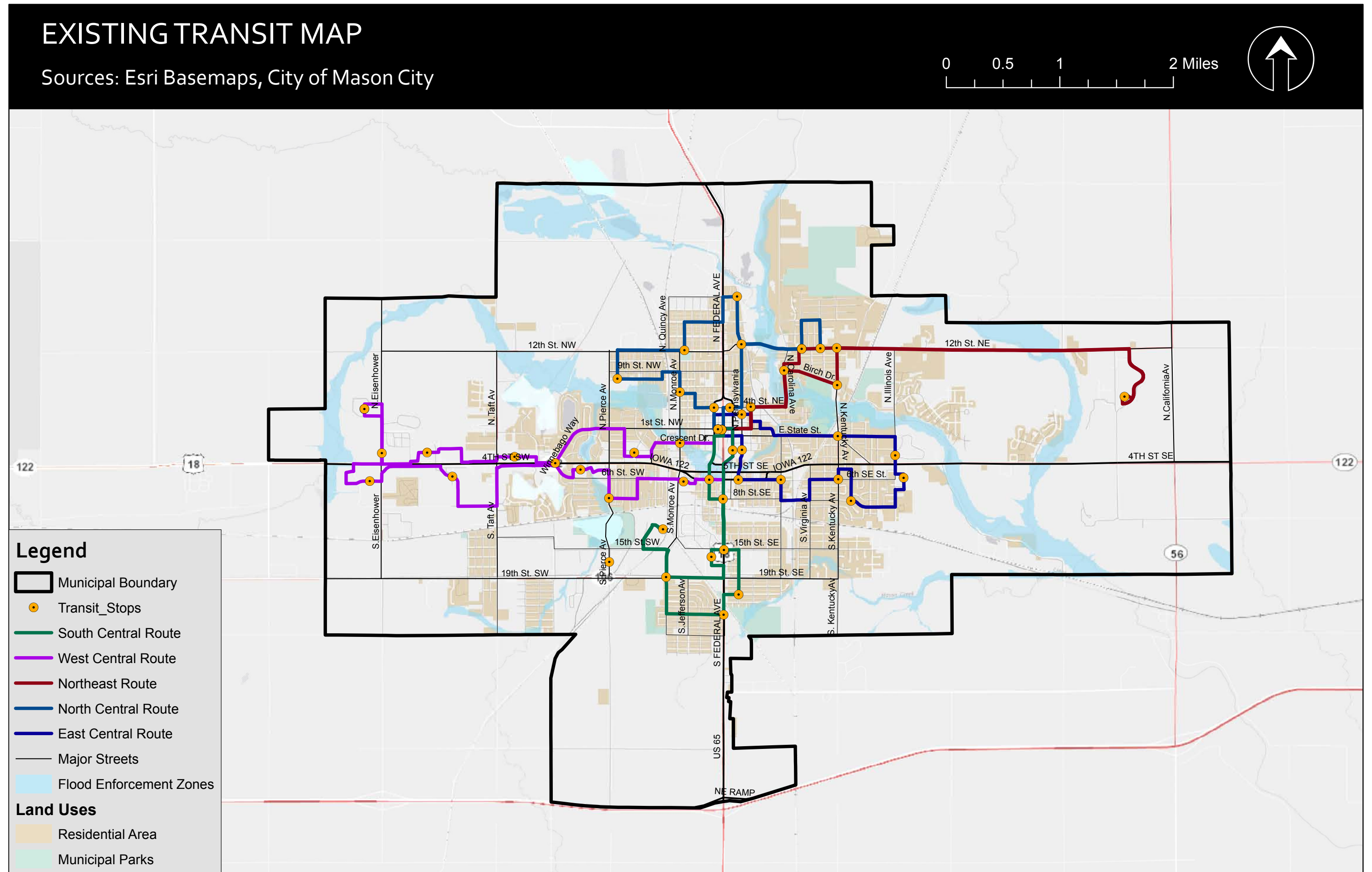
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Figure 36: Existing transit system with stops in Mason City



TRAFFIC CAPACITY ANALYSIS

Understanding the street network in terms of the traffic capacity is important for maintaining flow of traffic and avoiding congestion. Traffic capacity is determined based on street classifications, number of lanes, and access conditions. Table 15 shows typical traffic capacity by road type.

Table 15: Traffic Capacity by Facility Type

Access Condition	Capacity at LOS D (vpd)			
	2-Lane	3-Lane	4-Lane Undivided	4-Lane Divided
Minimal	7,000	7,900	14,100	16,700
Light (Residential)	6,700	7,600	13,600	16,100
Moderate (Mixed Zoning)	6,300	7,000	13,500	15,800
Heavy	6,000	7,000	12,700	15,000

Based on traffic capacity and comparison of average daily traffic counts, gathered by the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) in 2015, an analysis of street operations can be completed. Table 16 uses these counts to analyze the performance of key principal arterial segments. It is important to analyze transportation efficiencies of principal arterials given that they provide access to commercial and civic land uses, which are highly trafficked areas. However, many streets have actual volumes that are more than 1,000 vehicles less than the built capacity of the road (rows highlighted green in Table 16). These streets have potential for more efficient use of public space given the traffic volume capacity is not met or exceeded. However, there are streets that demonstrate volumes of traffic greater than the carrying capacity of the roads (rows highlighted in yellow in Table 16 show roads with an actual volume of 1,000 vehicles greater than the capacity).

Important Definitions:

LOS/Level of Service: Used to analyze the traffic flow on streets by assigning quality levels for traffic based on performance measures (A to F, A being the best LOS and F being the worst LOS).

Traffic Capacity: The maximum flow of vehicles that can traverse a segment of the roadway during a specific time period under the current roadway geometry, traffic, environmental, and traffic control conditions.

Traffic Volume: The number of vehicles to traverse an intersection or roadway segment at any given time.

Table 16: Comparison of Traffic Volume and Traffic Capacity for Key Street Segments

Street Sections	Capacity (vpd)	Actual Volume (2015)
Principal Arterials		
US 65/ Federal Avenue (South of 6 th Street)		
6th Street to 8th Street	13,500	10,700
8th Street to 11th Street	13,500	11,700
11th Street to 15th Street	13,600	10,100
15th Street to 19th Street	13,500	10,100
19th Street to 27th Street	13,500	12,000
South of 27th Street	13,500	7,800
Downtown		
S. Delaware Ave, 4th St-SW to E. State St	6,300	6,300
N. Delaware Ave, E-State St to 3rd St NE	6,300	5,900
N. Delaware Ave, 3rd St-NE to 4t St NE	6,300	4,750
N. Delaware Ave, 4t St-NE to 6th St NW	6,300	2,940
S. Washington Ave, 4th St SW to W State St	6,300	6,300
N. Washington Ave, W-State St to 3rd St NW	6,300	5,200
N. Washington Ave, 3rd St NW to 4th St NW	6,300	4,270
N. Washington Ave, 4th St NW to 6th St NW	6,300	2,630
Iowa 122/ 4th Street South		
West of S-Eisenhower Ave	18,770	15,500
S. Eisenhower Ave to S-Taft Ave	18,700	20,300
S. Taft Ave to Winnebago way	18,700	21,100
Winnebago way to S-Pierce Ave	13,500	21,100
S. Pierce Ave to S-Monroe Ave	13,500	18,400
5 th Street SW from S. Monroe Ave to S-President Ave	6,300	8,400
5 th Street SW from S. President Ave to US 65	6,300	6,900
5 th Street SE from US 65 to S. Delaware Ave	6,300	7,600
5 th Street SE from S. Delaware Ave to S. Pennsylvania Ave	6,300	6,800
5 th Street SE from S. Pennsylvania Ave to S. Massachusetts Ave	6,300	5,900
5th Street SE from S. Massachusetts Ave to S. Carolina Ave	13,500	10,300
5th Street SE from S. Carolina Ave to S. Virginia Ave	15,800	10,300
4th Street SE from S. Virginia Ave to S. Kentucky Ave	13,500	10,300
4th Street SE from S. Kentucky Ave to S. Illinois Ave	13,500	10,000
4th Street SE east of S. Illinois Ave	7,600	6,800

Table 17: Total AADT for Major Intersections in Mason City

Total AADT for Intersections at East-West Principal Arterial	
Major Intersections	Total AADT (2013)
Principal Arterial (IA-122/ 4th St Southwest) and minor arterial (S. Eisenhower Ave.)	10,253
Principal Arterial (IA-122/ 4th St Southwest) and minor arterial (N. Pierce Ave.)	50,649
Principal Arterial (IA-122/ 5th St Southwest) and Principal arterial (US 65/ S. Federal Ave.)	34,345
Principal Arterial (IA-122/ 6th St Southwest) and Principal arterial (US 65/ S. Federal Ave.)	32,601
Principal Arterial (IA-122/ 4th St Southwest) and minor arterial (S. Kentucky Ave.)	25,897
Principal Arterial (IA-122/ 4th St Southwest) and minor arterial (S. Illinois Ave.)	31,066
Total AADT for Intersections at North-South Principal Arterial	
Major Intersections	Total AADT
Principal Arterial (US 65/ South Federal Avenue) and minor arterial (19th Street Southwest)	35,353
Principal Arterial (US 65/ North Federal Avenue) and minor arterial (12th Street Northwest)	28,618
Principal Arterial (US 65/ Downtown) and minor arterial (West State Street)	16,150

Traffic volumes at major intersections allows for the analysis of streets relative to the surrounding land use. Table 17 presents the annual average daily traffic (AADT) for major intersections between principal arterials and minor arterials gathered from the Iowa DOT. The intersection at Highway 122 and N. Pierce Avenue (highlighted in Table 17) is the most highly trafficked intersection in Mason City. Land uses south of this intersection are manufacturing industries and contribute to the traffic at this intersection. The vast majority of the traffic is east and west bound, with the highest traffic being westbound through movements.

It is important to manage street networks around heavily trafficked intersections by implementing future studies for circulation of traffic and safety. Diverting the commercial and civic growth to the city center and avoiding sprawl may also help improve such situations, which can be done by altering future land use and zoning. The City has been working towards improving such intersections by adding turn lanes and medians on South Federal Avenue at the intersection of South Federal Avenue and 19th Street SE/SW.

Figure 37: Example of intersections improvements



A complete and efficient transportation system not only provides safe and comfortable movement of people and goods but it is also important to city design, as streets contributing to urban form. Mason City has demonstrated its awareness of streets as valuable public spaces through incorporation of street and corridor development plans in the 2007 Downtown Plan. Furthermore, the City has been utilizing 40% of the revenues from the local sales and service tax for street improvements. Given the City's vision for a resilient and life-cycle community, it is important to continue investment in the overall enhancement of the transportation system.

CITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

INTRODUCTION

City facilities and services provided by Mason City aim to uphold a high quality of life for residents by sustaining the services necessary for a modern lifestyle and cultural resources that enrich the lives of residents. This section provides an overview of City facilities and utilities in Mason City. It also includes the short and long term goals for facilities and utilities that were presented in the 2006 comprehensive plan.

City facilities and utilities are an integral part of creating a more resilient Mason City. The maintenance and robustness of City facilities and utilities are an important part of resiliency and ensures that Mason City's residents are well served. Planning and building facilities and utilities to avoid or withstand any natural disasters is another key aspect of resiliency. Natural disasters, for example flooding, can be avoided by not building critical facilities in a floodplain. However, other events, like tornados, cannot be avoided, thus facilities should be built to withstand such incidents.

CITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

Mason City maintains and provides a number of facilities and utilities to residents of the city. The current City facilities and utilities include:

CITY HALL: 1ST STREET NW

Location/Description: The City Hall is located downtown, north of Central Park. This is a convenient location for people who have a need to come to City Hall.

Year built/History: The original building contained a savings and loan building on the first floor with professional offices on the second and third floors. It was built in 1972

No. of stories and sq. ft.: There are three stories above grade with a total of 27,316 square feet plus a basement area of 5,658 square feet.

Type of construction: Concrete block and stone on masonry.

Parking: There is public parking along the west side of the building plus on-street parking in front of the building. There is a public parking lot across the alley to the west. Some City staff use this parking.

ADA compliant: Yes

Personnel: There are 51 personnel working in City Hall, not counting the Mayor and Council. There are 12 transit drivers supervised from City Hall

Functions

City offices and meeting rooms.

Basement: GIS and IT offices, small meeting room, staff break room, restrooms and storage spaces.

1st floor: City Clerk, Finance and Accounting, Mayor's office, Human Resources, and a public information desk.

2nd floor: City Administrator, City Attorney, City Engineer, Human Rights, Mayor's Youth Task Force, a large meeting room, and restrooms.

3rd floor: Community Development including Planning & Zoning, Building Department, Inspections, Housing, Neighborhood Services, Transit, and Animal Control.

Evaluation

Condition: Above average condition, well maintained.

Positives: Good first impression, convenient location



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Negatives: No meeting room large enough for City Council and other large public meetings. Basement offices are cramped. Storage is limited.

Expressed Needs: The questionnaires indicated that additional space for City Council and large public meetings would be desirable; also additional office and storage areas would be appreciated.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: The City is searching for possible expansion space or annex.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

POLICE DEPARTMENT AND RADIO TOWER: 78 S. GEORGIA AVENUE

Location/Description: The Police Department is on the east edge of the downtown area, between 1st Street SE and E. State Street.

Year built/History: The police facility was constructed in 1978. This facility originally contained a firing range and jail; both have been closed. The City now houses arrestees in the county jail and a police firing range has been built at the edge of town.

No. of stories and sq. ft.: The building is one story with 23,784 square feet on the ground floor and an additional 9,338 square feet in the basement.

Parking: There is a garage inside the building with two bays, and a security port for prisoner safety. There are 20 private parking spaces behind the building. Public parking is on street in front of and near the building entrance.

Type of construction: Brick on masonry.

ADA compliant: Yes, for the areas available to the public.

Functions: The Police Department provides law enforcement functions for the community.

Basement: Emergency management offices, emergency operations center, training and meeting rooms and storage space.

Main Floor: Administrative office space, patrol and investigations, and operational areas.

911 Communication Center: 911 services are now jointly provided with the county in the courthouse. Upon completion of the new county jail, the 911 dispatch center will be relocated to that site.

Vehicles (marked/unmarked): There are 12 marked and 10 unmarked vehicles. Also, there is one speed trailer, an ATV, and a marked police motorcycle. The department also has access to an armored rescue vehicle and a tactical response van from the regional drug task force.

Personnel: There are 49 personnel involved with Mason City Police Department work. These include 44 sworn officers, one parking enforcement official, and four support staff.

Evaluation

Condition: The building is in good condition.

Positives: The current central location of the Police Department activities has functioned reasonably well to date.

Negatives: The current location does not provide convenient direct access to major arterial or collector streets for fast response police vehicles. The internal layout of the building allows little separation between victims of crimes and alleged perpetrators during questioning or booking. New administrative functions, drug investigators, DARE and school resource officers have been added in the past 20 years and space is limited.



Expressed Needs: The building needs to be further up-graded to ADA standards. More parking and better security is needed and interior improvements need to be made for public convenience and safety. The garage needs to be expanded and the underground fuel tanks need to be re- moved. Space is needed for patrol officers, including drug investigators, DARE and school resource officers.

Modifications/Priorities from a planning perspective

Short Term: Anything related to safety of the employees or the public should be addressed. But before any major expense is incurred the long-term benefits should be considered by the appropriate City representatives.

Long Term: A recent evaluation of the facility identifies serious deficiencies in operational efficiency and security. A new police station is currently a goal of the department and of the City.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: 350 5TH STREET SW

Location/Description: The Fire Station is located on the north side of the westbound route of Highway 122 (5th Street SW), between Jefferson and Madison Avenues.

Year built/History: The building was built in 1973; with an addition in 2005 for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) vehicle and apparatus space, a service recently added to the Fire Department.

No. of stories and sq. ft.: The building has 24,273 square feet plus a basement area of 7,154 square feet.

Type of construction: Brick/Masonry/non-combustible.

Functions: Fire protection in the City and Emergency Medical Services to the region.

Basement: The basement area is utilized for training space and storage.

Main floor: The main floor is administrative space, training space, overnight space for employees, a staff break room, and storage. A seven-bay garage on the west end of the building is for equipment and other apparatus. The garage space was recently expanded to accommodate the EMS equipment and vehicles.

Parking: There are 32 parking spaces, including one handicap accessible parking space.

ADA Compliant: First floor is accessible while the basement is not. None of the restrooms are handicap accessible.

911 Communication Center: This facility is located at the county dispatch center.

Area Covered/District: The Fire Department covers 28 square miles of the City, plus 30 square miles of rural area. EMS service covers a service area of 700 square miles.

Vehicles/Fire Apparatus Equipment: The department has five staff vehicles, five ambulances and eight pieces of fire apparatus equipment.

Personnel: There are 44 sworn personnel.

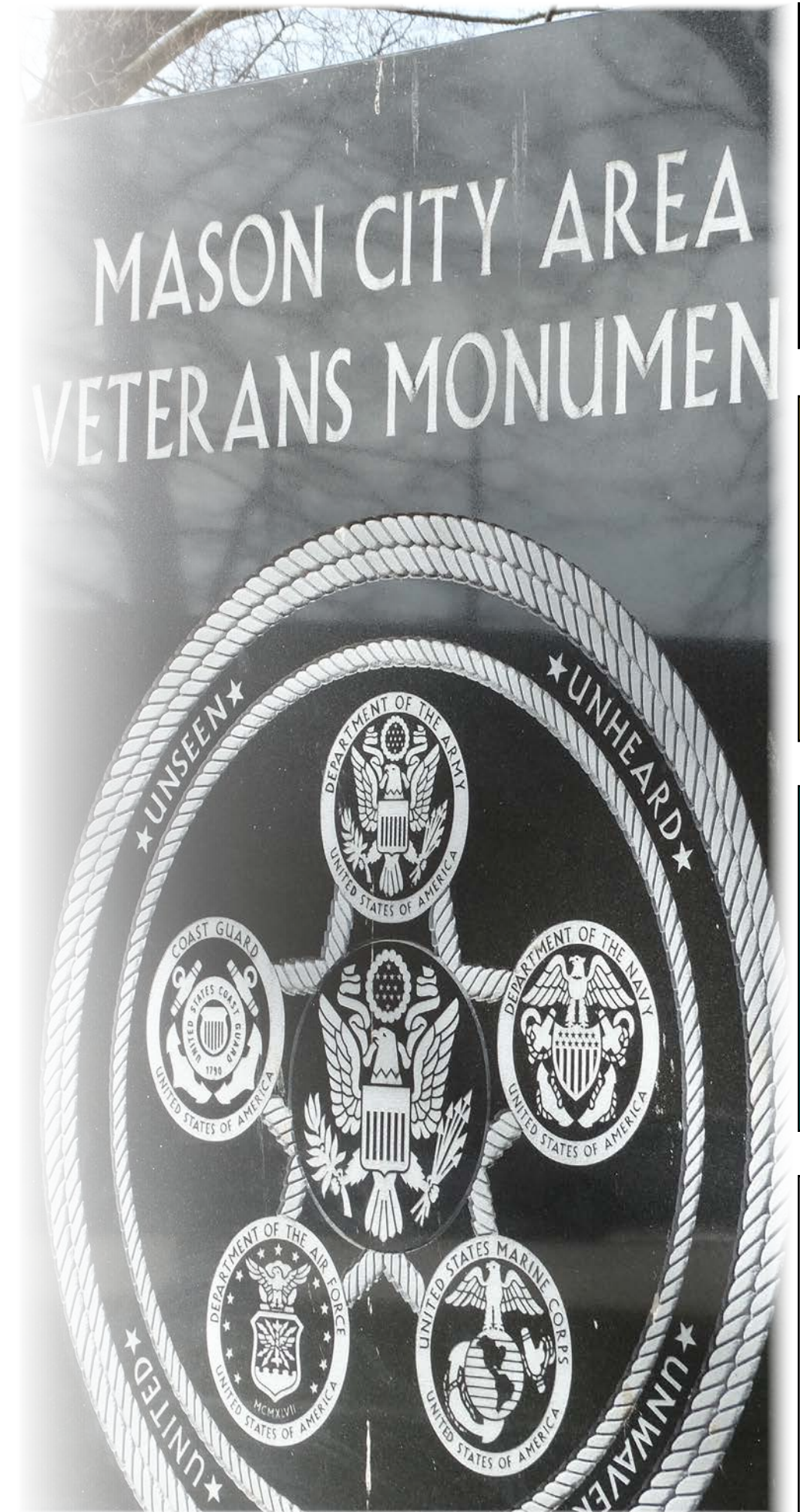
Evaluation

Condition: The existing building is well maintained.

Positives: Good central location and reasonable access to main arterial and collector streets.

Negatives: As the City continues to grow, primarily to the west, east, and south, an additional station may be needed.

Expressed Needs: Additional apparatus space is needed. The building is not energy efficient and needs many up-grades, such as new flooring throughout the building. Also, the driveways should be replaced. The building should be more handicap accessible.



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Modifications/Priorities from a planning perspective

Short Term: The need for additional apparatus space, handicap accessible areas, and replacement of driveways are needs that should be investigated and evaluated by the appropriate City staff and representatives.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be reviewed and evaluated by the appropriate City representatives. Perhaps a community service feasibility study should be considered to determine a potential additional fire station location.

MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

Location/Description: The Mason City Municipal Airport is located approximately one mile east of Interstate 35 from exit number 194. The airport is on the north side of Highway 122, a divided four-lane highway from Mason City to the interstate. Although the airport is approximately 2.5 miles west of the City's corporate boundary, it is owned and operated by the City.

Year built/History: The airport was originally constructed in 1945 as an emergency landing facility during World War

II. The original administration building was a farmhouse constructed in 1946 that was expanded in the 1950's. The FAA's Flight Service Station (FSS) was introduced at the air- port in 1962 and the second passenger terminal building was opened in 1966. The airport has expanded in recent years to its present size of 1102 acres, and is currently served by Mesaba Airlines, a Northwest Airlin affiliate, for commercial service.

No. of stories and sq. ft.: The existing gross square footage for the three floors of the passenger terminal facility totals 30,140 square feet, which includes a partial basement. The terminal building was remodeled in 1990. The terminal building annex (formerly known as the FAA building) is an adjacent two-story building constructed in 1962. There is a one-story connection between the two buildings that is used as a baggage area. There is no interior access between the buildings.

Type of construction: The passenger terminal building and the adjacent terminal building annex are both constructed of brick on concrete framed structures with one-way concrete joist framing.

Parking: There are several adequate parking areas avail- able; short-term areas for passenger drop off and pick up, long-term areas for extended terms, and special parking areas for rental vehicles.

ADA compliant: The public areas of the terminal building are handicap accessible. However, the terminal building annex is not handicap accessible. The airport master plan anticipates that this building will be demolished and a new facility constructed.

Personnel: A staff of six maintains the City's operations of the airport. In addition there are numerous personnel involved with the fixed based operator, airline, Transportation Security Administration, Federal Aviation Administration Facility Sector Office, car rental, and bus line.

Functions: The Federal Aviation Administration has classified the Mason City Municipal Airport as a commercial service airport, which serves the north central Iowa region. The airport currently provides commercial, corporate and general aviation services. The airport does not have an air traffic control tower, and is referred to as an uncontrolled airfield. The airport is open 24 hours a day.

Aircraft requiring air traffic control directions use the Air Traffic Route Control Center, located in Minneapolis.

Terminal Building

Basement: The partial basement of the terminal building has an area of 6,247 square feet and provides airport support spaces such as mechanical and storage rooms.

1st floor: The first floor is 10,147 square feet and is where the passenger counter areas, security areas, restroom facilities, and a restaurant are located. There is a one-story space between the terminal building and terminal annex building that is used as the baggage claim input area.



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2nd floor: The second floor is 3,969 square feet and provides space for the airport administration offices, one conference room, and TSA offices.

Terminal Building Annex

Basement: The basement area of 2,014 square feet provides support space such as mechanical and storage rooms.

1st Floor: The first floor is 2,392 square feet and provides space for the fixed base operator offices and pilot lounge.

2nd Floor: The second floor is 1,958 square feet and provides space for airport maintenance offices and FAA Airways Facility Sector Field Offices.

Note: An Airport Master Plan Update was completed in 2002

Evaluation

Condition: The airport buildings and facilities are in good condition.

Positives: The airport is conveniently located for direct access from I-35 and from Highway 122. Because the airport is approximately 2.5 miles west of Mason City, the associated airport noise is far enough away not to have a direct impact on the City. The Airport Commission does a very good job of keeping the airport eligible for available federal and state funding to assist with improvements. Typically, federal funding for improvements arrange from 90 % to 95%, requiring a 5% to 10% local match. The airport budget is part of the regular Mason City budget.

Negatives: Land acquisitions are necessary whenever the FAA requires changes in the runway safety area approach. The Airport Commission has negotiated with adjacent property owners to acquire needed property and easements.

Expressed Needs: The needs of the airport have been clearly identified in the Master Plan.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: Utilize the updated Master Plan to schedule improvements.

Long Term: The Airport Commission and the Mason City Council should investigate and consider the possibility and benefits of regionalizing the airport.

MACNIDER ART MUSEUM: 303 2ND STREET SE

Location/Description: The museum is located two blocks east of the downtown shopping mall. The museum is adjacent to and just east of the City Public Library.

Year built/History: The building was originally built by the Burr Keeler Family in 1920 as a residence. It was purchased by General Hanford MacNider and gifted to the City of Mason City in 1964 to be used specifically as an art museum. Several additions have been made to the original building.

No. of stories and sq. ft.: The building is 2 ½ stories with 20,146 square feet plus 1,729 square feet in the basement area. There are attic storage areas.

Type of construction: The Tudor Revival style building is brick on masonry.

Capacity: The main two floors of the building can accommodate up to 1,000 persons for special events.

Parking: There is on-street parking in front of the building, and there is a large public parking lot to the west.

ADA Accessible: All of the public areas are accessible, except the basement ceramics studio. There is a small elevator serving the first and second floors.

Functions: The museum offers exhibitions, tours, classes, lectures, receptions, performances, films, festivals, art camps, and special events. There are seven permanent galleries, two temporary galleries, a ceramic studio, two art studio classrooms, a dark room, art storage, a reference library, and an event room with a seating capacity of approximately 100 people and with audio/visual capability. Also, there is a retail sales shop available.

Collection: The museum has an American Fine Art collection and a ceramics collection. Also, the world famous Bill Baird puppets are on display. Traveling exhibits are also shown.

Personnel: There are six full-time personnel, three part-time workers, and contract workers for special projects and programs.

Evaluation

Condition: The building is stable, but requires on-going inside and outside maintenance. It has a new membrane on the flat roof, and an HVAC system upgrade in progress.

Positives: The Tudor design of the building and the specialty cedar shake roofing makes a memorable appearance to all those who have visited the museum.

Negatives: The two-block distance from the downtown area makes it difficult to see the museum from the most traveled streets. Some additional directional signage would be very helpful on the streets.

Expressed Needs: The specialty roof is cedar shakes and re- placement is expected within 10 years. The outdoor lighting is limited, and needs additional sidewalk light poles. Also, updating of the driveway cobblestones and landscaping is needed.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

ELMWOOD/ST. JOSEPHS CEMETERY: 1224 S. WASHINGTON AVENUE

Location/Description: The cemetery is located between

S. Federal Avenue and S. Monroe Avenue on the north side of 15th Street SW. This area is approximately 100 acres between the two streets, and can be accessed from the east and the west. There is 10-acre parcel of land on the west side of S. Monroe Avenue that is available for future expansion, if needed.

Year built/History: The cemetery became a part of the City in 1948 when two separate entities, the Elmwood Cemetery and the St. Joseph Cemetery deeded their land to the City of Mason City.

No. of stories and sq. ft.: All of the buildings are single story. The maintenance and storage buildings were built in 1970 and the office building in 1980. The office building is 700 square Feet and the maintenance building and the storage buildings are each 1,680 square feet.

Type of construction: The office building is siding and wood on wood frame. The maintenance and storage buildings are concrete block.

Plots: 18,781 plots have been used. At the current rate of use the cemetery has space available for perhaps 100 years

Type: (above, below, crypt): The cemetery permits all types of interment; including cremation urns.

Amenities (irrigation, etc): Most of the roads have been blacktopped for all-weather use. There is a pond that functions as a storm retention pond, and adds to the pleasant appearance of the cemetery. There are many trees and some landscaping. A water system is provided for garden hoses and as a service to visitors to water their flowers.

Functions: The cemetery provides a place for interment for individuals and families.

The office: The cemetery records are kept in this building, and staff provides information regarding the cemetery's services to the community.

The maintenance and storage buildings: These buildings provide shelter for the cemetery equipment and a place to put items for future cemetery use.

Personnel: There are four full-time personnel and one part-time personnel.

Evaluation

Condition: The cemetery is in very good condition over all. The buildings, grounds and equipment are well maintained.

Positives: The location has convenient access without competing with highway traffic.

Negatives: The entrances to the cemetery are not well identified and lighted. There are too many trees on the property. Many of the larger trees need to be removed or trimmed. The south fence is in poor shape.

Expressed Needs: The shop and storage buildings need updating. A tree removal and tree-trimming program is needed. Three thousand lineal feet of chain link fence needs to be replaced. A new entrance sign, landscape improvements, and new lighting are needed at the east entrance.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident. However, a new entrance sign, landscaping and lighting improvements at the east entrance and the replacement of 3,000 lineal feet of chain link fence are important for safety and appearance. The west entrance should have similar improvements.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

PUBLIC LIBRARY: 225 2ND STREET NE

Location/Description: The library is located one block east of the downtown shopping mall, at the corner of S. Pennsylvania Avenue and 2nd Street SE. The large long building can be easily seen from the street and access to the Library is convenient from S. Pennsylvania Avenue or 2nd Street SE.

Year built/History: The site was given to the City by the MacNider family and the library was constructed in 1939.

No. of stories and sq. ft.: The east end of the building is two stories and the west end of the building is one story. The first floor and second floor area contain 44,923 square feet plus a basement area of 12,554 square feet.

Type of construction: Brick on masonry.

Parking: There is adequate parking available near the building. The public parking lot serves the many meetings held in the Mason City Room in the west wing of the library, and also is convenient to the MacNider Art Museum east of the Library.

ADA compliant: Much of the building is accessible, except for the older restrooms, and the elevator, which may not accommodate larger wheelchairs.

Functions: The library provides public access to materials for study and enjoyment. There is a children's library section on the main floor of the building. A major portion of the first and second floor area is used for book shelving, and for public study areas and reading areas. The west wing provides space for the Mason City Archives, which is said to be one of the most complete collections in Iowa. The Mason City Room is also in the west wing of the building. It has a capacity of 200 people and is used for City Council meetings and many other public gatherings.

Circulation and Collections: In 2004 there were 155,572 items in circulation, and 112,209 items in the collection.

Technology: There are 14 computer stations available for public use, and the local library is connected to other state and regional libraries.



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Personnel: There are 14 full-time personnel and four part-time personnel at the Library.

Evaluation

Condition: Structure is sound.

Positives: Excellent location near the downtown area and central to the population of the community. The building is a landmark structure overlooking Willow Creek and has ample, convenient parking.

Negatives: The interior and mechanical systems are out-dated.

Expressed Needs: Interior renovation; better grounds maintenance, and updates for the mechanical and electrical systems. A consultant is currently (2006) evaluating the library to offer renovation and updating ideas to the interior and improvements to the exterior. The intent is to maintain the historic character of the structure while improving services, security, and energy efficiency.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by the appropriate City representatives.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Several organizations, both public and private, are directly involved in historic preservation and historic recognition in the community. For example, the City has an appointed Historic Preservation Commission that operates with City staff support. Private organizations concentrate on specific historic architectural preservation. The Stockman House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, was restored and is supervised by a local foundation. Wright on the Park, Inc., a local non-profit organization, is restoring the Park Inn Hotel, also designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright on the Park, Inc. is interested in also restoring the adjacent Wright-designed City National Bank. The River City Society for Historic Preservation provides annual recognition of people and projects that have contributed to the preservation and promotion of historical features of Mason City.

Downtown Mason City recently has been recognized as a Cultural and Entertainment District by the Iowa Department of Economic Development, Division of Cultural Affairs. Such a designation makes the City eligible for certain types of financial assistance. Downtown Mason City was selected as an Iowa Main Street Program community two years ago.

The Mason City Archives is a research and storage library located in the west wing of the Mason City Public Library. The North Iowa Genealogy Society has an office and a research library on the second floor of the same building. Mason City has a dedicated group of individuals and organizations that create a strong sense of place and community. Collectively, their programs provide recognition, promotion, and encouragement for historic preservation in the Mason City area.

EVALUATION

Mason City is very fortunate to have several buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, and to have other unique historic examples that attract many research visitors and tourists to Mason City. The result is a sense of community pride and a potential for additional economic development benefits for the community. Current programs by the Mason City Downtown Association are being offered for further historic preservation improvements.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: Encourage historic preservation activities by both public and private individuals and organizations. Historic attractions and cultural tourism are growing forms of economic development.

Long Term: The community should continue to support the importance of historic preservation of Mason City's unique architectural history.



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MEETING HALL

Mason City's primary civic meeting place is currently served by the Mason City Room in the west wing of the Public Library. Use of the meeting room is administered and monitored by the library personnel. There is a large auditorium facility at the North Iowa Area Community College in eastern Mason City that holds approximately 1,200 people for large-scale attractions and events. There are other meeting places made available by some of the businesses, schools, churches, and other organizations in Mason City. Space in The Music Man Square is often used by groups and organizations for meetings, conferences, and celebrations. Not all meeting halls listed here maintained by the City.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: Continue to make good use of the public and private meeting places available to the citizens of Mason City.

Long Term: It may be desirable and feasible to construct a conference/convention facility in the downtown area to accommodate large meeting groups, presentations and trade shows.

PARKS MAINTENANCE FACILITIES: 802 3RD STREET NE

Location/Description: The park maintenance office and buildings are located between 3rd and 4th Streets NE, east of North Hampshire Avenue. Access is possible from both 3rd and 4th Streets.

Year built/History: The existing office building was constructed in 1975. An attached storage garage was constructed in 1975, and a carpenter shop was constructed in 1977.

No of stories and sq. ft.: All of the existing buildings are single story structures. The office/garage is 3,448 square feet; the storage garage is 4,960 square feet; and the carpenter shop is 1,200 square feet. There are eight parking bays under cover.

Type of construction: The office/garage is stone masonry on concrete block; the storage garage is wood frame with metal siding; and the carpenter shop is wood frame.

Functions: The Park Maintenance Superintendent's office is at this location, and all of the park maintenance vehicles and equipment is located here. There are 39 City parks and trail systems to be maintained, including the buildings and facilities in these parks.

Parking: Existing parking is somewhat scattered nearby and adjacent to the existing buildings. There are not many visitors and parking spaces are available near the office entrance

ADA compliant: Yes

Vehicles / Equipment: There are 14 vehicles and various items of maintenance equipment.

Personnel: There are seven full-time personnel in the Park Maintenance Division, plus several part-time seasonal maintenance personnel.

Evaluation

Condition: The City parks are generally in good to fair condition, depending upon the season and degree of usage.

Positives: Mason City's 282 acres of community parks provide a level of service of approximately 9.6 acres per 1,000 residents, which is just slightly greater than the recommended level of service by National Recreation and Parks Association.

Negatives: All parks require on-going maintenance. There have been several cases of park vandalism, which is both damaging and frustrating.

Expressed needs: The future parkland needs in Chapter 4, Parks and Recreation, indicates that if the City population increases as forecast in Chapter 3, Community Growth and Land Use, there will be a future deficit in parks, particularly in neighborhood parks.



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Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: Chapter 4, Parks and Recreation will indicate where additional neighborhood parks may be needed in the near future. The City should monitor opportunities in those areas.

Long Term: The City should look at the overall commitment and budget necessary to continue a good park program in Mason City. An adequate and functional City park program is one of the main features to serve existing citizens and to attract new people to the Mason City community.

PARKS: RECREATION FACILITIES: 22 N. GEORGIA AVENUE, MOHAWK SQUARE

Location/Description: The City currently leases space on the second floor of Mohawk Square, the old Mason City High School. The building is now privately owned and several types of public service offices are located there.

Functions: The recreation staff provides many programs for year round activities. Programs include family activities, adult and youth activities, individual sports programs, health and wellness, and mentoring.

The recreation office manages the Aquatic Center, the High- land Park Golf Course, the Margaret MacNider Campground, and several ball fields.

Parking: Parking is available only on-street Parking convenience depends upon the time of day and other activities going on in the building.

ADA compliant: Handicap access to the office is available by using the building elevator to the second floor.

Vehicles/Equipment: There are two vehicles and various types of recreation equipment.

Personnel: There are four personnel in the park recreation office, two personnel for operation of the Golf Course, and one for Municipal Band. However, in the summer months, there are usually about 19 part-time personnel to assist with work.

Evaluation

Condition: The City's recreation program is very comprehensive. There seem to be many family and individual participants, and many willing volunteers to help in the summer months.

Positives: New master plans have been prepared for the update of Margaret MacNider Campgrounds and for the update and expansion of the Frederick Hanford Softball/ Soccer Complex.

Negatives: Several of the existing parks need additional lighting and updated recreation buildings and equipment in order to continue their programs.

Expressed needs: The two new Campgrounds and Soft- ball/Soccer Complex master plans indicate specific needs for the upgrade and improvements for each of them. In addition, there are needs at the Aquatic Center and at the Highland Park Golf Course. Other needs are listed by the staff in other parks in order to continue the variety of year- round activities.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short term: Funding will be needed for the proposed improvements at the MacNider Campground, and for the land acquisition and proposed improvements at the Frederick Hanford Softball and Soccer Complex.

Long term: The City should look at the overall commitment and budget necessary to continue a good recreation program in all City parks. This is important to the current citizens in the community, and to attract new people to Mason City.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

The City Engineering Department, located in City Hall, is responsible for the design of public utilities, which includes streets, water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer. This work is done by the engineering staff, or is outsourced to private engineering firms. The City Engineer is responsible for the supervision of the installation of the infrastructure. Once the construction is completed, the facility is turned over to the City Operations and Maintenance Department. The City Engineer is also responsible for the water treatment plant operations while City Operations and Maintenance is responsible for water distribution, storage, water reclamation (waste water treatment), and solid waste collection. In general, the Engineering Department is responsible for the design and construction of facilities while the Operations and Maintenance Department operates the facilities.

Personnel: Overall, there are approximately 70 personnel in the Operations and Maintenance Department, which includes streets, water distribution, water reclamation, sanitary sewer lines and lift stations, storm sewer lines, and residential solid waste collection.

STREET SERVICES AND DESIGN

Location/Description/Function: Street design services are provided through the City Engineering Department. This office either provides the work or supervises and inspects the contract work done by others.

Personnel: There are seven personnel in the Engineering Department, including Traffic Control.

STREET SERVICES AND MAINTENANCE

Location/Description/Function: Street maintenance is part of the Operations and Maintenance Department located at 725 N. Massachusetts Avenue. Also, large equipment maintenance facilities and construction supplies are located here.

Personnel: There are 19 personnel assigned to the various street maintenance duties.

Evaluation

Condition: The City Operation and Maintenance facilities were consolidated on N. Massachusetts Avenue in 2002. A new office complex and large equipment storage facility were constructed to facilitate the consolidation of the division. A new salt and sand storage facility was constructed in the fall of 2005.

Positives: The location is reasonably central to a majority of the City, but that will change as the community continues to grow to the east, south, and west. There is access to the present location from the north and from the south.

Negatives: The access routes to the N. Massachusetts Avenue location pass through residential areas, requiring heavy equipment to use residential streets.

Expressed Needs: No immediate needs were expressed.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident.

Long Term: It would be prudent to begin planning for a relocation of the Operations and Maintenance facility, especially with the anticipated city growth to the east, south, and west in the next 20 years.



WATER SERVICE AND WATER TREATMENT

Location/Description/Function: The Water Treatment Plant is located at 339 13th Street NE. The treatment plant was recently expanded and updated. Its current capacity is 9.4 million gallons per day (MGD), the average daily demand is 5.6 MGD, and the maximum daily demand is 8.6 MGD. Maintenance is done in accordance with the operations and maintenance manual.

Personnel: There are 11 personnel involved with water supply.

Evaluation

Condition: The condition is excellent due to the recent update and expansion.

Positives: The water quality has been enhanced and radium reduced.

Negatives: None

Expressed needs: Some additional staff may be needed.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

WATER WELLS

Location/Description/Function: The wells are located in the southeast and northeast areas of the community. The City's water supply comes from nine wells. All of the wells are encased from the surface to a depth of 960 ft. The average depth of the wells is 1,230 ft. Maintenance is provided as needed.

Evaluation

Condition: All wells are encased and have been reconditioned in recent years.

Positives: The current number of wells is adequate to provide the supply needed.

Negatives: Two of the wells need further development.

Expressed needs: Future plant expansion will require additional wells.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident.

Long Term: Additional wells will be needed as development growth occurs. These needs should be discussed with the appropriate City representatives.

WATER STORAGE

Location/Description/Function: There are four elevated water storage facilities and one underground storage facility. The four elevated facilities are 2.5 MG (million gallons) and the underground facility is 5.5 MG. The four water towers are placed in the community where needed to provide the necessary water pressure to serve the land uses in those areas. The underground storage facility is near the Water Treatment Plant. Maintenance is conducted as required.



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Evaluation

Condition: The water storage facilities are in good condition

Positives: Water storage provides for adequate fire protection in the City and meets Environmental Protection Agency and Iowa Department of Natural Resources requirements.

Negatives: A couple of the tanks still have lead based paint.

Expressed needs: None were listed.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: The City is currently adding a 1 MG storage facility on 43rd Street SW. This is part of the City's economic development efforts in that area.

Long Term: The long term needs will be driven by future development.

WATER DISTRIBUTION

Location/Description/Function: The developed area of the community is generally served by existing water distribution lines, with a few exceptions. The main lines are typically 16 inches and the distribution lines from the main lines are typically a minimum of 4 inches with some larger sizes as needed. The construction of the water lines is cast iron, ductile iron, or PVC as required by code. A main line 16-inch loop was recently extended into the south annexation area. Maintenance is as required, and as funding allows.

Personnel: There are eight personnel involved with water distribution.

Evaluation

Condition: The condition of the water distribution lines ranges from poor to excellent, depending upon the age of the lines.

Positives: The more recent water lines are in excellent condition.

Negatives: Many of the older lines are in poor condition.

Expressed needs: Continual maintenance is required.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident. However, the City's codes need to be reviewed to assure that new development is providing the water services needed.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

WATER RECLAMATION

Location/Description/Function: The Water Reclamation Plant is located on S. Birch Drive adjacent to the Winnebago River. There are several required treatment facilities at that location on several acres of land. These facilities were up- dated a few years ago, and there is a current study being done to see what may be needed due to the newly annexation area in south Mason City.

Personnel: There are 15 personnel involved with sewage treatment

Evaluation

Condition: The current facilities are in good condition and meet the required state codes.

Positives: The City has maintained acceptable water reclamation facilities, and is planning to do what is necessary to provide service to the newly annexation area.

Negatives: This type of facility is expensive to construct and to maintain.

Expressed needs: Continual maintenance is required. Substantial funds will be needed if the existing facilities are to be enlarged and improved.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: Currently (2006), there is a facility plan being developed to determine the needs of the facility for the next 20 years. Upon completion of the study and permit approval by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, it may be necessary to upgrade parts of the Water Reclamation facility.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

SANITARY SEWER SERVICES AND LINES

Location/Description/Function: The developed area of the community is generally served by existing sanitary sewer lines, with a few exceptions. The main lines are typically 24 inches and the collection lines are eight inches, with some sizes in between these sizes as needed. The construction of the sewer lines is clay and plastic, or as required by code. Maintenance as required, and as funding allows. Combined sanitary/storm sewers are not allowed.

Personnel: There are two personnel specifically involved with sanitary sewer maintenance, with assistance from others or contractors as needed.

Evaluation

Condition: The condition of the sanitary sewer lines is poor to excellent, depending upon the age of the lines.

Positives: The newer lines are mostly on the west side of the community, and in the newer developed areas of the community.

Negatives: The older lines are in the downtown area and the older areas of the community. As in most other communities, inflow and infiltration testing and studies are conducted in portions of the City.

Expressed needs: Continual maintenance is required.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: Sanitary sewer services will be extended into the new annexation area to the south as development occurs. The cost is shared by the developer. No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident.

Long Term: Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

Sanitary Lift Stations

Location/Description/Functions: There are currently two sanitary sewer lift stations. One is on the west side of S. Pierce Avenue and on the north side of 15th Street SW. The other is on Lakeview Drive on the west side of the community. The Lakeview Drive station was recently relocated and rebuilt.

Evaluation

Condition: The condition of the lift stations is good to excellent.

Positives: Both stations have automated equipment.

Negatives: None listed.

Expressed needs: None listed.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: A new lift station for the new annexation area to the south is currently being designed.

Long Term: Additional need will be determined by future development. These needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

STORM SEWER SERVICE AND SYSTEM

Location/Description/Functions: The topography of Mason City slopes downward generally from northwest to southeast. The City is fortunate that five creeks collect storm water and flow into the Winnebago River. The overall drain- age area of the river is approximately 550 square miles. This large drainage area sometimes causes flooding in low areas of the City. The City uses Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps to determine the flood plains, flood ways, and elevations within the planning and construction areas of the City. Most of the developed area of the City is served by a storm sewer system, or is designed to surface flow into the river or into one of the several creeks. The more urban areas of the City have storm sewers designed to provide street drainage. The more rural areas of the City generally use open ditches. The size of storm sewer pipes range from 12 inches to 48 inches depending upon the area to be served. Maintenance of these pipes is an on-going responsibility of the City.

Personnel: Street personnel also provide storm sewer maintenance.

Evaluation

Condition: The general condition of the storm sewer lines is good to fair.

Positives: Most of the developed areas have storm sewer drainage with some exceptions in lower elevation areas.

Negatives: Occasional flooding has caused problems in

Expressed needs: Additional flood prevention and control improvements are needed in some already developed areas of the City. A drainage district study should be conducted in certain areas to determine the extent of problems and to identify improvements.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: The City is currently studying recent flood area problems and working with the Army Corps of Engineers to update the information needed to make the necessary improvements. The City needs to utilize the information from the existing drainage district studies when any further development is happening in one of those districts. City codes and ordinances need to be reviewed to assure that new development is providing the storm sewer and drain- age design needed.

Long Term: Based upon the results of the flood control studies and analyses the City needs to prepare a phased improvement plan to solve these problems; and request funding assistance from federal and state sources to help pay for the necessary improvements. On-going maintenance will be required. Other expressed needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

SOLID WASTE SERVICE AND SYSTEM

Location/Description/Functions: The City's solid waste system provides pickup of residential solid waste, yard waste, bulk items, and recyclable items. City Operation and Maintenance employees collect solid waste and recycling items in separate trucks on a weekly basis. A separate recycling materials tub is provided by the City to households to separate these items from the waste stream. During the spring, summer, and fall seasons, yard waste items are collected in recyclable bags. All solid waste and yard waste materials are trucked by the City to the Landfill of North Iowa, which is approximately two miles southwest of the City. The recyclable materials are delivered to a local recycling contractor located southeast of the City. The City provides a large bulk item pickup once per year, and those items are taken to the Landfill of North Iowa.

Commercial and industrial waste collection and recycling is done by private service contractors. They dispose of their materials in the same manner as the City.

Personnel: There are 12 personnel working with refuse and solid waste materials.

Evaluation

Condition: The City has nine vehicles to provide the solid waste system services. Most of these vehicles are in operable condition, while others are being repaired or serviced. The equipment and services are good.

Positives: The waste collection services are available to residential properties—up to three-unit dwellings. Each quadrant of the City has a designated weekly pickup day.

Negatives: The City pickup services are at the curb only.

Expressed needs: None listed.

Modifications/Priorities and suggestions from a planning perspective

Short Term: No planning needs related to immediate structures or land area acquisition are evident.

Long Term: As the City grows and develops future solid waste service needs should be discussed and evaluated by appropriate City representatives.

CITY PERSONNEL

There are 256 full-time City employees.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

INTRODUCTION

Mason City has faced challenges posed by changing environmental conditions, including recent flood events in 2008 and 2016, and a number of tornadoes. These events indicate the importance of proactively addressing potential hazards to ensure that residents and homes are protected in the future. By integrating environmental resilience into this comprehensive plan, Mason City can ensure that land use policies and plans for future growth consider all possible environmental risks. This section assesses hazards that affect Mason City, and discusses the successful response to past events that sets a potential framework for future response.

It is critical that Mason City focuses on environmental resilience by employing hazard mitigation activities before, during, and after a disaster. Long-term resilience will ensure that Mason City implements effective mitigation measures before a disaster, is prepared for unexpected risks, and responds to and recovers from disasters quickly. It is important for Mason City to consider environmental resilience in its comprehensive plan to ensure that future land use plans and policies consider all environmental risks.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

CERRO GORDO MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Cerro Gordo County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies potential natural and man-made hazards, and provides mitigation strategies to reduce the county's long-term vulnerability. The plan uses a scale from 1 to 9 (9 being highest risk) to score potential hazards that can cause considerable damage or disrupt daily lives. The weighted scores are based on the probability, magnitude and severity, warning time, and duration of past hazard incidents. The plan rates flash flooding, thunderstorms, windstorms, river flooding, severe winter storms, tornados, and hailstorms as high priority hazards for Mason City (Table 18). Considering the highest risk events is important for identifying types of events for which Mason City should prioritize mitigation and response. Based on this risk assessment, flash flooding, thunderstorms, and windstorms pose the most risk for Mason City. This indicates that future planning should be focused on these event types.

Table 18: High-Risk Hazards for Mason City Based on Weighted Scores (Source: Cerro Gordo County Courthouse, compiled by author)

High-Risk Disaster	Final Weighted Score
Flash Flood	3.1
Thunderstorms and Lightning	3.1
Windstorm	3.1
River Flooding	3.0
Severe Winter Storm	2.9
Tornado	2.8
Hailstorm	2.8

Important Definitions:

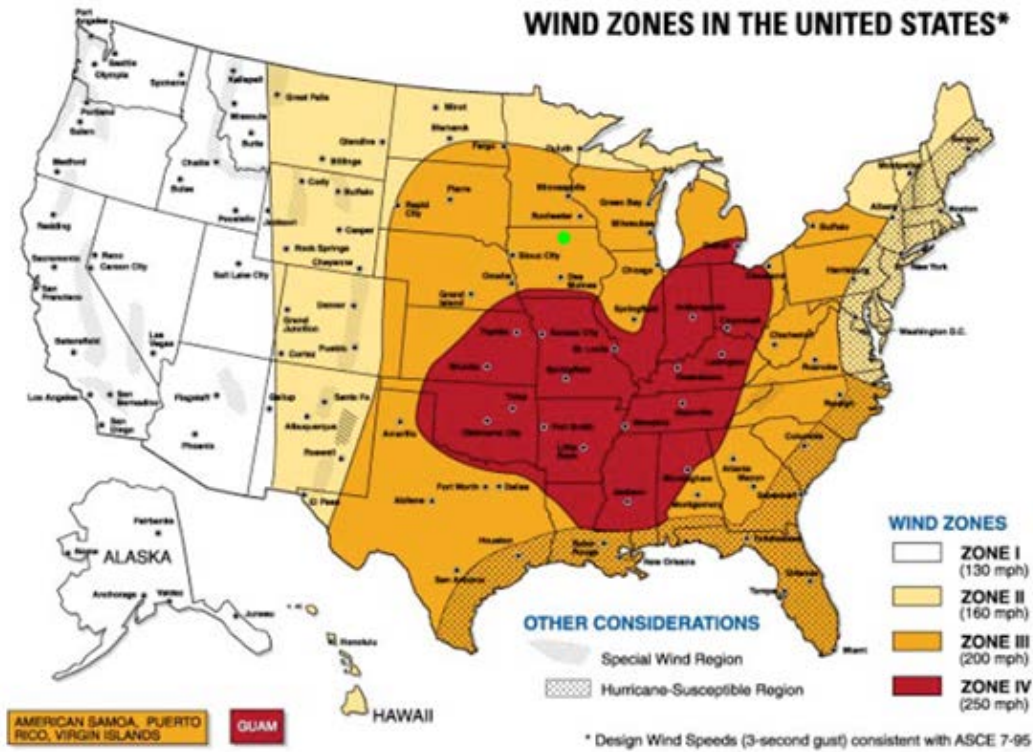
Total Maximum Daily Load: A value of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards set by the Clean Water Act (USEPA).

Preserve: A land or water area maintained in its natural condition or an area with rare geological, archaeological, scenic or historical value (Iowa Department of Natural Resources).

WIND ZONE RISK AND GUIDANCE

Given that wind poses a significant threat the Mason City, it is important to further analyze exposure to windstorms and tornados. Mason City lies within a FEMA's designated Zone III wind zone, which is prone to high wind speeds up to 200 miles per hour (Figure 38). FEMA recommends the use of safe rooms in Zone III as the preferred method of protection from extreme wind hazards. In 2016, FEMA funded tornado safe rooms in Mason City to protect the residents during extreme weather events. One of these rooms is located in Mason City High School, and also serves John Adams Middle School. Another tornado safe room is located at the MacNider Campground, which serves surrounding parks and neighborhoods.

Figure 38: FEMA- designated wind zones in the United States. Mason City is indicated by the green circle (FEMA, 2016).



SURFACE WATER

Under section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, the State of Iowa is required to develop a list of impaired water bodies and submit the list for Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approval every two years. This list recognizes waters that are either polluted or do not meet water quality standards. The EPA removes these water bodies from the 303(d) list once the state establishes a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and pollution falls below the TMDL. (US Environmental Protection Agency, 2016).

Iowa Department of Natural Resources collects impaired stream data which includes Mason City waterways that are polluted and require TMDL limits (Figure 39). The Winnebago River and the southern section of Calmus Creek have a Category 5 impairment and require a TMDL. A TDML study provides an analysis of how much pollution a stream segment can contain and still meet state quality standards.



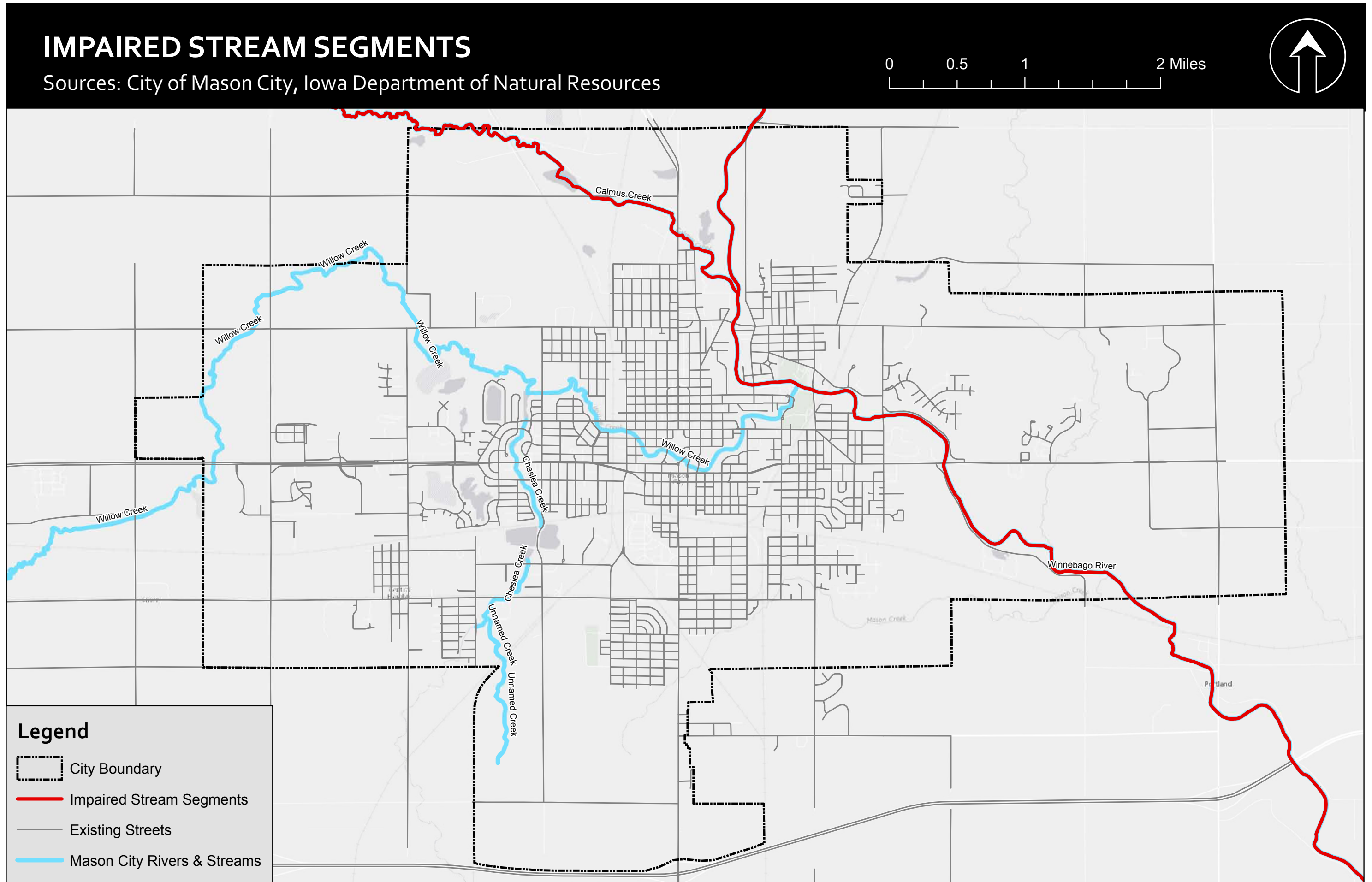
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Figure 39: Waterways under section 303 (d) (Source: IDNR, ESRI)



FLOOD RISK

The risk assessment completed by the Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan also indicates that flash flooding and river flooding are of significant concern, with flash flooding being one of the top hazard risks for Mason City. This risk of flooding results from Mason City's location between two topographic regions, the Plain of Clear Lake and the Winnebago River/Willow Creek drainage basin. Within Mason City limits there is a total of 31 miles of streams, including the Winnebago River, Ideal Creek, Willow Creek, Calmus Creek, and Mason Creek and its tributaries. The city also contains wetlands that provide wildlife habitat, improve water quality, store floodwaters, and maintain surface water flow during dry periods. Wetlands are low-lying areas that slowly release surface water, rain, snowmelt, groundwater, and flood waters. The water resources identified in Mason City have varying implications for flood events, but all should be considered in future resilience planning.

RESPONSE TO CENTRAL IOWA FLOODS OF 2008

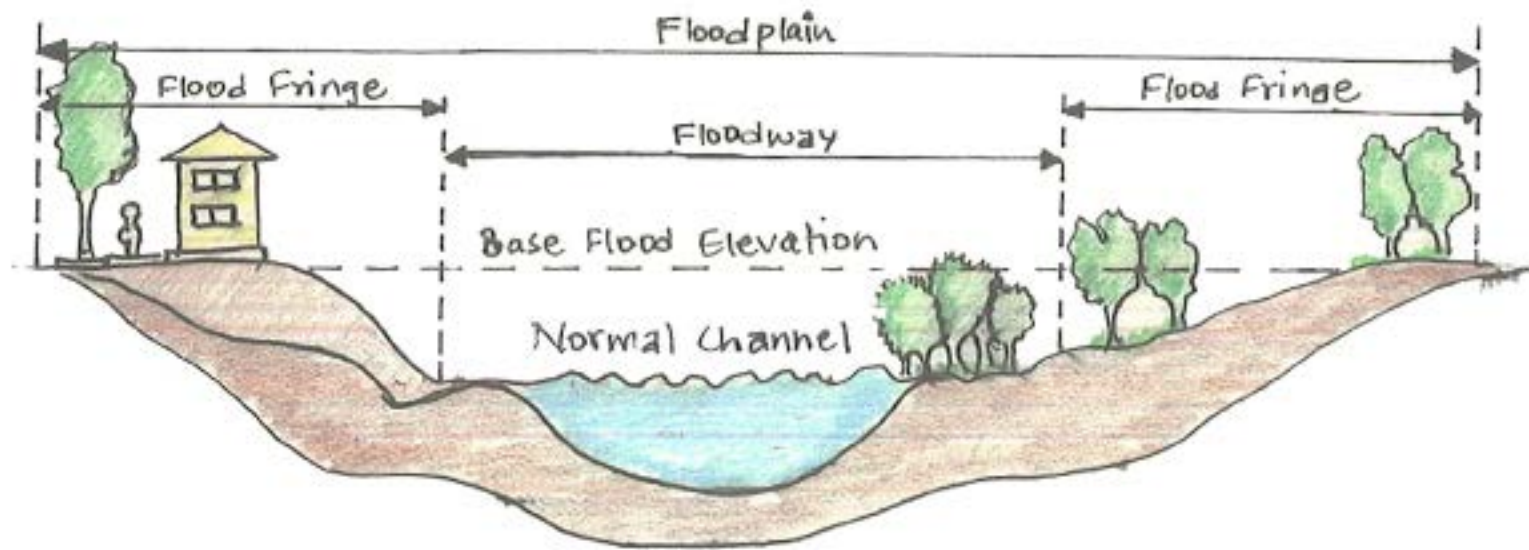
In 2008, Mason City experienced extensive floods that damaged over 1,320 properties throughout the city. This flood event exceeded the one percent floodplain and impacted a variety of land uses, the most affected being suburban residential areas. A floodplain is a low-lying, generally flat area of land next to a river or stream that includes a floodway, the immediate channel of the river, flood fringe and the extended banks of the river (Figure 40). The 2008 floods impacted areas above the one percent floodplain and resulted in millions of dollars in damage.

Important Definitions:

1% floodplain – Area with a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded during a flood event in any given year.

0.2% floodplain – Area with a 0.2% chance of being equaled or exceeded during a flood event in any given year.

Figure 40: Explain of Floodplain Characteristics



As a result of the 2008 flood, the City acquired, demolished, or relocated structures from the floodplain. East Park Place, a historic neighborhood, was greatly affected by the 2008 floods, resulting in the demolition of 28 houses (Figures 41 and 42). Buyouts occurred in other neighborhoods, including Parker’s Woods/West Park Neighborhood, West of Downtown Neighborhood, Elm Drive, 10th Northeast/ 11th Northeast, Oak Park/ Maryland Avenue Neighborhood, Birch Drive Area, Meadowbrook Area, and Norris Youth Softball Complex (Figure 43). Although buyout costs are typically paid with local funds, Mason City was able to secure funding assistance from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Housing and Development (HUD), and from the State of Iowa. Table 19 gives a summary of the buyouts that occurred from 2009 to 2016.

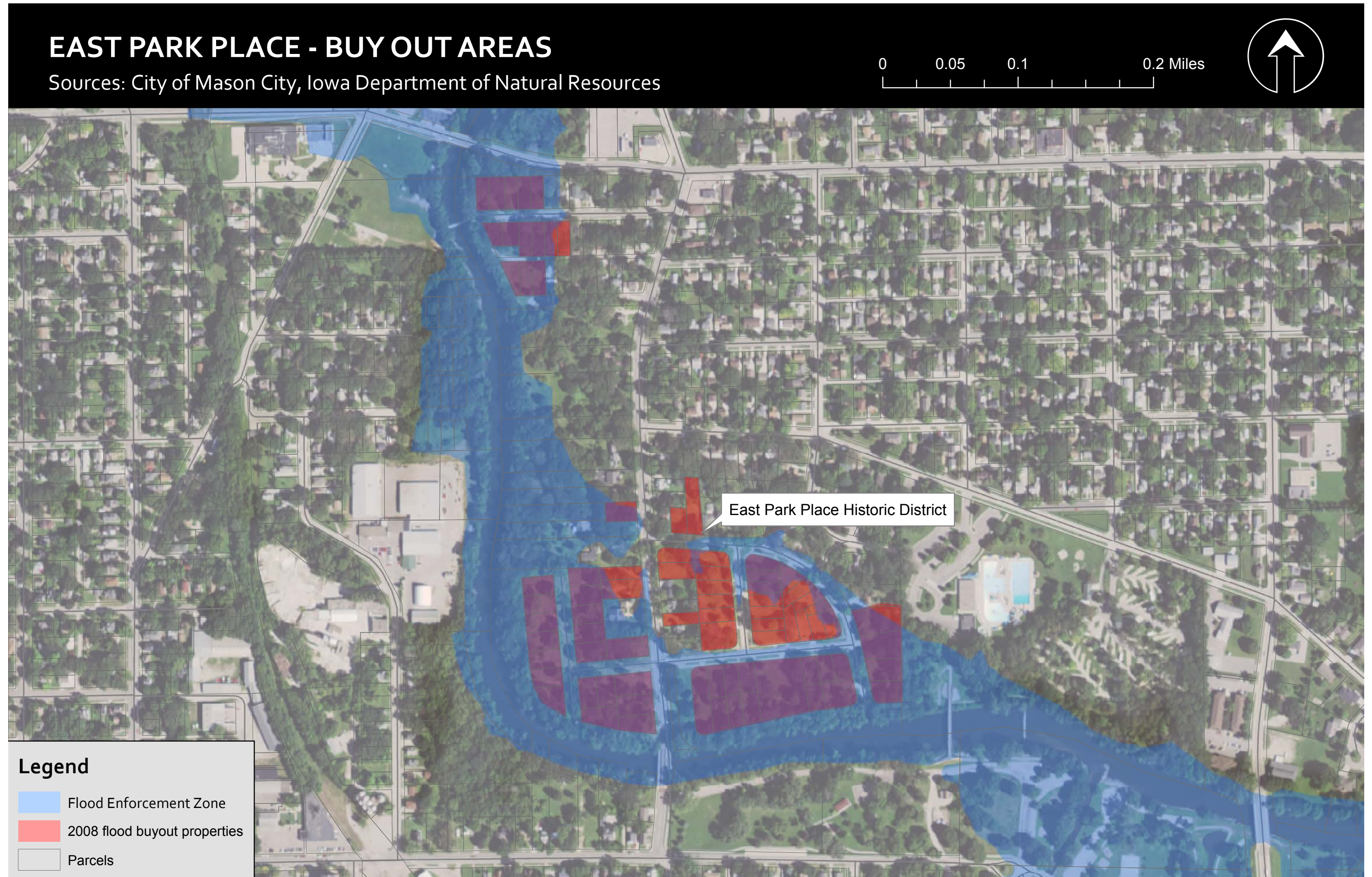
Table 19: Summary of Buyouts; Source: City of Mason City, 2017

Buyout	Funding Source
1	Community Disaster Grant from the State of Iowa
2,3,4	FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (75% of cost), the State of Iowa (10% of the cost), and US Department of Housing and Urban Development (15% of the cost)
5	US Department of Housing and Urban Development
6	FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (75% of cost), the State of Iowa (10% of the cost), and the property owners (15% of the cost)

Figure 41: East Park Neighborhood with sidewalks still in place where residential properties have been demolished



Figure 42: Flood Buyout in the East Park Place Neighborhood



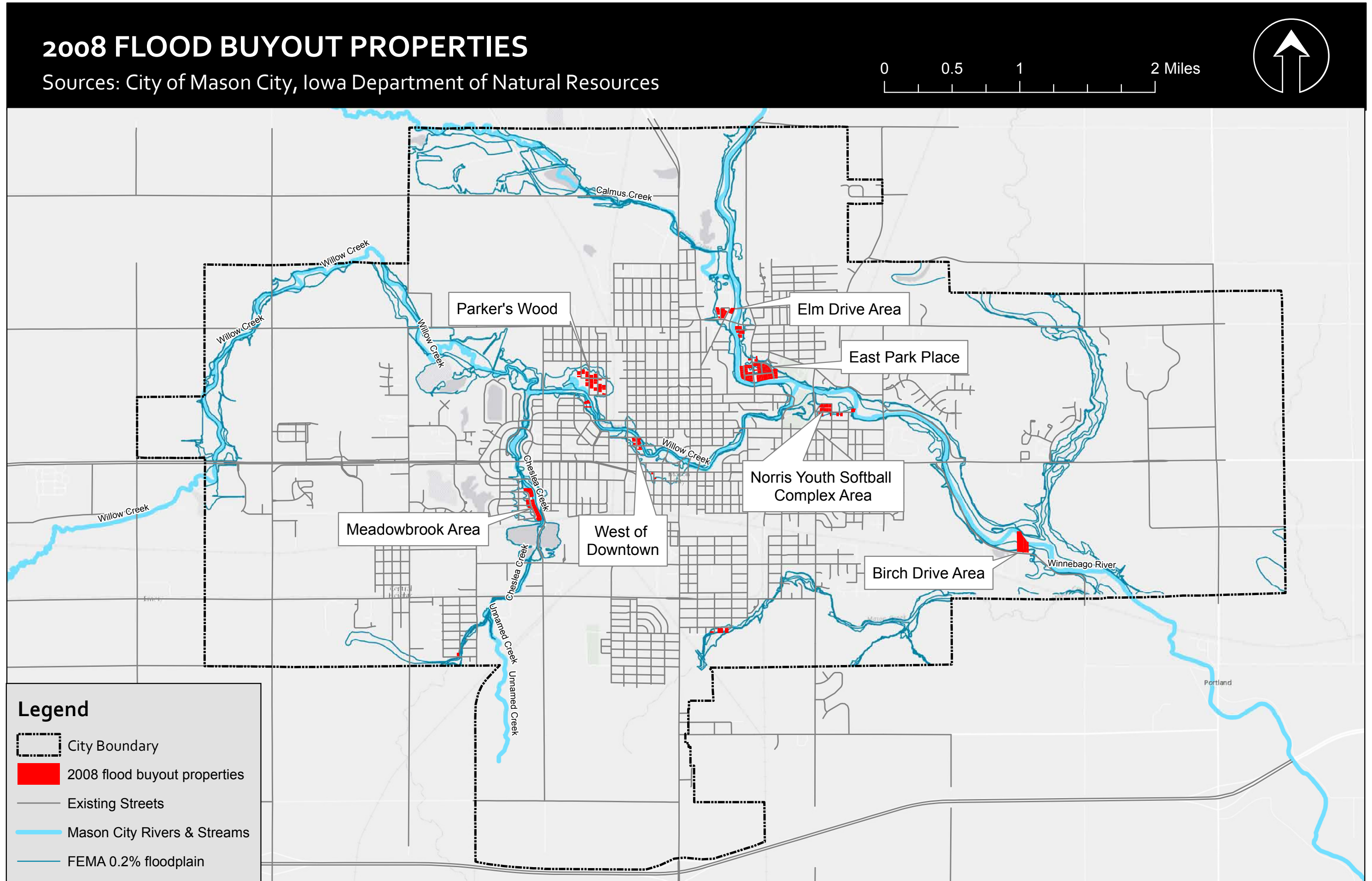
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Figure 43: Properties that were bought out after the 2008 floods



REUSE OF BUYOUT AREAS

Given the buyouts that occurred in flood-prone areas it was necessary to reassess how these lands would be used. Future land use for bought out properties were based on input from an ad hoc committee formed by the City Administrator and representatives from neighborhoods of the buyout areas. The chosen land uses included park space, community gardens, and naturalized or light maintenance areas. The implementation of these land use recommendations are contingent on the availability of funding. Looking forward, Mason City will continue to mitigate future flood hazards by returning potential floodplain regions back to uses that are not susceptible to flood damage.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

In 2010, Mason City adopted flood plain regulations as part of its zoning ordinance. These regulations guide development within the City's mapped flood plains for the purpose of minimizing flood losses. The City's floodplain management regulations preserve floodplain areas, regulate development, and ensure that eligible property owners purchase flood insurance through the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). NFIP is a voluntary incentive program which provides affordable insurance to property owners and supports Mason City's floodplain management regulations. These floodplain regulations aim to reduce the impact of flooding on private and public properties by requiring a local floodplain development permit.

In 2012, FEMA adopted new floodplain maps that incorporated revised studies of the Winnebago River and Chelsea Creek. This resulted in a significant change in the floodplain boundaries around Chelsea Creek. It is vital for Mason City to continue to update the flood plain regulations and follow the revised FEMA one percent and two percent floodplain boundaries for future land-use growth decisions. Figure 44 shows a development constraints overlay map, which provides a basis for the development of the future land use plan.



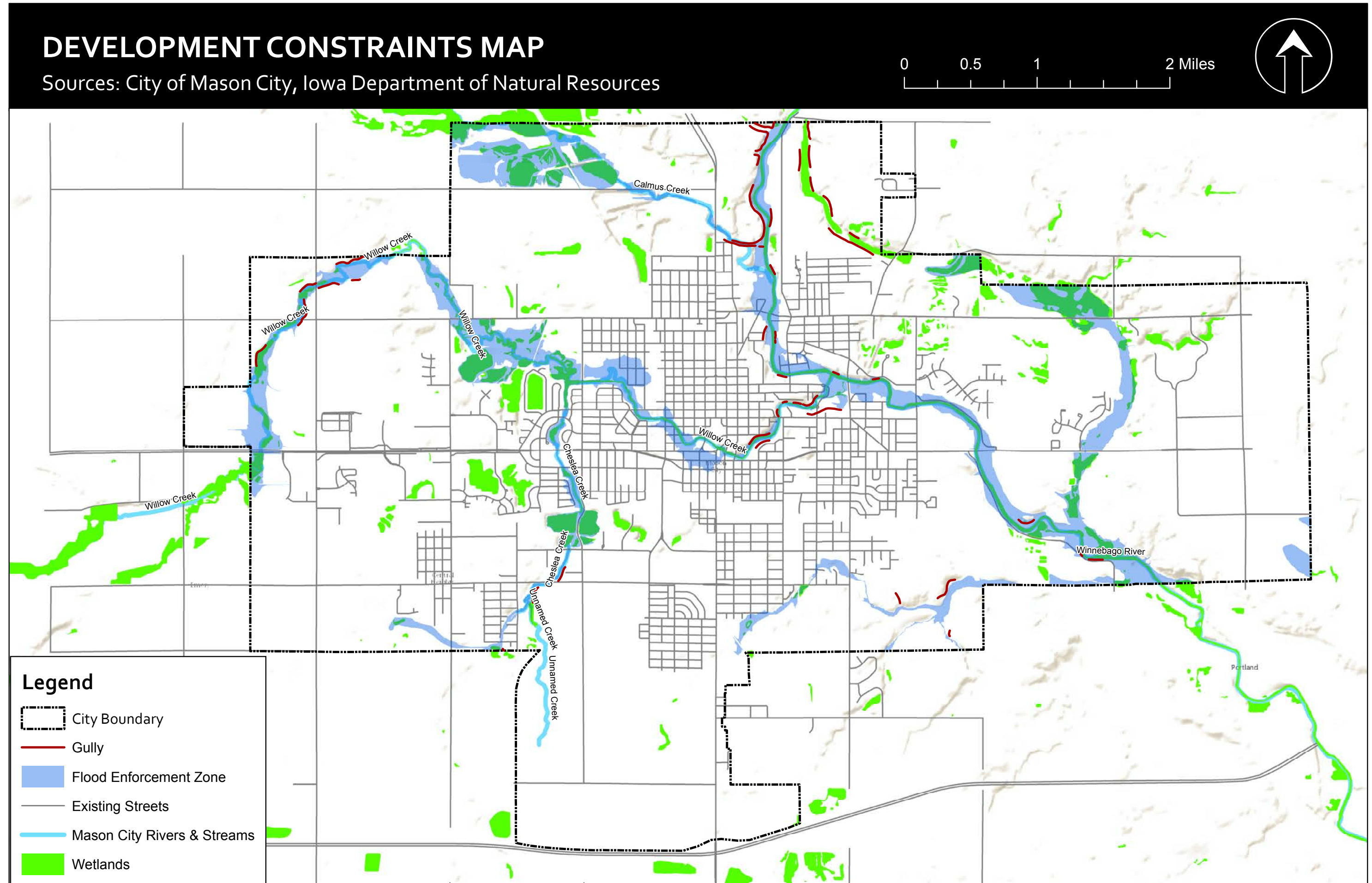
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Figure 44: Development Constraints Map with Mason City flood enforcement zones



ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

INTRODUCTION

Economic development is the key to growth and stability in cities, regions, and states. A strong local economy provides job opportunities for residents, and a healthy local economy increases the quality of life within a community. Resilience plays an important role in the economic development and prosperity of Mason City. By enacting policies that support the local economy, the City can prepare for future obstacles and ensure economic stability. Economic resilience includes attracting and retaining a wide variety of businesses, while building on the existing strengths of the community. The path to economic prosperity for Mason City lies in the diversification of its economic base to encourage and promote resilience for the future. This section of the comprehensive plan update examines the existing condition of economic development within Mason City.

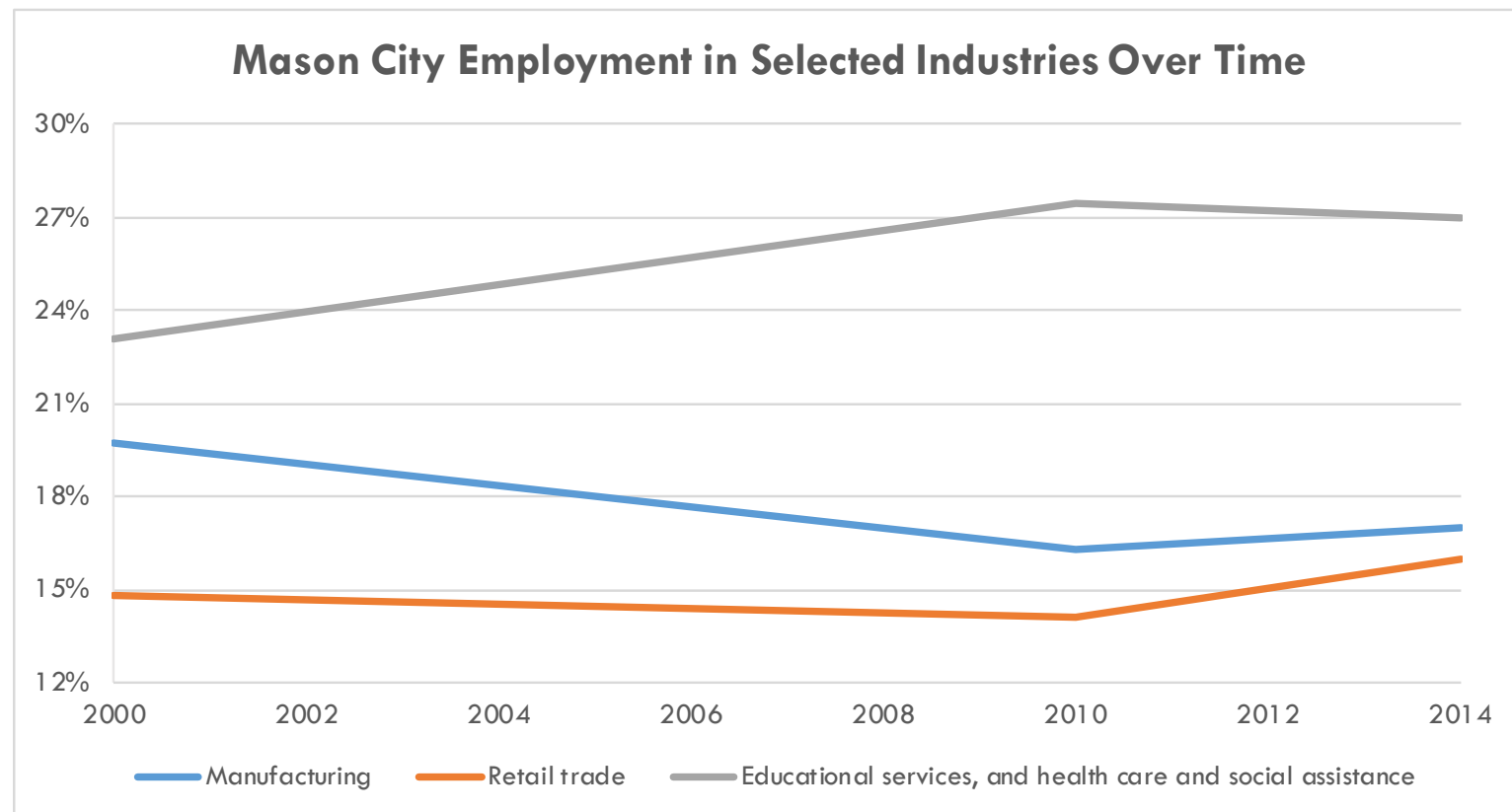
EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

EMPLOYMENT

According to 2014 data from the US Census Bureau, Mason City residents hold a total of 14,321 jobs, 27% of which are within educational services, health care, or social assistance sectors. Manufacturing and retail are large industries for Mason City and comprise 16% and 15% of total jobs. The distribution of employment by industry for Mason City has been similar to that of the state since 2000 (Figures 45 through 47).

A comparison of employment between Mason City and the state of Iowa shows higher employment in the retail, manufacturing, educational services, health care, and social assistance for Mason City than the state. High employment in these sectors demonstrates Mason City's strengths and reveals its status as a regional hub for retail, education, and health care services.

Figure 45: Mason City Employment over 2000-2014



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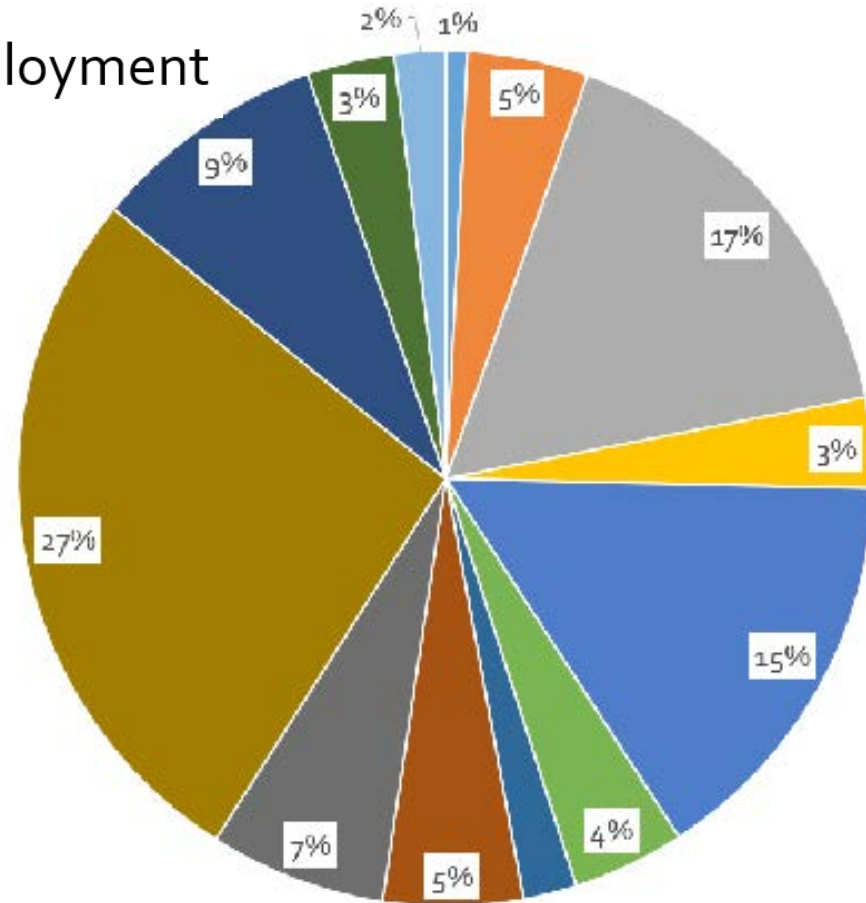
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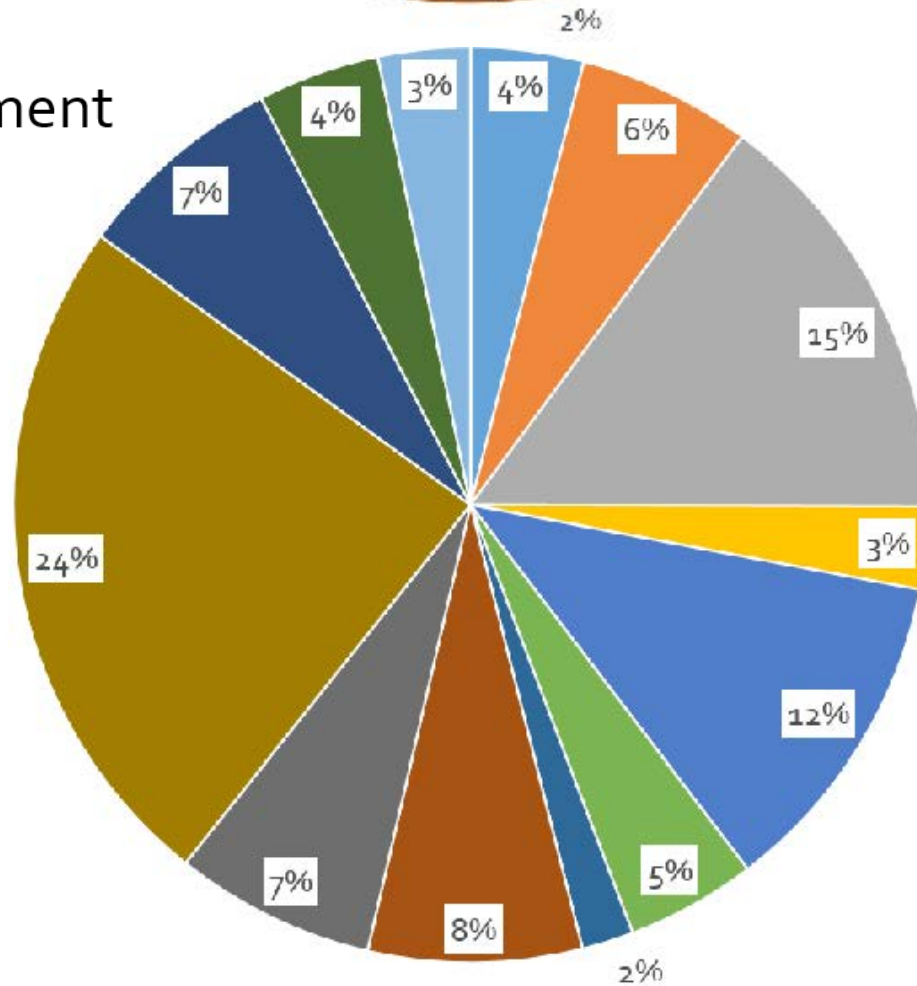
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Figure 46: Employment by Industry in Mason City, Iowa Compared to State Employment, 2014 Data

Mason City 2014 Employment



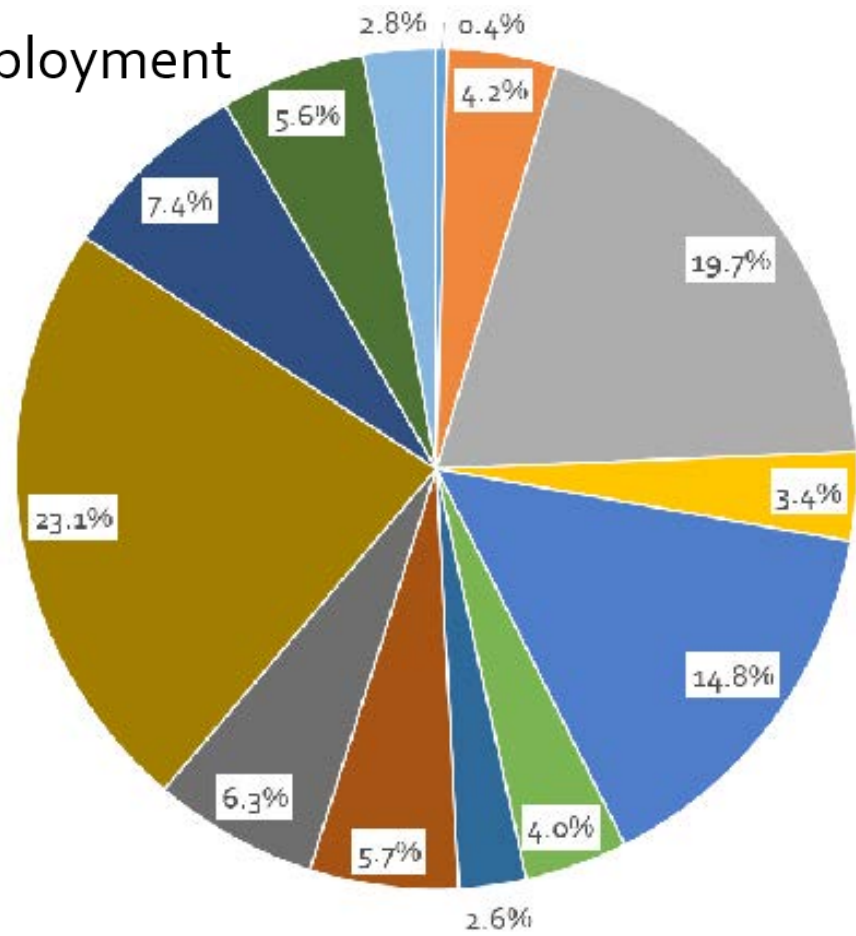
Iowa 2014 Employment



- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Transportation and warehousing, and utilities
- Information
- Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing
- Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services
- Educational services, and health care and social assistance
- Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services
- Other services, except public administration
- Public administration

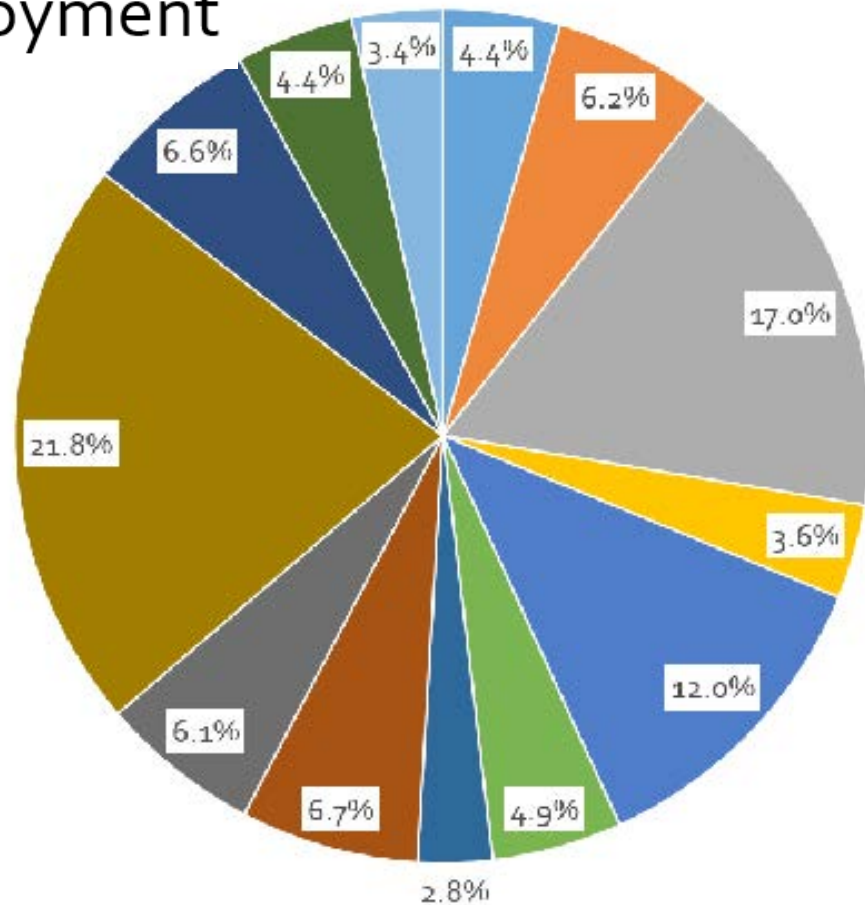
Figure 47: Employment by Industry in Mason City, Iowa Compared to State Employment, 2000 Data

Mason City 2000 Employment



- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Transportation and warehousing, and utilities
- Information
- Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing
- Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services
- Educational services, and health care and social assistance
- Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services
- Other services, except public administration
- Public administration

Iowa 2000 Employment



As seen in prior tables and graph, there is a decreasing percentage of employment in the manufacturing industry over the 14 year period. However, the trend of declining employment in the manufacturing sector is not specific to Mason City. Many communities throughout Iowa and the United States are experiencing loss of their manufacturing industries.

Retail trade, educational services, and health care and social assistance have remained strong economic sectors for Mason City, despite decreases in manufacturing. The Labor Market and Workforce Information Division of Iowa Workforce Development projects that Mason City’s region will gain nearly 1,000 jobs within the healthcare industry by 2024 out of the total 4,335 jobs predicted for the entire region.

The Cerro Gordo County 2015 Workforce Needs Assessment, which includes Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Franklin, Hancock, Mitchell, Winnebago and Worth counties, demonstrated that manufacturing (36.3%), healthcare and social services (16.4%), arts, entertainment, and recreation (14.7%), and wholesale and retail trade (10.1%) industries report the highest volume of current employment vacancies within the region. These industries are a large part of region’s economic base given their workforce needs. These workforce needs will have implications for Mason City. As workforce fills these vacancies, individuals will consider communities in the region, like Mason City, as a place to live.

The *Economic & Social Indicators for Iowa’s Micropolitan Counties and Cities* report found that Cerro Gordo County has experienced a 4.9% decline in jobs from 2010 to 2015. However, the Mason City Micropolitan Area (which includes Clear Lake and other smaller cities) has a higher than state average professional, technical, and scientific services revenue per capita sales. Hospital utilization (in terms of outpatient visits, ER visits, and acute admissions) is also higher than the state average. This shows that the city is on its way to transforming into a diversified micropolitan economy, with several important regional sectors.

INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

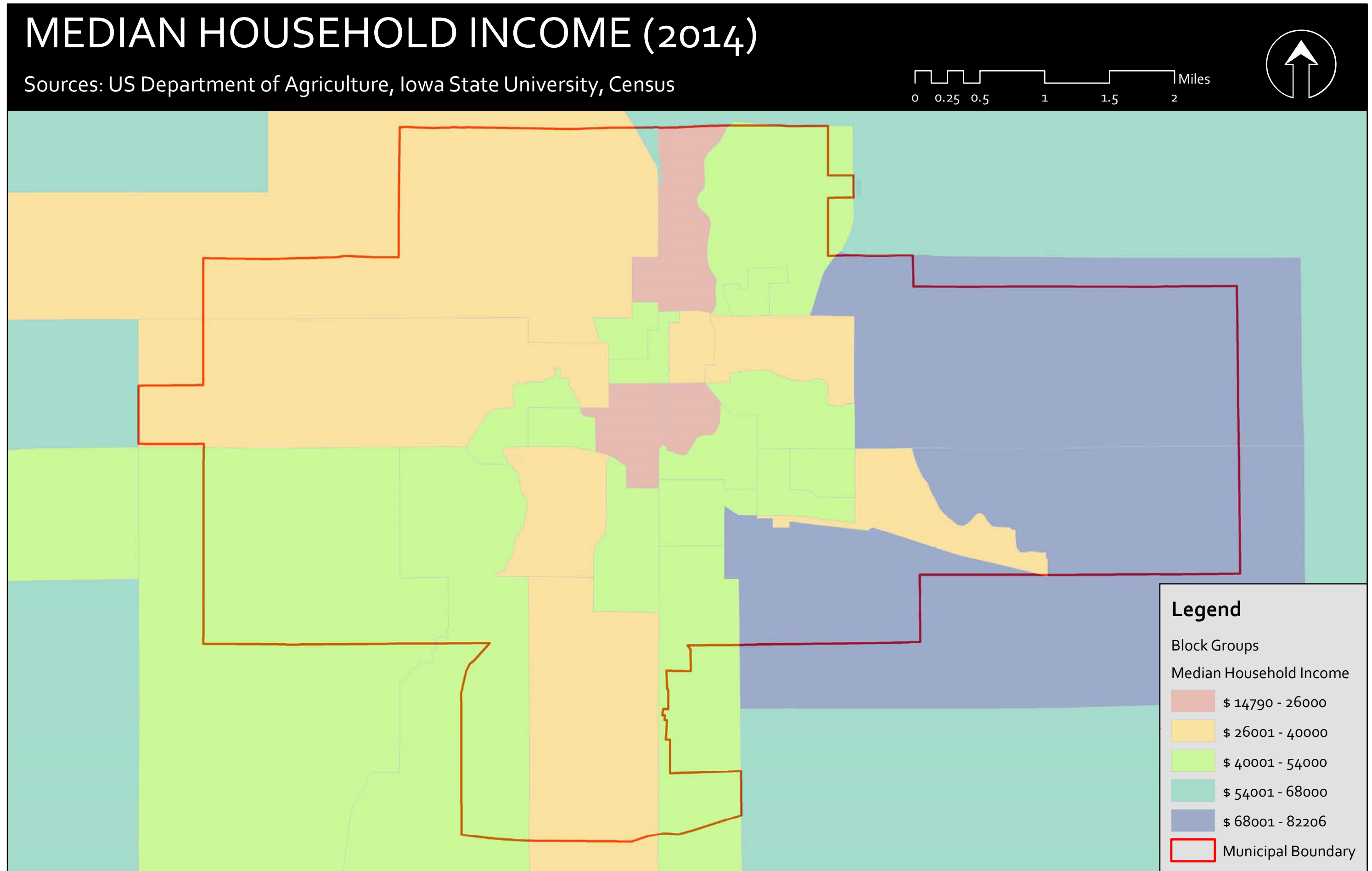
Mason City has a median household income of \$42,009, more than \$10,000 below the state’s average of \$52,716. A breakdown of earnings show that 15% of Mason City’s residents earn less than \$15,000, compared to 11% for the entire state. While income in Mason City is less than state averages, it is comparable to other cities of the same size across Iowa (Table 20). Lower income households are generally located in the center of Mason City and along North Federal Avenue (Figure 48)

Table 20: Change in Mason City Median Household Incomes and Comparable Cities

	2000	2014	% Change
Mason City	\$33,852	\$42,009	24%
Ames	\$36,042	\$42,373	18%
Ft. Dodge	\$33,361	\$38,380	15%
Iowa City	\$34,977	\$42,119	20%
Marshalltown	\$35,688	\$48,750	37%
Ottumwa	\$30,174	\$38,095	26%
Waterloo	\$34,092	\$41,461	22%
State of Iowa	\$39,469	\$52,716	34%

Despite lower median incomes, Mason City demonstrates one of the highest growth rates in annual median household income across comparable cities in Iowa. These growth rates are lower than large suburban areas, larger urban cities, and the state as a whole, where the average increase in median household income was 34%.

Figure 48: Mason City Median Household Income



Examining these economic trends demonstrates Mason City's potential. Based off data within this chapter, the city will likely continue to see growth within the education, healthcare, and social services industries. To prepare for these potential impacts, Mason City will allow for greater development where these industries can concentrate themselves and provide the most economic efficiency for the city. This includes areas near Mercy Medical Center and the North Iowa Area Community College. These areas should be a key focus in order to ensure a resilient economic future.



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PARKS AND TRAILS

INTRODUCTION

The existing park and trail facilities in Mason City provide community members and visitors with accessible and pleasant spaces for recreation and enjoyment. The 632 acres of park space makes Mason City a desirable place for residents and visitors. The abundance of recreation facilities are valuable assets for individuals and families relocating in the area. The purpose of this section is to identify how parks and trails influence the resilience of a city and to identify the changes in Mason City's park facilities since 2006.

Parks and trails are essential to pursuing a resilient Mason City. Parks further resilience because they can be established in areas that are highly susceptible to environmental hazards. Property damage as a result of disaster events is limited in parks because structures are limited. This makes parks or open spaces suitable land uses for flood-prone areas. They are also an efficient use of land because parks in potentially hazardous areas can be fully utilized during normal conditions.

Having a well-connected and maintained trail system will make Mason City more resilient through increased accessibility and greater opportunity for healthy living. A complete trail system will give Mason City residents the option to access all parts of the city by walking or biking. More opportunity for exercise and recreation are additional benefits of a complete trail system.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggests 10 acres of park area per 1,000 residents. Given Mason City's 632 acres of park space and a current population of 27,775, Mason City exceeds this standard with roughly 23 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. Mason City park facilities are categorized into six types; mini parks, neighborhood parks, school parks, community parks, natural resource areas, special use parks and rivers and creeks. These facility types provide residents with diverse outdoor spaces that serve a variety of activities.

The Mason City Park and Recreation Board and City staff, such as the Park Maintenance Supervisor and the Superintendent of Recreation, manage the park space and recreational opportunities in Mason City. The staff carries out directives set forth by the board while the board is responsible for park planning, maintenance and recreational program management.

Since the 2006 comprehensive plan, a dog park (2.5 acres of park space) has been added to Mason City's park system. This land became available after flooding in 2008. An ad hoc committee was formed to identify potential future uses of properties that had been flooded and acquired by the City during their buyout program. The committee decided that two city-owned lots north of 14th Street NE would be developed as the Mason City Dog Park.

Mason City bought out 175 properties (47 acres) total after the 2008 flood. The ad hoc committee for the buyout areas decided that the Mason City Parks Department would be responsible for maintaining all but two of these properties. The Dog Park is the only area that is being converted into formal park space while the other properties will be leased or developed with restrictions, or become naturalized areas that are not regularly maintained or natural areas with light maintenance.



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PARKS LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

The need for a higher acreage of park space in the future is rooted in the possibility of increased development for certain areas of Mason City and in possible population changes. The comprehensive plan update has projected population changes for 2020, 2025 and 2030 under a number of different population change scenarios. Based on the 632 acres of park land currently existing in Mason City and population projections, this analysis demonstrates that in all of the population projection scenarios, Mason City will always have a ratio higher than 10 acres of park space per 1,000 residents (Table 21).

Table 21: Acres of Parks per 1,000 Residents for Population Projection Scenarios

Population Projections	2020	Acres of Park per 1000 Residents Based on Current Park Acreage	2025	Acres of Park per 1000 Residents Based on Current Park Acreage	2030	Acres of Park per 1000 Residents Based on Current Park Acreage
0.75% Annual Growth	28,408	22	29,489	21	30,612	21
0.25% Annual Growth	27,710	23	28,058	22	28,410	22
Population Stabilization	27,366	23	27,366	23	27,366	23
0.25% Population Decline	27,026	23	26,689	24	26,358	24
0.75% Population Decline	26,355	24	25,381	25	24,444	26

PARK FACILITIES BY GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

As demonstrated by the level of service analysis, the amount of park space in Mason City is sufficient for its population. However, the distribution of these parks is important to determining if areas with an insufficient amount of accessible park space exist. The NRPA standard of a quarter mile to a half-mile service radius for neighborhood parks measures the level of service and accessibility in certain areas of the city. The Park Service Areas map (Figure 49) demonstrates that majority of the developed areas in Mason City are adequately served by park space given that development falls within either a half or quarter mile radius of a park. There are minor gaps in this geographic distribution on the east and north-west sides of town. However, these gaps are not a major cause for concern because the total acreage of park space is sufficient relative to the current population and all future population scenarios.

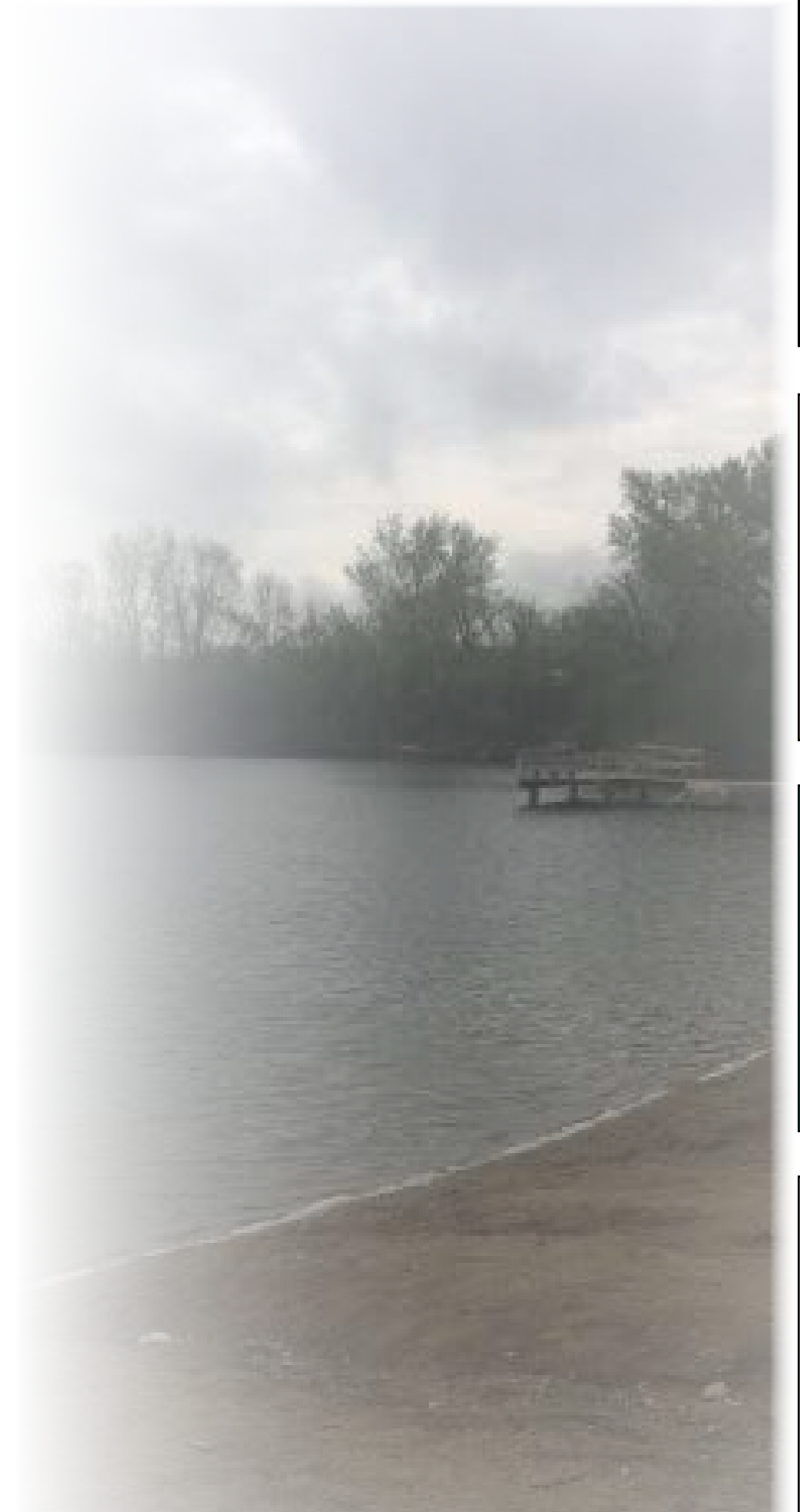
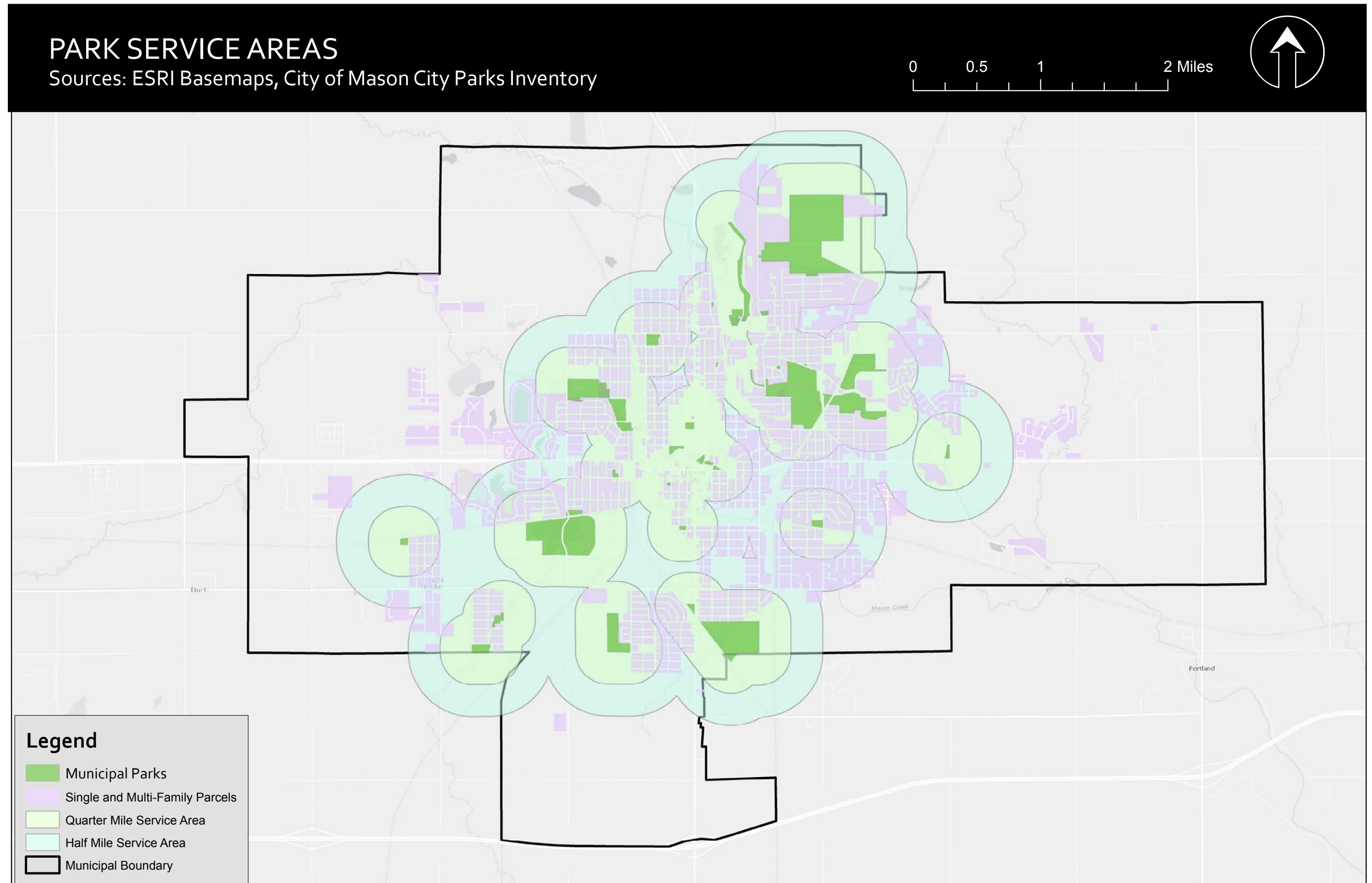


Figure 49: Park service areas



TRAIL SYSTEM

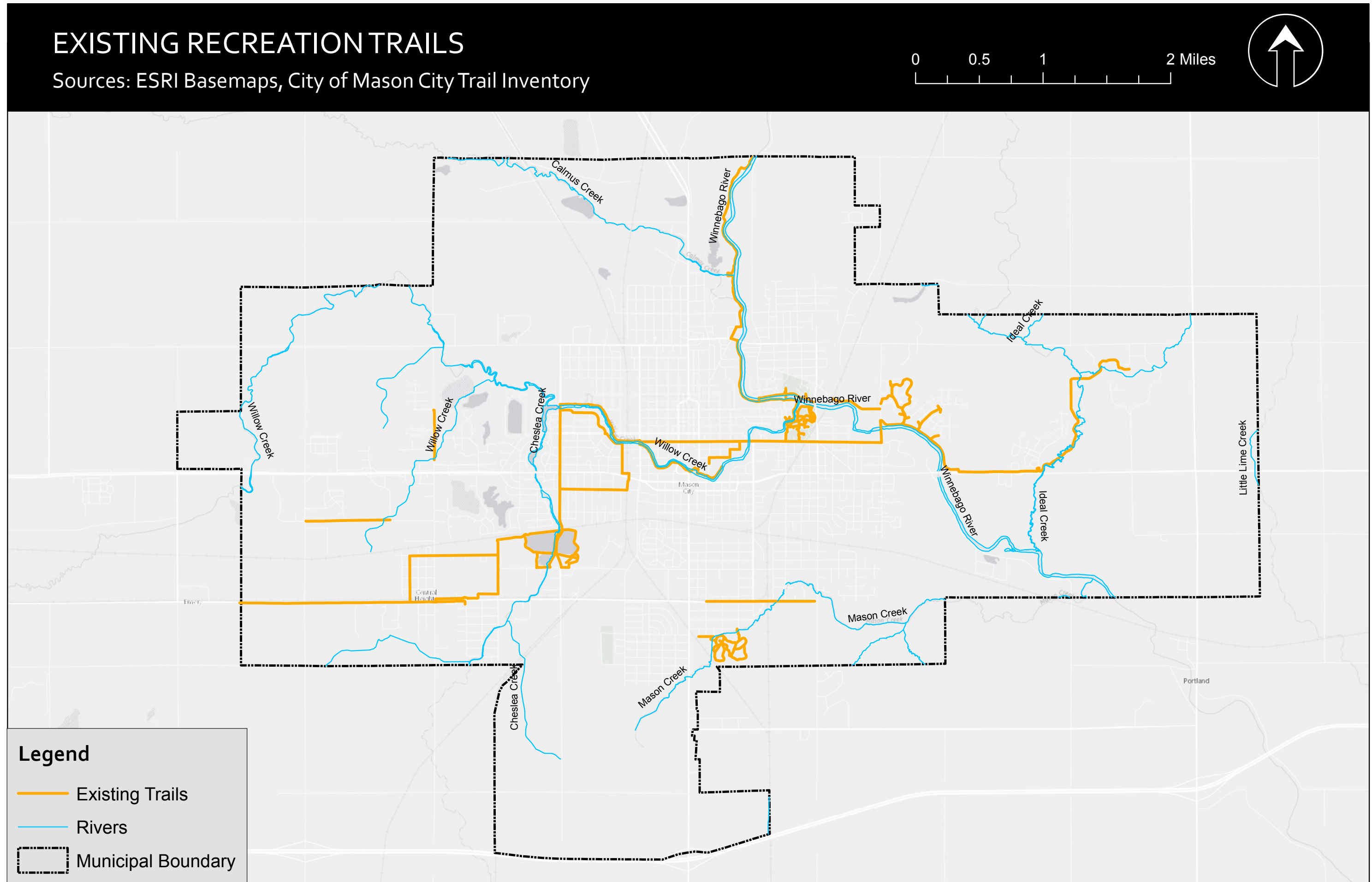
Mason City is well served by a trail system that provides connectivity to green spaces, natural areas, and community assets, such as North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC). Many of Mason City's trails run adjacent to the Winnebago River and Willow Creek. The Winnebago River trail is located on the west side of the river and extends north from 12th Street NE to the Lime Creek Nature Center at Lime Creek Road (Figure 50). This placement of trails allows access to scenic river views and natural areas. The trail system also provides some regional connectivity by extending roughly 7 miles west to Clear Lake, Iowa.

Current trails in Mason City provide significant opportunity for recreation and access to natural, scenic areas. However, trails can also be utilized for transportation purposes. The existing trails in Mason City provide a limited level of connectivity, constraining the ability to use bike and recreation trails for transportation purposes. This is demonstrated by lack of connectivity in the existing trail system, where many trails stop abruptly or do not create loops for recreation. However, existing trails do connect to a number of community assets, such as NIACC, the Lime Creek Nature Center, downtown, Big Blue Lake, and a number of parks.

The future development of trails in Mason City is tied to recommendations made by this plan, as well as recommendations set forth in the Mason City Master Trails Plan (2002). This Plan in conjunction with the broad goals of this comprehensive plan should be utilized to further the development of a complete and connected trail system for Mason City.



Figure 50: Existing Trails



COMMUNITY CHARACTER

INTRODUCTION

Mason City's urban character plays a significant role in defining its identity and attracting and retaining a vibrant population. By making improvements and enhancing urban features, Mason City can create a strong sense of place and improve the overall livability of the community. Investment in property restoration, historic resources, neighborhoods, and key corridors will ensure that Mason City's built environment is enhanced. Since 2006, the City has strengthened the urban core, revitalized its historically significant buildings, connected places of civic importance, and maintained a cohesive neighborhood character. This section provides an overview of Mason City's existing community character and makes a case for future revitalization.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Downtown Mason City includes important landmarks such as Southbridge Mall, Music Man Square, Mason City Public Library, City Hall, and the First National Bank Building. The American Planning Association recognized downtown Mason City for its Great Places in America program in 2013. The program acknowledged downtown Mason City's streetscape improvements and restored historic architecture, crediting these exemplary planning initiatives that have resulted in a stronger and healthier community. Downtown Mason City also participates in the National Register of Historic Districts, follows form-based zoning code, and uses tax increment financing (TIF) and tax credits to support building renovations.

In 2011, the City implemented a \$3.6 million streetscape and plaza program that revitalized four of its downtown streetscapes from Federal Plaza at Southbridge Mall to Fourth Street, seen in the accompanying pictures. The project included street and sidewalk improvements and renovation of the plaza area. Renovation of the plaza area used inspiration from the Park Inn Hotel to extend the Prairie-School architectural style throughout downtown. Mason City residents also successfully restored the Park in Hotel by leveraging \$18 million in private donations and historic tax credits. These improvements make downtown Mason City more attractive and result in economic, social, and cultural benefits for the entire community.

Housing in downtown is also critical to revitalizing the area and the community as a whole. During the community input process, participants identified living close to downtown as an opportunity for future planning initiatives and that a lack of downtown housing inhibits a younger population from staying in the community. Mason City uses a variety of financing tools, such as TIF and Iowa tax credits to encourage upper story housing downtown. Living downtown provides improved access to goods, services, and amenities, and creates central gathering place for all residents.



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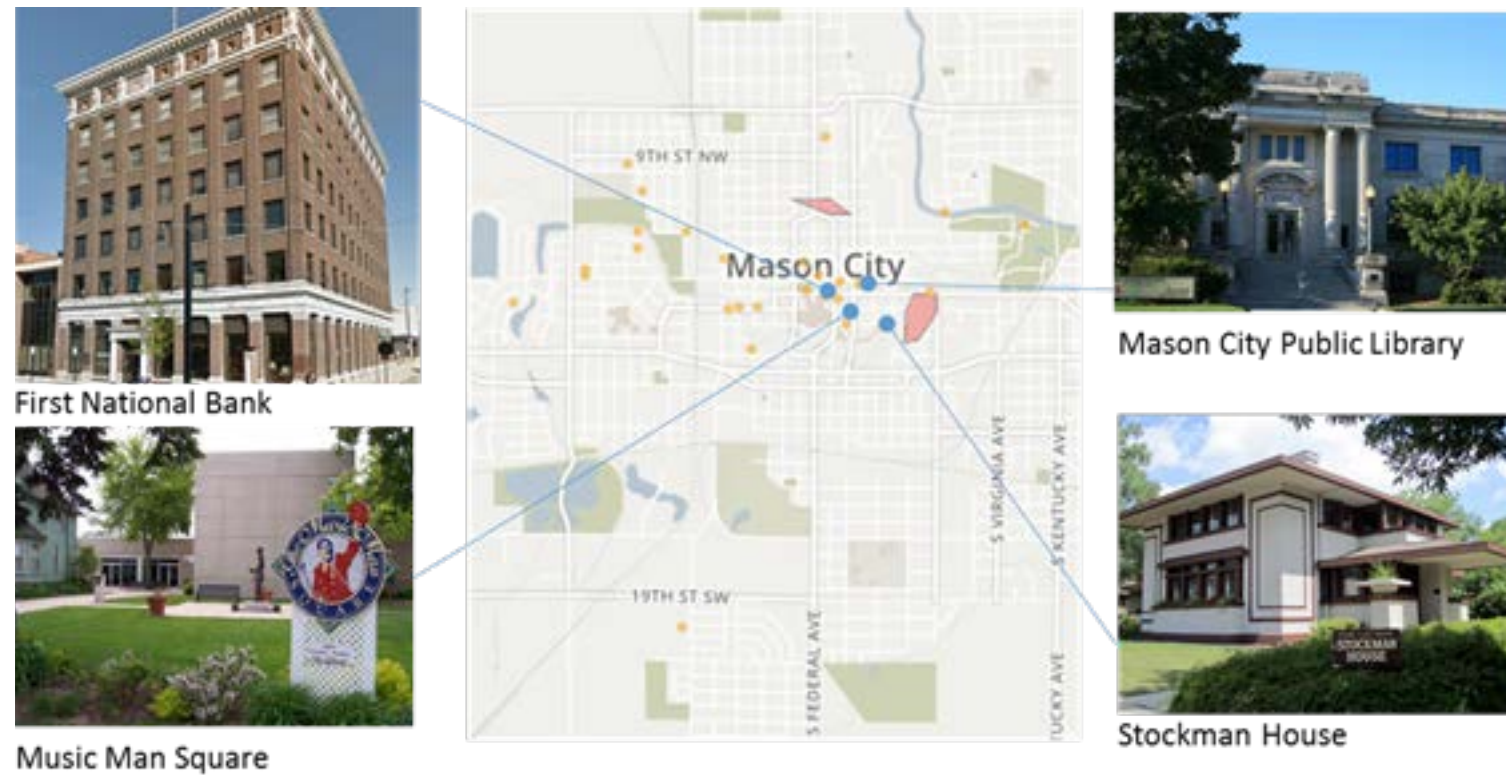
HISTORIC PRESERVATION WITH THE CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

The Certified Local Government (CLG) program assists cities in preserving the historic character of neighborhoods. Cities interested in historic preservation can undergo a certification process that provides funding opportunities and technical assistance for protecting cultural heritage under the Federal Historic Preservation Program. Mason City is among over 100 cities and counties in the state of Iowa to be an Iowa Certified Local Government with the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs. To further protect historic resources, the City Code establishes a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) that is responsible for reviewing historic district boundaries and formulating an action plan for future preservation steps.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Mason City has 35 sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register of Historic Places, 2013), many of which are architectural assets built in the Prairie School architectural style. Significant historic buildings are the First National Bank, the Stockman House, Mason City Public Library, and the Historic Park Inn (Figure 51). Some of these sites are income producing properties and are therefore eligible for federal rehabilitation tax credits. These tax credits support the cost of upgrading or retrofitting historic buildings. Since the listing does not provide a protective designation, it is important for the city to preserve and enhance its historically significant buildings.

Figure 51: Location of significant sites located on the National Register of Historic Places



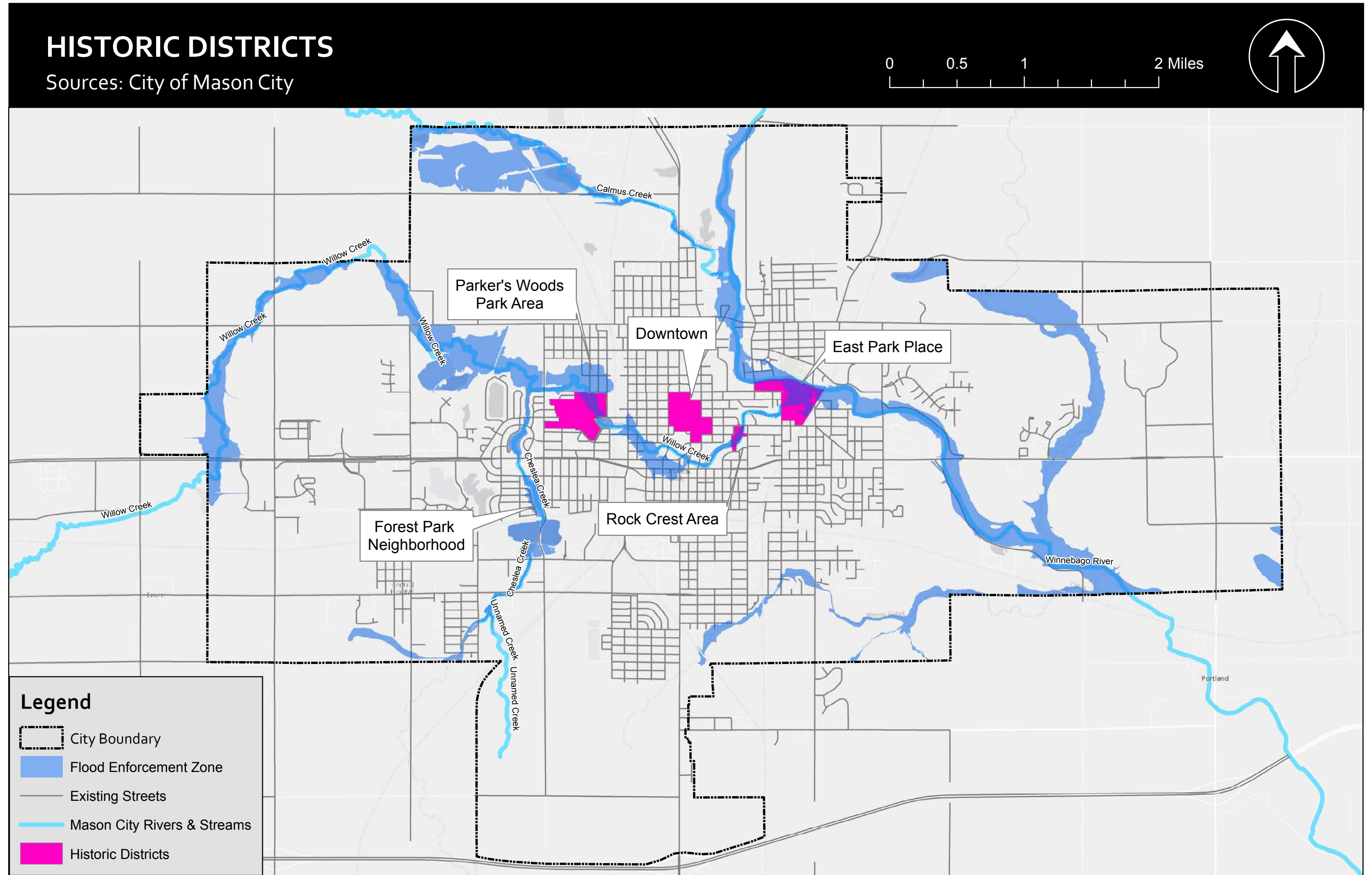
Important Definitions

Vacant Housing: Chapter 657A of Iowa State code defines Vacant Housing as "a building that has remained vacant and has been in violation of the housing code of the city in which the property is located, or the housing code applicable in the county in which the property is located if outside the limits of a city, for a period of six consecutive months."

Public Nuisance: The erecting, continuing, or using of any building or property for the exercise of any activity which, by occasioning noxious exhalations, offensive smells, or other annoyances, becomes injurious and dangerous to the health, comfort, or property of individuals or the public (Mason City, City Code)."

Several of Mason City's historic neighborhoods including downtown, Parker's Woods Park Area, Forest Park Neighborhood, Rock Crest Area, and East Park Place overlap with the established flood enforcement zone (Figure 52). Since historic structures do not have to meet the National Flood Insurance Policy floodplain management requirements, it is critical that Mason City implements other mitigation measures that protect its historic resources from future disasters.

Figure 52: Historic neighborhoods in Mason City in relation to the flood enforcement zone.



HISTORIC HOMES PRESERVATION DURING THE 2008 FLOODS

Several of Mason City's historic neighborhoods coincide with flood enforcement zones, putting historic properties at risk for flooding, a risk that materialized during the 2008 floods (Figure 52). The 2008 floods affected 45 residential properties that were eligible for the National Register of Historic Places listing. In response, the City created and implemented a relocation plan for more than 10 historic properties in the buyout area in partnership with North Iowa Habitat for Humanity (City of Mason City, n.d.).

Other efforts by the Community Benefit – Mason City Fund worked to relocate historic homes to prevent them from being demolished during the buyout program. This organization utilized grants from Vision Iowa, Iowa Great Places, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Save America's Treasures program, and equity from the sale of state and federal historic tax credit.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

Mason City's empty or abandoned manufacturing plants and retail and commercial spaces can contribute to overall decline and disinvestment in the community. Recent loss of manufacturing industries and stiff competition from large retail outlets and big-box stores has resulted in lost manufacturing jobs and small businesses through bankruptcy and foreclosures. This economic change has implications on community character because small, local businesses that characterize Mason City's downtown and surrounding neighborhoods have been lost. However, Main Street Mason City and the North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation track the number of commercial properties in the City and maintain an inventory of vacancies to assist potential businesses in securing downtown locations for investment.

Housing also plays a significant role in community character. The Building Code of the City ensures public health, safety, and welfare of its residents through development and promotion of uniform building codes and standards, but no time limit on vacancy exists and there is no standard timeline for removing empty or abandoned buildings. Currently, the Mason City Neighborhood Services Division acts once a vacant structure becomes a nuisance and demolishes structures unfit for use.

Other ways that the City of Mason City works to uphold its community character is through its Urban Revitalization Tax Abatement Program. This program applies to tax increases resulting from improvements or new construction that increases the assessed value of a property by 10% or more. The property applies to commercial, residential, and multi-residential properties located in urban revitalization districts.



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FORM-BASED CODE

Mason City preserves its community character through form-based development regulations designed to create a uniform built environment throughout the city. The Z-7 specific use provision in the existing Zoning Ordinance supports the ongoing operation and future expansion of specific areas within Mason City. Any redevelopment or addition must conform to the forms, functions, and development standards found within the Z-7 district to reduce the risk of non-conforming uses. Mason City's Zoning Ordinance describes the zoning form and function permitted in each zone, including building character, setbacks, number of floors, and percentage of built site.



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Part 3: Mason City Tomorrow

This section outlines the various goals and objectives for each chapter of the comprehensive plan, along with the Future Land Use Map, which serves as a spatial representation of these goals.

LAND USE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of these land use goals and objectives is to guide efficient future land development. The goals and objectives were derived from input gathered at public outreach events and analysis of existing land use conditions. Through public outreach, the planning team identified issues for land use as strict separation of uses and sprawling development. However, most participants also identified specific areas of the city, like existing historic districts, as opportunities to create community assets. Throughout the public outreach events, participants identified downtown as city's biggest strength and showed interest in walkability, accessibility, and mixed use development. More specifically, focus group participants viewed walkability and downtown as opportunities for City and community investment.

In addition to the public input, analysis of existing land use conditions helped identify several issues and trends that are addressed through these goals and objectives. One of the primary issues is expanding commercial development on the west side of the city, which has encouraged sprawl. Likewise, separation of commercial activity and residential land uses was supported by the existing conditions analysis. The analysis demonstrated that isolated neighborhoods are prevalent and that lack of access to goods, services, and amenities decrease the resilience of such neighborhoods.

Mason City utilizes its zoning code, subdivision regulations, building codes and other city codes to direct development and changes in land uses. Altering aspects of these regulations can improve the efficiency of land development. The changes to these regulations proposed by the following goals and objectives will help strengthen neighborhoods and promote resilience and a life-cycle community in Mason City.

Goal 1: Mason City will support infill and compact development to increase density and land use diversity.

- Objective 1.1: Ensure the availability of appropriately zoned land for mixed-use development and provide opportunities and flexibilities following the design standards for blocks and lots in chapter 4 of Title 11 and flexibilities in building and moving permit fees as a part of building codes, Title 10.
- Objective 1.2: Prevent leapfrog development by limiting the expansion of utilities to undeveloped areas.
- Objective 1.3: Provide technical assistance to support the rehabilitation and redevelopment of aging properties, vacant lands.
 - o Action 1.3.1: Mason City will consult with realtors and developers to assess the real estate market for new development and analyze density and selling price by conducting infill parcel inventory of those properties located within the mixed-use nodes, constructing a housing needs analysis.
- Objective 1.4: Provide incentives to support and encourage infill development.
 - o Action 1.4.1: Mason City will promote the use of the Urban Revitalization Tax Abatement Program to reduce property tax payments for both businesses and multi-family dwellings development at the mixed-use nodes.
 - o Action 1.4.2: Mason City will continue to seek opportunities for financial assistance for developers through state and federal sources as well as provide below-market financing through mortgage revenue bonds.

- Objective 1.5: Improve and maintain infrastructure to properties that provide opportunities for compact, infill development.
 - o Action 1.5.1: Mason City will create an inventory of properties key for infill development and identify the potential infrastructure barriers to redevelopment.

Goal 2: Mason City will support the integration of mixed-use developments to promote neighborhood resilience.

- Objective 2.1: Incorporate regulatory incentives for the development of mixed use and high-density development.
 - o Action 2.1.1: Mason City will allow for density bonuses for developments occurring within the mixed-use nodes.
 - o Action 2.1.2: Mason City will utilize transferable development rights for properties within the mixed-use nodes.
 - o Action 2.1.3: The City will impose impact fees on development in Low Density Development areas (as outlined by the future land use map) or Sub-Urban District (as designated by the zoning code).
- Objective 2.2: Provide sufficient infrastructure and technical assistance in areas where future land use is designated as mixed use.
- Objective 2.3: Continue the City’s commitment to revitalization and redevelopment of the Downtown Redevelopment Area with an appropriate mix of uses by reviewing and following recommendations made by the 2007 Downtown Plan.

Goal 3: Mason City will guide growth and development through future land use to create high quality and resilient neighborhoods.

- Objective 3.1: Continue preservation of riverfront and other areas prone to runoff and flooding, as detailed in the environmental resilience chapter of this comprehensive plan.
- Objective 3.2: Work collaboratively and communicate effectively with entities like major employers, developers, non-profit entities, and agencies that have large impacts on land use to direct future growth.
- Objective 3.3: Encourage the compact and mixed-use development as mentioned in goals 1 and 2 to reduce urban sprawl, prevent the development of open and agriculture lands, and create neighborhoods where residents can live closer to work, rely less on environmentally damaging methods of transportation, increase the public tax base with minimal city investment, increase property values and reduce the collective carbon footprint.
- Objective 3.4: Mason City will ensure that any new development impact on floodplain, wetlands, contour, and tree cover is mitigated through its subdivision ordinance.

FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Plan plays a key role in guiding the recommendations and decisions of the City Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustments, and the City Council. It acts as the spatial representation of the goals and objectives put forward by this plan. To meet these goals and objectives, it is necessary to guide and accommodate new and existing development. Thus, this Future Land Use Plan and map will provide a guidance for any land use decisions in Mason City. However, this plan will not provide the lot-by-lot recommendation of how land shall be utilized but rather provides a framework that helps City administrative officials, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the City Council make decisions that implement the overall goals and objectives of this plan.

The Future Land Use Plan for the Mason City was developed after public outreach events that have been described in the Community Input and Planning Process section of this document. Public events and input from the residents of Mason City helped to identify common issues and the goals and objectives necessary to solve them. Analysis of public feedback, reviews by members of the city government, and the expertise of the planning team established the Nodal Development pattern as the best option to guide resilient growth in Mason City.

As described in the Mason City Profile and Background chapter, demographic trends show that the city has experienced declining population over the last 40 years. If this trend of population loss continues, there is an increase in probability of having more underused or vacant properties. This affords an opportunity to examine how the existing land use could be more efficiently used to sustain the current population. Through compact future development, the city can prepare for these future population trends, be it population loss, stabilization, or growth. Likewise, the age trends of the city show a higher old-age or child-age ratio that indicates a larger dependency ratio in the population. Given an older population, compact development will help to alleviate many accessibility issues for elderly and disabled residents. Mason City has also seen a decrease in the average household sizes for both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing since 2000. Changing demographic, social, and cultural issues all present challenges for housing in Mason City and shows a need for accessible and diverse housing. Throughout public outreach initiatives, accessible and diverse housing was brought up by many participants. Considering these needs and other current trends, the future land use plan aims to compact future growth and development.

The mixed-use nodes identified on the future land use map have been selected for strengthening the core of the city and creating compact, accessible, mixed-use development. These nodes will increase the commercial activity within neighborhoods, providing convenient and walkable choices for neighborhoods. Medium and high density residential land uses are proposed within a quarter mile and half mile around these nodes. Compact housing surrounding the nodes will support retail and commercial activity within mixed-use areas. This hierarchy provides diverse options for housing and promotes walkability in these areas. Transit service in Mason City is also available along corridors where proposed nodes are located. Transit coupled with walkable destinations make transportation options diverse, convenient, and affordable.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map identifies development categories that must be considered when a new development is proposed, especially when a zoning change or land division is requested. The City's use of this map should be more than a reactive process by guiding proposals for development and giving the City proactive goals to work towards. While the map may not precisely reflect how the city will look after the 10-year planning timeframe of this document, it establishes a unified and feasible goal.

The map identifies the most appropriate and efficient land uses within Mason City, in terms of utility infrastructure, city services, environmental conditions, and surrounding compatible land use. The map identifies land use categories that will provide Mason City with the most resilient future.

These classifications are not zoning districts. They do not legally set performance criteria for land uses in terms of setbacks, height restrictions, or density. However, they do identify what zoning categories would be most efficient within each land use category. In some cases, changes to the current zoning map may be necessary to fulfill the changes proposed. Any such changes should be reflective of the goals and objectives of this plan.

The Future Land Use Map identifies nine separate land use categories. These categories are:

- Commercial Corridor
- Agricultural
- Low Density Development
- Medium Density Development
- High Density Development
- Multi-Use Nodes
- Industrial
- Civic and Public Use
- Park Space and Public Open Space

Commercial Corridor

These areas serve as the gateways into Mason City. Currently, they serve as mostly commercial areas, with some residential development. In the future, development here should focus on more mixed-use buildings, incorporating aspects of higher-density residential and retail and commercial development. These areas should be easily accessible by all modes of transportation. The most appropriate zoning designation for this area is Z₄, Multi-Use District.

Agricultural

The Agricultural category is intended to preserve land and rural character in at the periphery of the city. Preferred uses in these areas include open space, farming, farmsteads, and agricultural businesses. Most of the area outside of the developed areas are currently zoned for agriculture production and should remain agricultural to focus on densifying the city. These areas should remain zoned Z₁, Agricultural.

Low Density Development

The Low Density Development category seeks to preserve the historic character of older neighborhoods while also allowing the development of new single-family dwellings. Any new development of this category should remain contiguous to existing development. These areas are predominantly detached single-family dwellings, with allowances for pockets of higher-density development and some small commercial applications. The most appropriate zoning for these areas is Z₂, Sub-Urban District.

Medium Density Development

The Medium Density Development category will be located near the ½ mile mark around all multi-use nodes within the city. This denser development will help support the commercial development within these nodes, and will concentrate residents near these accessible areas. This area should see a mixture of retail, commercial and medium density residential, with a mixture of building types and usages. The most appropriate zoning for this category would be Z₃, General Urban, with allowances for higher density residential.

High Density Development

These areas will primarily be located adjacent to multi-use nodes, allowing for a concentration of residents to support the mixed-use nodes, and will provide the greatest accessibility for all residents, regardless of age or ability. These lands should include a multitude of housing options, to provide diversity and life-cycle housing for the city. The most appropriate zoning for this land use is Z3, General Urban, with the possibility to incorporate some Z4, Multi-Use District. In these areas, emphasis should be placed on high-density residential, to support the commercial activities of the multi-use nodes.

Multi-Use Nodes

These nodes will serve to connect the residents with necessary resources and amenities. The nodes will serve as mini-town centers, allowing more compact development and greater connectivity within the nodes and throughout the city. The most appropriate zoning designations for these areas are either Z4, Multi-Use District, or Z5, Central Business District where appropriate. The areas should have a primary focus on retail and commercial development, but should incorporate a mix of uses when possible.

Industrial

The Industrial designation seeks to orient industrial development in the most appropriate areas. All development within these areas should be environmentally responsible. Development should also be well-connected with streets and rail lines to provide the greatest benefit to the industry. The most appropriate zoning for this category is Z6, Industrial.

Civic and Public Use

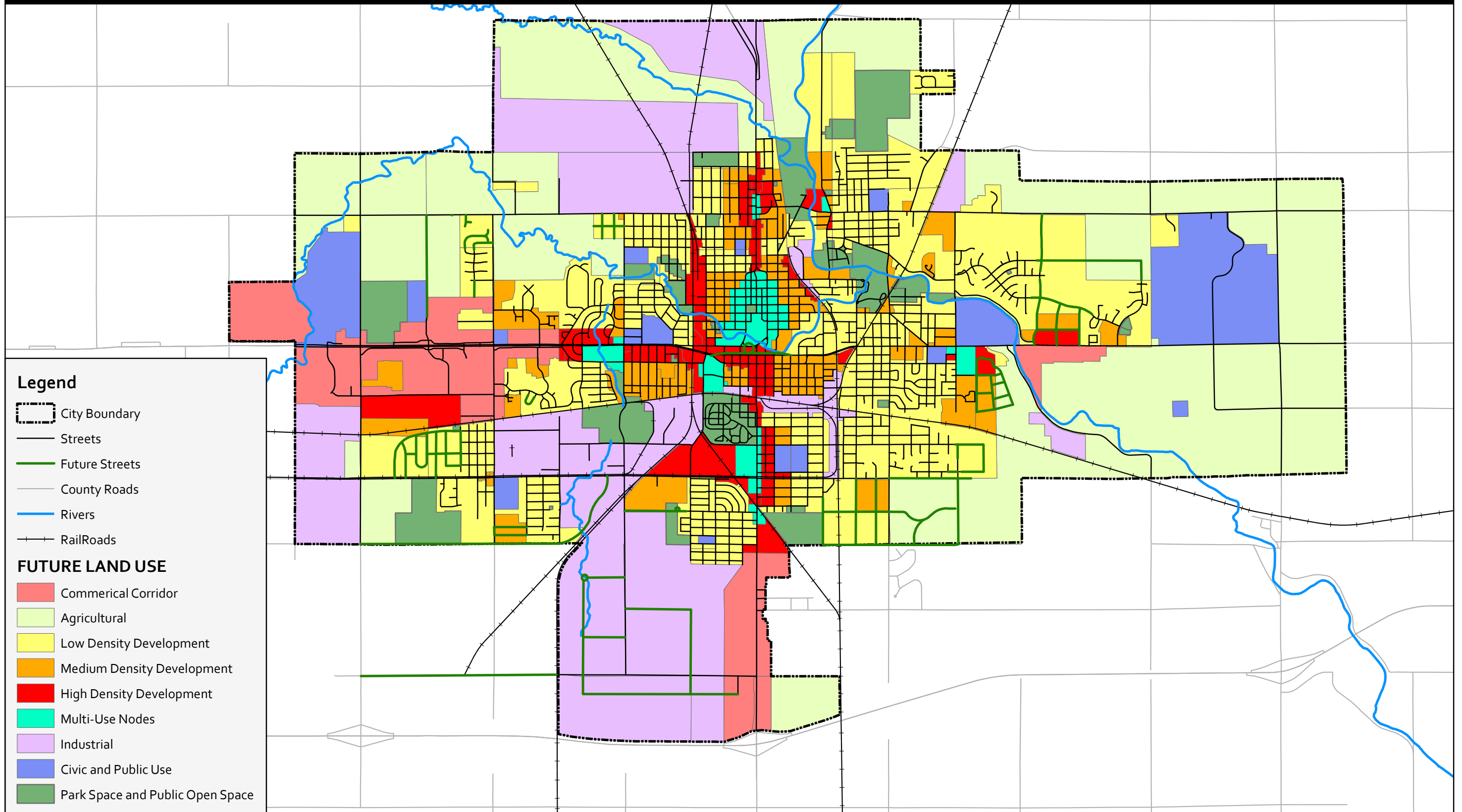
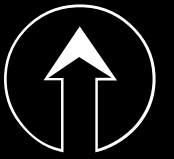
This category identifies areas of a specific use, such as hospitals, civic buildings, and schools. Any development of these areas should be considerate of surrounding land uses and should seek to be compatibility in form and function. These areas shall be zoned Z7, Specific Use District.

Park Space and Public Open Space

Parks and Open Spaces should be dedicated to the preservation and conservation of the natural environment, and focus on recreational purposes when appropriate. All development within proximity of these areas should be compatible with the space and should seek to enhance the utility of park or open area. No development should be allowed within these areas, unless it completely aligns with the goals and objectives of this plan. Park space and public open space falls into the Z7, Specific Use District.

Future Land Use Map

Sources: Mason City, Mason City Comprehensive Plan Update Team



INTRO

TODAY

TOMORROW

APPENDIX

HOUSING

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Throughout the development of this plan, Mason City residents were asked to reflect on the future of housing within the community. Through focus groups, the open house, and other community meetings, Mason City residents communicated that they sought to have a diversified housing stock that will support a variety of housing needs throughout a person's life-cycle. By having a diverse housing stock, Mason City will be prepared for future demographic, economic, or social changes. Other major topics from the public outreach process included a desire for increased walkability and a focus on downtown Mason City. These topics are closely related to housing, in that compact housing promotes walkability and can be successfully implemented downtown and at proposed mixed-use nodes. Given this guidance, the housing goals and objectives focus on providing more diverse and compact housing in Mason City.

Through the analysis of existing conditions, issues identified during the public outreach process were supported and justified. Housing diversity characteristics show either single-family or twin homes as the majority of new residential developments, lacking more compact, multi-family housing. Housing affordability was an issue demonstrated by data, although it had not been brought up in public outreach. Therefore, the City should utilize the existing conditions section in conjunction with these goals and objectives to focus on housing diversity, housing affordability, and housing quality in order to secure a more resilient future.

Goal 1: Mason City will offer a variety of attractive, diverse, and safe housing options.

- Objective 1.1: Mason City will encourage mixed-use development within new and old neighborhoods to encourage greater resilience by following the future land-use map throughout the lifetime of this plan.
- Objective 1.2: New housing development will remain contiguous to existing housing development and pedestrian infrastructure in Mason City, and will review all new development as it relates and abides by the goals of this plan.
 - o Action 1.2.1: The City will prioritize infill housing development within the existing growth boundary of the city by following the future land use map and zoning code.

Goal 2: Mason City will provide access to quality housing regardless of age, mobility, and socioeconomic status.

- Objective 2.1: The City will encourage new development to contain affordable housing options by working with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to secure state and federal grants and other sources of funding every year.
- Objective 2.2: The Mason City Planning and Zoning Division and the Housing Division will evaluate the allowance of constructing accessory dwelling units (i.e. "granny flats") and small lot housing to provide market rate affordable housing options.
- Objective 2.3: The City will continue to seek opportunities for homeownership for low to moderate income families through state and federal grant opportunities, such as the Federal HOME Investments Partnerships Program and the State Housing Trust Fund every year.
 - o Action 2.3.1: Mason City will continue to work with and support the Habitat for Humanity of North Central Iowa to promote housing for low-income families.



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- Objective 2.4: Accessible housing units will be seamlessly integrated into both existing neighborhoods and new developments when new housing development occurs.
 - o Action 2.4.1: The City will encourage the use of life-cycle housing to facilitate the opportunity for residents to age within the community by examining the building code of the city and making necessary changes that allow for ease of development to address the most common physical impairments affecting the elderly and disabled. This examination should occur within the next 5 years.
 - o Action 2.4.2: The Mason City Planning and Zoning Division and the Housing Division of the City will do a housing needs assessment with a focus on housing needs of elderly and disabled populations every 5 years.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Given the importance of transportation systems in the growth and development of a city, Mason City must be committed to enhancing transportation networks and conditions. The transportation system not only provides connectivity and accessibility to goods and services for residents, but also shapes urban form and influences property values.

Through the community input process, participants reflected on the future of Mason City's transportation system. Many of the residents who participated in this process identified lack of connectivity and lack of multi-modal accessibility as some of the major issues. Focus group participants discussed using Mason City's small town characteristics to create walkable development. In addition, participants from the Great River City Event and focus group communicated that present bike facilities and trails are a strength of Mason City and should be maintained and extended to provide more connectivity throughout the city.

The existing condition analysis demonstrates that Mason City has been working towards investing and improving its transportation system. However, there is potential to address issues with connectivity and enhancement of major corridors that will strengthen the system and its connection to surrounding land use. The analysis of existing condition identified areas where walkability and connectivity should be improved. The City should utilize the existing conditions section in conjunction with these goals and objectives to enhance accessibility, mobility and implement well-designed, complete streets to ensure resilience in the future.

Goal 1: Mason City will continue to improve connectivity and accessibility to the downtown and neighborhoods to ensure a resilient transportation system.

- Objective 1.1: Continue to map the preferred routes and connection points for major streets in growth areas and ensure adequate and appropriate right-of-way dedication as land is divided in the future.
- Objective 1.2: Improve the quality of existing street infrastructure and the functions of intersections, corridors, and major streets as identified in the existing condition analysis.
- Objective 1.3: Provide strict inspection and monitoring of the standards for streets and circulation including connectivity and design standards as part of the city Subdivision Ordinance Title 11, Chapter 4 for any new developments.
- Objective 1.4: Identify and improve the connectivity of streets to provide efficient routes for the public as well as emergency services, and to provide direct and continuous vehicular and pedestrian travel routes to neighborhood destinations.
- Objective 1.5: Maintain and create an interconnected street system throughout the transit service area with high priority given to the mixed use nodes and its surrounding development to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists and different types of vehicles.

Goal 2: Mason City will provide safe, accessible, and efficient biking and walking facilities that encourage community members of all ages to use multi-modal forms of transportation.

- Objective 2.1: Continue to support the goals and vision of "Activating Mason City: Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan" and update the plan to be consistent with the future land use and trails.
- Objective 2.2: Continue to develop and expand a connected network of on-street and off-street bike routes to make biking a viable, safe transportation option (See Mason City Tomorrow Parks and Trails).
 - o Action 2.2.1: Mason City will develop bikeway planning inventory with prioritization of improvements and establish specific budget line items to support the provision of on-street and off-street biking network yearly.



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- Objective 2.3: Revise the current subdivision ordinance to establish a Complete Streets ordinance, requiring consideration and provision for bike and pedestrian users whenever a street is constructed or reconstructed, including meeting ADA requirements.
- Objective 2.4: Provide monitoring and inspection of sidewalks and street lighting installation as per the ordinance of Chapter 1, Title 5 for streets and sidewalks improvements.
- Objective 2.5: Implement road diets for streets with enough capacity to allocate excess roadway width to other purposes like bike lanes, on-street parking, or other efficient roadway uses.
- Objective 2.6: Continue to follow and update ordinances for crosswalks and safety zones as part of Title 9 to provide and maintain the important signs, crosswalks at intersections, and mark streets for bicycle use.

Goal 3: Mason City will provide safe and efficient transportation system for all transportation users.

- Objective 3.1: Use the existing conditions analysis to improve the function of high trafficked areas by adding or maintaining proper street signs, signals, pavement marks, speed regulations, and street lights.
- Objective 3.2: Seek to maintain and improve the transit system and services along with providing and maintaining sidewalks, bikeways and trails as mentioned in Goal 2 to provide mobility choices for diverse population.
- Objective 3.3: The City will work to maintain transit services and facilities throughout the city by collaborating with Iowa DOT, Office of Public Transit.
- Objective 3.4: Work with Iowa Department of Transportation to explore and maintain the intercity routes and ensure that transit investments strengthen the regional transit network where needed by providing more transportation choices.

Goal 4: Mason City will ensure that the transportation system is designed to withstand the effects of natural hazards.

- Objective 4.1: Encourage the use of complete street and street connectivity in Goal 1 and Goal 2 to allow people to reroute during emergency by providing easy access to other roads or transit options.
- Objective 4.2: In flood enforcement zones, incorporate design standards into Chapter 1 (Streets and Sidewalks) Title 5 of the City Code in order to provide infrastructure capable of withstanding climate change and impacts of natural hazards.
- Objective 4.3: Encourage the use of porous paving for sidewalks and streets with addition of bioswales for stormwater runoff as part of street landscaping supporting the road diet concept.
 - o Action 4.3.1: Mason City will create the green streets design guidelines for incorporation into the ordinance of Streets and Sidewalks, Title 5.
 - o Action 4.3.2: Mason City will conduct a pilot program to demonstrate the feasibility and functionality of such practices.

CITY FACILITIES

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The current condition of Mason City's facilities and utilities are supporting their primary function and are adequate for serving Mason City residents. However, it is important to outline new goals that guide future development of City facilities and services to ensure that they are resilient changing environmental conditions and natural hazards. These goals are as follows:

Goal 1: Ensure that City facilities and utilities will effectively meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.

- Objective 1.1: The City will not place new facilities and utilities in the Flood Enforcement Zone without adequate protection from a 500-year flood event within the life of this plan.
- Objective 1.2: City facilities and utilities will be built to withstand thunderstorms, windstorms, tornado, severe winter storms, and hailstorms.
- Objective 1.3: City storm sewers will have adequate capacity to handle 500-year rain storms.

Goal 2: Mason City will protect its assets and infrastructure during a disaster

- Objective 2.1: The City will develop and maintain a plan to protect community facilities, public and private utility infrastructure and historic places/ districts within the next 10 years.
- Objective 2.2: The City will utilize state/ local taskforce and volunteers to protect public assets when needed.



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ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The existing conditions analysis demonstrates that Mason City is committed to protecting residents from hazardous events given past mitigation efforts. Through this analysis, the planning team examined the future risk associated with hazards that affect Mason City, including natural disasters and water quality issues. The City can utilize these identified risks in conjunction with the goals and objectives outlined in this section for future mitigation measures.

The Cerro Gordo County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies potential hazards and recommends mitigation efforts for Mason City. In addition to implementing this plan, it is essential to integrate hazard planning into the comprehensive planning process to ensure that future land development is resilient against changing environmental conditions.

At the comprehensive planning level, Mason City will use land-use approaches, such as alteration of the Subdivision Ordinance and the Zoning Code to restrict development in its river/ stream corridors, reduce flood risk for existing development in vulnerable areas, and identify safer areas for development.

- **River/ Stream Corridors:** Mason City will continue to regulate development in flood vulnerable areas along river corridors, such as 0.2% floodplain and wetlands. Regulating development in the floodplains will control erosion, and maintain water quality.
- **Vulnerable Areas:** Mason City will reduce future flood risk for development already existing in vulnerable areas through mandating FEMA's National Insurance Flood Policy for mortgage lenders. These include neighborhoods along Chelsea Creek, which are located in the flood risk area (Figure 53)
- **Safer Areas:** Mason City will encourage new development in areas that are less vulnerable to future floods.
- **Wetlands:** Mason City will implement storm water management best practices to slow and infiltrate floodwater. Wetland vegetation can impede the movement of flood waters and distribute them more slowly over floodplains. Effective solutions for water pollution reduction include natural vegetation buffers around impaired stream segments. These buffers provide water quality control by acting as a natural filter for polluted water running off land surrounding streams and rivers.

Figure 53: Stream corridor, vulnerable areas and safe areas to build along Chelsea Creek.



Additional goals to prepare Mason City for future long-term resilience are as follows:

Goal 1: Mason City will protect its critical natural resources areas to reduce future flood impact and restore water quality.

- Objective 1.1: Mason City will evaluate establishing a buffer around impaired stream segments and wetlands, including the Winnebago River and Calmus Creek, to improve water quality, store floodwaters, and maintain diversity of species.

Goal 2: Mason City will reduce vulnerability to existing properties in the hazard risk areas.

- Objective 2.1: Mason City will promote financial risk mitigation for existing development in highly vulnerable areas by pursuing the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS).
- Objective 2.2: The City will implement a combination of flood control strategies and effective floodplain management activities, such as flood walls, by securing hazard mitigation funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, from state grants, and other sources of funding.
- Objective 2.3: Mason City will prioritize and implement the mitigation strategies identified in the Cerro Gordo Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Goal 3: Mason City will protect future development from flooding and other hazards.

- Objective 3.1: Mason City will amend its existing building code to incorporate resilient building practices including flood-proofing requirements, wind-bracing requirements for new construction, and repair of existing buildings within disaster vulnerable areas.
- Objective 3.2: Mason City will amend the future development constraint map to reflect updated FEMA Flood Map, which is produced in support of the updated National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Objective 3.3: The City will amend its Subdivision Ordinance and incorporate an on-site storm water detention policy for major developments that lie in proximity to the 0.2% annual risk flood plain.
- Objective 3.4: Mason City will encourage future developments to improve the permeability of the paving system by amending its Subdivision Ordinance, and a storm water best management practices cost-share program.
- Objective 3.5: Mason City will explore the development of a Post-Construction Storm Water Ordinance to inspect construction site runoff and monitor post construction storm water permit applications.
- Objective 3.6: The City will prepare a Comprehensive Storm Water Management Plan (CSWMP) and update it regularly to achieve these environmental resilience goals.

Goal 4: Mason City will use Iowa Smart Planning Principles to protect and restore the natural floodplain and wetland area.

- Objective 4.1: Mason City will amend the future land use map to reflect a stricter flood enforcement zone when appropriate, which will follow FEMA's 0.2% annual chance floodplain when the floodplain coordinates are updated.
- Objective 4.2: Mason City will continue to work with the buyout ad hoc committee to recommend resilient land uses for bought-out floodplain areas.

Goal 5: Mason City will effectively manage and recover from disasters.

- Objective 5.1: The City will develop and maintain a Disaster Recovery Plan to guide immediate and long-term recovery measures.
- Objective 5.2: The City will continue utilizing its Disaster Recovery Project Center.
- Objective 5.3: The City will continue to collaborate with the non-profit agencies, government, non-government, faith based, and civic organizations to provide long-term recovery services to residents.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mason City is the economic heart of the region in terms of healthcare, retail, and manufacturing, and to ensure prosperity, it must continue to be a regional hub in the future. To achieve this, the goals of this comprehensive plan promote a diversified economic base to help bolster the resilience of Mason City's economy and prepare it for any future challenges.

Throughout the development of this plan, the residents of Mason City reflected on the future economy of the city and region. Residents communicated that increasing the overall number of jobs was the most important economic goal. To stabilize and prepare for the future, Mason City must invest in businesses that will provide the greatest benefit to the city in terms of long-term employment and resilience.

Mason City has primarily been a manufacturing center of employment throughout the 20th century, as demonstrated by the Economic Prosperity existing conditions analysis. However, the manufacturing industry has declined over the last 30 years, with a rise in service-sector jobs. While manufacturing may have been a strength for the city over the last several decades, focusing on diversifying the economy will offer true resilience in future years.

Goal 1: Mason City will support local business growth by establishing new and support ongoing Workforce Development programs will focus on and help the needs of local employers.

- Objective 1.1: Mason City will continue to work with organizations such as IowaWORKS Center of Cerro Gordo County and Regional Workforce Development Board of NIACC to identify and meet workforce education and training needs that support local businesses by examining the projections of the Cerro Gordo County Workforce Needs Assessment.
- Objective 1.2: The City will work with local school districts to encourage students to pursue local careers to retain workforce and increase population retention.

Goal 2: Mason City will promote and healthy living environments.

- Objective 2.1: The City will continue to support arts and culture, including live performance, public art installations, and other means, as an important element of workforce attraction and economic development.
 - o Action 2.1.1 The City should utilize the Sustainability Plan for guidance on how arts and culture can be integrated into the Mason City community.
- Objective 2.2: Mason City will promote healthy living practices and initiatives to increase community appeal and reduce health care costs, including building upon initiatives set forth by the Blue Zones Project®.

Goal 3: Downtown Mason City will continue to be the hub of economic and social activities.

- Objective 3.1: Mason City will utilize its existing economic development tools, such as urban revitalization tax abatements and urban redevelopment, and establish new tools as feasible and appropriate, to attract more retail and professional employers to downtown.
- Objective 3.2: The City will continue to work with Main Street Mason City and other entities to enhance, promote, and preserve the downtown area.



Goal 4: Mason City will have environmentally sustainable development.

- Objective 4.1: The City will continue to support sustainable business education programs and initiatives, such as the Mason City Sustainability Plan (currently in development).
- Objective 4.2: Mason City will support business growth in accessible areas of the city, especially around mixed-use nodes and corridors, by working closely with the North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation and other entities.
- Objective 4.3: The City will disallow commercial and industrial development in environmentally hazardous areas, as deemed by the Environmental Resilience Chapter of this plan, the Cerro Gordo County Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the Mason City Zoning Ordinance.

Goal 5: Mason City will have a variety of jobs in diversified sectors.

- Objective 5.1: Mason City will continue to support businesses that diversify the economy of the City through the use of Mason City's Urban Revitalization Tax Abatement program.
- Objective 5.2 The City will work with key stakeholders to identify a base of creative industries and promote these industries to enhance quality of life and expand workforce variety.

Goal 6: Mason City will continue to operate as the ideal convention and tourism destination in the region.

- Objective 6.1: The City will work with Visit Mason City and The Music Man Square to attract new conventions and new tourists through the promotion of the City.
- Objective 6.2: Mason City will continue to improve the quality of the downtown area to make it an attractive tourist destination for the region and beyond by continuing to invest in the aesthetics of the area (reference Community Character goals).

PARKS AND TRAILS

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Parks and trails are integral to creating high quality of life in Mason City. Through the public outreach completed for this plan, residents expressed that the amount of park space was sufficient in Mason City but that these amenities require better maintenance. The existing conditions analysis for Mason City parks identifies the same trend regarding the amount of park space.

Likewise, trails were identified as a significant amenity in the community. However, accessibility was a broad topic discussed frequently throughout public outreach events, and can be addressed through creation of a more wide-spread and connected trails system. Trails existing conditions also identified gaps in the current trail system that inhibit using trails for transportation and recreation. The goals outlined for future development of park and trail facilities focus on the issues and opportunities expressed by community members and use existing condition analyses to provide goals and objectives.

Goal 1: Mason City will maintain exceptional recreation facilities that are resilient and accessible to all members of the community.

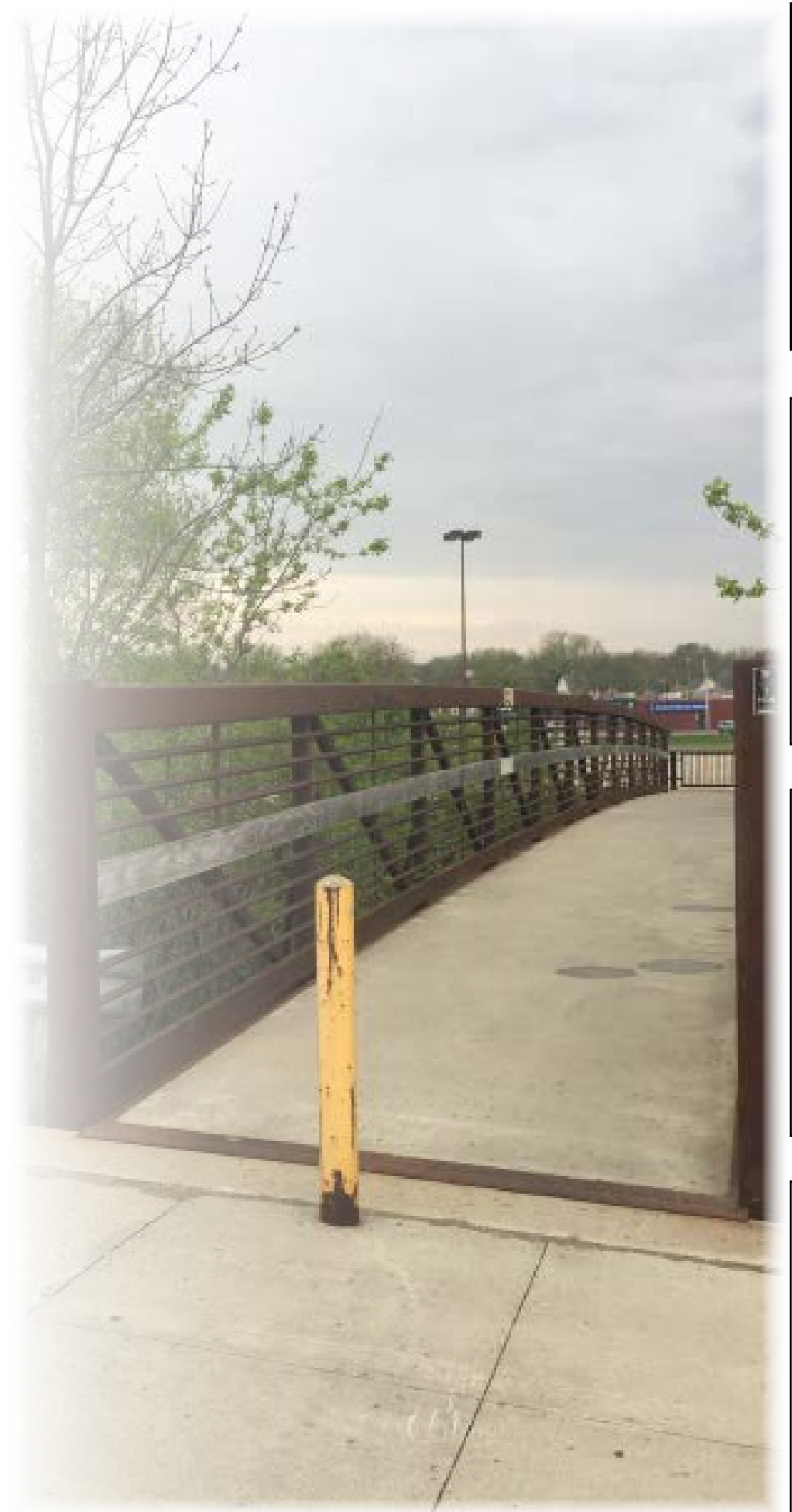
- Objective 1.1: Create a Parks and Recreation Master Plan that includes a needs analysis, gap analysis, evaluation of existing facilities, and a plan for future improvements.
- Objective 1.2: Convert areas of park turf grass to native prairie or woodland plantings to increase infiltration of storm water runoff and reduce long-term maintenance costs.

Goal 2: Mason City will continue to support a well-connected and maintained trail system.

- Objective 2.1: The City's trail system will provide city-wide and regional accessibility by implementing the future trails outlined by this plan (Figure 54).
- Objective 2.2: The City will work through collaboration with nearby entities, such as Cerro Gordo County or cities in the region, to expand the trail system throughout the region.
- Objective 2.3: The trail network will connect mixed-use nodes, future development, recreation areas, and other community features.
- Objective 2.4: The City will utilize the Mason City Master Trails Plan in conjunction with this plan for guidance on the development of future trails.

Goal 3: Mason City will promote and encourage healthy living in Mason City.

- Objective 3.1: The Mason City Parks and Recreation Department will partner with the Blue Zones® initiative to utilize park and trail systems to provide healthy living events and opportunities.



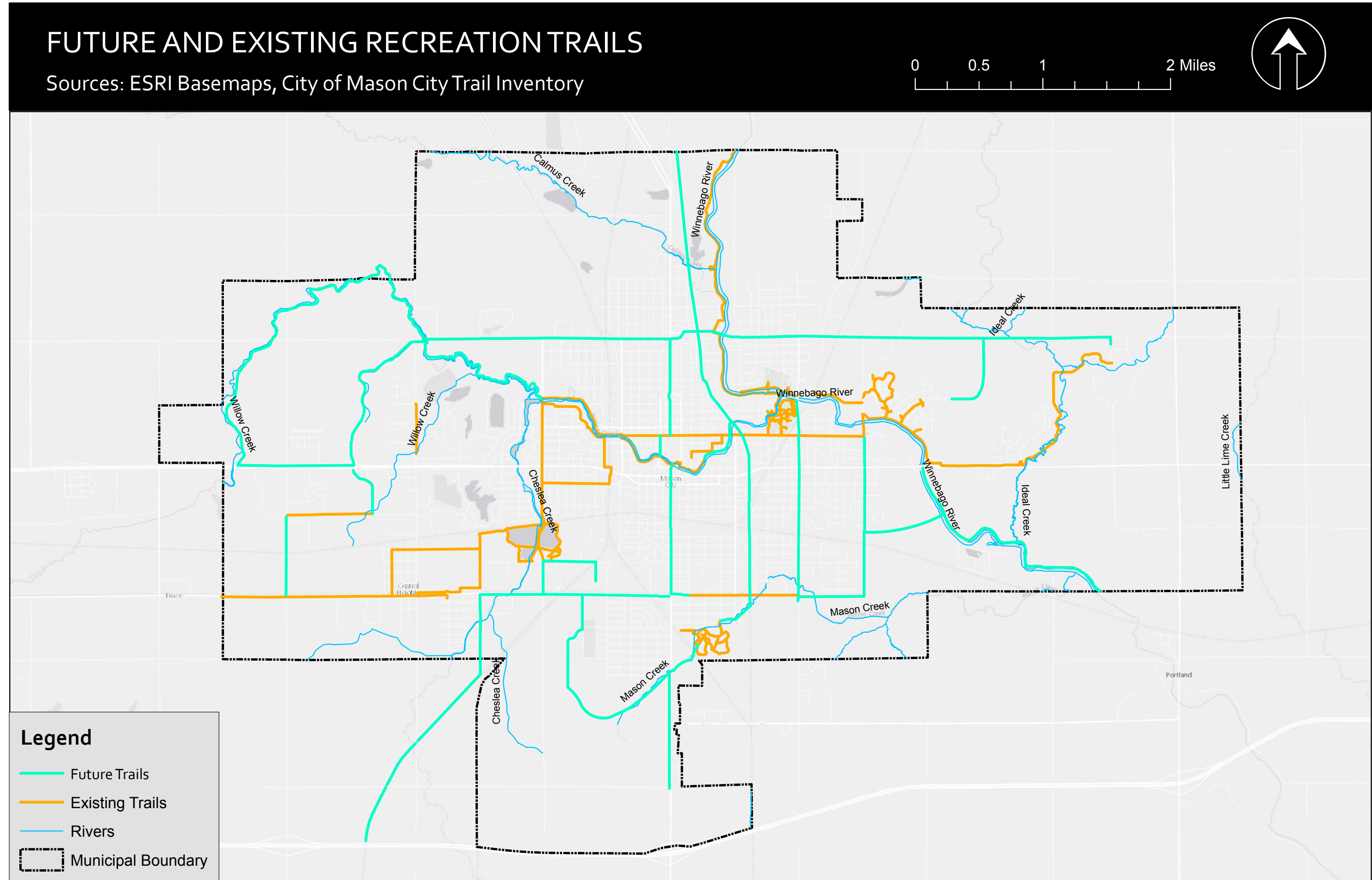
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Figure 54: Future trails map



COMMUNITY CHARACTER

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The residents of Mason City were engaged throughout the planning process to identify community character challenges and develop goals to address them. Residents recognized historic architecture and cultural heritage as the city's greatest strengths. Deterioration of buildings in the north end of town and vacant retail spaces were identified as weaknesses. Public outreach participants communicated that revitalization of existing structures is an important goal to address deterioration.

The existing conditions analysis demonstrates the need to invest in preserving or restoring Mason City's historic resources, renewing deteriorated development, and repurposing vacant and underutilized buildings. Revitalizing the existing neighborhoods and corridors will ensure a stable tax base for the city. The city will refer to the existing conditions chapter in conjunction with these goals and objectives to ensure adequate investment in downtown housing and improvements in the quality of its existing built environment. Looking forward, Mason City must support and invest in maintaining its historic properties, existing key corridors, and rehabilitation of housing stock in targeted neighborhoods.

The City can use the downtown area as a template to extend form-based code in the proposed multi-use nodes and compact residential zones. These redeveloped pockets can include vertically and horizontally integrated mix of uses and encourage distinctive neighborhoods. Another example is an underutilized parking lot on 4th St SW, along Willow Creek. Since the area lies within the 0.2% floodplain, the space can be utilized as a park and community space, which will prevent the building of any permanent structures, but will ensure that the land is productively used.

Goal 1: Mason City's Architectural, historic, aesthetic and cultural heritage will be well preserved.

- Objective 1.1: The City will continue to protect and enhance historic sites and districts by supporting its Historic Preservation Commission.
- Objective 1.2: The City will encourage integration of historic character and quality architectural design into new development or redevelopment in historic districts and areas of civic importance. The City will work with the Historic Preservation Commission to secure Community Development Block Grant funds and other sources of funding.
- Objective 1.3 The City will prepare a historic preservation plan for preserving historic downtown areas and neighborhoods by working with the Historic Preservation Commission.

Goal2: Mason City will utilize its historic and cultural heritage for economic development.

- Objective 2.1: The City will continue to encourage investment in the downtown by revitalizing its commercial areas through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds through the Iowa Downtown Revitalization Program (DTR).
- Objective 2.2: Mason City will continue to promote downtown amenities to attract business and residences by working with North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation.
- Objective 2.3: The City will continue to promote its heritage tourism to stimulate the local economy through Community Development Block Grant Funds for Historic Preservation and Heritage Tourism.
- Objective 2.4: Mason City will continue to market its historic and cultural resources as a tourism attraction by working with Main Street Mason City and other similar organizations.

Important definition

Vacant Housing: Chapter 657A of Iowa State code defines Vacant Housing as "a building that has remained vacant and has been in violation of the housing code of the city in which the property is located, or the housing code applicable in the county in which the property is located if outside the limits of a city, for a period of six consecutive months."

Goal 3: Mason City will encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of historic properties.

- Objective 3.1: The City will encourage rehabilitation of historic properties through federal and state property tax relief programs (such as Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits and State Historic Preservation Tax Credits) by working with Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs.
- Objective 3.2: The City will evaluate rehabilitating and reusing commercial and residential properties to encourage greater resilience by seeking Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) grants, Neighborhood Stabilization Program, and other funding opportunities.

Goal 4: Mason City will improve the quality and identity of neighborhoods.

- Objective 4.1: Private nuisances that negatively affect neighborhoods will be mitigated. Mason City will implement and enforce the Vacant Building Ordinance through Neighborhood Service Division to regulate the existence of vacant properties.
- Objective 4.2: Mason City will monitor and evaluate its vacant housing regularly by working with Neighborhood Services Division to create a vacant housing inventory.
- Objective 4.3: Mason City will work with experienced consultants to develop a Comprehensive Historic Structure Report that provides details on existing physical conditions of historic properties. The report will guide the treatment of significant historic properties and will serve as a readily accessible reference document for property owners.
- Objective 4.4: Mason City will continue to monitor its rental housing stock through its Rental Housing Inspection Program.

Goal 5: Mason City will have a thriving arts, cultural, and entertainment community and identity.

- Objective 5.1: Mason City will establish an Arts Commission to promote its local public art installations and engage local artists.
- Objective 5.2: The City will continue to support arts, cultural and historic preservation programs and initiatives, such as the Sustainability Plan in development for Mason City.

IMPLEMENTATION CHART

This implementation chart outlines all goals, objectives, and action items set forth by this plan, and designates a timeframe for completion.

	Goals and Objectives	1 to 3 Years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	Notes
Land Use					
Goal 1	Mason City will support infill and compact development to increase density and land use diversity.				
Objective 1.1	Ensure the availability of appropriately zoned land for mixed-use development and provide opportunities and flexibilities following the design standard for block and lots in chapter 4 of Title 11 and flexibilities in building and moving permit fees as a part of building codes, Title 10.			X	This objective will be observed when new development is proposed and will continue throughout the life of this plan.
Objective 1.2	Prevent leapfrog development by limiting the expansion of utilities to undeveloped areas.			X	
Objective 1.3	Provide technical assistance to support the rehabilitation and redevelopment of aging properties, vacant lands.			X	
Action 1.3.1	Mason City will consult with realtors and developers to assess the real estate market for new development and analyze density and selling price by conducting infill parcel inventory of those properties located within the mixed-use nodes.	X			
Objective 1.4	Provide incentives to support and encourage infill development.		X		
Action 1.4.1	Mason City will promote the use of the Urban Revitalization Tax Abatement Program to reduce property tax payments for both businesses and multi-family dwellings development at the mixed-use nodes.				
Action 1.4.2	Mason City will continue to seek opportunities for financial assistance for developers through state and federal sources as well as provide below-market financing through mortgage revenue bonds.				
Objective 1.5	Improve and maintain infrastructure to properties that provide opportunities for compact, infill development.				
Action 1.5.1	Mason City will create an inventory of the identified properties and identify the potential infrastructure barriers to redevelopment.				
Goal 2	Mason City will support the integration of mixed-use developments to promote neighborhood resilience.				
Objective 2.1	Incorporate regulatory incentives for the development of mixed use and high-density development as part of the comprehensive plan.			X	
Action 2.1.1	Mason City will allow for density bonuses for developments occurring within the mixed-use nodes.				
Action 2.1.2	Mason City will utilize transferable development rights for properties within the mixed-use nodes.				
Action 2.1.3	The City will impose impact fees on development in Low Density Development areas (as outlined by the future land use map) or Sub-Urban District (as designated by the zoning code).				
Objective 2.2	Provide sufficient infrastructure and technical assistance in areas where future land use is designated as mixed use			X	
Objective 2.3	Continue the City's commitment to revitalization and redevelopment of the Downtown Redevelopment Area with an appropriate mix of uses by reviewing and following recommendations made by the 2007 Downtown Plan.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to all new downtown development.
Goal 3	Mason City will guide growth and development in land uses to create high quality and resilient neighborhoods.				
Objective 3.1	Continue preservation of riverfront and other areas prone to runoff and flooding, as detailed out in environmental resilience chapter of this comprehensive plan.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to future land use development plans.
Objective 3.2	Work collaboratively and communicate effectively with entities like major employers, developers, non-profit entities, and agencies that have large impacts on land use to direct future growth.	X			The City will seek to communicate annually with such entities to direct the new land use development.
Objective 3.4	Encourage the compact and mixed-use development as mentioned in goals 1 and 2 to reduce urban sprawl, prevent the development of open and agriculture lands, and create neighborhoods where residents can live closer to work, rely less on environmentally damaging methods of transportation, and reduce the collective carbon footprint.			X	This objective will be observed whenever new development is proposed and will continue throughout the life of this plan
Objective 3.5	Mason City will continue to review proposed preliminary plats through its subdivision ordinance and ensure that any new development impact on floodplain, wetlands, contour, and tree cover is mitigated through its subdivision ordinance.	X			

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	Goals and Objectives	1 to 3 Years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	Notes
	Housing				
	Goal 1				
	Goal 1				Mason City will offer a variety of attractive, diverse, and safe housing options
Objective 1.1	Mason City will encourage mixed-use development within new and old neighborhoods to encourage greater resilience by following the future land-use map throughout the lifetime of this plan.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to all new development
Objective 1.2	New housing development will remain contiguous to existing housing development and pedestrian infrastructure in Mason City, and will review all new development as it relates and abides by the goals of this plan.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to all new development
Action 1.2.1	The City will prioritize infill housing development within the existing growth boundary of the city by following the future land use map and zoning code.			X	
	Goal 2				
	Goal 2				Mason City will provide access to quality housing regardless of age, mobility, and socioeconomic status
Objective 2.1	The City will encourage new development to contain affordable housing options by working with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to secure state and federal grants and other sources of funding every year.	X			The City should seek to acquire these funding sources every year during the life of this plan.
Objective 2.2	The Mason City Planning and Zoning Division and the Housing Division will evaluate the allowance of constructing accessory dwelling units (i.e. "granny flats") and small lot housing to provide market rate affordable housing options by 2023.		X		
Objective 2.3	The City will continue to seek opportunities for homeownership for low to moderate income families through state and federal grant opportunities, such as the Federal HOME Investments Partnerships Program and the State Housing Trust Fund every year.	X			The City should seek to acquire these funding sources every year during the life of this plan.
Action 2.3.1	Mason City will continue to work with and support the Habitat for Humanity of North Central Iowa to promote housing for low-income families			X	These partnerships will be ongoing throughout the life of this plan.
Objective 2.4	Accessible housing units will be seamlessly integrated into both existing neighborhoods and new developments when new housing development occurs.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to all new development
Action 2.4.1	The City will encourage the use of life-cycle housing to facilitate the opportunity for residents to age within the community by examining the building code of the city and making necessary changes that allow for ease of development to address the most common physical impairments affecting the elderly and disabled. This examination should occur within the next 5 years.		X		
Action 2.4.2	The Mason City Planning and Zoning Division and the Housing Division of the City will do a housing needs assessment with a focus on housing needs of elderly and disabled populations every 5 years.		X		

INTRO

TODAY

TOMORROW

APPENDIX

	Goals and Objectives	1 to 3 Years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	Notes
Transportation					
Goal 1	Mason City will continue to improve connectivity and accessibility to the downtown and neighborhoods to ensure a resilient transportation system.				
Objective 1.1	Continue to map the preferred routes and connection points for major streets in growth areas and ensure adequate and appropriate right-of-way dedication as land is divided in the future.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to future transportation system development.
Objective 1.2	Improve the quality of existing street infrastructure and the functions of intersections, corridors, and major streets as identified in the existing condition analysis.	X			The city will monitor the existing condition of the streets regularly.
Objective 1.3	Provide strict inspection and monitoring of the standards for streets and circulation including connectivity and design standards as part of the city Subdivision Ordinance Title 11, Chapter 4 for any new developments.	X			The city will monitor the existing condition of the streets regularly.
Objective 1.4	Identify and improve the connectivity of streets to provide efficient routes for the public as well as emergency services, and to provide direct and continuous vehicular and pedestrian travel routes to neighborhood destinations.		X		The city will create a program to identify the conditions of such streets and abide by the objectives throughout the life of this plan.
Objective 1.5	Maintain and create an interconnected street system throughout the transit service area with high priority given to the mixed use nodes and its surrounding development to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists and different types of vehicles			X	
Goal 2	Mason City will provide safe, accessible, and efficient biking and walking facilities that encourage community members of all ages to use multi-modal forms of transportation.				
Objective 2.1	Continue to support the goals and vision of "Activating Mason City: Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan" and update the plan to be consistent with the future land use and trails.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to future bike and pedestrian development plans.
Objective 2.2	Continue to develop and expand a connected network of on-street and off -street bike routes to make biking a viable, safe transportation option (See Mason City Tomorrow Parks and Trails).			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to future bike and pedestrian development plans.
<i>Action 2.2.1</i>	Mason City will develop bikeway planning inventory with prioritization of improvements and establish specific budget line items to support the provision of on-street and off-street biking network yearly.	X			
Objective 2.3	Revise the current subdivision ordinance to establish a Complete Streets ordinance, requiring consideration and provision for bike and pedestrian users whenever a street is constructed or reconstructed, including meeting ADA requirements.	X			The city will examine and monitor the existing condition of the street as well as future street development regularly.
Objective 2.4	Provide monitoring and inspection of sidewalks and street lighting installation as per the ordinance of Chapter 1, Title 5 for streets and sidewalks improvements.	X			The city will provide regular monitoring.
Objective 2.5	Implement road diets for streets with enough capacity to allocate excess roadway width to other purposes like bike lanes, on-street parking, or other efficient roadway uses.		X		The city will identify the existing condition of streets and plan for the implementation.
Objective 2.6	Continue to follow and update ordinances for crosswalks and safety zones as part of Title 9 to provide and maintain the important signs, crosswalks at intersections, and mark streets for bicycle use.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to future street development.
Goal 3	Mason City will provide safe, and efficient transportation system for all transportation users.				
Objective 3.1	Use the existing conditions analysis to improve the function of high trafficked areas by adding or maintaining proper street signs, signals, pavement marks, speed regulations, and street lights.	X			The city will identify the existing condition of streets and plan for the implementation.
Objective 3.2	Seek to maintain and improve the transit system and services along with providing and maintaining sidewalks, bikeways and trails as mentioned in Goal 2 to provide mobility choices for diverse population.			X	This objective will be observed throughout the life of this plan and abide by the goals and objectives for any new street developments.
Objective 3.3	The City will work to maintain transit services and facilities throughout the city by collaborating with Iowa DOT, Office of Public Transit.	X			The city will cooperate with transit center on regular basis.
Objective 3.4	Work with Iowa Department of Transportation to explore and maintain the intercity routes and ensure that transit investments strengthen the regional transit network where needed by providing more transportation choices.	X			The city will cooperate with DOT on regular basis.
Goal 4	Mason City will ensure that the transportation system is designed to withstand the effects of natural hazards.				
Objective 4.1	Encourage the use of complete street and street connectivity in Goal 1 and Goal 2 to allow people to reroute during emergency by providing easy access to other roads or transit options.			X	This objective will be observed throughout the life of this plan and applies to future street development
Objective 4.2	Support the environmental resiliency chapter of the comprehensive plan to prevent transportation infrastructure development in flood enforcement zones and develop standards as part of the update of Chapter 1 (Streets and Sidewalks), Title 5 of City Code to provide better designed infrastructure to withstand extreme climate change and impacts of natural hazards.			X	This objective will be observed throughout the life of this plan and applies to future street development

Objective 4.3	Encourage the use of porous paving for sidewalks and streets with addition of bioswales for stormwater runoff as part of street landscaping supporting the road diet concept.			X	This objective will be observed throughout the life of this plan and applies to future street development
Action 4.3.1	Mason City will create the green streets design guidelines for incorporation into the ordinance of Streets and Sidewalks, Title 5.				
Action 4.3.2	Mason City will conduct a pilot program to demonstrate the feasibility and functionality of such practices.				

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	Goals and Objectives	1 to 3 Years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	Notes
	City Facilities and Utilities				
Goal 1	Ensure that City facilities and utilities will effectively meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.				
Objective 1.1	The City will not place new facilities and utilities in the Flood Enforcement Zone without adequate protection from a 500-year flood event within the life of this plan.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to all new Mason City facilities and utilities
Objective 1.2	City facilities and utilities will be built to withstand thunderstorms, windstorms, tornado, severe winter storms, and hailstorms.			X	This objective is ongoing and applies to all new Mason City facilities and utilities
Objective 1.3	City storm sewers will have adequate capacity to handle 500-year rain storms.			X	This objective is ongoing given that existing storm sewers must be retrofitted and new sewer must be built to this standard
Goal 2	Mason City will protect its assets and infrastructure during a disaster				
Objective 2.1	The City will develop and maintain a plan to protect community facilities, public and private utility infrastructure and historic places/ districts	X			
Objective 2.2	The City will utilize state/ local taskforce and volunteers to protect public assets when needed			X	This objective is ongoing and should be abided by when the need for assistance arises

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	Goals and Objectives	1 to 3 Years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	Notes
Environmental Resilience					
Goal 1	Mason City will protect its critical natural resources areas to reduce future flood impact.				
Objective 1.1	Mason City will evaluate establishing a buffer around impaired stream segments and wetlands, including the Winnebago River and Calmus Creek, to improve water quality, store floodwaters, and maintain diversity of species.		X		
Goal 2	Mason City will reduce vulnerability to existing properties in the hazard risk areas.				
Objective 2.1	Mason City will promote financial risk mitigation for existing development in highly vulnerable areas by pursuing the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS).		X		
Objective 2.2	The City will implement a combination of flood control strategies and effective floodplain management activities, such as flood walls, by securing hazard mitigation funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, from state grants, and other sources of funding.			X	Funding will be applied for when the need for mitigation arises
Objective 2.3	Mason City will prioritize and implement the mitigation strategies identified in the Cerro Gordo Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.			X	This process will begin upon adoption of the County Hazard Mitigation Plan.
Goal 3	Mason City will protect future development from flooding and other hazards.				
Objective 3.1	Mason City will amend its existing building code to incorporate resilient building practices including flood-proofing requirements, wind-bracing requirements for new construction, and repair of existing buildings within disaster vulnerable areas.			X	Once amended, the effectiveness of the building code will be monitored annually.
Objective 3.2	Mason City will amend the future development constraint map to reflect updated FEMA Flood Map, which is produced in support of the updated National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).			X	The City will update the development constraints map when new FEMA flood maps are adopted
Objective 3.3	The City will amend its Subdivision Ordinance and incorporate an on-site storm water detention policy for major developments that lie in proximity to the 0.2% annual risk flood plain.	X			The success of the policy will be evaluated annually.
Objective 3.4	Mason City will encourage future developments to improve the permeability of the paving system by amending its Subdivision Ordinance, and a storm water best management practices cost-share program.	X			Once adopted, the Ordinance will be monitored throughout the life of the plan.
Objective 3.5	Mason City will explore the development of a Post-Construction Storm Water Ordinance to inspect construction site runoff and monitor post construction storm water permit applications.	X			
Objective 3.6	The City will prepare a Comprehensive Storm Water Management Plan (CSWMP) and update it regularly to achieve these environmental resilience goals.			X	This objective will be ongoing given the plan will be reassessed/updated every 2 years
Goal 4	Mason City will use <i>Iowa Smart Planning Principles</i> to protect and restore the natural floodplain and wetland area				
Objective 4.1	Mason City will amend the future land use map to reflect a stricter flood enforcement zone, which will follow FEMA's 0.2% annual chance floodplain.	X			The amendment process will begin as soon as the updated FEMA maps are adopted.
Objective 4.2	Mason City will continue to work with the buyout ad hoc committee to recommend resilient land uses for bought-out floodplain areas.	X			The community members will be involved throughout this process.
Goal 5	Mason City will effectively manage and recover from disasters.				
Objective 5.1	The City will develop and maintain a Disaster Recovery Plan to guide immediate and long-term recovery measures.			X	
Objective 5.2	The City will continue utilizing its Disaster Recovery Project Center.	X			The capacity of the Center will be monitored every 3 years.
Objective 5.3	The City will continue to collaborate with the non-profit agencies, government, non-government, faith based, and civic organizations to provide long-term recovery services to residents.	X			

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	Goals and Objectives	1 to 3 Years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	Notes
	Economic Prosperity				
Goal 1	Mason City will support local business growth by establishing new and support ongoing Workforce Development programs focus on and help the needs of local employers.				
Objective 1.1	Mason City will continue to work with organizations such as IowaWORKS Center of Cerro Gordo County and Regional Workforce Development Board of NIACC to identify and meet workforce education and training needs that support local businesses by examining the projections of the Cerro Gordo County Workforce Needs Assessment.	X			This important relationships will continue throughout the life of this plan and will have concrete and visible benefits for the community. An analysis of these benefits will occur every 3 years.
Objective 1.2	The City will work with local school districts to encourage students to pursue local careers to retain workforce and increase population retention.		X		The City will monitor levels of workforce retention and report every 5 years.
Goal 2	Mason City will be an attractive community to live and work.				
Objective 2.1	The City will continue to support arts and culture, including live performance, public art installations, and other means, as an important element of workforce attraction and economic development.		X		The City will monitor levels of workforce development and economic development and report every 5 years.
Action 2.1.1	The City should utilize the Sustainability Plan for guidance on how arts and culture can be integrated into the Mason City community.			X	The City will implement aspects of the Sustainability Plan throughout the lives of both documents.
Objective 2.2	Mason City will promote healthy living practices and initiatives to increase community appeal and reduce health care costs, including building upon initiatives set forth by the Blue Zones Project®.	X			The City will report on the benefits of the Blue Zones Project® every 3 years, or as frequently as necessary.
Goal 3	Downtown Mason City will continue to be the hub of economic and social activities				
Objective 3.1	Mason City will utilize its existing economic development tools, such as urban revitalization tax abatements and urban redevelopment, and establish new tools as feasible and appropriate, to attract more retail and professional employers to downtown.	X			The City will work to promote and use these tools, reporting on their benefits and accomplishments every 3 years, or as frequently as necessary.
Objective 3.2	The City will continue to work with Main Street Mason City and other entities to enhance, promote, and preserve the downtown area.			X	This partnership will continue throughout the life of this plan.
Goal 4	Mason City will have environmentally sustainable development.				
Objective 4.1	The City will continue to support sustainable business education programs and initiatives, such as the Mason City Sustainability Plan (currently in development).			X	The City will support these initiatives throughout the life of this plan.
Objective 4.2	Mason City will support business growth in key areas of the city, especially around mixed-use nodes and corridors, by working closely with the North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation and other entities.		X		The City will examine the commercial outcomes of the mixed-use nodes every 5 years.
Objective 4.3	The City will disallow commercial and industrial development in environmentally hazardous areas, as deemed by the Environmental Resilience Chapter of this plan, the Cerro Gordo County Hazard Mitigation Plan, and the Mason City Zoning Ordinance.			X	This objective is ongoing and will be enforced throughout the life of this plan.
Goal 5	Mason City will have a variety of jobs in diversified sectors.				
Objective 5.1	Mason City will continue to support businesses that diversify the economy of the City through the use of Mason City's Urban Revitalization Tax Abatement program.	X			The City will use the program when appropriate and report on the benefits and outcomes of the program every 3 years.
Objective 5.2	The City will work with key stakeholders to identify a base of creative industries and promote these industries to enhance quality of life and expand workforce variety.	X			Key industries will be identified every 3 years.
Goal 6	Mason City will continue to operate as the ideal convention and tourism destination in the region.				
Objective 6.1	The City will work with Visit Mason City and The Music Man Square to attract new conventions and new tourists through the promotion of the City.	X			The City will report on the successes of attracting tourists and visitors every 3 years.
Objective 6.2	Mason City will continue to improve the quality of the downtown area to make it an attractive tourist destination for the region and beyond by continuing to invest in the aesthetics of the area (reference Community Development goals).			X	

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	Goals and Objectives	1 to 3 Years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	Notes
	Parks and Trails				
Goal 1	Mason City will maintain exceptional recreation facilities that are resilient and accessible to all members of the community.				
Objective 1.1	Create a Parks and Recreation Master Plan that includes a needs analysis, gap analysis, evaluation of existing facilities, and a plan for future improvements.	X			
Objective 1.2	Convert areas of park turf grass to native prairie or woodland plantings to increase infiltration of storm water runoff and reduce long-term maintenance costs.			X	This objective is ongoing and should be carried out incrementally over the life of this plan
Goal 2	Mason City will continue to support a well-connected and maintained trail system.				
Objective 2.1	The City's trail system will provide city-wide and regional accessibility by implementing the future trails outlined by this plan (Figure X).			X	The future trails proposed by this plan should be implemented incrementally in conjunction with the <i>Mason City Master Trails Plan</i>
Objective 2.2	The City will work through collaboration with nearby entities, such as Cerro Gordo County or cities in the region, to expand the trail system throughout the region.			X	
Objective 2.3	The trail network will connect mixed-use nodes, future development, recreation areas, and other community features.			X	
Objective 2.4	The City will utilize the <i>Mason City Master Trails Plan</i> in conjunction with this plan for guidance on the development of future trails.			X	
Goal 3	Mason City will promote and encourage healthy living in Mason City				
Objective 3.1	The Mason City Parks and Recreation Department will partner with the Blue Zones® initiative to utilize park and trail systems to provide healthy living events and opportunities	X			

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	Goals and Objectives	1 to 3 Years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	Notes
Community Character					
Goal 1	Mason City's Architectural, historic, aesthetic and cultural heritage will be well preserved.				
Objective 1.1	The City will encourage integration of historic character and quality architectural design into new development or redevelopment of historic districts and areas of civic importance. The City will work with the Historic Preservation Commission to secure Community Development Block Grant funds and other sources of funding.			X	The City will work to secure Community Development Block Grant funds and other sources of funding annually
Objective 1.2	The City will prepare a historic preservation plan for preserving historic areas and neighborhoods by working with the Historic Preservation Commission.		X		
Goal 2	Mason City will utilize its historic and cultural heritage for economic development.				
Objective 2.1	The City will continue to encourage investment in the downtown by revitalizing its commercial areas with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds through the Iowa Downtown Revitalization Program (DTR).	X			The City will report on the successes of the grant every year.
Objective 2.2	Mason City will continue to promote downtown amenities to attract business and residences by working with North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation.	X			The City will report on the successes of promoting downtown amenities every 2 years.
Goal 3	Mason City will encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of historic properties.				
Objective 3.1	The City will encourage rehabilitation of historic properties through federal and state property tax relief programs (such as Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits and State Historic Preservation Tax Credits) by working with Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs.		X		
Objective 3.2	The City will evaluate rehabilitating and reusing commercial and residential properties to encourage greater resilience by seeking Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), Neighborhood Stabilization Program, and other funding opportunities.		X		
Goal 4	Mason City will improve the quality and identity of neighborhoods.				
Objective 4.1	Private nuisances that negatively affect neighborhoods will be mitigated. Mason City will implement and enforce a Vacant Building Ordinance to regulate the existence of vacant properties.	X			The Ordinance will be evaluated every 3 years.
Objective 4.2	Mason City will monitor and evaluate its vacant housing regularly by creating a vacant housing inventory.		X		Vacant housing will be monitored annually.
Objective 4.3	Mason City will work with experienced consultants to develop a Comprehensive Historic Structure Report that provides details on existing physical conditions of historic properties.		X		

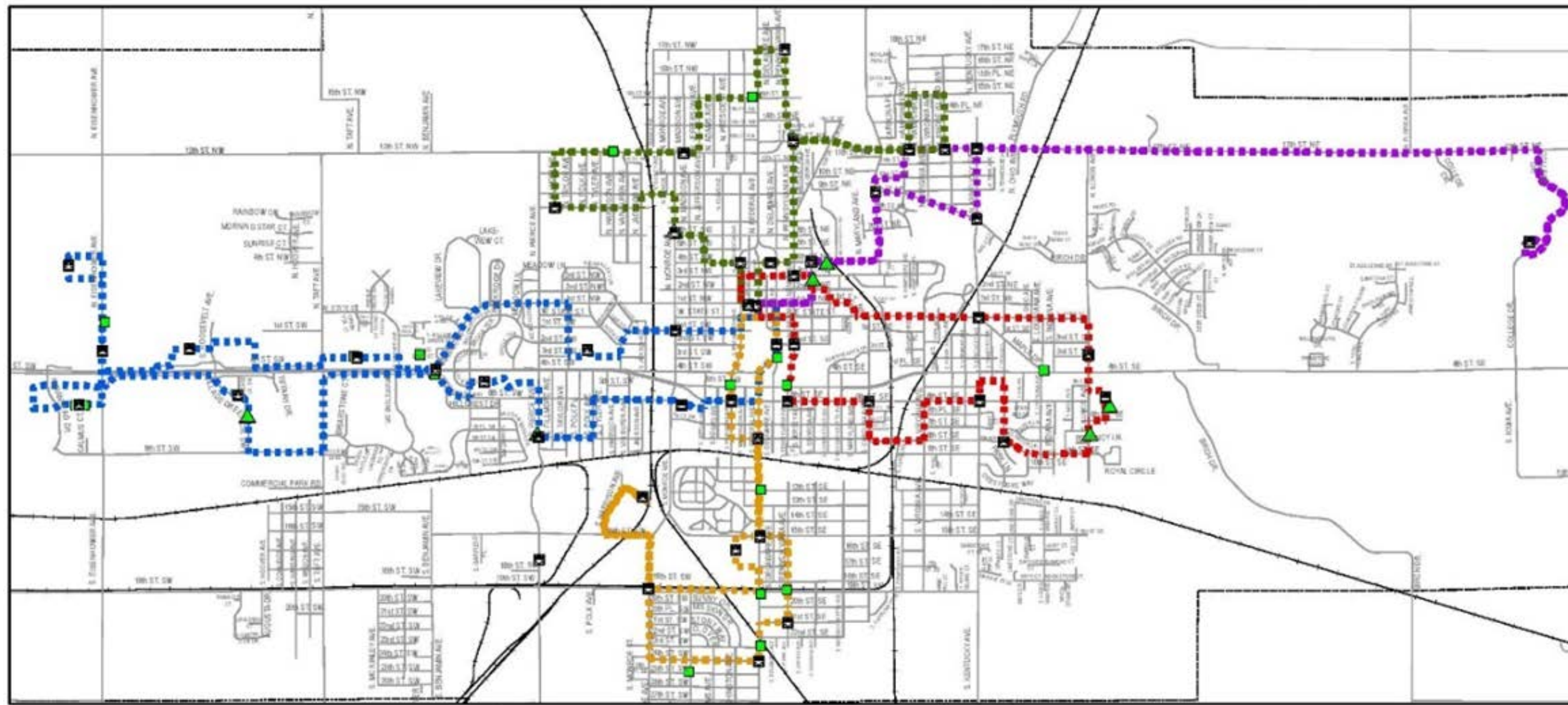
Part 4: Appendix



ALL PICTURES, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, WERE TAKEN BY THE AUTHORS OR THE CITY OF MASON CITY.

Mason City Transit System Routes

West Central Outbound - Blue Route		West Central Inbound - Blue Route		North Central - Green Route		South Central - Brown Route		East Central - Red Route		Northeast - Purple Route	
Location	Minutes After the Hour	Location	Minutes After the Hour	Location	Minutes After the Hour	Location	Minutes After the Hour	Location	Minutes After the Hour	Location	Minutes After the Hour
Central Park	:00 & :30	Mercy Medical Center West	:20 & :50	Central Park	:00 & :30	Central Park	:00 & :30	Central Park	:00 & :30	Central Park	:00 & :30
1st St. SW & S. Monroe Ave.	:02 & :32	Wal-Mart	:26 & :56	Fareway	:02 & :32	S. President Ave. & 6th St. SW	:03 & :33	S. Pennsylvania Ave. & 2nd St. SE	:02 & :32	N. Georgia Ave. & 4th St. NE	:02 & :32
Mercy Medical Center East	:04 & :34	Village Green Dr. & Village Grn Ln.	:30 & :00	N. Pennsylvania Ave. & 13th St. NE	:06 & :36	8th St. SW & S. Federal Ave.	:05 & :35	S. Pennsylvania Ave. & 6th St. SE	:04 & :34	N. Carolina Ave. & 9th St. NE	:04 & :34
Winnebago Way & 4th St. SW	:10 & :40	Willowbrook Mall	:36 & :06	12th St. NE & N. Rhode Island Ave.	:08 & :38	South Port Mall (Sears)	:06 & :36	6th St. SE & S. Carolina Ave.	:06 & :36	Birch Dr. & N. Kentucky Ave.	:05 & :35
West Plaza	:12 & :42	S. Pierce and 8th St. SW	:40 & :10	N. Hampshire Ave. & 12th St. NE	:11 & :41	NIVC	:11 & :41	6th St. SE & S. Kentucky Ave.	:07 & :37	N. Kentucky Ave. & 12th St. NE	:06 & :36
Target Super Center	:15 & :45	Shopko	:45 & :15	N. Pennsylvania Ave. & 17th St. NE	:14 & :44	S. Monroe Ave. & 19th St. SW	:14 & :44	S. Tennessee Ave. & Manor Dr.	:11 & :41	NIACC	:12 & :42
Mental Health Center	:18 & :48	Central Park	:55 & :25	N. Madison Ave. & 12th St. NW	:18 & :48	24th St. SW & S. Federal Ave.	:17 & :47	Regency Mall (HyVee East)	:15 & :45	12th St. NE & N. Hampshire Ave.	:19 & :49
Mercy Medical Center West	:20 & :50			N. Fillmore Ave. & 8th St. NW	:20 & :50	21st St. SE & S. Pennsylvania Ave.	:19 & :49	Mason City High School	:18 & :48	4th St. NE & N. Georgia Ave.	:23 & :53
				Community Kitchen	:23 & :53	15th St. SE & S. Federal Ave.	:21 & :51	E. State St. & N. Kentucky Ave.	:20 & :50	Central Park	:25 & :55
				4th St. NW & N. Washington Ave.	:24 & :54	2nd St. SE & S. Delaware Ave.	:23 & :53	3rd St. NE & N. Pennsylvania Ave.	:23 & :53		
				Central Park	:25 & :55	Central Park	:25 & :55	Central Park	:25 & :55		



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Transit Stops
 Transit Shelters
 Transit Benches

City of Mason City GIS; Map Prepared 9/14/2012

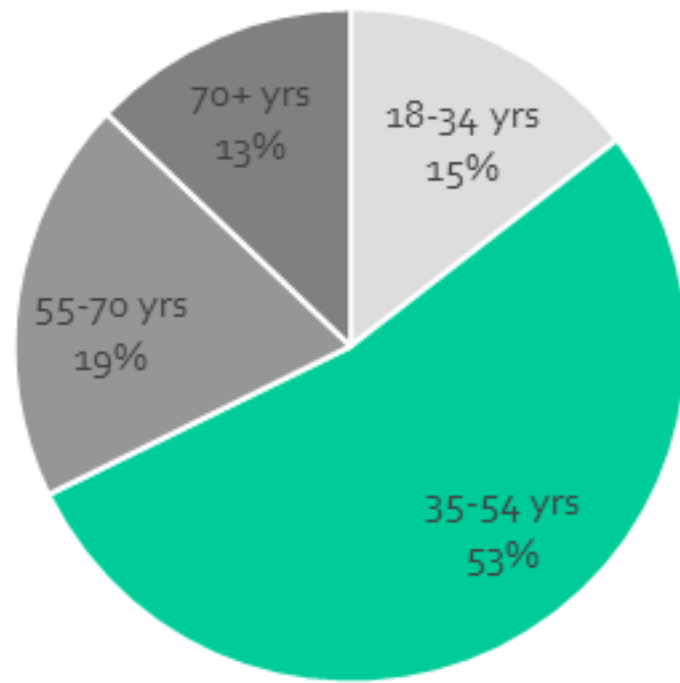
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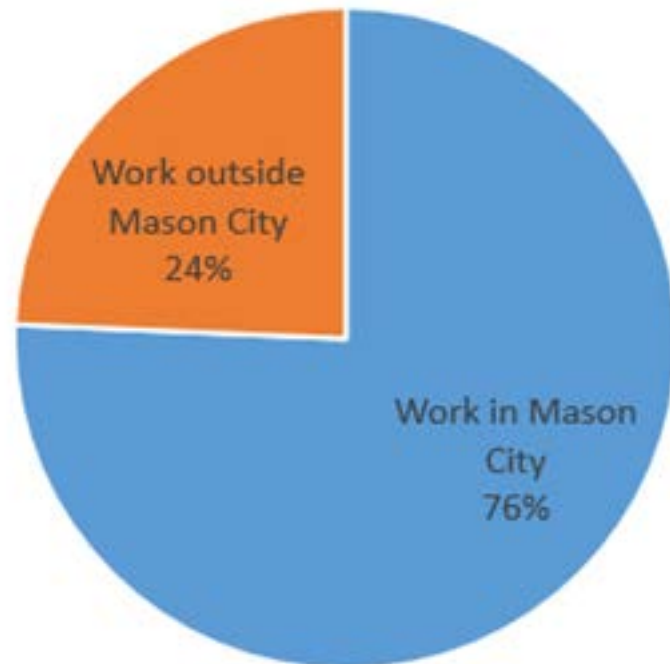
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A P P E N D I X

Repondent Age Composition (in %)



Work Area Profile of respondents



MASON CITY EMPLOYMENT 2014, DETAILED

Mason City – Employment	Jobs			Iowa - Employment	Jobs	
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	14,321			Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,562,492	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	118	1%		Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	62,344	4%
Construction	653	5%		Construction	95,899	6%
Manufacturing	2,373	17%		Manufacturing	233,193	15%
Wholesale trade	489	3%		Wholesale trade	45,376	3%
Retail trade	2,213	16%		Retail trade	182,416	12%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	608	4%		Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	71,807	5%
Information	289	2%		Information	28,625	2%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	756	5%		Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	118,166	8%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	955	7%		Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	110,830	7%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	3,843	27%		Educational services, and health care and social assistance	379,192	24%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	1,275	9%		Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	116,274	7%
Other services, except public administration	474	3%		Other services, except public administration	67,550	4%
Public administration	275	2%		Public administration	50,820	3%

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MASON CITY EMPLOYMENT 2010, DETAILED

Mason City Employment	Jobs			Iowa Employment	Jobs	
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	14,541			Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,553,594	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	111	0.80%		Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	62,943	4.10%
Construction	788	5.40%		Construction	98,644	6.30%
Manufacturing	2,371	16.30%		Manufacturing	232,877	15.00%
Wholesale trade	478	3.30%		Wholesale trade	50,706	3.30%
Retail trade	2,053	14.10%		Retail trade	179,217	11.50%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	681	4.70%		Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	75,119	4.80%
Information	233	1.60%		Information	33,549	2.20%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	714	4.90%		Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	119,194	7.70%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	849	5.80%		Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	102,220	6.60%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	3,997	27.50%		Educational services, and health care and social assistance	365,550	23.50%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	1,222	8.40%		Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	115,963	7.50%
Other services, except public administration	702	4.80%		Other services, except public administration	67,249	4.30%
Public administration	342	2.40%		Public administration	50,363	3.20%

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MASON CITY EMPLOYMENT 2000, DETAILED

Mason City Employment	Jobs			Iowa Employment	Jobs		
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	14461			Civilian employed population 16 years and over	1,489,816		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	60	0.4%		Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	65,903	4.4%	4%
Construction	611	4.2%		Construction	91,824	6.2%	6%
Manufacturing	2,850	19.7%		Manufacturing	253,444	17.0%	15%
Wholesale trade	493	3.4%		Wholesale trade	53,267	3.6%	3%
Retail trade	2,146	14.8%		Retail trade	179,381	12.0%	12%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	573	4.0%		Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	73,170	4.9%	5%
Information	374	2.6%		Information	41,970	2.8%	2%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	828	5.7%		Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	100,395	6.7%	8%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	916	6.3%		Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	90,157	6.1%	7%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	3,336	23.1%		Educational services, and health care and social assistance	324,142	21.8%	24%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	1,064	7.4%		Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	98,819	6.6%	7%
Other services, except public administration	806	5.6%		Other services, except public administration	66,286	4.4%	4%
Public administration	404	2.8%		Public administration	51,058	3.4%	3%

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