

# Comprehensive Plan 2014-2024



## City of Osceola, Nebraska

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The City of Osceola would like to thank all of the residents, property owners, and business owners who participated in the development of Osceola's Comprehensive Plan! The City would also like to acknowledge Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA) for partially funding the update to this Comprehensive Plan.

### ***Members at Approval of Comprehensive Plan (2014)***

#### **City Council**

Mayor - Wendell Lindsley  
City Clerk/Treasurer - Heather Lindsley  
Charles Hays  
Kraig Kuhnel  
Donald Sterup  
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#### **Planning Commission**

Tim Althouse  
Robert Johansen  
Scott Anderson  
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#### **City Council**

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*Note: This page was updated in January, 2020 to record the current City Council and Planning Commission members.*

## Vision for Osceola

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

The blueprint for Osceola is to have continuing community input of goals and ambitions for the City. The idea is to promote and grow a diverse economic base while emphasizing overall community development, including a proactive approach for attracting new residents. Commercial and housing development is currently an issue that needs to be addressed in order to attract and maintain residents. There are areas for development; however, these areas need to be marketed in order to attract a developer. Gateway corridors along Highway 81/92 were major discussion points during the public input sessions. Residents would really love to see these areas beautified in order to give a grand "first impression" to visitors. Other goals for Osceola are to create a variety of job options, agricultural and non-agricultural, while also maintaining infrastructure such as roads, water, and public buildings/services. The creation of this plan and the continual reference back to it and any other planning efforts, will benefit the City on its road to reach the goals laid out in this Comprehensive Plan.

## Introduction

The Comprehensive Plan for Osceola 2014-2024 is an outline of the goals for the community and by the community. This Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint for the City's future, a blueprint to develop the kind of community for tomorrow. It provides guidance on where and how the City will invest and change over the next ten years. It contains maps, visions and goals for the future, and policies to address topics ranging from land use and demographics to transportation and community services. The purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to provide long-range guidance to property owners, residents, elected and appointed officials, City staff, and others to inform, provide options, and stimulate community discussion on issues such as where and what type of future developments should occur.

## Compliance with State & Local Requirements Governmental & Jurisdictional Organization

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

The planning and zoning jurisdiction for the City of Osceola includes an area within one-mile of their corporate limits, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 17-1002,

### Nebraska Revised Statute § 17-1002.

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

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

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

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

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

The planning and zoning jurisdiction of City of Osceola is governed by Neb. Rev. Stat. §17-1004. As Osceola continues to grow and annex land into their corporate limits, their extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJ) may extend further into Polk County. The City of Osceola has chosen, at this time, to extend their jurisdiction the full one-mile.

Nebraska Revised Statute § 17-1004

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

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

Nebraska Revised Statute § 19-903

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## Why a Comprehensive Plan?

This document is the community's long-term Comprehensive Plan that establishes vision and direction for the future (to the year 2024). Its objectives are to confirm the community's vision for the future, and to set the policy framework to help guide future decisions related to development and investment. It will help the City thoughtfully address future needs for economic development, transportation, housing, services, parks and open space, and other community benefits. It will also help to ensure a sustainable and fiscally responsible future, by setting the desired direction for future development regulations, policy decisions, and community programs.

## Goals for Osceola's Comprehensive Plan 2014-2024

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

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

## Data Sources

### 2010 Census (short form)

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

### American Community Survey (ACS)

This survey is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau in replacement of the Decennial Census Long Form. The ACS provides a lot of different data such as household income, commute time to work, year of household, etc. The survey is spread over five years (2008-2012) and it uses a much smaller sample population than the Decennial Census Long Form did. Every year a small portion of surveys are sent out to people; the Census Bureau then makes estimates based on those numbers that were gathered over the five-year time span. The ACS reports the data as an estimate with a margin of error. The ACS states there is a 90 percent chance of accuracy within the margin of error reported on either side of the original estimate.

### Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI)

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

## **Planning Period**

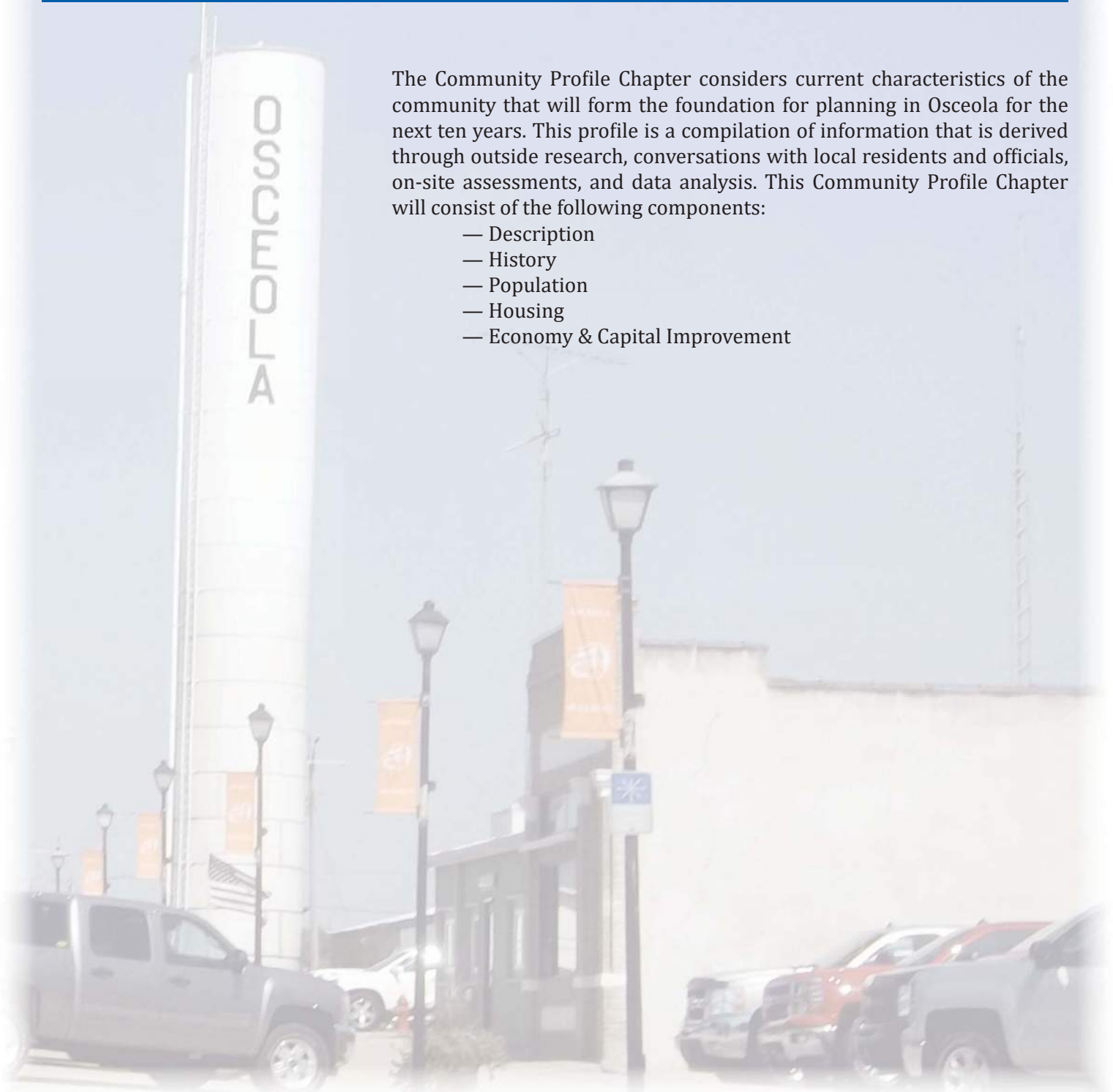
The planning period for Osceola's Comprehensive Plan, is from 2014-2024. This plan should be reviewed in 2015, 2019, and a complete update should be done in 2024 if City officials decide the community has had enough change to warrant a new plan or they determine the process and goal-setting would be beneficial for the City at that time. However, it is still important to continually refer to and update this plan throughout the planning period.

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

# Chapter 1: Community Profile

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

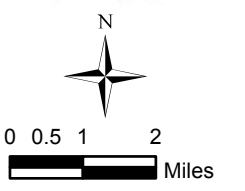
- Description
- History
- Population
- Housing
- Economy & Capital Improvement




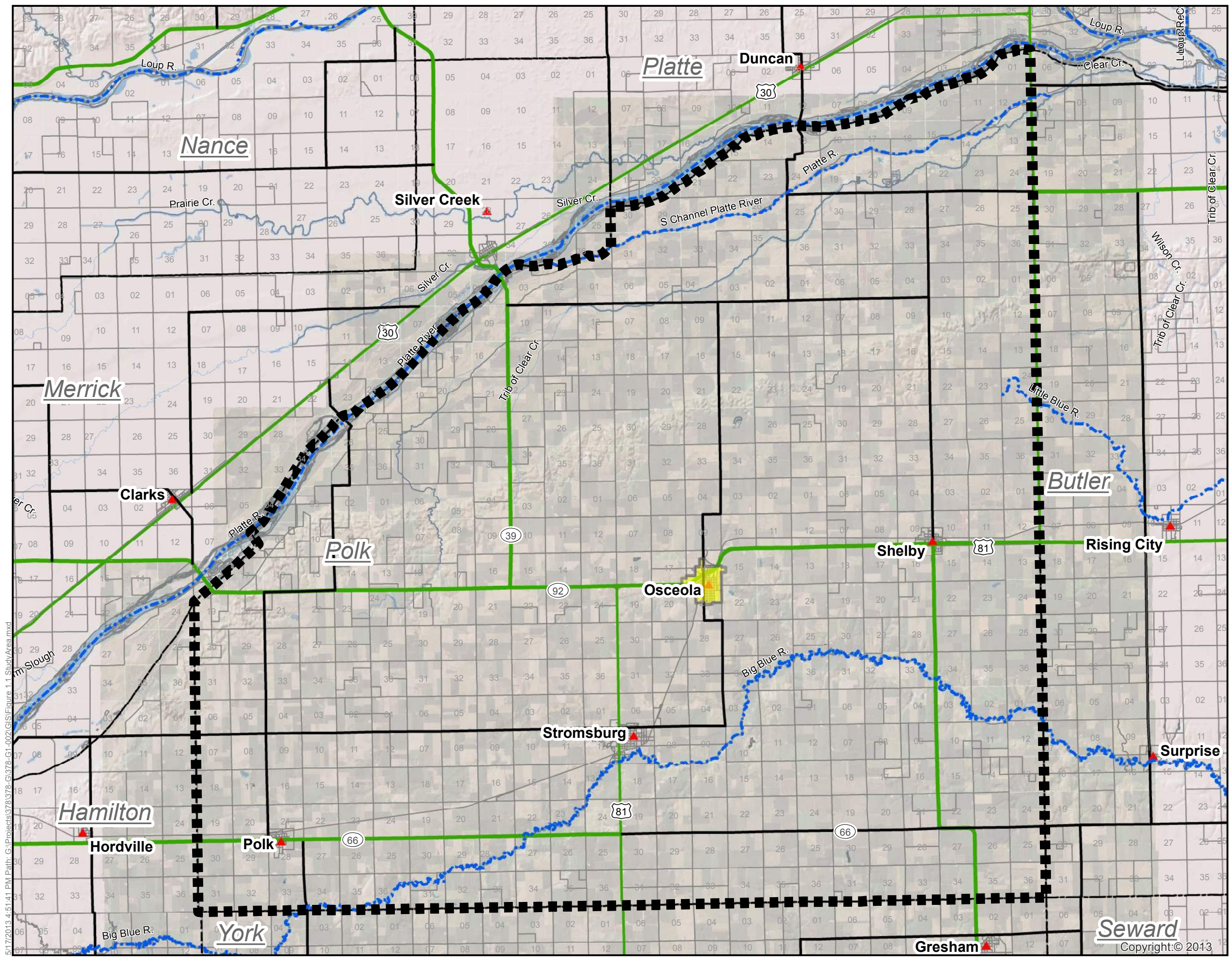


## Description

The City of Osceola, which is approximately 0.92 square miles, is situated in central Polk County along United States Highway 81 and Nebraska State Highway 92. Other communities in Polk County include Stromsburg, Polk, and Shelby. Osceola is the County Seat of Polk County. According to the 2010 Census, Osceola's population was 880. Osceola is home to several different industries, a wonderful school district, Annie Jeffrey Memorial County Health Center, senior housing and services, restaurants, stores, and enjoyable recreational facilities. Figure 1.1 shows Osceola's location in Polk County. This map acts as a Study Area Map for the Comprehensive Plan.



**Legend**  
 Osceola Corporate Boundary



**Figure 1.1**  
**Study Area Map**

Polk County, Nebraska

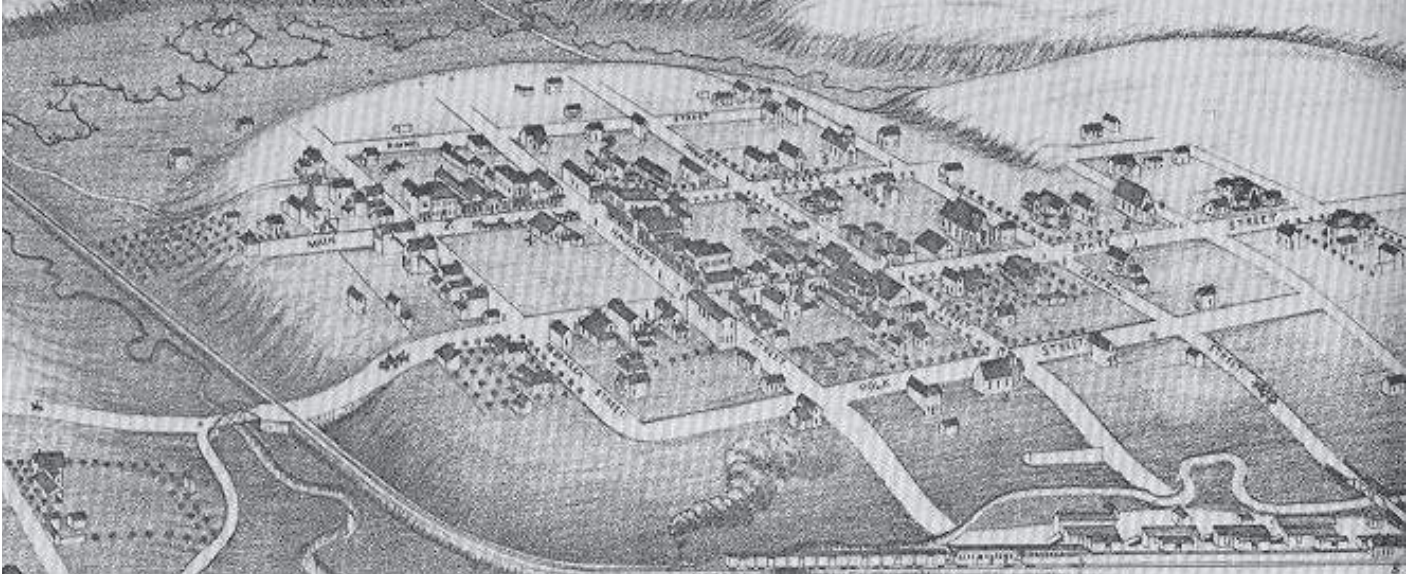
5/17/2013 4:51:41 PM Path: G:\Projects\378\378-G1-002\GIS\Figure 1.1 Study Area.mxd

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# History

*The following account of Osceola's history was written by D. Ruth Lux, president of the Polk County Historical Society, and it can be found on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's "Virtual Nebraska" website. This article and historic images of the community can be found by going to <http://www.casde.unl.edu/history/counties/polk/osceola/>.*



*Sketch of Osceola, Nebraska 1880. Image from <http://www.casde.unl.edu/history/counties/polk/osceola/>*

Our town derives its unusual name from Chief Osceola of the Seminole Indian tribe. The first settlers, Rev. James Query and V.P. Davis, came with their families in October 1868. During the next two years the families of Stewart, Kerr, Beltzer, Hildebrand, Kenyon, Campbell, VanHoosen, and Arnold arrived.

When organizing in 1870, the county seat, given the name "Osceola," was located three miles southeast of the present town in Section 24. On October 10, 1871, another election was held at which time the people contested a proposed site five miles north of today's location. Approved by only 14 votes, the "geographic center of the county" was made the permanent site. Throughout the heated battle, the name remained the same.

A committee was appointed to locate the permanent town site in Section 16 of the approved township. By January 1872 the first courthouse was in place, and trees found along Davis Creek were used to build homes for those first on the scene. Many early settlers were Swedish and German people who had come in search of land in the new world. Word was carried back across the waters to relatives and friends, who then came directly to Polk County where they filed claims of their own or purchased railroad land.

A post office, established July 21, 1871, was moved to the new site by postmaster William Loring in 1872. At that time, Osceola was the terminus of the overland mail route from Lincoln by way of Ulysses. "The Osceola Homesteader" was established as a weekly paper in 1872 by Herbert Arnold. The present newspaper is the "Osceola Record."

The Omaha & Republican Valley Railroad was completed as far as Osceola by June 1879. One of the first locomotives into the city carried the name "Osceola," but was later renamed number "9."

A college named "Nebraska Wesleyan" was chartered in Osceola on May 21, 1879. Classes opened that Fall in a two-room annex of the Methodist Episcopal Church with 11 students and four instructors. Rev. Jesse Jackson Fleharty served as president, with John Mickey president of the board of trustees. The college moved to Fullerton in 1881, and from there to Lincoln.

Four governors have come from our community: Albinus Nance served Nebraska 1879-83, John Mickey from 1902-007, Ashton Shallenberger from 1909-11 then ten years in Congress, and Stanley Hathoway was Wyoming's governor 1966-74.

On August 26, 1881, Osceola was incorporated as a village, having attained 200 residents. Today, Osceola is a beautiful city on U.S. Highway 81 and Nebraska 92, just 30 miles north and east of York and I-80. The city is comprised of well-kept homes and friendly, energetic people. Rich farmlands surrounds the town, and because of the substantial aquifer, irrigation plays a large part in ag-production. In addition to several grain elevators, implement center, and veterinary hospital, Osceola has a balanced business district and a sizable industrial park, which currently includes manufacturing by Midland Products and County Feeders Supply. Education is a top priority at Osceola. Churches include Catholic, Lutheran, and United Methodist. The Annie Jeffrey Memorial Hospital serves the county as does the Good Samaritan nursing home. We have a public library, a senior citizens center, a volunteer fire department, an ambulance service, and the Polk County Historical Society Museum. NPPD provides power to the community, and the town has a substantial municipal water system. Osceola has an olympic-size swimming pool, tennis courts, picnic area, and camping facilities in the city park. The Polk County Recreation Association maintains a nine-hole golf course, Ryan Hill Clubhouse, a gun club, and a bowling alley.



Recent Hufnagle aerial of Osceola, looking north, "...Right in the middle of everything!"  
Image courtesy <http://www.casde.unl.edu/history/counties/polk/osceola/>

A grand centennial celebration was held in 1971. An even larger celebrations was held in 1976 when the national bicentennial wagon train, following the Ox Bow Trail, came through town and camped overnight at the county fairgrounds. A program was presented at the school auditorium to a standing-room-only crowd, tapes of which were sent to the National Archives. Another commemorative event occurred in September 1991 when St. Mary's Catholic Church at "Pilzno," north of town, the second national Polish church in the Lincoln Diocese, held its 100th anniversary. Osceola's city government is managed by a city council and a mayor. A population peak was reached in 1920 with 1,200 residents. The 1980 census count was 975.



# Population

*Population is any community's lifeblood. The people that live, work, and visit Osceola everyday*

*are what make the community "tick". Understanding the population is just as important as understanding the wants and needs in the community. Analyzing demographics is important to the Comprehensive Plan because it becomes the basis for prioritizing future growth. In order to accurately plan for the growth of Osceola, we first must consider the past and the current populations before we can make projections for the future. Population projections are significant because they assist communities with a vision for where they will be in five, ten, and even fifteen years. That will in turn help decision-makers plan for social, economic, and physical infrastructure with the purpose of meeting the community's future needs and demands.*

The 2010 Census data, which was released during the first few months of 2011, showed the City of Osceola had an 85 percent return rate for mail-in surveys. This was much higher than both the State and National averages of 77 percent and 74 percent, respectively, and higher than Osceola's 2000 Census participation rate of 80 percent. Having a high participation rate leads to higher accuracy levels for data reported by the Census Bureau as opposed to having a low rate of Census participation which causes the Census Bureau to make estimates from the minimal data provided. Osceola saw over a four percent decrease in population from 2000 to 2010, or a total of 41 persons from the 2000 population of 921. Osceola's population is 98.6 percent White, 0.2 percent American Indian, 0.2 percent Native Hawaiian, 0.1 percent Asian, and 0.6 percent Hispanic or Latino. Based on the 2010 Census, approximately five persons living in Osceola are Hispanic or Latino. That is the largest population sector other than White alone for the community's residents. The Hispanic or Latino population sector has stayed relatively constant since the 2000 Census, when there were four persons of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity living in Osceola.

<b>Table 1.1 Comparable Population Changes, Osceola, 2000-2010</b>				
<b>Community</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>% of Change</b>
Silver Creek	441	362	-79	-17.91
Duncan	359	351	-8	-2.23
Genoa	981	1,003	22	2.24
Shelby	690	714	24	3.48
Seward	6,403	6,964	561	8.76
Clarks	359	369	10	2.79
Stromsburg	1,232	1,171	-61	-4.95
Rising City	386	374	-12	-3.11
Osceola	921	880	-41	-4.45

Source: US Census Bureau

**Table 1.1** shows a comparison of Osceola's population changes between 2000 and 2010 with surrounding communities that have similar characteristics to Osceola. Some of the communities saw a decrease in population and some showed an increase in total population in the region. All of these communities have many of the same challenges that face Osceola with growth, development, and trying to attract residents to their communities. This data shows City leaders that regardless of a community's size and location, they are still liable to population loss; proving that cities must continually work to retain the existing population and attract new residents.

Gender is another facet to consider when analyzing the population. Over 54 percent of Osceola’s population is female and almost 46 percent of the population is male. The median age of residents in Osceola is 45.3. The median age for women is 47.6 years-old, and that number is drastically higher than the male median age of 43.4. The difference in median ages between the male and female population shows there is a higher percentage of elderly women living in Osceola. Women have longer life expectancies than men which could be a contributing factor to the gender distribution in Osceola’s residents. These age and gender differences can affect housing, recreation, community services, and businesses that will be desired in Osceola because of the differences in wants and expectations for amenities between men and women as well as between the differing ages.

Table 1.2 Population History, Osceola, 1930-2010									
Year	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
<b>Population</b>	1,054	1,039	1,098	1,013	923	975	879	921	880

Source: Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Census Bureau

**Table 1.2** shows the history of Osceola’s population which has fluctuated greatly over the past eight decades. Since 1930 there has been no apparent trend in population changes for the City. Since 1930, Osceola has seen an overall decrease in total population of 174 people. This makes projecting future populations more complicated when using a historical analysis method. Osceola is a progressive community with proactive City leaders and community stakeholders. The City has a lot to offer to residents including a variety of job opportunities and housing options currently existing within the City’s limits. It is important for Osceola to stay ahead of the curve as a progressive, proactive community in order to continually attract new people and families to town.

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

For the 2010 Census data, 25 percent of the population was under 18 years-old. Also, according to the 2010 Census, 21 percent or 185 people are 65 or older; this number is important because 65 is the common age of retirement, although trends now show the retirement age is starting to rise.

Table 1.3 Population by Age Cohorts, Osceola, 2010		
Age Cohort	Number	Percent
<b>Total Population</b>	880	
<b>Under 5 Years</b>	58	6.6
<b>5 to 9 years</b>	69	7.8
<b>10 to 14 years</b>	54	6.1
<b>15 to 19 years</b>	54	6.1
<b>20 to 24 years</b>	32	3.6
<b>25 to 29 years</b>	36	4.1
<b>30 to 34 years</b>	43	4.9
<b>35 to 39 years</b>	47	5.3
<b>40 to 44 years</b>	42	4.8
<b>45 to 49 years</b>	67	7.6
<b>50 to 54 years</b>	72	8.2
<b>55 to 59 years</b>	60	6.8
<b>60 to 64 years</b>	61	6.9
<b>65 to 69 years</b>	33	3.8
<b>70 to 74 years</b>	34	3.9
<b>75 to 79 years</b>	34	3.9
<b>80 to 84 years</b>	24	2.7
<b>85 years and over</b>	60	6.8
<b>Median Age</b>	48.9	

Source: U.S. Census 2010

**Figure 1.2 Population Pyramid, Osceola, 2010**

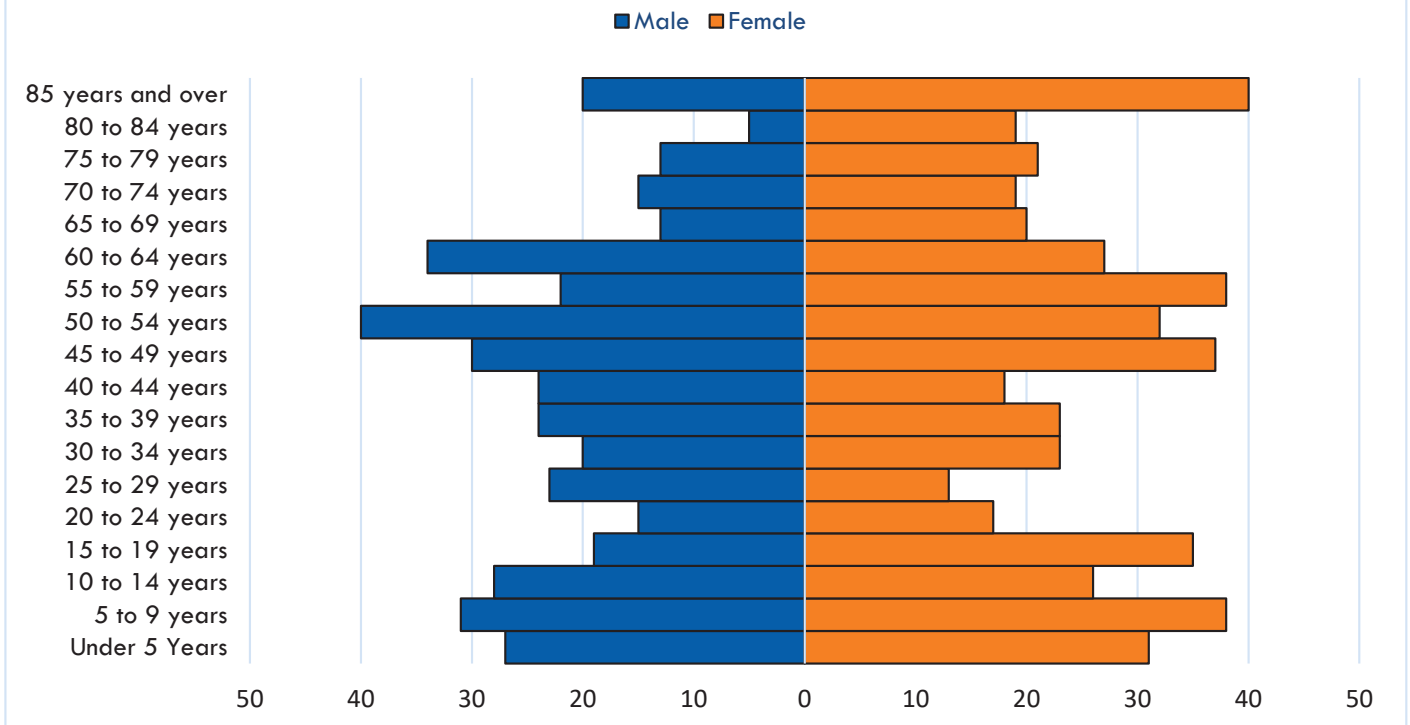


Figure 1.2 Population Pyramid - Osceola, 2010

**Figure 1.2** shows a population pyramid for Osceola’s 2010 Census population based on age and gender. A population pyramid is a series of bar charts set on a horizontal axis. The 18 bars represent each of the 18 cohorts with the male population being represented on the left side of the chart and the female population numbers being represented on the right side of the chart. A population pyramid that shows a healthy viable population has a large base of children and young adults and a much smaller number of elderly persons.

A population pyramid uses two assumptions, with the first assuming that the community exists to meet the need of its residents. The government and other quasi-governmental agencies provide public/quasi-public uses including schools, Churches, medical facilities, emergency services, and public infrastructure to meet the needs of the public. The second assumption is that people have needs and expectations that change with age. Osceola’s population pyramid shows a large elderly population for women with a solid number of middle-aged residents for both men and women. The pyramid is not completely upside down; however, a self-sustaining community is home to a larger number of children than elderly persons. In order for Osceola to grow, based on the 2010 population pyramid, the community will have to rely on in-migration to attract new families and depend on these new families and existing families to expand the base of the pyramid.

It is clear from the population pyramid and **Table 1.3**; many of the cohorts make up the same general percentage of the total population. However, there are a few cohorts that are drastically different than the majority, including the 45 to 49 and 50 to 54 cohorts which comprise 7.6 and 8.2 percent of the total population, respectively. The 20-24 year-olds make-up 3.6 percent threshold of the percentage of total population is not all that uncommon. This cohort is the typical age for college students and young professionals; therefore, it is common to have a lower population percentage for this particular cohort when there is no college in the community. Although, it is common to have a smaller percentage of college-aged people living in Osceola it is important for the community to attract those potential residents and young professionals when they have graduated from school. Attracting young professionals and families is challenging in a smaller community, especially during a struggling economy.

Job creation is the main pull factor for people moving into a community. If the City of Osceola and its businesses can create new jobs, people will come to fill those jobs. It is also important to provide amenities for these new workers. Attracting and keeping the young “creative class” generation is imperative. The “creative class” is a socioeconomic class of workers that bring new ideas, art, science, and technology together. Being able to draw these people in and to retain them as residents is critical in growing Osceola. Creating activities or a social group to help new community members get involved with current residents is a way for the community to reach out to new residents. A Young Professionals group or even an annual community dinner recognizing new community members would be beneficial for Osceola’s new residents. Another way to encourage young people to stay in the community or move back after furthering their education is to create a program that would provide job training opportunities for businesses located in the community. As previously stated, the median age of Osceola’s residents is 45.3 is drastically higher than the State and National median ages of 36.2 and 37.2, respectively. Attracting young families and professionals would help to bring the median age down to something that is consistent with the State’s median age. Lowering the median age for Osceola will not happen overnight, but will require a community effort to be able to attract the younger generations in order to have a self-sustainable balance.

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

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

<b>Table 1.4 Population Projections, Osceola, 2010-2025</b>				
<b>Annual Growth Rate Percentages</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Trend 1 (2000-2010): -0.41%</b>	880	862	845	827
<b>Trend 2 (1990-2000): 0.44%</b>	880	900	919	940
<b>Trend 3 (1980-1990): -0.98%</b>	880	838	797	759

Source: Census Bureau, M&A

The first projection is an annual growth rate percentage coming from historic trends depicted by decennial Census data. This historic trend from the population difference between 2010 and 2000, which was -0.41 percent, was projected for future populations at the years 2015, 2020, and 2025. The second population projection follows the trend between 2000 and 1990 and was then forecasted to the same three time periods as the first projection showing a 0.44 percent annual growth rate. The third scenario uses the historic trend from 1980 to 1990 showing almost a one percent annual decrease in population. These three scenarios show a difference in future populations depending on which historic trend was used to make the population projection. Of course, populations do not change at a constant rate every year; however, these numbers give an example of what the population could look like at these different intervals. It is also important to remember that most communities hit a point when the population will begin to level out and could become steady or even experience a small up-tick.

There are slight differences in the three population projection trends. This will help show City leaders what the population could look like over the next 5-15 years if the historic trends stay true into the community's future. There are a couple of things that could completely change the scene of Osceola. A major local industry or employer closing its doors or a new manufacturing business moving to town or into the region would drastically change the population of Osceola. In any community, this historic population fluctuation is typical, especially in small rural communities. Therefore, it is important for City leaders to be prepared for a multitude of scenarios and to understand that doing nothing for the community is not an option. It is important for City leaders to stay vigilant in the growth, success, and sustainability of the community in order to progress and move forward.

Families are an important to the viability of any community, including Osceola. A family, whether it is a one or two parent household, would add at least one worker to the local workforce, children into the school system, a place that is now rented or owned, more people to buy groceries in town, another vehicle to fill with gas, etc. It adds one more set of persons that have a vested interest in the welfare of the community. Families make up approximately 62.7 percent, or 229, of all occupied households in Osceola. Approximately 183 "family households", live in owner-occupied homes while 46 families live in renter-occupied households. A household is considered to be a "family household" when at least one member of the household is related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. "Non-family households," those consisting of people living alone and households who do not have any members related to the householder make up 37.3 percent of all occupied housing units in Osceola with 76 and 60 living in owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, respectively.

Educational attainment is yet another component to analyze in order to better understand your community's population base. **Table 1.5** shows the educational attainment levels for residents in Osceola. The 2008-2012 American Community Survey (ACS) data shows there were 696 ( $\pm 78$ ) people 25 years-old and older living in Osceola. The ACS also reported 15.8 ( $\pm 5.0$ ) percent of Osceola's 25 and older population has a bachelor's degree. Approximately 6.3 ( $\pm 2.9$ ) percent of the population has also received their graduate or professional degree. These educational attainment figures are higher than Polk County's averages for a bachelor's degree and graduate or professional degree of 13.7 ( $\pm 1.9$ ) percent and 5.0 ( $\pm 1.3$ ) percent, respectively. These percentages should continue to grow over the next decade due to the growing demand for American's to get a college education. This societal change can be seen all around the country, but smaller communities are having a harder time trying to attract and retain persons with a bachelor's, or higher, degree.

<b>Table 1.5 Educational Attainment, Osceola, 2012</b>	
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	100%
<b>Less than 9th grade</b>	2.0% ( $\pm 2.4$ )
<b>9th to 12th grade, no diploma</b>	6.5% ( $\pm 4.4$ )
<b>High school graduate (Includes equivalency)</b>	30.5% ( $\pm 6.8$ )
<b>Some college, no degree</b>	22.3% ( $\pm 5.4$ )
<b>Associate's degree</b>	16.7% ( $\pm 5.7$ )
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	15.8% ( $\pm 5.0$ )
<b>Graduate or professional degree</b>	6.3% ( $\pm 2.9$ )

Source: ACS 2008-2012

Throughout its history, Osceola has seen population changes, even in the past ten years. There has been a slight decrease in school-age children from 2000 to 2010. Continually developing community services and amenities along with, housing development and job creation will help draw more families to Osceola. Seeking to attract young families with children is important for the community. One way to help attract these families is to create a program offering low interest mortgages to young families.

Between 2000 and 2010 the 55-64 year-old cohorts saw a large increase in the percent of the total population in the community. Because of the nature of life, the people in these cohorts will continue to grow older and could possibly retire in Osceola, if they have not already. These cohorts, which include empty-nesters tend to lead a different lifestyle than when they had young children at home. Empty-nesters like to dine out or go for walks around the community; they like to enjoy the freedom of being on their own schedule again. Osceola's Downtown Square, the Senior Center, restaurants, and existing recreational facilities are all excellent amenities that many empty-nesters love to take advantage of in their community. As previously stated, 21 percent of Osceola's population is 65 years and older. Not only are these people typically empty-nesters, most likely they are retired or at least thinking about retirement. Community services such as an active Senior Center and ease of pedestrian traffic through sidewalk connectivity and/or hike/bike trails can promote a healthy quality of life for this cohort.

Twenty-five percent of Osceola's population is under the age of 18 which is another group of cohorts that likes to be active both indoors and outdoors. Community members, of all ages, seem to be large supporters of the Osceola Bulldogs and this age group in general. Providing amenities for this age group is also essential to provide a good quality of life for families as well as to successfully attract these students back to the community when they start their families. Things such as summer sports leagues and public and private recreational facilities are a great place for the 18 and under crowd to congregate.

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

# Housing

*Housing is a crucial piece to the prosperity of Osceola. Whether it is identifying needs for new market-*

*rate housing or ways to encourage development of affordable housing options including much needed rentals, Osceola must work to constantly assess and improve its housing market. In order to attract more people to the community, there has to be a supply of well-maintained, available, affordable, and safe housing. Addressing the issues of old housing stock that does not meet the needs of today's renters and buyers is also another challenge that faces City leaders. Community growth and revitalization can be made possible through the identification of housing needs in Osceola. When considered in conjunction with population data, housing information analysis will enable Osceola to identify housing developments that are most appropriate for its success.*

**Table 1.6 Year Housing Unit Built, Osceola, 2012**

<b>Total housing units</b>	454 (±86)
<b>2010 or Later</b>	0 (±10)
<b>2000-2009</b>	19 (±12)
<b>1990-1999</b>	22 (±16)
<b>1980-1989</b>	18 (±11)
<b>1970-1979</b>	92 (±31)
<b>1960-1969</b>	57 (±20)
<b>1950-1959</b>	56 (±23)
<b>1940-1949</b>	17 (±11)
<b>1939 or Earlier</b>	173 (±41)

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates

Data taken from the American Community Survey is represented in **Table 1.6** and provides the overall age for owner-occupied units in Osceola. A majority of Osceola's homes were constructed in 1939 or before. This is common in many communities although it can create challenges in the housing market because today's buyers are looking for two-three car attached garages with houses that have three-four bedrooms and two bathrooms set on a larger lot. Homes constructed 40+ years ago were typically constructed on 50 foot wide lots that were platted throughout the community. Today's buyers have different standards and 50 foot wide lots do not typically fit the mold for what buyers want. There were also several homes built in the 50's, 60's, and almost 100 homes constructed during the 70's. Although a majority of the community's homes were constructed during those three decades, they still provide housing market challenges for today's buyers.

From the 2010 Census, Osceola had 415 total housing units which include all single-family homes, duplexes, apartment complexes, and vacant units. There were 50 vacant housing units which was a 12 percent vacancy rate. There were 365 occupied housing units in Osceola. As seen in **Table 1.7**, of the 50 vacant properties, there were nine properties for rent and eight were for sale. There was one home that were sold but not occupied and two units that were rented but not occupied. The Census reported 25 homes that were listed as "other vacant" which could include homes that are uninhabitable, stuck in litigation, being remodeled, or several other reasons a Census investigator may quantify and there were five homes marked as for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.





**Table 1.7 Vacancy Status, Osceola, 2010**

<b>Total</b>	50
<b>For rent</b>	9
<b>Rented, not occupied</b>	2
<b>For sale only</b>	8
<b>Sold, not occupied</b>	1
<b>For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use</b>	5
<b>Other vacant</b>	25
<b>Vacancy Rate</b>	12.0%

Source: 2010 Census

It is important to have a portion of homes that are “for sale” or “for rent,” because a percentage of housing units should always be on the market in order to attract new residents and also create an atmosphere for a healthy housing market. Adequate housing is essential in supporting economic growth. It is important to have available housing in order to attract new businesses because the community needs to be able to house new workers. As mentioned above, Osceola’s total vacancy rate was 12 percent. The City’s homeowner vacancy rate was only three percent and the rental vacancy rate was 7.7 percent. A homeowner vacancy rate less than three percent and a rental vacancy rate less than five percent means there is a very tight housing market. Osceola had a three percent vacancy rate in 2010 for owner-occupied homes meaning the market has minimal flexibility and availability for any person or family looking to purchase. A tight housing market can also drive-up housing prices making it challenging for people to purchase a home in the community. If no homes are available or are too expensive in Osceola when a family is looking to move to the community then they will be forced to look in surrounding towns where homes are available. The main goal is to ensure that available homes also fit the needs and wants of the buyers.

When analyzing vacant housing units in the community it is important to determine whether the units are still habitable. Uninhabitable structures should be removed to provide vacant lots for new construction and infill development, as well as to rid the neighborhoods of fire and safety hazards. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) can provide the City of Osceola and the Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA) with a tool to eliminate some of the vacant, blighted safety hazards. A Blight and Substandard Determination Study and Redevelopment Plan were completed for Osceola in 2014. Redevelopment Area #1 is a large area covering the north part of the community. TIF funds can be used for a variety of projects following Legislative Bill 729 in the Redevelopment Area including demolition of structures that are deemed unsafe by the City.

Housing Rehabilitation Programs, whether through the City or a third party group such as Southeast Nebraska Development District could be an essential tool in helping residents pay for housing repairs, energy efficiency improvements, or major maintenance issues. There are grant programs available to utilize in the creation of a revolving loan fund that can be used to offer zero or low interest loans for qualifying households in Osceola to make home improvements. Promoting home maintenance and improvements throughout the community could help to prevent more homes from becoming dilapidated. Community leaders should continually look at ways to incorporate these programs into Osceola.



The population that lives in occupied housing units in Osceola is 837. There is a discrepancy between the population that occupies the 365 occupied housing units and the overall population, 880, in Osceola due to the 43 persons living in group quarters. Residents who live in group quarters are not counted as part of the population that lives in occupied households, because the Census separates group quarters and housing units. There are two types of group quarters, institutionalized and

non-institutionalized. Non-institutionalized facilities include college/university student housing and military quarters; no one resides in non-institutionalized facilities in Osceola. During the 2010 Census, 43 people lived in institutionalized facilities which include nursing homes, juvenile homes, and adult correctional facilities. One of the residents was reported to live in a correctional facility for adults while the other 42 residents were reported to live in a nursing home at the time of the 2010 Census. Of the 43 total institutionalized residents, 37 were 65 years of age or older. Approximately 20 percent of the total population of 65 and older residents in Osceola lived in a nursing home during the 2010 Census.

Although we know there are 365 occupied housing units in Osceola, we need to evaluate the characteristics of those units. The 2010 Census reported that 259 housing units are owned equating to 71 percent of all occupied housing units owned versus rented. A total of 106, or 29 percent, of the occupied housing units in Osceola are rented. In Osceola, the average household size of an owner-occupied unit is 2.41 people and slightly less for renter-occupied at 2.00. The overall average household size in Osceola is 2.29, while the average family size is 2.94. This difference can be explained by the number of people in Osceola living alone.

**Table 1.8** shows data representing the number of persons per household in the 259 owner-occupied and 106 renter-occupied housing units. There are 123 households in Osceola with persons living alone which is almost 20 percent of the total occupied housing units. Of the 123 persons living alone in Osceola, almost 58 percent, or 71 persons, are 65 years old or over. As a note, none of the 123 people living alone were living in an institutionalized facility at the time of the 2010 Census. The large number of person 65 years or older living alone in Osceola is a very distinct statistics which can help community leaders make informed decisions that will benefit the majority of Osceola’s citizens. For example, community leaders could focus on finding developers that would be interested in developing condominiums or apartments for elderly residents or empty-nesters to rent or purchase. Another amenity that would be attractive, especially for elderly residents, would be the presence of an association that would, for a fee, take care of maintenance for the homeowners if a private developer cannot be attracting for constructing senior housing.

**Table 1.8 Persons per Household, Osceola, 2010**

<b>Owner-Occupied persons per Household</b>	
<b>Total:</b>	259
<b>1-person</b>	71
<b>2-person</b>	100
<b>3-person</b>	32
<b>4-person</b>	29
<b>5-person</b>	21
<b>6-person</b>	5
<b>7 or more-persons</b>	1
<b>Average household size</b>	2.41
<b>Renter-Occupied persons per Household</b>	
<b>Total:</b>	106
<b>1 person</b>	52
<b>2 person</b>	28
<b>3 person</b>	14
<b>4 person</b>	4
<b>5 person</b>	4
<b>6 person</b>	3
<b>7 or more-persons</b>	1
<b>Average household size</b>	2.00

Source: 2010 Census

Another point to consider when looking at persons per household and the large number of residents living alone in Osceola is the fact that these 123 residents living alone do not all live in single-bedroom housing units. Local realtors and the local Housing Authority Director all commented on the need for larger homes for families which would be housing units with at least three or four bedrooms. There is a good possibility that some of the people who live on their own live in three or four bedroom homes. These individuals would maybe be willing to move to a smaller, up-to-date, and low maintenance home, if there were some available. If there were smaller homes, whether for purchase or rent, and some of the 123 one-person households were to move, it would add larger homes to the housing market for families to move into.





**Table 1.9 Housing Values-Owner Units, Osceola, 2012**

Value	ACS	ESRI	USA.com
< \$50,000	84 (±29)	58	75
\$50,000 to \$99,999	94 (±27)	146	109
\$100,000 to \$149,999	74 (±27)	34	65
\$150,000 to \$199,999	19 (±11)	10	3
\$200,000 to \$299,999	8 (±8)	11	4
\$300,000 to \$499,999	0 (±10)	10	0
\$500,000 to \$999,999	3 (±5)	2	3
≥ \$1,000,000	0 (±10)	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>282 (±45)</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>Median Value</b>	<b>\$77,200 (±\$12,498)</b>	<b>\$76,541</b>	<b>\$75,900</b>
<b>Polk County Median Value</b>	<b>\$93,400 (±\$5,600)</b>	<b>\$97,859</b>	<b>\$93,400</b>
<b>Nebraska Median Value</b>	<b>\$126,700 (±\$681)</b>	<b>\$127,600</b>	<b>\$126,700</b>

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates, ESRI Estimates, USA.com

**Table 1.9** shows a variety of sources for Osceola’s housing values in order to compare different sources. One thing to remember is the ACS column provides an estimate with a margin-of-error for each housing value. All of the columns are for owner-occupied housing units only. The median household value is approximately \$77,200 (±\$12,498). A local realtor shared information about the existing housing market in Osceola stating that the majority of people are looking to purchase homes in Osceola as opposed to renting. These people are looking to purchase homes in the \$75,000-\$80,000 price range. The majority of homes in Osceola are in the \$50,000-\$99,999 value range. Homes in that value range may be considered move-in ready with some having some modern amenities; however, not all of these homes are decent, safe structures that meet the needs of today’s buyers including attached garages, updated kitchens, two bathrooms, three or four bedrooms.

**Table 1.10 Housing Affordability Analysis, Owner Units, Osceola, 2010**

Household Income Range	# of Households (Units Needed)	Affordable Range for Housing Units	# of Owner Available Units	Gap/Surplus of Housing Units
\$15,000-\$24,999	75	< \$50,000	75	0
\$25,000-\$34,999	28	\$50,000-\$70,000	109	35
\$35,000-\$49,999	46	\$70,000-\$100,000		
\$50,000-\$74,999	80	\$100,000-\$150,000	65	-15
\$75,000-\$99,999	16	\$150,000-\$200,000	3	-13
\$100,000-\$149,999	7	\$200,000-\$300,000	4	-3
\$150,000-\$199,999	3	\$300,000-\$400,000	0	-3
> \$200,000	4	> \$400,000	3	-1

Source: ESRI, USA.com, M&A

**Table 1.10** shows a housing affordability analysis based strictly on number and data that is presented. This table shows the comparison of the household income range and the value of housing units that are currently present in Osceola. The rule-of-thumb when purchasing a home is to multiply the household income by two; homes in that price range are typically what can be afforded by the buyers. Using this idea, the table shows where there are gaps and where there is a surplus of housing units present in Osceola based on value. The following is a breakdown of the process:

Column 1 – Household income range for residents in Osceola

Column 2 – ESRI household income data from **Table 1.12**

Column 3 – Column 1 multiplied by 2 (i.e. \$25,000 x 2 = \$50,000)

Column 4 – USA.com data from **Table 1.9** that shows the number of existing owner-occupied units in Osceola, based on value

Column 5 – Column 2 subtracted from Column 4 (i.e. 65 - 80 = -15)

In the range of \$100,000-\$200,000 there is a gap of 28 homes. There is a surplus of 35 homes valued between \$50,000 and \$100,000. The analysis is based solely on numbers for owner-occupied units in Osceola; therefore, it does not take into account people that live above or below their means, units available for rent, or the market-rate price of homes. Because of the way housing values are reported, the \$25,000-\$34,999 and \$35,000-\$49,999 household income ranges had to be consolidated in order to correctly correspond with the number of houses present at that specific value range.

Community leaders can use this formula in the future to determine where there are shortfalls in Osceola’s housing supply. Quality and availability of decent housing is a decisive point for individuals and families when they are considering moving to a community. Osceola should take steps to improve their current housing market to attract residents to the community. With a homeowner vacancy rate of three percent, a supply of affordable housing needs to be created and that will only happen with the construction of new housing units. A shortage of up-to-date, sizable rentals continues to exist in Osceola, along with a low supply of market rate, move-in ready homes available for sale. In order to maintain as well as grow and diversify the population base, Osceola’s officials must investigate feasible options for housing development in the community. It may be important for Osceola’s leaders to consider what other communities are successfully implementing to help with housing development as well as programs that have been created to help raze uninhabitable homes.

It is important to remember that many homes will “fall off the market” every year because they are uninhabitable due to age, lack of maintenance, and the sheer fact that homes do not last forever. It can be assumed that approximately one percent of all homes will fall off the market each year. Knowing and understanding the need to replace those homes with market-rate housing is important for City leaders. Actions need to be taken in order to replace the homes that are no longer habitable. It also becomes challenging because uninhabitable homes do not disappear; therefore, steps also need to be taken to remove vacant, uninhabitable structures to provide lots for infill development. Several survey respondents included the need to remove substandard housing as one of their top three priorities for housing.

- People are looking to purchase homes in the \$75,000-\$90,000 price range.
- Strong market for \$30,000-\$50,000 homes as well.
- Most people are looking in the \$300/month range for rental units.
- More people are interested in buying in Osceola than renting.
- Some property conditions seem to be an issue in the community.
- What has recently been happening:
  - Young families (with children) are moving into town.
  - Homes are selling quickly if priced appropriately.
  - Deficiency in lack of available building lots.
  - People want to know what is going to happen with the school before making permanent decisions.
  - Three new building permits in town in the past 36 months.
  - People have some interest in purchasing lots/a couple of people recently have.

Information from local professionals cannot be found through the Census or any other source online. Decision-makers need to continually engage in conversations with local professionals in order to determine what people are looking for when they are interested in moving to Osceola.



In summary, Osceola has a housing shortage especially with homes valued over \$100,000. There are a few lots available for infill development, as well as a few vacant uninhabitable homes that could be cleared and made ready for infill housing development. There has been a shortage of decent homes that fit the needs of today's buyers which is why it is imperative to look for ways to improve the housing market including the possibility of lots for sale. When existing residents build a new home in the community it, in turn, puts another affordable house on the market because they will sell or rent-out their existing home. Many young couples or families just starting out do not have the means to construct a new home which is why they will need to buy something completed. By offering some incentive program such as lower interest rates, down-payment assistance, and/or free or low-cost lots to any person willing to build in Osceola it encourages new development that will benefit the entire housing market in Osceola. However, there needs to be viable places for residential development.

Many of the issues for the housing market, both rental units and owner-occupied, is the condition and size of the homes available as well as the lack of modern amenities needed by renters and buyers. There is potential for existing occupied homes to enter the market for purchase if there are other options for single-persons to move to in the community. Exterior maintenance, smaller square footage, and modern features would be amenities that may attract several single persons, empty-nesters, young couples, seniors, and person in need of transitional housing. There are few vacant lots available throughout the community. These lots were originally platted roughly 50 feet wide making it challenging to build a home of today's needs/wants. It may be necessary to look for areas in the community with multiple vacant lots adjacent to one another, but they must be feasible lots for residential construction.



# Economy & Capital Improvement

*The ability for Osceola to predict development needs and future land uses relies heavily on economic trends. Therefore, a description and analysis of local economic factors is*

*a crucial component of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Another important aspect to a City's economy is annual fiscal management tool called a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This fiscal plan should use a 5-6 year time horizon to schedule capital improvement projects for the City. The CIP is used to coordinate location, timing, and financing of capital improvements over a multi-year period. Goals determined in a Comprehensive Plan should help to facilitate the CIP development process.*

As stated above, the ACS estimated 439 (±64) of Osceola's residents to be in the labor force. The ACS also reported of that 439 people in the labor force, 430 (±66) were employed while 9 (±11) people were unemployed. Based on the ACS, only 1.2 (±1.5) percent of Osceola's residents were unemployed which is starkly different than the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) 2012 national unemployment rate of 7.9 percent. Unemployment data is not as readily available for smaller communities which means we have to follow larger trends. Nebraska has weathered the recent economic downturn better than a majority of the nation, so luckily for Nebraska's communities they share in the same goodwill.

There are several different job opportunities in Osceola including the medical and educational systems, agricultural businesses, and many retail and service sector businesses to name a few. However, some of Osceola's residents commute to work in other communities. This is fairly typical in the smaller communities across the United States and with the City of York located only 25 miles south of Osceola and Columbus located 30 miles northeast of Osceola there is a good probability that some people commute to those communities for work on a daily basis. Commuting patterns for Osceola's residents include a mean travel time to work of 18.9 (±5.4) minutes. Approximately 309 (±57) people drive to work alone while almost seven (±3.9) percent of Osceola's residents carpool. Over eight (±4.5) percent of Osceola's residents works from home.

**Table 1.11 Employed Population by Industry, Osceola, 2012**

<b>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining</b>	7.2% (±4.2%)
<b>Construction</b>	13.3% (±5.5%)
<b>Manufacturing</b>	6.5% (±3.1%)
<b>Wholesale trade</b>	3.7% (±3.7%)
<b>Retail trade</b>	4.0% (±2.7%)
<b>Transportation and warehousing, and utilities</b>	6.7% (±5.0%)
<b>Information</b>	0.9% (±1.5%)
<b>Finance and insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing</b>	4.7% (±3.7%)
<b>Professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services</b>	5.6% (±2.9%)
<b>Educational services, health care, and social assistance</b>	28.1% (±5.9%)
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services</b>	5.6% (±3.2%)
<b>Other services, except public administration</b>	6.5% (±3.7%)
<b>Public administration</b>	7.2% (±4.5%)

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates



**Table 1.11** shows the employment percentages by industry for Osceola’s residents. The 2008-2012 ACS data shows the majority of Osceola’s residents, 28.1 (±5.9) percent, are employed in the educational services, health care, and social assistance industry. The next largest industry by employment figures in Osceola is the construction industry, employing 13.3 (±5.5) percent of the population. Public administration and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining are tied for the third largest employment industries in Osceola employing approximately seven percent each.

<b>Table 1.12 Household Income, Osceola, 2012</b>		
<b>Household Income</b>	<b># of Households</b>	
	<b>ACS</b>	<b>ESRI</b>
<b>Less than \$15,000</b>	20 (±20)	55
<b>\$15,000-\$24,999</b>	50 (±24)	52
<b>\$25,000-\$34,999</b>	53 (±24)	39
<b>\$35,000-\$49,999</b>	53 (±23)	65
<b>\$50,000-\$74,999</b>	133 (±36)	114
<b>\$75,000-\$99,999</b>	55 (±20)	24
<b>\$100,000-\$149,999</b>	28 (±17)	10
<b>\$150,000-\$199,999</b>	7 (±8)	5
<b>\$200,000 or more</b>	0 (±10)	6
<b>Median household income</b>	\$53,259 (±4,162)	\$41,557

Source: ACS 2008-2012 Estimates, ESRI 2010 Forecasts

**Table 1.12** shows the household income for Osceola in 2010. Household income is defined by the Census Bureau as the following:

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

Household income data is displayed in ranges based on dollar amounts and the related number of households with an annual income that falls into the associated range. The ACS data that was reported has high margin of error values; therefore, in order to make a more solid determination another set of values was used to compare with the ACS data. The second source of data is from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI) which reports data on Nebraska’s Location One Information System (LOIS) website. The 2008-2012 ACS data showed Osceola’s median household income to be \$53,259 (±\$4,162). ESRI estimated Osceola’s 2010 median household income to be \$41,557. The 2008-2012 ACS estimates the State of Nebraska to have a median household income of \$51,381 which is slightly lower than Osceola’s median household income reported by ACS.

Osceola has a strong existing economy which is already drawing outside citizens to shop/do business in the community. However, there is always room for improvement. During our public input sessions, residents discussed the need to draw even more people into the community and to capitalize on people moving in to the community. One way to do both of these things, with additional bonuses, is to market the community and what it has to offer.

Marking Osceola will help to attract visitors to come to Osceola or stop in the community as they are passing through. It would also be a way to encourage existing and new residents to support the local businesses and inform residents of everything Osceola has to offer. A “shop local” initiative is one way to inform residents of the importance of supporting local businesses and encouraging residents to do so.

The Downtown Square is the main hub for retail and service sector businesses; however the Highway 81/92 corridor is also very important to the community’s tax base. But, the Downtown Square and Highway corridor have differences in the way the land is used. In order for the Downtown Square to keep its distinct appeal is to keep the area pedestrian friendly and focus business efforts on retail and service sector companies. The neighborhood feel is important for a downtown district, and that appeal is what helps attract people to shop in a Downtown Square. Without the unique feeling of the area, the Square would not be able to easily attract people to walk the sidewalks and pass by the windows and stop in the stores to shop.

The Highway 81/92 corridor is best for businesses that require large areas of land, high visibility, and easy access from the Highway. Fortunately for Osceola, the community is facing one of the better economic development challenges possible, there is minimal land available along the Highway in the existing corporate limits. The businesses existing on the Highway are successful businesses because of the high traffic volume, visibility, and easy access. But this area looks and feels much different than the Downtown Square, and rightfully so. Businesses along the Highway corridor should have off-street parking, larger setbacks, more green space, larger buildings, and even more signage than what is necessary for Downtown Square businesses. It will be important for City leaders to understand the difference between the two commercial areas and encourage economic development to fit the unique identity of each area.

Another point that was discussed during the public input sessions was the need for more job opportunities from a variety of industries. A variety of job opportunities is important to attract new residents to move to Osceola, but it is also important to consider how businesses will exceed in the community. City leaders should focus on attracting businesses that can co-exist and/or support existing businesses and industry in Osceola.

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



**Table 1.13 RMP - Opportunity Gap Analysis, Osceola, 2010**

Retail Stores	2010 Demand (Consumer Expenditures)	2010 Supply (Retail Sales)	Opportunity Gap/Surplus
<b>Total Retail Sales Incl. Eating and Drinking Places</b>	7,792,267	7,322,246	470,021
<b>Motor Vehicle an Parts Dealers</b>	1,710,819	2,901,323	1,190,504
<b>Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores</b>	11,231	0	11,231
<b>Electronics and Appliance Stores</b>	60,633	0	60,633
<b>Building Material, Garden Equipment Stores</b>	608,210	98,102	510,108
<b>Food and Beverage Stores</b>	1,762,161	2,372,403	610,242
<b>Health and Personal Care Stores</b>	339,347	345,030	5,683
<b>Gasoline Stations</b>	1,504,450	1,353,162	151,288
<b>Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores</b>	124,876	0	124,876
<b>Sporting Good, Hobby, Book, Music Stores</b>	494	0	494
<b>General Merchandise Stores</b>	549,233	0	549,233
<b>Miscellaneous Retailers</b>	254,627	62,498	192,129
<b>Non-Store Retailers</b>	71,361	0	71,361
<b>Foodservice and Drinking Places</b>	794,825	189,728	605,097

Source: ESRI

**Table 1.13** shows an abundance of information. The first column shows a list of retail store categories. Most of these are big groups that are then broken down further. The full list is shown in the Appendix. The second column shows what consumers in Osceola spent on each category in 2010. The third column shows the total retail sales, by each retail market, of stores found within Osceola. The fourth, and last column, shows an opportunity gap or surplus that exists for each retail sector. In the fourth column, if the number is black, it means there is a surplus of supply in Osceola for the associated sector. In this case, a surplus is not bad. It means, not only are these retail stores meeting the needs of consumers in Osceola, they are also meeting the needs of customers who live outside of Osceola. Maybe people are traveling in from a rural area, or even coming from a different town in order to fill some of their needs. The numbers in red, in the fourth column, show a gap or an opportunity for that particular retail sector. These numbers show there is a demand for the associated economic sectors in Osceola; however, there may not be stores to fulfill the consumers' needs. Therefore, they are leaving the City of Osceola to spend their money someplace else. These red numbers should be viewed as an opportunity; they are areas where the City can improve by expanding the existing businesses or looking to attract businesses in a specified market where there is a need.

**Table 1.13** shows a summary of Osceola's RMP analysis. This analysis estimates over 7.3 million dollars were spent in Osceola in 2010 at retail trade stores and eating and drinking establishments. ESRI estimated almost 7.8 million dollars were spent by Osceola's residents at retail stores and eating and drinking places, not taking into account location of purchases. This analysis shows an opportunity gap in retail sales for Osceola. Osceola is missing the opportunity for almost half a million dollars in retail sales including eating and drinking places. Some retail sectors are currently missing from the streets of Osceola leaving room for economic growth and improvement. Also, there are some retail businesses that Osceola would not be able to viably support due to its close proximity to larger markets like York and Columbus. Some of the retail markets, reported by ESRI, that are missing in Osceola include furniture and home furnishings; electronics and appliance stores; clothing and clothing accessories stores; sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores; general merchandise stores; miscellaneous retailers; and non-store retailers. Competing with larger towns that can easily support a variety of "big box" stores such as Wal-Mart, Target, Sears, and Menards is not easy for any community. These numbers do not mean the retail operations that are present in Osceola are bad businesses or that they are lacking in any way. It simply means there is opportunity to improve.



Business expansion or adding new inventory is a few ways that businesses could progress. Several of the business sectors that are not located in Osceola would not be self-sustainable businesses there. Furniture and home furnishings as well as a sporting goods, hobby, book, and music store may not have the traffic and population to support the store. It is not recommended to add “big box” retailers to Osceola’s as it would not benefit the whole community. Instead, it would detract from the Downtown Square and the other small businesses in town and affect the overall atmosphere of Osceola. Locally run businesses would struggle to compete with “big box” store names. While “big box” stores may not be the answer, it is important for Osceola to take advantage of its location on a highway which provides many commercial opportunities for the community that many other communities do not have.



Having an established retail base is difficult, but Osceola has been working hard. Several businesses are growing and a new business is under construction at this time. It is challenging for small communities to attract consumers. The City and/or other local organization should consider a promotional market plan to encourage shopping locally and supporting local business. Both groups work hard to retain and expand local businesses however, there is always room for improvement. Placemats in local restaurants or yard signs saying “Support your neighbors, shop locally” could be the extra reminder residents need to support Osceola.



Communities, whether they are large or small, need all types of businesses in order to be successful. Economic growth is a challenging task, but becomes extremely important in order to maintain the vitality of the community. Osceola is taking the right steps forward, but as previously stated there is always room for improvement. Two items that need to be addressed in Osceola is business retention and expansion coupled with succession planning for many of the existing businesses. This is something that must be discussed for the successful sustainability of Osceola’s economic base. A succession plan will help owners plan for the longevity of their businesses and ensure that residents will maintain the quality of life they have become accustomed to in Osceola.





Osceola could work to become a Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) Leadership Community. Being a Leadership Community would help open many more doors for Osceola in terms of growth and economic development. Osceola has a low unemployment rate at 1.2 percent, and has great companies already present in the area that are continually growing. It is important that Osceola not only continue to try to attract new businesses to the community, but also support the existing businesses. The ease and proximity to the larger transportation network makes Osceola a good centralized option for businesses needing motor or rail carrier transportation options.



Another economic development tool the City of Osceola can take advantage of is Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF is primarily designed to finance the public costs associated with private development projects. Property tax increases resulting from a new development are targeted to repay the public investment required by the project. Osceola is currently working to implement TIF for a couple of projects. Maintaining an updated blight and substandard study provides the City with an opportunity to offer TIF as a development incentive.

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







# Chapter 2: Facilities & Infrastructure

The Facilities & Infrastructure section acts as an inventory of current amenities available to the public because of the county. This is a good section to review and hopefully add upon in the future with growing facilities and a growing population. This section is also helpful for others to read to see what the community has to offer. This Facilities & Infrastructure section will cover the following components:

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

# Recreational Facilities

Osceola is home to several different parks and recreational opportunities from ball fields and playground

equipment to a community swimming pool and a hike/bike trail. Recreational facilities add to the quality of life for all ages of residents in the community. It is important to have these amenities available for residents and visitors alike. Osceola's list of recreational amenities includes the following:

## Osceola City Park

City Park, Osceola's only park, is located on State Street, between Ridge Street and Highway 81/92, it offers two lighted tennis courts with synthetic surface, great playground equipment, public restrooms and a sheltered picnic area. Overnight camping is permitted at the park.



## Swimming Pool

The pool is located along Highway 81/92 in the City Park. The swimming pool was originally built in 1978 with an update completed in 2011. The swimming pool volume was originally designed to be 276,000 gallons and the wading pool volume was designed to be 5,200 gallons. The perimeter of the swimming pool is 395 feet. Features of the Olympic-sized pool include zero-depth entry with toddler sprinklers and a slide, two diving boards, and basketball hoop. The pool is open from the first of June through mid-August. Offerings of the swimming pool include Red Cross swim lessons are provided each year for a nominal fee or you may make arrangements with a lifeguard to have private lessons. Water aerobics are also offered. Season passes maybe purchased or a daily admissions fee may be paid.



## Ball Park

The Ball Park is located south of town. Contact the City Clerk at 308-747-3411 if you have a child interested in participating on one of the teams. The annual fee is \$25 per child or a maximum of \$75 per family.



## Golf

The Ryan Hill Country Club is a beautiful nine-hole, par 33 course located at 960 Nebraska Street. Enjoy gently rolling bentgrass greens and a very playable bluegrass rough, consisting of 6 par fours and 3 par threes. This well conditions course is playable for all levels. The Clubhouse with food options is available all day. Contact the Country Club at 402.747.6661.



## Hike/Bike Trail

Osceola's Hike/Bike Trail starts at the corner of Beebe and Nance Streets, in front of Annie Jeffry Hospital, and runs south out of town, past the Fairgrounds and out to the Ball Park. The trail is approximately three-fourths of a mile long.

## Area Hunting

Private and State Lakes in the area, along with the Platte River offer a variety of Hunting and Fishing opportunities. There are populations of pheasant, quail, duck, rabbit and deer throughout the area.



## Polk County Fair

The Polk County Fair is held annually in July at the Polk County Fairgrounds located south of town on Nance Street. Contact the Polk County Extension Office at 402.747.2321. The annual fair includes 4-H exhibits and livestock/animal shows, McKay Rodeo bull riding and Jr. sheep riding, Demolition Derby, 5K fun run, helicopter rides, Swap Meet/Flea Market, and a Show & Shine to name a few of the activities available during the fair week.



Below is a list of goals for potential recreational improvements or enhancements. The items listed below do not cover all of the recreational improvements that may be needed or desired in the future, but at this time these are goals or ideas that were discussed by residents at the several public input sessions held during the planning process of this Comprehensive Plan.



Osceola's public swimming pool was constructed in 1978, because of the age of the swimming pool there are several repairs and/or updates that are needed in order to keep it functioning properly and up to par with State and Federal regulations. A renovation to the swimming pool was completed in 2011 to improve the swimming pool facility. With recent improvements made to the municipal swimming pool, it has been maintained as a wonderful amenity for the residents of Osceola and the surrounding area. However, it will be important for the swimming pool to remain in compliance with ever-changing regulations and maintained in order to ensure the pool is there for future swimmers. Also, future improvements, including a potential expansion to increase the pool area and enhance play features within the pool area may be a goal of residents.



Another water amenity that is becoming more popular in Nebraska's communities is a splash pad. A splash pad would be a great addition to Osceola's long list of amenities. Splash pads can attract children at a variety of ages. They should be designed to have special areas that best suit each age group. These specified bay areas, allow for a safe play environment for everyone. Splash pads are a way to provide community enhancement as well as a healthy way for families to play safely. A few positive, functional attributes to a splash pad are that they do not require lifeguards, it can be another free recreational feature in the community, and they are designed to have automatically scheduling in order to control the hours of use. A new splash pad may be incorporated with the swimming pool facility or developed as a standalone facility.



Another option for an added recreational amenity would be the creation of a dog park. This area should be fenced in to provide a space where dogs can be let off their leashes to run around. A possible location for a dog park/dog run could be near the ball fields on the south side of the community. A dog park is an amenity that does not require much except open ground and an installed fence. This amenity is not only beneficial for Osceola's citizens, but also for all of the four-legged residents in town.



Hike/bike trails were a topic of discussion at several of the public input sessions held during the planning phases of this Comprehensive Plan. Osceola currently has a hike/bike trail running along Nance Street near the Hospital past the Polk County Fairgrounds then to the east connecting to

the ball fields. This provides a safe area for residents to exercise outdoors. During public input sessions, residents discussed the desire to have additional hike/bike trails constructed to connect the north side of town to the existing trail. Ideally, additions to the hike/bike trail would connect the Ball Park to Osceola City Park. Crossing Highway 81/92 poses safety concerns; therefore, a possible pedestrian overpass may be needed to provide a safe way for pedestrians to cross the busy highway. Hike/bike trail design to connect the Ball Park and Osceola City Park could include connections to the Osceola Public Schools campus on the east side of town. A phased trail map would need to be determined, which would ideally minimize intersection and driveway crossings to ensure a safer trail route. An obvious attraction to hike/bike trails is the ease of access and use for all ages. Hike/bike trails provide a safe environment for exercising including walking, running, biking, and skating as well as a safer way for pedestrians to reach key amenities in the community. Hike/bike trails can be constructed in phases, this adds to the appeal of developing an amenity that can continue to grow and expand for residents.

The City has discussed developing a campground area near Highway 81/92 for visitors to utilize. This campground could include a few parking pads with electrical hook-ups. Developing camper pads within Osceola City Park would be ideal, because it is close to the highway and would be near other recreational amenities in the community providing campers with other amenities near the campground. This would be a nice attraction for the community to market. It provides a place for visitors to come and stay and by bringing them to Osceola they would have the opportunity to explore all that the community has to offer.

The existing tennis/basketball courts, constructed in 1980, located in Osceola City Park has served as a key attraction for residents and visitors for several decades. The courts have been enjoyed by residents of all ages, but is now closed due to safety issues and surface deterioration caused by lack of drainage. Structural problems developed several years ago. Even though the City has made several attempts at resolving the issue, a permanent solution has never been found. The City Council and Park Committee want to provide tennis and basketball courts for residents to enjoy; therefore, a long-term solution has been determined. Demolishing the southern portion of the existing court, repairing and resurfacing the northern portion of the court to serve as a tennis court, and pouring a new concrete slab for a separate basketball court to the west of the existing courts. A new horseshoe pit could then be developed to the south of the tennis court. These new courts would be multi-purpose providing options for tennis, basketball, volleyball, etc. and would include lighting, fencing, awnings for protection from the elements, proper drainage, and be constructed of long-lasting surface that meets contemporary construction and safety standards. The improved multi-purpose courts would, once again, provide opportunities for outdoor sport activities geared to a majority of residents from pre-teens to adults. See Osceola City Park Tennis Court/Basketball Court, Horseshoe Pit, and Campground Improvements Figure, completed by Hays Land Surveying. This Figure outlines the project goals to provide basketball and tennis courts to residents again and add three camper pads within Osceola City Park.

The City-owned youth ball field, Lucy Holm, on the south side of town is in need of updates. A renovation project consisting of a complete infield renovation, fencing, dugouts, lighting, etc. is planned for 2018. The City and Park Committee are working hard to enhance this amenity for residents and visitors to enjoy. Future expansion and upgrades may be needed as summer recreational activities grow.

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

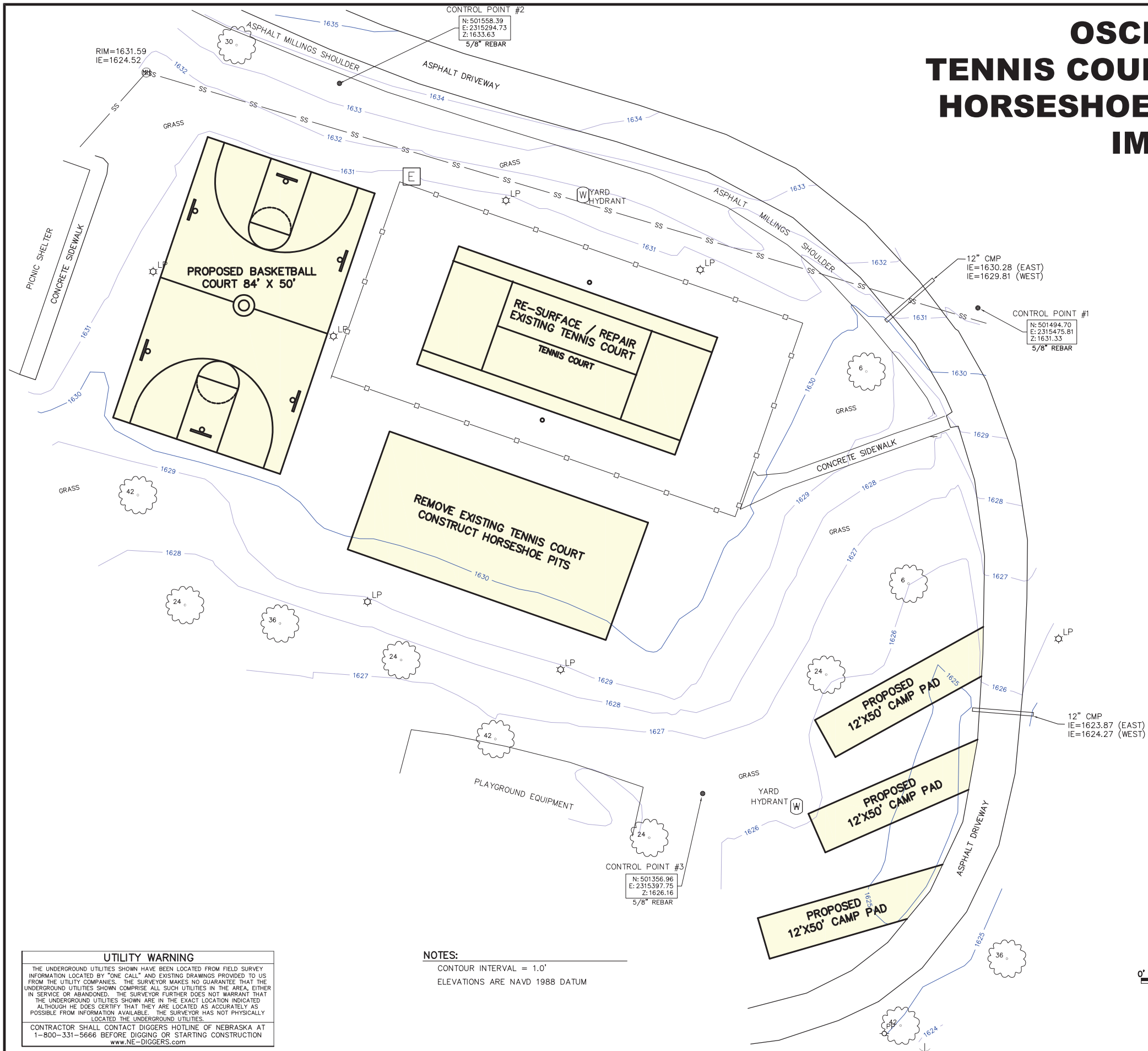
Osceola has a variety of playground and picnic equipment to suit families and children of all ages. Existing park equipment should be periodically monitored to determine times for improvement or replacement to ensure all parks are a safe environment for children to play. In the future it may also be a goal for the City to add additional playground equipment or create an additional "neighborhood" park in the community.

Vibrant, colorful landscaping helps draw people to an area, and creates a positive first impression. The Osceola City Park currently has extensive landscaping; however, the City may decide to include new landscaping or add landscaping throughout Osceola to add to the aesthetic appeal of the community. Not only does landscaping add beauty to the parks, but it is also an opportunity for residents to volunteer their time and talent in order to keep the parks and the community beautiful.



# OSCEOLA CITY PARK TENNIS COURT / BASKETBALL COURT HORSESHOE PIT AND CAMPGROUND IMPROVEMENTS

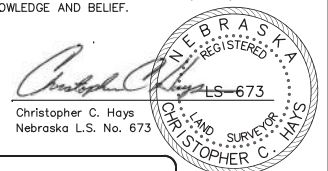
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**LEGEND**

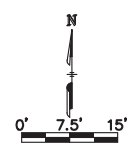
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⊙ LP LIGHT POLE	⊙ 24 DECIDUOUS TREE WITH SIZE
⊙ PP POWER POLE	⊙ MH SANITARY SEWER MANHOLE
⊙ GUY ANCHOR	— SS — SANITARY SEWER MAIN
⊙ W YARD HYDRANT	— □ — CHAIN LINK FENCE
⊙ E ELECTRIC BOX	CMP CORRUGATED METAL PIPE
	IE INVERT ELEVATION

**SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE:**  
I, CHRISTOPHER C. HAYS, A REGISTERED SURVEYOR OF THE STATE OF NEBRASKA, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS TOPOGRAPHY SURVEY WAS MADE BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECTION ON NOVEMBER 14, 2016, AND THAT SAID SURVEY IS CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF.



**UTILITY WARNING**  
THE UNDERGROUND UTILITIES SHOWN HAVE BEEN LOCATED FROM FIELD SURVEY INFORMATION LOCATED BY "ONE CALL" AND EXISTING DRAWINGS PROVIDED TO US FROM THE UTILITY COMPANIES. THE SURVEYOR MAKES NO GUARANTEE THAT THE UNDERGROUND UTILITIES SHOWN COMPRISE ALL SUCH UTILITIES IN THE AREA, EITHER IN SERVICE OR ABANDONED. THE SURVEYOR FURTHER DOES NOT WARRANT THAT THE UNDERGROUND UTILITIES SHOWN ARE IN THE EXACT LOCATION INDICATED ALTHOUGH HE DOES CERTIFY THAT THEY ARE LOCATED AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE FROM INFORMATION AVAILABLE. THE SURVEYOR HAS NOT PHYSICALLY LOCATED THE UNDERGROUND UTILITIES.  
CONTRACTOR SHALL CONTACT DIGGERS HOTLINE OF NEBRASKA AT 1-800-331-5666 BEFORE DIGGING OR STARTING CONSTRUCTION  
www.NE-DIGGERS.com

**NOTES:**  
CONTOUR INTERVAL = 1.0'  
ELEVATIONS ARE NAVD 1988 DATUM



**HAYS LAND SURVEYING, LLC**  
160 North Polk Street, P.O. Box 432, Osceola, NE 68651 (402) 747-2126 www.HaysSurveying.com

<b>TITLE</b>	OSCEOLA CITY PARK OSCEOLA, NEBRASKA
<b>PROJECT</b>	TENNIS, BASKETBALL COURT, HORSESHOE PIT AND CAMPGROUND IMPROVEMENTS
<b>DATE</b>	11/15/16
<b>SHEET</b>	1 OF 1

www.HaysSurveying.com



# Education System

*A great school system is becoming more than an amenity for communities in the Midwest. Osceola has a strong educational system as well as a strong tradition for their extracurricular activities. Community members seem to continually be supporters of the school district, and City leaders should continue to promote a strong relationship between the community and the school. Great school districts are one of the leading factors when looking at population growth; families want to live in a community where their children can attend school and receive a good, quality education. The following section explores Osceola Public School District and its existing presence in the community.*



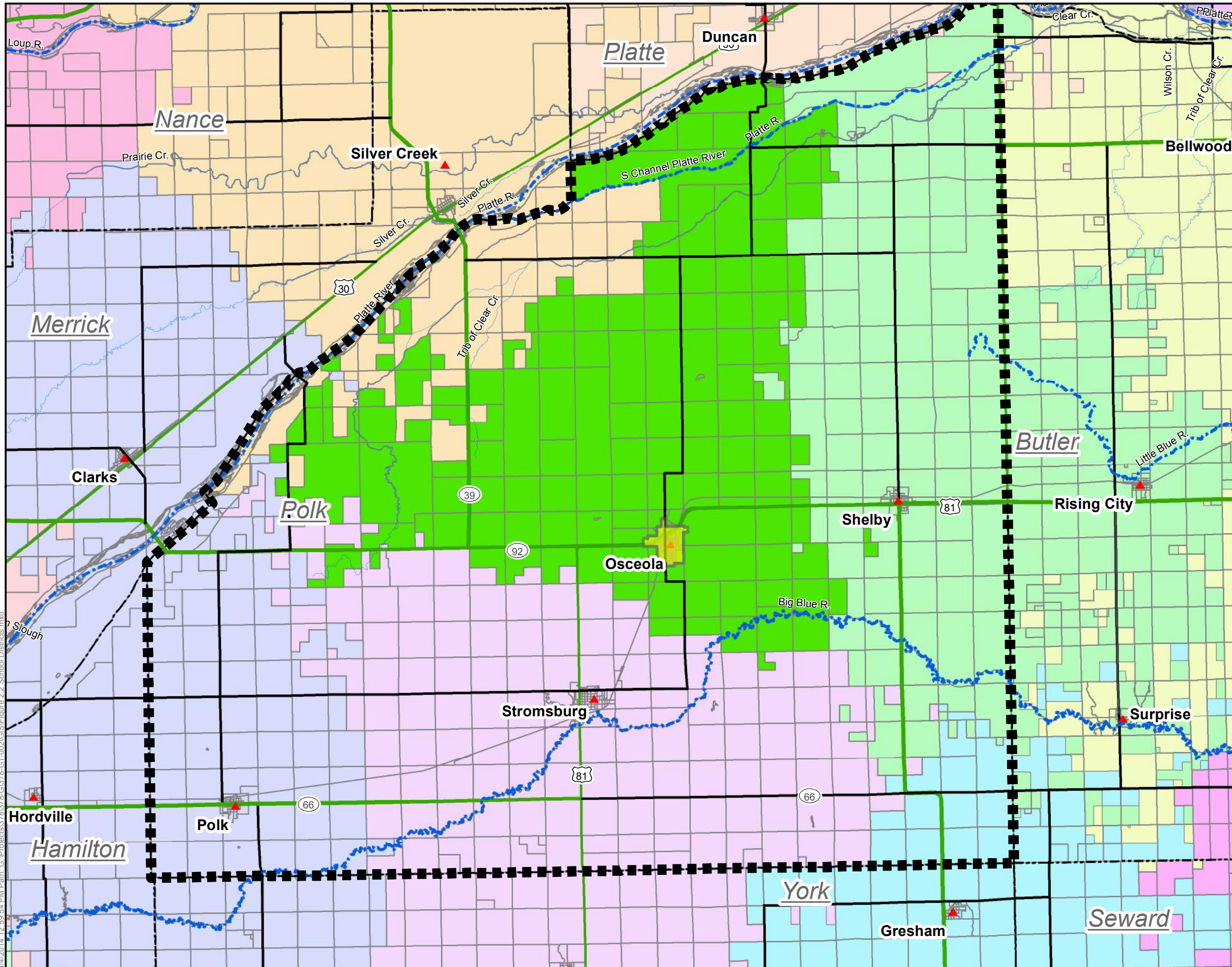
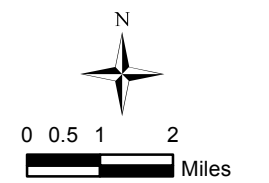
Many rural Nebraska communities and counties put a high value on maintaining and protecting their local schools, because they are vital in preserving community pride as well as supporting local residents and businesses. The following section analyzes Osceola Public Schools. Nebraska State Statutes group schools into six different classifications.

These classifications are defined by the following law:  
2009 Nebraska Code, Chapter 79 SCHOOLS - § 79-102.

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

Osceola Public School District (72-0019-000) is classified as a Class III School because it maintains both elementary and high school grades, and because the school district territory has a population of more than 1,000 and less than 150,000. **Figure 2.1** shows Osceola Public School District's boundaries. The District boundary includes a large portion of central Polk County. Osceola Public School District is a part of the Educational Service Unit 7 (ESU 7). ESU 7 contains school districts from the following seven counties, Boone, Butler, Colfax, Merrick, Nance, Platte, and Polk. ESU 7's headquarters are located at 2657 44th Avenue in Columbus, Nebraska.

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**Legend**

Osceola Corporate Boundary

**School Districts**

- Osceola Public Schools
- Aurora Public Schools
- Centennial Public Schools
- Central City Public Schools
- Columbus Public Schools
- Cross County Community Schools
- David City Public Schools
- Fullerton Public Schools
- Hampton Public Schools
- High Plains Community Schools
- Lakeview Community Schools
- Schuyler Community Schools
- Seward Public Schools
- Shelby Public Schools
- Twin Rivers Public Schools

Source:  
 US Census Bureau,  
 Geography Division - 2013

**Figure 2.1**  
**School Districts**

Polk County, Nebraska

4/4/2014 12:59:54 PM Path: G:\Projects\378\378-G1-002\GIS\Figure 2.1 School Districts.mxd





Pre-K - 12 Schools

Children that live in Osceola attend Osceola Public Schools which is a single campus, Preschool through twelfth grade school system. A one-campus school district is typically viewed as very beneficial for families, students, and faculty. The Junior/Senior high school, built in 1975 with a new athletic complex completed in 1982, has a maximum capacity of 300 allowing for low student-to-teacher ratios. It is estimated that 99 percent of the eighth grade students finish high school. Courses offered in high school include college preparatory and trade. Osceola also offers courses in career education. The school district's special education program is available for students with special needs. Osceola Public Schools is a Class D-1 school and home of the Bulldogs. Extra-curricular activities include, but are not limited to, Middle-School and High-School Athletics, Chorus, Band, Art, and Future Farmers of American (FFA).

School districts provide many qualities in a community that are unable to be measured. However, it is important to know and understand school districts are evaluated on several different levels including test scores, graduation rates, and how their formula student population affects the amount of resources the district will receive as well as the operating expenditures per formula student.



**Table 2.1** depicts the adjusted general fund operating expenditures per formula student during the 2012-2013 school year. Formula students are based on the 2011-2012 average daily attendance and the 2011-2012 contracted students. The table highlights Osceola Public Schools and other districts in surrounding counties. Osceola's formula students for 2012-2013 were 271.52; the total expenditure cost per student is approximately \$8,997.78 for the 2012-2013 school year. As seen in the table, Osceola Public School's adjusted general fund operating cost per formula student is lower than a majority of the other school districts in the surrounding counties. Typically the larger the school is, the lower the operating costs are per student which is why Aurora and York Public Schools have two of the lowest adjusted general fund operating expenditures for those five counties. However, many students, parents, and teachers prefer a smaller student-to-teacher ratio for the attention and assistance each student receives. Osceola falls in the middle of these two scenarios, because they are able to keep operating costs lower than many of the surrounding schools yet they can offer smaller class sizes to ensure students can receive more attention from the teachers.

**Table 2.2** shows the size of each class from Kindergarten to 12th grade. This data goes back to the 2000-2001 school year which shows the enrollment figures for the final year of Osceola Public Schools. The 2002-2003 school year saw the largest school enrollment figures with total enrollment just shy of 300 students. Over the

<b>Table 2.1 TEEOSA Formula Students, Osceola Public Schools, 2012-2013</b>					
<b>Nebraska Department of Education School Finance and Organization Services, Model LB235</b>					
<b>County</b>	<b>County / District Number</b>	<b>District / System Name</b>	<b>Formula Students</b>	<b>Adjusted General Fund Operation Expenditures</b>	<b>Adjusted General Fund Operating Expenditures per Formula Student</b>
POLK	72-0075-000	HIGH PLAINS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS	225.98	\$3,472,322.44	\$15,365.45
BUTLER	12-0502-000	EAST BUTLER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	326.16	\$3,880,775.02	\$11,898.23
POLK	72-0032-000	SHELBY - RISING CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	369.90	\$4,248,435.73	\$11,485.34
HAMILTON	41-0002-000	GILTNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	170.45	\$1,828,448.81	\$10,726.92
HAMILTON	41-0091-000	HAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS	163.48	\$1,707,170.21	\$10,442.49
YORK	93-0096-000	HEARTLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOLS	300.19	\$2,937,724.29	\$9,786.35
POLK	72-0015-000	CROSS COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS	350.30	\$3,406,006.66	\$9,722.98
MERRICK	61-0004-000	CENTRAL CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	706.07	\$6,744,979.68	\$9,552.81
BUTLER	12-0056-000	DAVID CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	618.64	\$5,770,873.38	\$9,328.32
POLK	72-0019-000	OSCEOLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	271.52	\$2,443,040.50	\$8,997.78
YORK	93-0083-000	MC COOL JUNCTION PUBLIC SCHS	249.61	\$2,221,463.73	\$8,899.77
HAMILTON	41-0504-000	AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1,179.34	\$10,297,547.86	\$8,731.64
MERRICK	61-0049-000	PALMER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	240.99	\$2,095,945.93	\$8,697.16
YORK	93-0012-000	YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1,206.76	\$8,821,425.13	\$7,310.03

Source: Nebraska Department of Education

Table 2.2 School Enrollment, Osceola Public Schools, 2000-2013														
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total Enrollment
2000-2001	20	21	22	17	25	19	29	18	18	27	30	24	24	294
2001-2002	19	17	21	22	18	29	16	26	18	20	28	31	30	295
2002-2003	17	21	18	23	21	22	27	16	28	19	23	31	32	298
2003-2004	18	13	19	17	23	20	21	25	17	31	21	21	34	280
2004-2005	19	17	16	19	18	23	23	24	25	19	33	22	21	279
2005-2006	21	18	17	18	17	17	28	25	25	24	20	30	22	282
2006-2007	19	24	20	20	19	15	18	29	26	26	23	21	29	289
2007-2008	20	20	21	20	22	17	17	18	27	22	25	20	23	272
2008-2009	17	19	19	25	18	22	18	17	18	28	20	27	18	266
2009-2010	25	19	23	20	29	18	21	20	18	20	28	23	26	290
2010-2011	23	21	16	22	18	27	21	21	19	17	19	28	20	272
2011-2012	18	22	20	17	22	20	28	23	21	17	17	19	28	272
2012-2013	17	19	21	19	18	18	19	23	21	19	15	17	19	245

Source: Nebraska Department of Education

past thirteen school-years for Osceola Public Schools, the total student enrollment has slightly decreased with fluctuations between each year. The 2012-2013 school year had the lowest enrollment rates in the past thirteen school years. The average graduating class for Osceola is 25 students. The 2003-2004 school year had the largest graduating class with 34 students. The smallest graduating classes were 18 and 19 students in 2008-2009 and 2012-2013 school years, respectively.

It is important to maintain and try to expand these numbers to keep a healthy, viable school. One way to do that is to ensure there is a healthy connection between the community and the school while promoting the community itself to attract new families to move to Osceola. With the addition of new families to the community, there is potential of adding additional students to the total enrollment. Increasing community population and student enrollment will work hand-in-hand. This relationship inevitably ties back to employment and job availability in the community. As stated earlier, families are attracted to communities with quality school systems which in turn will help draw residents to Osceola as opposed to neighboring communities. It is also important to understand in rural communities in America, school districts have to evaluate the option of consolidating with surrounding schools in order to offer students the education and activities for the betterment of their future. This is something that Osceola Public Schools has discussed over the years, but it is also something that will continue to be discussed into the future. The school district must do what it has to in order to provide quality education to the students in Osceola.

#### Christian Education

Osceola is also home to the Polk County Christian School, a Pre-K through 8th grade, private Christian school. The two full-time teachers at the school teach a Bible-based, non-denominational curriculum.

#### Post-Secondary Education

Osceola is part of the Central Community College which encompasses 25 counties. The Platte Campus in Columbus offers 17 vocational-technical programs and 13 academic transfer programs designed for transfer to four-year colleges. Enrollment includes on and off campus students who completed business, industrial and professional training programs provided by the campus for local employers. Central Community College credit courses are available on an individualized basis through the Osceola learning center located in the Osceola High School. Learning Center Students work on courses independently, using course materials from the Platte Campus in Columbus. Central Community College works with area industries, retail establishments and other agencies and organizations in planning customized in-service and/or in-plant training programs.



# Transportation

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

Osceola’s transportation system creates many opportunities for growth because of the proximity and connectivity to the larger transportation network. Highway 81/92, running from the west edge of the community through the City to the northeast, connects many surrounding communities to Osceola. This highway corridor creates important access points for the community and it acts as the gateway for all travelers going to and from Osceola. These gateway entrances act as a “first impression” for visitors. It is important, when talking about community corridors and connections, to understand how highway corridors provide areas that can become important features for the City.

The Nebraska Central Railroad Company (NCRC) Railroad also runs through the community from the southwest to the northeast. This transportation system provides many economic development opportunities while also creating a few development constraints for the community. The closest airport which provides passenger services is the Central Regional Airport located in Grand Island, which is 48 miles southwest of Osceola. The closest hub airport is Eppley Airfield located in Omaha which is approximately 90 miles directly east of Osceola on Highway 81/92. Eppley Airfield is a medium-sized airport hub offering a larger variety of flight options for Nebraska’s travelers.

The final form of transportation in Osceola is pedestrian foot traffic. There is sidewalk circulation throughout the community; however, some locations in town are lacking sidewalks. Also, some of the sidewalks are in need of repair and/or replacement just based on age and condition. The transportation section of a Comprehensive Plan is important because it is necessary to address the condition of both local road and street networks that tie the community together and the types of transportation that links Osceola with the outside world.



## Railroad

As mentioned above, the Nebraska Central Railroad Company (NCRC) railroad runs through Osceola and provides several opportunities as well as development constraints for the community. The NCRC is a 340-mile network composed of five former Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) branch lines and one former Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) branch line. Trackage rights include rights on 70 miles of UPRR main line between North Platte and Omaha, NE. NCRC, through its connection with Union Pacific (at Columbus, Central City and Grand Island) and BNSF (at David City), is an integral part of grain shipments in the region.



NCRC plays a key role in the Nebraska economy by providing a variety rail transportation services, serving a diverse group of customers engaged in industries such as steel production, agricultural products, grain marketing and ethanol production. Rio Grande Pacific Corporation maintains a 100% equity interest in this property.

The railroad offers great commerce opportunities to Osceola that would not be available without the presence of this form of transportation. The railroad runs from the southwest side of the community cutting northeast. There are five at-grade railroad crossings in Osceola with one being on Highway 81/92. There are approximately one to two freight trains that travel through Osceola on a daily basis.



## Roads

As previously mentioned, transportation systems are vital to the sustainability of the community; especially in the automobile dependent society we live in today. There are three different categories of roads in Osceola: local, collector, and arterial streets. Highway 81/92 is the main arterial road carrying traffic into and out of town acting as the gateway to the community. Development along arterial roads says a lot about the overall appearance and priorities of the community. During our public input sessions, many residents discussed the desire to beautify this highway corridor in order to enhance the general appearance of the entire City. Highway 81/92, along with the availability of rail access, will influence the potential for economic growth for Osceola. Transportation costs are an important factor for existing businesses and for searching businesses looking for a new location.



Osceola has existing infrastructure, but it will be important to maintain and improve the infrastructure over time. As noted by the residents, there are several roads which are not paved and areas of the community that have stormwater drainage issues. City leaders are continually working to resolve these issues and have recently completed a paving project on the northwest side of the community and are currently working on a large paving project for the south side of Osceola.



The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) annually reports surface aggregates for all of the roads in Osceola. Updated in 2014 road types include concrete, asphalt, bituminous, and gravel surfaces. The Lane-Mile Report for Osceola detailed the following figures, 3.94 miles of concrete, 2.65 miles of asphalt, 5.37 miles of bituminous surfacing, and 2.03 miles of gravel roads in Osceola. There is a total of 13.99 miles of road surfaces in Osceola. Successful street networks are dependent on the availability and condition of the roads throughout the community. Osceola has a safe, efficient transportation system. However, this type of public infrastructure, like all others, requires continual maintenance and updates in order to maintain the high level of effectiveness.

NDOR also conducts traffic counts biannually; 2012 traffic counts are the most recent numbers available through the State. **Figure 2.2** shows traffic counts for the Highways 81/92. The top number represents the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) for all vehicles; the bottom number characterizes the number of heavy commercial vehicles. Highway 81/92 is the primary access for residents and visitors of Osceola to utilize. When new commercial businesses are looking at locating in any community, they look at traffic counts because commercial businesses want locations with high visibility, good connectivity, and access to the larger transportation network. Highway 81/92 provides the community with a link to the outside world which is an economic asset for the City. A majority of Osceola's traffic utilizes Highway 81/92 to enter or leave Osceola; therefore, making it ideal for commercial development along the Highway corridor. With 3,700 vehicles traveling through Osceola on a daily basis, there is a lot of traffic going into and out of the community. Although some businesses are currently located along this highway corridor, there is still a large amount of land undeveloped, mainly on the outskirts and adjacent to corporate limits.

Osceola also completed its 1 & 6 Year Road Plan in January of 2014. This plan is in place to help guide achievable transportation development for the first year and development goals for the remaining five years. As seen in **Figure 2.3**, the plan has two projects listed for Osceola's one-year road plan, and five projects for the six-year plan. The first project on the one-year road plan includes grading, curb and gutter, sidewalks, utility adjustments, and concrete pavement on Main Street from Beebe Street to Central Street, Ohio Street Main Street to State Street, Mickey Street Main Street to State Street, Smith Street Main Street to State Street, Grant Street Main Street to State Street, Sherman Street State Street to Kimmel Street, and South Street State Street to Kimmel Street. The second project on the one-year road plan includes new four-inch asphalt on Central Street from Highway 81/92 east to the west side of Bridge #M186003013. The total estimated cost for the one-year projects is approximately \$725,000. The six-year road plan projects include a mixture of new asphalt and concrete pavement with some projects including the replacement and/or addition of drainage structures and grading to help with stormwater drainage concerns. The cost estimates for the five projects in the six-year plan is \$1,225,000.



Figure 2.2  
2012 NDOR  
Traffic Counts  
Osceola, Nebraska

# ONE & SIX YEAR PLAN 2014-2019

**OSCEOLA**

POLK COUNTY  
NEBRASKA

POPULATION 971 2000 CENSUS

2010

R 2 N

## LEGEND

- ONE YEAR
- SIX YEARS
- STRUCTURES

- STATE HIGHWAYS
  - Gravel or Crushed Rock
  - Asphalt/Bituminous Surface
  - Multiple Lane Divided Highway
  - Asphalt/Bituminous Surface
  - Concrete/Asphalt Surface
  - Multiple Lane Divided Highway
  - Concrete/Asphalt Surface
- CITY STREETS AND  
COUNTY ROADS
  - Primitive or Unimproved
  - Gravel or Crushed Rock
  - Asphalt/Bituminous Surface
  - Concrete/Brick Surface
- Interstate Numbered Routes
- U.S. Numbered Routes
- State Numbered Routes
- State Numbered Spurs
- State Numbered Links
- Local Street/Road Names
- City Center
- Corporate Limits

CORPORATE LIMITS AS OF 2010  
STATE HIGHWAYS CORRECTED TO 2010

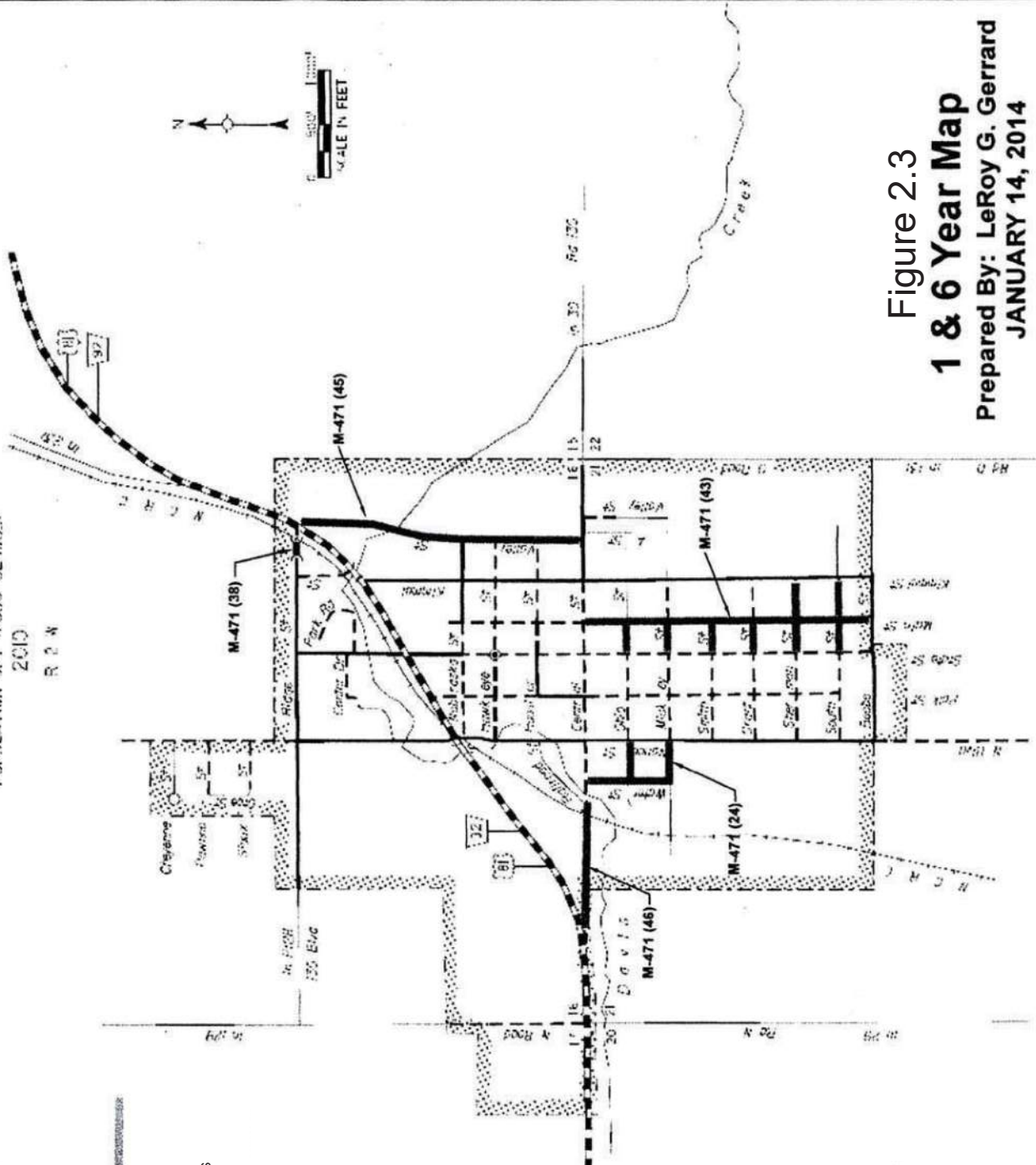


Figure 2.3  
1 & 6 Year Map  
Prepared By: LeRoy G. Gerrard  
JANUARY 14, 2014

Map made by author, plan sheet of approximately  
1:25,000 scale. All data is subject to change. All  
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The City of Osceola is currently in the construction phase of a concrete paving project on the south side of the community. This project is listed under the City's one-year road plan. This project was bid as a 15-block concrete paving project to replace concrete pavement, sidewalks, and curb and gutter as well as complete grading and utility adjustments. A separate paving project in the northwest part of the community was completed in 2012 paving Sioux, Otoe, and Pawnee Streets as well as Cheyenne Street including the cul-de-sac. This project paved streets for several newer homes in the community.

The State of Nebraska has proposed a Highway 81 bypass to the north and west of Osceola. It is important to consider the impacts the bypass may have on the community when planning for the future. While no official date has been given as to if/when the bypass may be constructed, it will be necessary to re-evaluate the Comprehensive Plan and produce an update in order to best plan for the impacts of a new bypass.

The construction of a bypass can open up a large area of rural land to commercial and low-density residential developments. This can be difficult to create a compact community, as it can increase a dependence on driving as well as hurt downtown businesses. While increases in truck and commuter traffic can bring considerable noise, pollution, and gridlock through the community the bypass would be built to move traffic traveling through the heart of the City to outside of the community. The proposed bypass may affect the City of Osceola in ways that will have both positive and negative impacts on the community. Engaging City officials and residents to understand and focus on the benefits of the possible effects will be critical. Ultimately the decision is left to governing officials at the State level as to constructing a bypass around Osceola.





### Sidewalks

Sidewalks are a way to walk to the neighbor's house, allow kids to ride their bikes and walk to school, and for families to walk to the park. Osceola's community is linked by many sidewalks with approximately 35 percent of the community having existing sidewalk infrastructure; however, several of the existing sidewalks are in need of repair and/or replacement which will need to be addressed in the future. Sidewalks promote foot traffic and provide a safe place for children, students, families, and senior citizens to travel. Many people believe that busy sidewalks also lead to a safer community because when more people out and about it inherently deters crime and lowers the opportunity for criminal activity. With a chance of being seen by someone walking their dog or shopping downtown most criminals would be discouraged from attempting an unlawful activity.

Although sidewalks are an essential amenity in communities, they are also another form of public infrastructure that requires maintenance, ADA compliance, updates, and sometimes complete replacement. Areas of broken or cracked sidewalks coupled with incomplete connections make sidewalks challenging to use. Completing a sidewalk inventory and conditions analysis including ADA-compliance review would assist City leaders with planning for sidewalk improvements. Approximately 65 percent of the developed community is lacking sidewalk infrastructure of any kind. The majority of the existing sidewalk network exists in the central part of the community. Improving existing sidewalks is important as the City moves forward, but it is also important for decision-makers to determine if new sidewalks need to be constructed in order to close some of the existing gaps to improve pedestrian transportation, safety, and connectivity. A matching program could be established by the City to encourage residents to construct new sidewalks and/or repair existing sidewalks in order to improve accessibility throughout the entire community. The most recent ADA design guidelines should be followed when any new sidewalk project is undertaken.

# Community Services

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

## Library

The Public Library is located at 131 North Main in Osceola, Nebraska and currently serves almost 1,500 registered users. The library boasts a collection of nearly 33,000 books, with close to 10,000 volumes in annual circulation. Videotapes, DVDs, E-Books, audiobooks, and magazines are available in addition to the book collection. Additional equipment available at the library includes; color copy machine, fax machine, microfiche with local data from 1873-2003, a 6 station computer lab with color printer. Children's story hour and book club both meet once a month. The Library participates in the interlibrary loan program.

Monday: 12:30 pm – 5:30 pm  
Tuesday: Closed  
Wednesday: 12:30 pm – 8:00 pm  
Thursday: Closed  
Friday: 12:30 pm – 5:30 pm  
Saturday: 10:00 am - 3:00 pm  
Sunday: Closed

For more information about the Osceola Public Library or a list of upcoming events, please visit their website at <http://libraries.ne.gov/osceola/>.



## Post Office

The United States Post Office is located at 241 North Main Street, Osceola. Retail hours are Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 11:30 am and 12:30 pm to 4:00 pm and from 9:00 am to 10:30 am on Saturday. The Post Office is closed on Sundays. For more information on the services offered at this USPS location, please visit the website at <http://www.uspspostoffices.com/ne/osceola/osceola>.



## Churches

The City of Osceola is home to three different churches including St. Vincent's Catholic Church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church and the United Methodist Church. Please visit the City of Osceola's website for a listing of the addresses and contact person for each Church.



## Newspaper

The Polk County News is located at 205 East 4th Street in Stromsburg, Nebraska. The newspaper is published once a week on Thursdays.





### American Legion Club

The American Legion Club is located in the Downtown Square at 420 Nebraska Street.

### Public Safety

The Osceola Volunteer Fire and EMS Departments are funded through the City's budget. They are both staffed by volunteers. Recently, a new Fire Hall was built for these departments. It is located on the West edge of town, on the corner of Nance Street and Nebraska Street.

Polk County Sheriff's Department is staffed by 13 individuals; Sheriff, 1 Chief Deputy, 6 Deputies and 5 Dispatchers.

### City Offices

The Osceola City Office is located at 350 N. State Street. The City Office building houses the office of the City Clerk/Treasurer and the City Council chambers, where the City Council meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month. The Council may also meet at such a time that the Mayor or any three council members call for a special meeting. For information regarding meeting agendas, please contact the City Clerk at 402-747-3411 or by e-mail at [clerk@cityofosceola.net](mailto:clerk@cityofosceola.net).



### Polk County Historical Society

A museum, sod house, log cabin, country church, restored country school, a Union Pacific caboose, and the Governor's Arboretum are some of the local attractions that can be seen at the Polk County Historical Society grounds which is located in southeast Osceola, behind the Annie Jeffrey County Memorial Health Center on Beebe Street.





Cemetery

The Osceola Cemetery is located on the east edge of Osceola at 561 Valley Street.

Healthcare

The Annie Jeffrey Hospital and Family Medicine Clinic is located on the south edge of town on Beebe Street. The Annie Jeffrey Hospital is a 21 bed Critical Access Hospital providing state of the art equipment operated by trained professionals. Striving to serve the area with compassion and respect in a warm, welcoming facility with knowledgeable and experienced staff. Dedicated to improving both the delivery of health care and the living conditions in the area are among their top goals.

Annie Jeffrey Hospital was built in 1956 through a generous gift from Dr. Charles W. Jeffrey. The hospital was named after his mother Annie.

Annie Jeffrey Family Medicine Clinic emphasizes on primary care and family medicine. Open Monday through Friday with evening and Saturday appointments available. To reach the Medicine Clinic please call 402.747.8851.

Annie Jeffrey Wellness Center

Located inside the Annie Jeffrey Hospital was established in 1988 and in 2007 underwent a \$5,000,000 addition. Open from 5:00 am to 10:00 pm daily. Fees for membership are affordable with different plans available to allow as many as possible to utilize the center. Discounted group and corporate memberships are also available. For additional information or to tour the facility call 402.747.2031.



### Polk County Health Department

The Polk County Health Department (PCHD) has developed into a multi-faceted department since its beginning in 1978. The PCHD is governed by the Polk County Health Board, and the Polk County Board of Commissioners.

Through community assessment and policy development, the Health Department offers many programs to meet the community's needs. On-going programs include CPR, first aid training, homemaker chore services, Lifeline (an emergency care program), school nursing, drug/alcohol testing, and baby-sitting classes. All Polk County schools receive general screening and assistance with health service and education programs. Through the Every Woman Matters Program, an outreach worker can tell you whether you qualify for free or reduced cost annual health check-ups. The PCHD also offers clinic services such as childhood and adult immunizations, annual flu shots, blood pressure checks, and pedicures.



### Dentist

The dentist office in Osceola is located in the Downtown Square at 240 N. Main Street and Bryan Dickey, D.D.S., P.C. is the local dentist for the City.



### Pharmacy

Bailey Drug a pharmacy and gift shop located at 260 North State Street. Hours of operation are Monday 9:00 am – 7:00 pm and Tuesday through Friday 9:00 – 5:30 pm.



### Senior Living

The Good Samaritan Nursing Home is located at 600 Center Drive. Osceola Good Samaritan Center is a 57-bed Medicaid/Medicare certified, Intensive Care Facility established in 1962. Renovated and remodeled, the center has an excellent reputation for quality throughout Polk County and the state of Nebraska. The facility is part of the largest nonprofit provider of long-term care -- The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society, recognized nationwide as the leader in long-term care. The center offers 24-hour nursing care, short- or long-term rehabilitative stays, all restorative therapies (physical, occupational, and speech), adult day care, varied activities programs, and numerous special events year-round. Committed to creating a home residents that is much like their own; a welcoming and loving place. Good Samaritan Nursing Home provides exceptional care and service to seniors and others in need in the community.



A 10-bed assisted living facility, Ridgeview Heights, with one additional unit for respite care, was completed in 2002 by the Evangelical Good Samaritan Society. There are studio and one-bedroom apartments located at this facility.

### Civic Center

In February 2018, Osceola purchased a historic 6,000 square foot building located at 441 Hawkeye Street to renovate into a town Civic Center. The facility will consist of multipurpose spaces and host activities for citizens of all ages. Space will include housing for the Senior Center, music, theater and the arts, community education and recreation classes, and rental hall for meetings and events. Civic Center construction is estimated to be complete by December 2018.

### Senior Center

The Osceola Senior Center is open to residents and visitors of Osceola for lunch Monday – Friday at noon. The Senior Center provides a place for senior citizens of the community to congregate and participate in a variety of activities.

### Blue Action Community Partnership

Blue Valley Community Action Partnership (BVCA) was officially incorporated on January 19, 1966. Located at 440 Nebraska Avenue, BVCA is a private, non-profit organization. BVCA Partnership operates over 30 programs that interact and complement each other. Programs are as diverse as the communities and families we serve. Service area includes Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Polk, Saline, Seward, Thayer and York counties in Nebraska. Limited services are also provided in Pawnee, Nemaha, Johnson and Richardson Counties in Nebraska.

Blue Action Community Partnership’s focus has been to develop community activities that eliminate the causes of poverty and to ameliorate the condition of poverty within the area. They have the flexibility to try new approaches with their core funding resource and mobilize local, state and national resources to provide the activities and services needed for motivating individuals and creating opportunities for self-sufficiency. Some services are traditional, but innovation is an important part of our organization. The organization has a history of establishing solutions to area needs.

Mission: Overcoming Poverty by Helping People, Improving Lives and Strengthening Communities.

Vision: Blue Valley Community Action Partnership’s vision is that communities are safe and supportive, differences and traditions are respected, individuals and families are financially secure, and everyone has opportunities to develop their potential.

### Veterinary Clinic

The Osceola Veterinary Hospital houses two veterinarians, who treat both large and small animals. The full-service hospital offers boarding, grooming, and animal health products. It is located on East Highway 81 and 92 in Osceola.



# Utilities

## Water

The City of Osceola currently maintains Nebraska Public Water Supply No. NE3114302. The current system supplies water to its residents and business with three active groundwater wells, a 125,000 gallon standpipe storage facility, 438 metered services and approximately 10 miles of distribution main. The three active wells were constructed in 1972, 1985, and 2012.

The City completed an installation of new water meters in 2010. Average daily water use prior to the installation of water meters is approximately 355,000 gallons per day. With the installation of the new water meters, the projected average daily water use is estimated at 230,000 gallons per day with at peak use of just under 1.0 million gallons per day. The system has a maximum capacity of approximately 1.5 million gallons per day.

Recent work on the system has included the abandonment of an older 1951 well which was no longer used for water supply, replacement with a new well located just south of the standpipe as a backup well which was also low in arsenic which plagued the 1951 well and the 1985 well. The new well was installed with a backup power supply and the well house of the 1972 well behind the City office was reconstructed. As part of the construction project a new control system for the wells was installed to assist in the operations and record keeping of the water system. The north well which was constructed in 1985 has some secondary water quality issues and has elevated arsenic levels. This well is not typically used for water supply at this time.

With the installation of the new well in 2012, the City also replaced approximately 24 blocks of water main to provide increased flow to the school and the hospital areas on the south and east sides of the community. Replacement of the smaller 2-inch and 4-inch piping with 6-inch and 8-inch piping was completed on Polk, Main, State and Kimmel streets.

Future improvement projects that have been identified are replacement of the 1903 riveted steel standpipe with a new elevated storage facility and continued water main replacement. Another future project would be the replacement of the 1985 public supply well if the water quality in the other two wells would not meet the drinking water standards or demand required of all three wells.



### Sanitary Sewer

The City owns and operates a collection system, a lift station, and a three-cell lagoon constructed in 1958 with an improvement project completed in 2007. The collection system flows by gravity to the collector and influent wet well at the lagoon site. It is then pumped to the two primary treatment cells of 6.14 and 5.16 acres. After primary treatment, the wastewater is transferred to a final 2.59 acre cell where it can be land applied or discharged to Davis Creek under NPDES permit NE-0046230. The NPDES permit was recently re-issued in 2012 and along with BOD and TSSS limits, spring, summer and winter ammonia limits were included in the permit. The City has been land applying and has not discharged since the permit was issued; however, with the changing regulations the ammonia limits are anticipated to decrease in the next permit (2017) and discharge may not be an option for the City in the future. The design population for the wastewater treatment facility is 921 with a design daily flow of 106,000 gallons per day but the average influent flow in 2012 was 170,000 gallons per day. With the installation of water meters the flow rate to the lagoon has been decreasing.

A NDEQ site inspection was performed in 2012 and some of the suggested wastewater improvements included:

- Elimination of burrowing animals in the dikes and filling in the holes
- Verify the facility is not hydraulically and organically overloaded
- Re-grade the lagoon dikes
- Add/break up the larger portions of the rip rap as the dikes appear to be eroding
- Continue to evaluate the infiltration and inflow to the sewer system

The City has been working on correcting the suggestions made by the NDEQ inspection report. Additional repairs noted by the City include a roof replacement on the control building at the Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF).

### Stormwater Drainage

The City of Osceola has relatively good elevation changes which allows for surface drainage of precipitation in the City. Some areas utilize surface drainage, which due to the elevation changes, can pose a few problems as it jumps the curb and gutters. Surface drainage at the lower elevations can cause flooding in the lower lying areas. The City street infrastructure is deteriorating and in the past several years they have been trying to replace some of the poor condition streets and improve drainage where street projects are being replaced. Drainage projects are expensive and with the aging infrastructure the drainage is the easiest to neglect as water and sewer are regulated by the State and Federal governments and street conditions are noticed by all the constituents.

Drainage infrastructure and associated projects will continue to be a point of discussion for City leaders moving forward. It would seem that future development within the City's one-mile jurisdiction (ETJ) should focus on detaining its stormwater impact, to minimize the development's impact on downstream property owners. This is even more critical in areas that have an existing drainage problem or in areas where sizeable development projects could occur in the future.

### Electrical and Natural Gas

The City of Osceola purchases electricity from the Polk County Rural Public Power District (PCRPPD). Osceola is served with a 34,500 volt line from a substation located south of Silver Creek. The City's distribution is 4,160 volts wye and the distribution substation capacity is 2,500 kVA. These substations are tied into Nebraska Public Power District's statewide electrical grid.

Black Hills Energy supplies natural gas to the City of Osceola through a four-inch transmission pipeline, which has an operational pressure of approximately 12 pounds per square inch. Black Hills Energy provides natural gas to residential and commercial customers within Osceola.



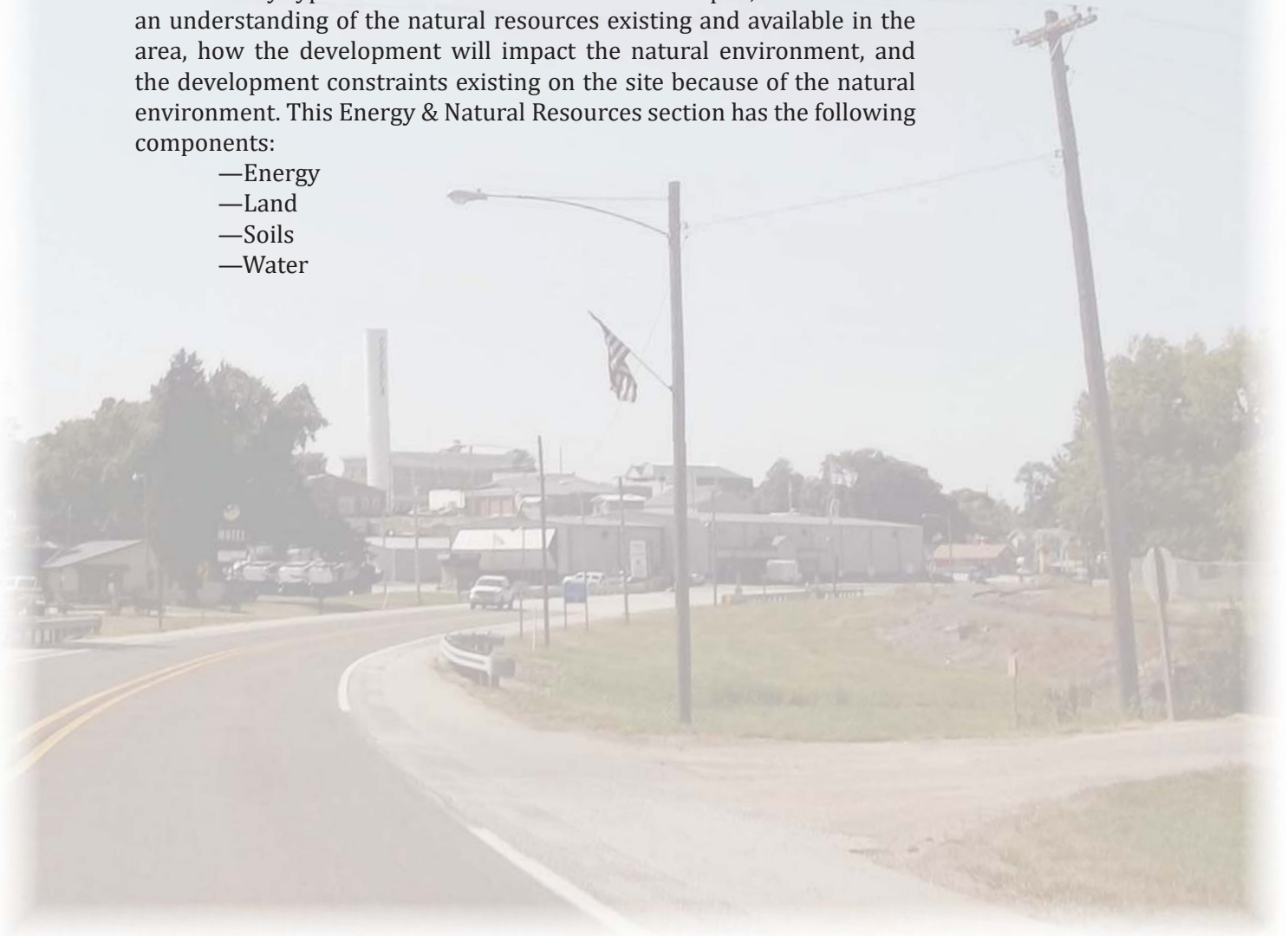
The City's water and sanitary sewer public infrastructure maps can be viewed at the City Office. There are only hard copies of these maps available for viewing because the maps were created several years ago when electronic files were not as accessible or readily available. The City should consider updating their infrastructure maps to ensure they can be reproduced and they always have up-to-date, accessible maps.



# Chapter 3: Energy & Natural Resources

Formulating a truly “comprehensive” plan for Osceola requires research and analysis for the community’s natural resources and energy options. Looking at land, soil, and water specifications will assist decision-makers when planning for future development and infrastructure. In order for any type of built environment to be developed, there must be an understanding of the natural resources existing and available in the area, how the development will impact the natural environment, and the development constraints existing on the site because of the natural environment. This Energy & Natural Resources section has the following components:

- Energy
- Land
- Soils
- Water



# Energy

*One important update for this Comprehensive Plan was to include an Energy section. In April 2010, Legislative Bill (LB 997) was signed into law by Governor Heineman and requires all Nebraska Cities and Counties to include an energy element in their new Comprehensive Plan by January 1, 2015. The energy element should assess current energy consumption and evaluate and promote utilization of renewable energy sources and energy conservation measures that benefit the community.*

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

The Nebraska Energy Office compiles statistics on energy consumption in the state by sector. The latest statistics are from 2007.

Residential: In 2007, 47.5% of the residential sector's energy usage was from natural gas. 40.2% of the energy consumed in the residential sector was electricity, 7.7% were petroleum products, 4.9% was renewable energy (wood 4.38%, geothermal 0.22%, and solar 0.04%), and less than 1% was coal. [Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Energy Consumption in Nebraska's Residential Sector," [www.neo.gov/statsht-ml/09/html](http://www.neo.gov/statsht-ml/09/html)]

Commercial: In 2007, 48.06% of the commercial sector's energy usage was from electricity and 45.88% from natural gas. Petroleum products made up 4.1% of the energy consumed in the commercial sector (diesel fuel 1.65%, propane 1.58%, motor gasoline 0.88%, kerosene 0.01%), 1.8% was renewable energy (geothermal 0.92%, wood 0.85%, and ethanol 0.02%), and less than 1% was coal. [Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Energy Consumption in Nebraska's Commercial Sector," [www.neo.gov/statsht-ml/12/html](http://www.neo.gov/statsht-ml/12/html)]

Industrial: In 2007, 38.13% of the industrial sector energy usage was from natural gas, 22.66% from diesel fuel, and 19.77% from electricity. Petroleum product other than diesel fuel were asphalt and road oil (3.8%), propane (3.51%), motor gasoline (2.33%), residual fuel (0.19%), lubricants (0.14%), kerosene (0.01%), and other petroleum (0.88%). 5.13% of the energy consumed in the industrial sector was coal and 3.44% was renewable energy (wood and wood waste 3.38% and ethanol 0.06%). [Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Energy Consumption in Nebraska's Industrial Sector," [www.neo.gov/statshtml/15/html](http://www.neo.gov/statshtml/15/html)]

Energy infrastructure and energy use statistics by sector are not available for the City of Osceola.

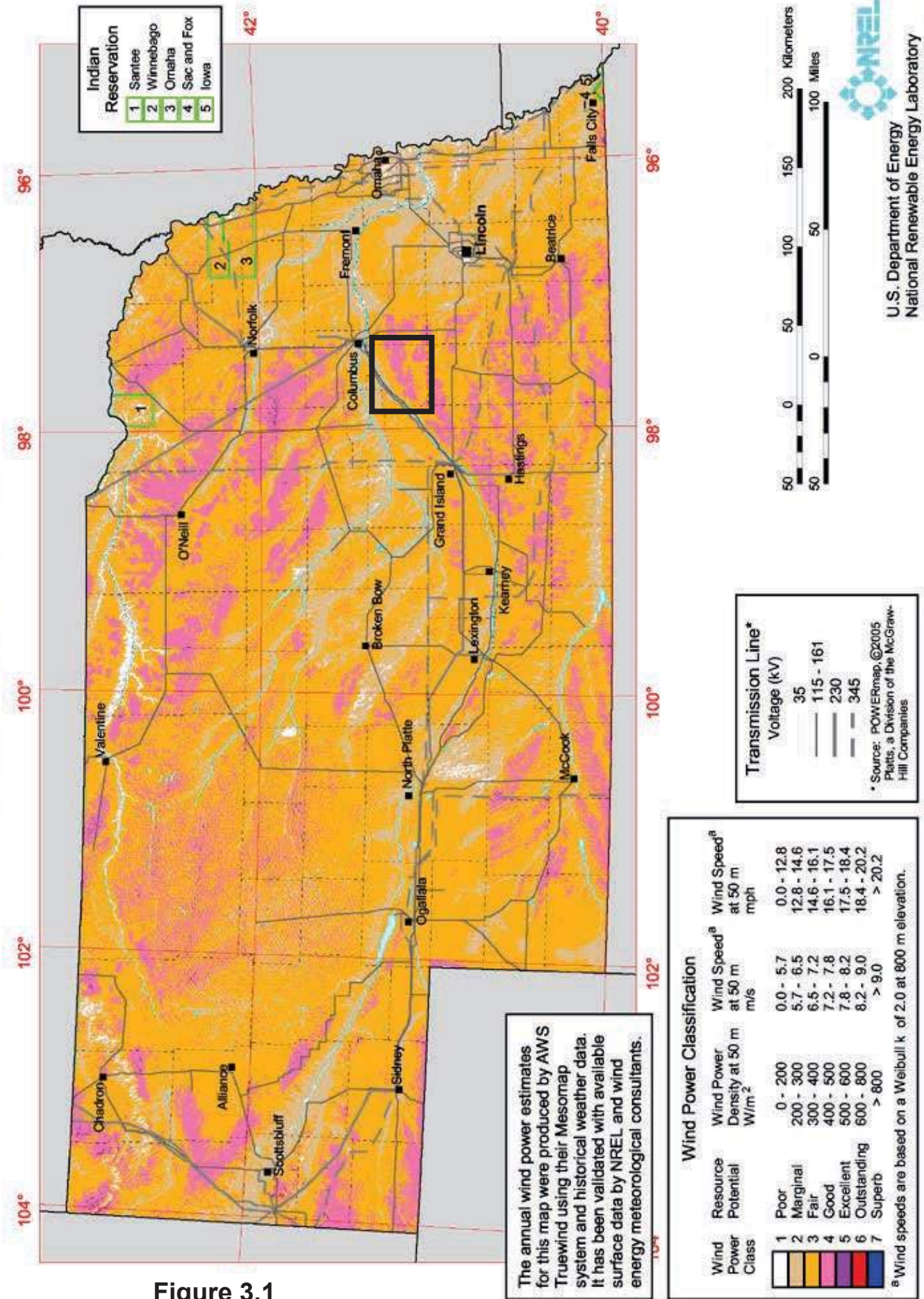
## 2. Utilization of renewable energy sources:

The Nebraska Energy Office reports that in 2007, 3% of Nebraska's energy consumption was from renewable energy sources. The sources of energy for Nebraska in 2007 were petroleum (33%), coal (31%), natural gas (21%), nuclear power (17%) and renewable energy (3%). The renewable sources were biomass (1.48%), conventional hydroelectric power (0.496%), ethanol (0.379%), wind (0.309%), geothermal energy (0.115%), and solar (0.005%). [Source: Nebraska Energy Office, "Nebraska's Renewable Energy Consumption," [www.neo.ne.gov/statshtml/92.htm](http://www.neo.ne.gov/statshtml/92.htm)]

The nation as a whole used a higher percentage of renewable energy than Nebraska. In 2008, 7% of the energy consumption in the United States was from renewable sources. That year the sources of energy for the nation were petroleum (37%), natural gas (24%), coal (23%), nuclear electric power (8%), and renewable energy (7%). The sources of renewable energy were solar (0.07%), geothermal (0.35%), wind (0.49%), hydropower (2.38%), and biomass (3.71%). [Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Renewable Energy Trends in Consumption and Electricity," [www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/trends/rentrends.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/solar.renewables/page/trends/rentrends.html)]

Renewable energy source statistics are not available for the City of Osceola. **Figure 3.1** shows the 50 meter wind power potential for the State of Nebraska. The box highlights Polk County showing that the County, including Osceola, has large areas of 'good' wind potential.

# Nebraska - 50 m Wind Power



**Figure 3.1**  
**Nebraska 50M Wind Power Map**  
Osceola, Nebraska

3. Energy conservation measures that benefit the community:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Land

Based on the Conservation and Survey Division at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, there are three different types of topographic regions in Polk County. They are plains, valleys, and bluffs and escarpments. Plains can be categorized as flat-lying land that lies above the valley. The materials of the plains are sandstone or stream-deposited silt, clay, sand and gravel overlain by wind-deposited silt (called loess). The valleys are flat-lying land that lies along major streams. The materials of the valleys are stream-deposited silt, clay, sand, and gravel. The bluffs and escarpments are categorized as rugged land with very steep and irregular slopes. Bedrock materials, such as sandstone, shale and limestone, are often exposed in these areas. All of Osceola falls with the valley and plains topographic regions.

Topographic elevations in the planning area are approximately 1,628 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL) at the lagoons. The City of Osceola climate is typical for Nebraska, with an average annual temperature of 50° F from a mean of 23° F in January to a mean of 77° F in July. Extreme temperatures range from below 0° F in winter to above 100° F in the summer. Annual precipitation is approximately 28 inches per year while total evaporation is approximately 44 inches per year, resulting in a net evaporation rate of 16 inches per year.

Understanding the topography of Osceola and Polk County is important to determine the community's best areas for potential development as well as understanding that proper land use practices can protect the natural resources and be a complement to the built environment. The natural topography of the community provides both opportunities and constraints for existing and future development. In Osceola, like most communities, the major development constraints and opportunities are associated with the existing soils, the condition of those soils, and the topography.

The soils in and around Osceola are classified into soil groups, or associations, and have a broad range of characteristics. The United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service conducted the field soils survey and determined the boundaries of the soil types found in the region. The planning jurisdiction of Osceola, including the corporate limits and the one-mile extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) outside of the corporate limits, is comprised of several generalized soil associations. The Shell-Muir-Hobbs Association considered to be deep, nearly level, well drained, silty soils; formed in silty alluvium; on bottom lands and stream terraces.

# Soils

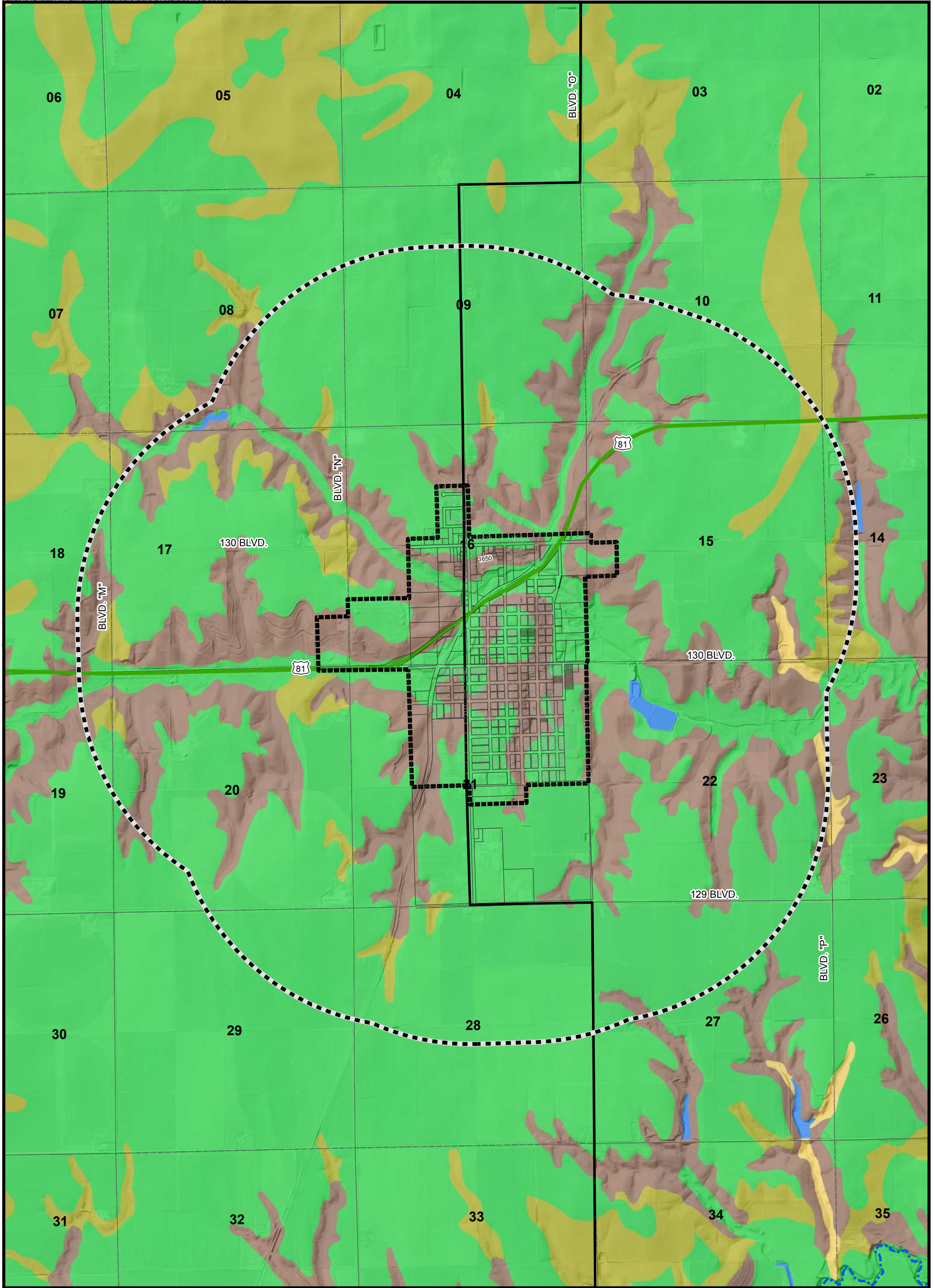
**Table 3.1 Soil Association Characteristics, Osceola, 2014**

Association	Characteristics	Use and Vegetation
<b>Uly Silt Loam</b>	A very deep, well drained soil formed in loess on uplands.	Cultivated areas are cropped mainly to corn, winter wheat, sorghum, and alfalfa.
<b>Hobbs Silt Loam</b>	The Hobbs series consists of very deep, well drained soils that formed in stratified, silty alluvium. These soils are on floodplains, foot slopes, and alluvial fans.	These soils are used for cultivated crops, both dryland and irrigated for corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, and alfalfa. Native species include big bluestem, switchgrass, western wheatgrass, and scattered deciduous trees.
<b>Muir Silt Loam</b>	The Muir series consists of very deep, well drained, moderately permeable soils that formed in alluvium.	Soils are generally cultivated and some irrigated acres. Principal crops include corn, wheat, sorghum, and alfalfa. Native vegetation is tall prairie grass and a few deciduous trees.
<b>Coly Silt Loam</b>	The Coly series consists of very deep, well drained, moderately permeable soils formed in loess.	Typical use includes livestock grazing with a mixture of short, mid, and tall native grasses. A few areas are cropped to corn, soybeans, wheat, alfalfa, and forage crops.
<b>Hastings Silt Loam</b>	The Hastings series consists of very deep, well drained soils that formed in loess.	Most areas are cultivated with corn, grain sorghum, winter wheat, soybeans and alfalfa.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

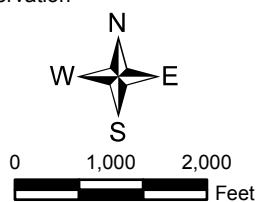
Information and knowledge on soils is an important factor when discussing future development options. The built environment is dependent upon the natural environment and proper development practices must be followed in order to protect the natural environment. There are several different types of soils present in the planning jurisdiction of Osceola; these can all be broken down into many classifications based on slope, percentage of soil type, major and minor types of soil, and degree of drainage. In order to make land use recommendations, decision-makers need to understand how different soil types and slopes can affect future land uses, the environment, current residents, and farming practices. Soils data and classifications used in the following maps were gathered by the United States Department of Agriculture’s Soil Conservation Service. The following maps in this section depict slope, soil suitability, and dryland capability by soil associations for the planning jurisdiction of this Comprehensive Plan.

- Slope by Soil Association Map (**Figure 3.2**)
- Soil Suitability for Septic Tanks (**Figure 3.3**)
- Soil Suitability for Sewage Lagoons (**Figure 3.4**)
- Dryland Capability Classification (**Figure 3.5**)
- Soil Suitability for Prime Farmland (**Figure 3.6**)









**Source:**  
 Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of  
 Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation  
 Service 7-27-2012, M&A

Prepared By:  
  
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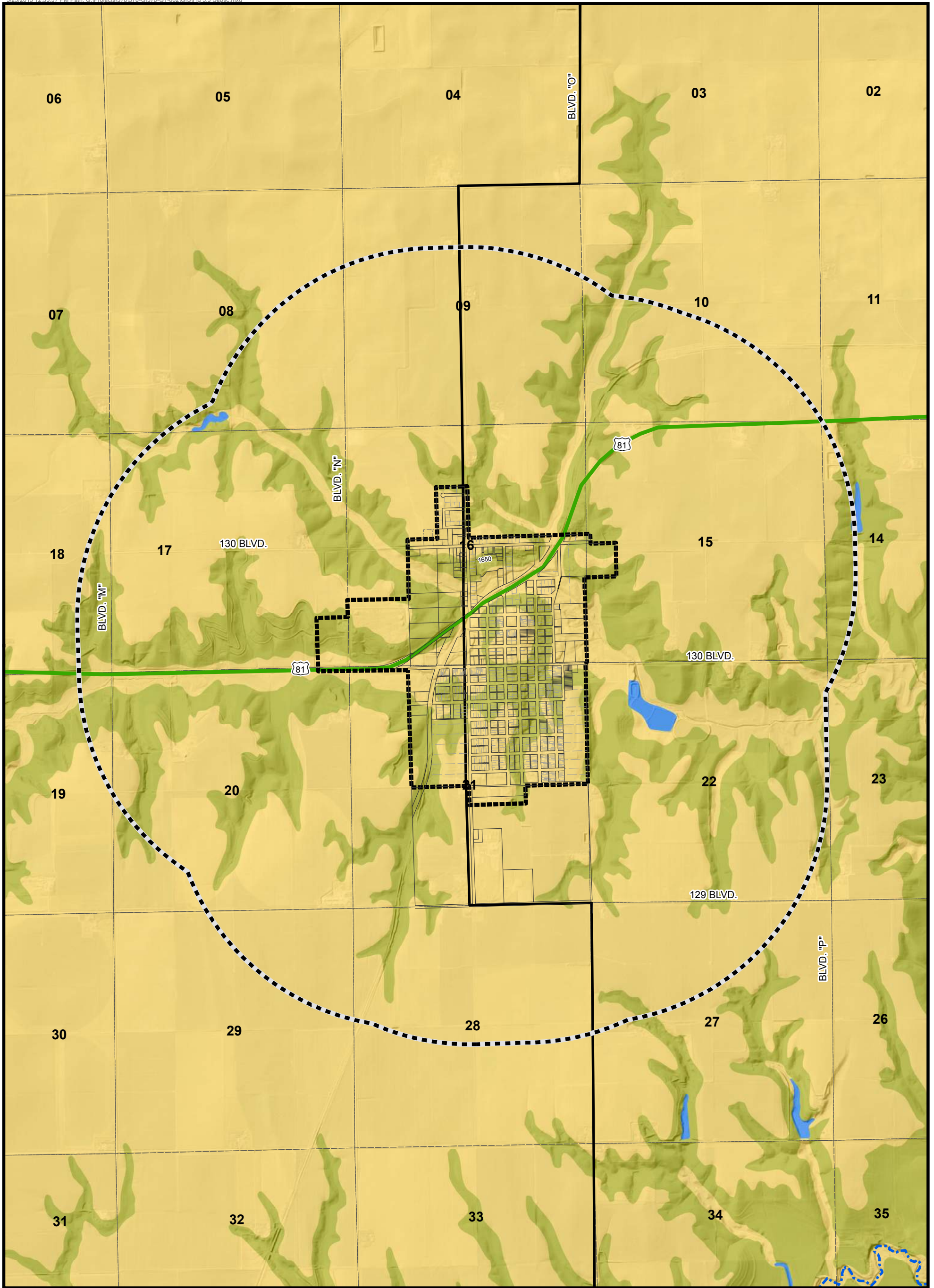
**Legend**  
 ETJ  
 Osceola Corporate Boundary

**Soil Slope Association**  
 Level to nearly Level (0-2 Percent)  
 Gently Sloping (1-6 Percent)  
 Moderately Sloping (6-11 Percent)  
 Strongly Sloping (9-30 Percent)  
 Very Steep (30-60 Percent)  
 Water

**Figure 3.2**  
**Slope By**  
**Soil Association Map**  
 Osceola, Nebraska

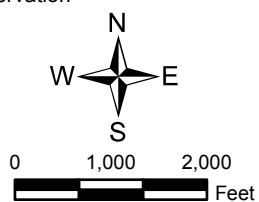











**Source:**  
 Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of  
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 Service 7-27-2012, M&A

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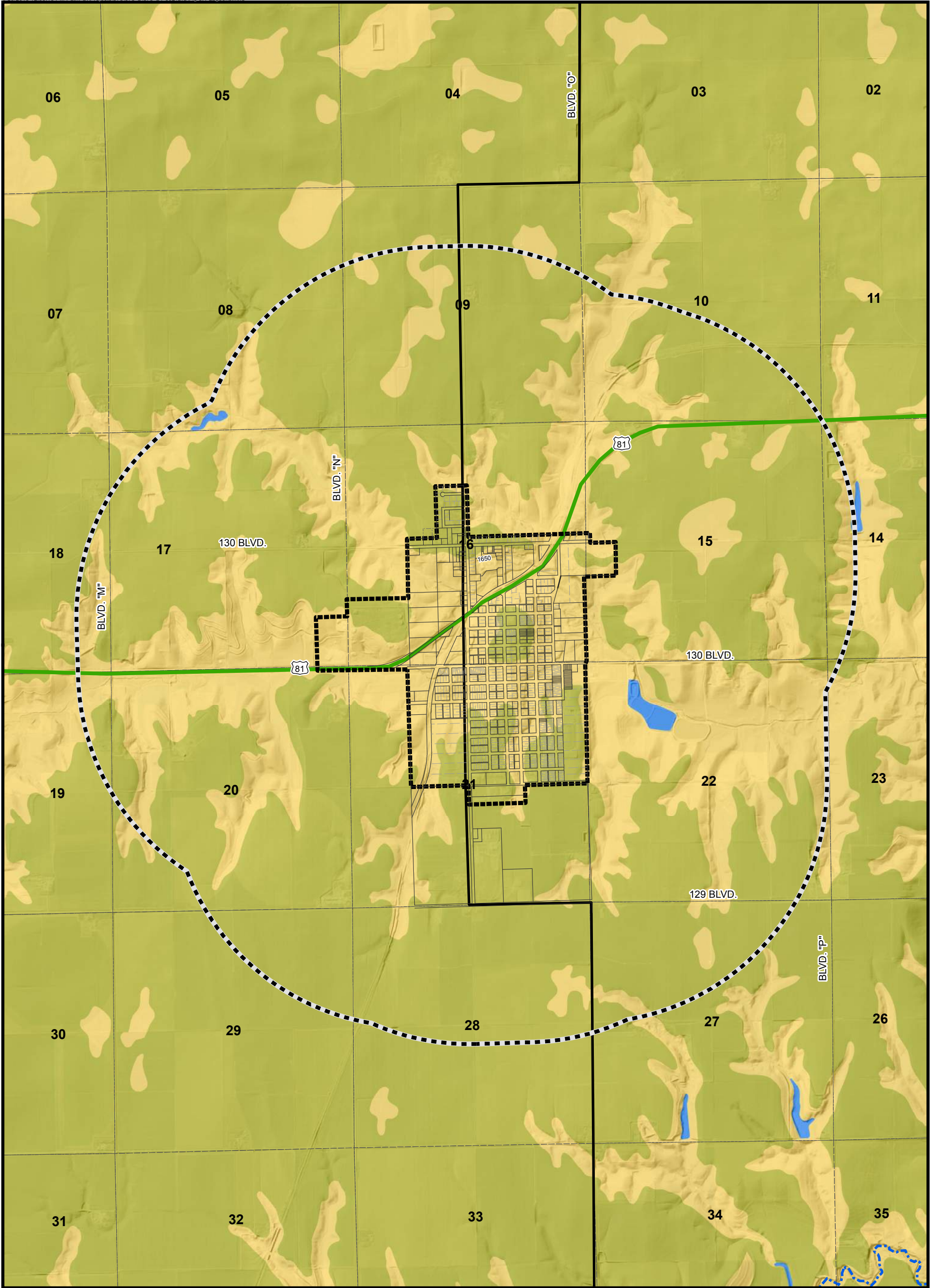


**Legend**  
 ETJ  
 Osceola Corporate Boundary

**Soil Suitability**  
 Moderate Limitations  
 Severe Limitations  
 Water

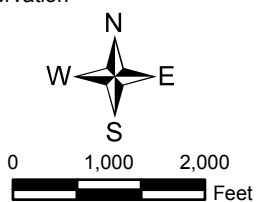
**Figure 3.3**  
**Soil Suitability For**  
**Septic Tanks**  
**By Soil Association Map**  
 Osceola, Nebraska









**Source:**  
 Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of  
 Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation  
 Service 7-27-2012, M&A

Prepared By:  
  
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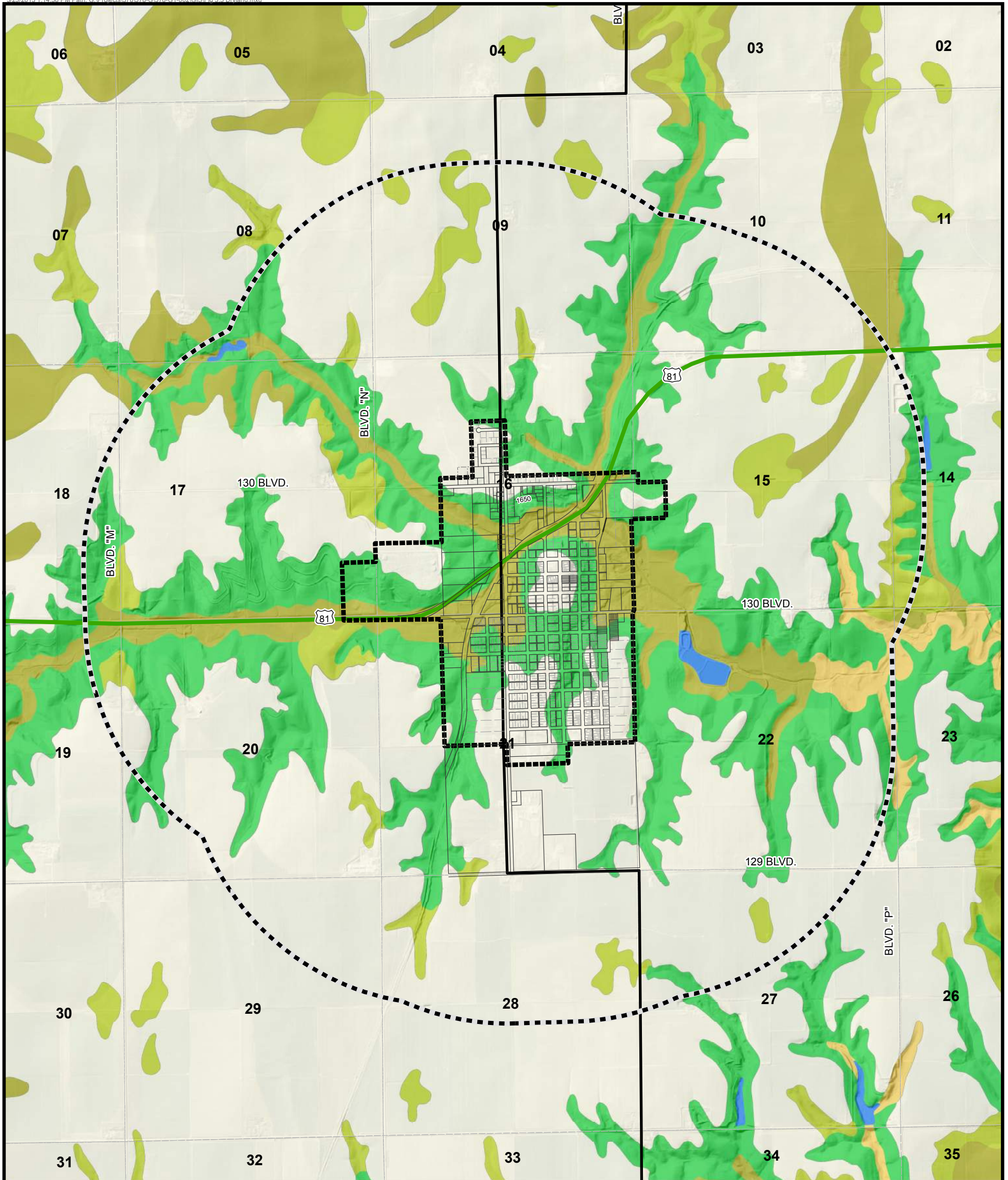


**Legend**  
 ETJ  
 Osceola Corporate Boundary

**Soil Suitability**  
 Moderate Limitations  
 Severe Limitations  
 Water

**Figure 3.4**  
**Soil Suitability For**  
**Sewage Lagoons**  
**By Soil Association Map**  
 Osceola, Nebraska





**Class Description**

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

**Legend**

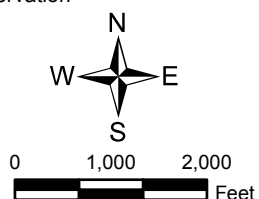
- ETJ
- Osceola Corporate Boundary

- Class 1
- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4
- Class 5
- Class 6
- Class 7
- Class 8
- Water

**Source:**  
Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service 7-27-2012, M&A

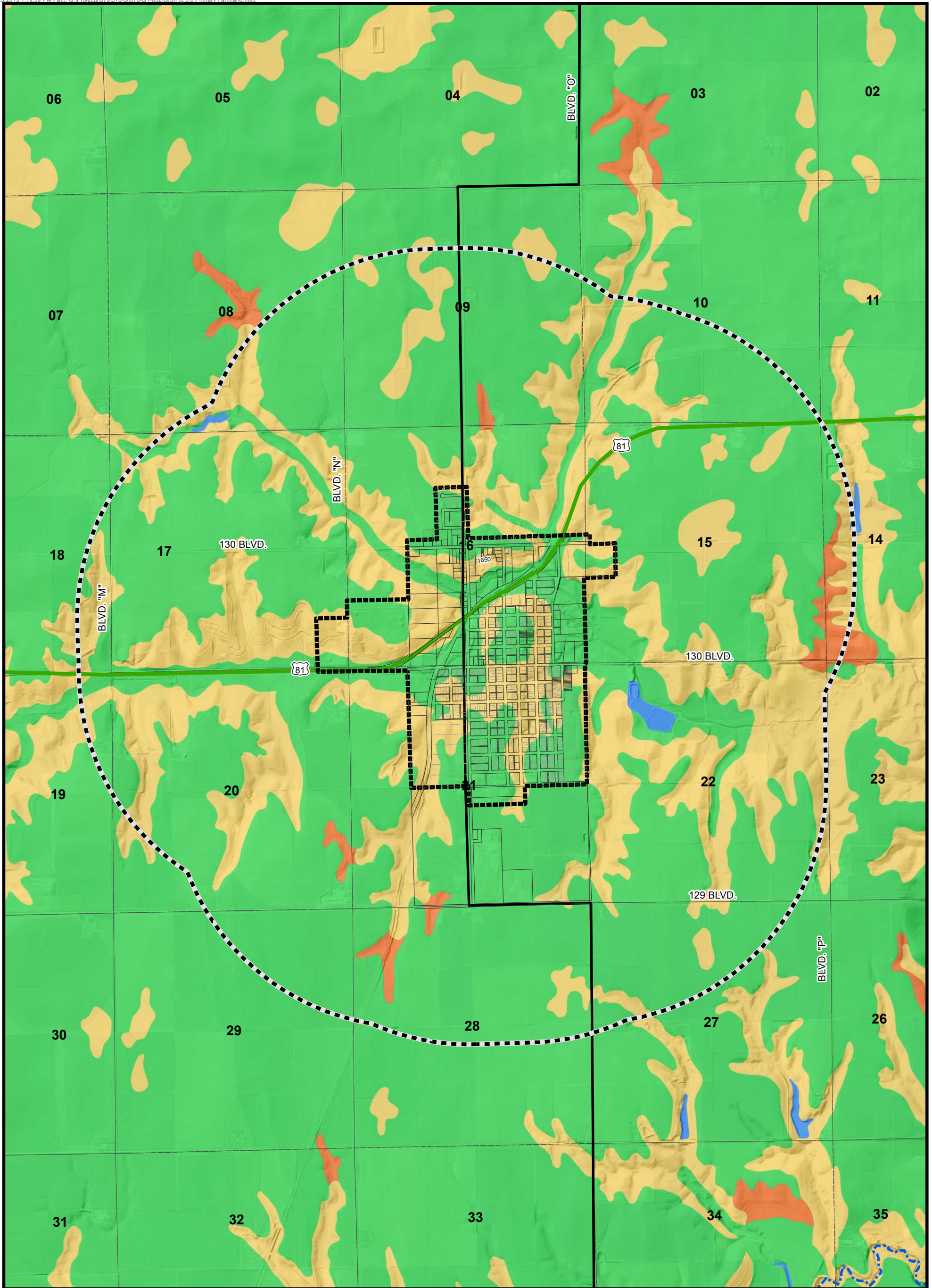
Prepared By:

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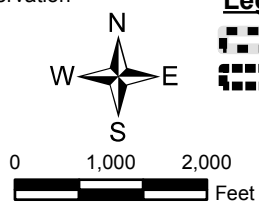
**Figure 3.5**  
**Dryland Capability**  
**Classification By**  
**Soil Association Map**  
Osceola, Nebraska





**Source:**  
Data Provided By: The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service 7-27-2012, M&A

Prepared By:  
**MA**  
**Miller & Associates**  
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**Legend**  
 ETJ  
 Osceola Corporate Boundary

**Soil Suitability**  
 Farmland of Statewide Importance  
 Prime Farmland if Irrigated  
 Prime Farmland if Drained  
 Not Prime Farmland  
 Water

**Figure 3.6**  
**Soil Suitability For**  
**Prime Farmland**  
**By Soil Association Map**  
 Osceola, Nebraska





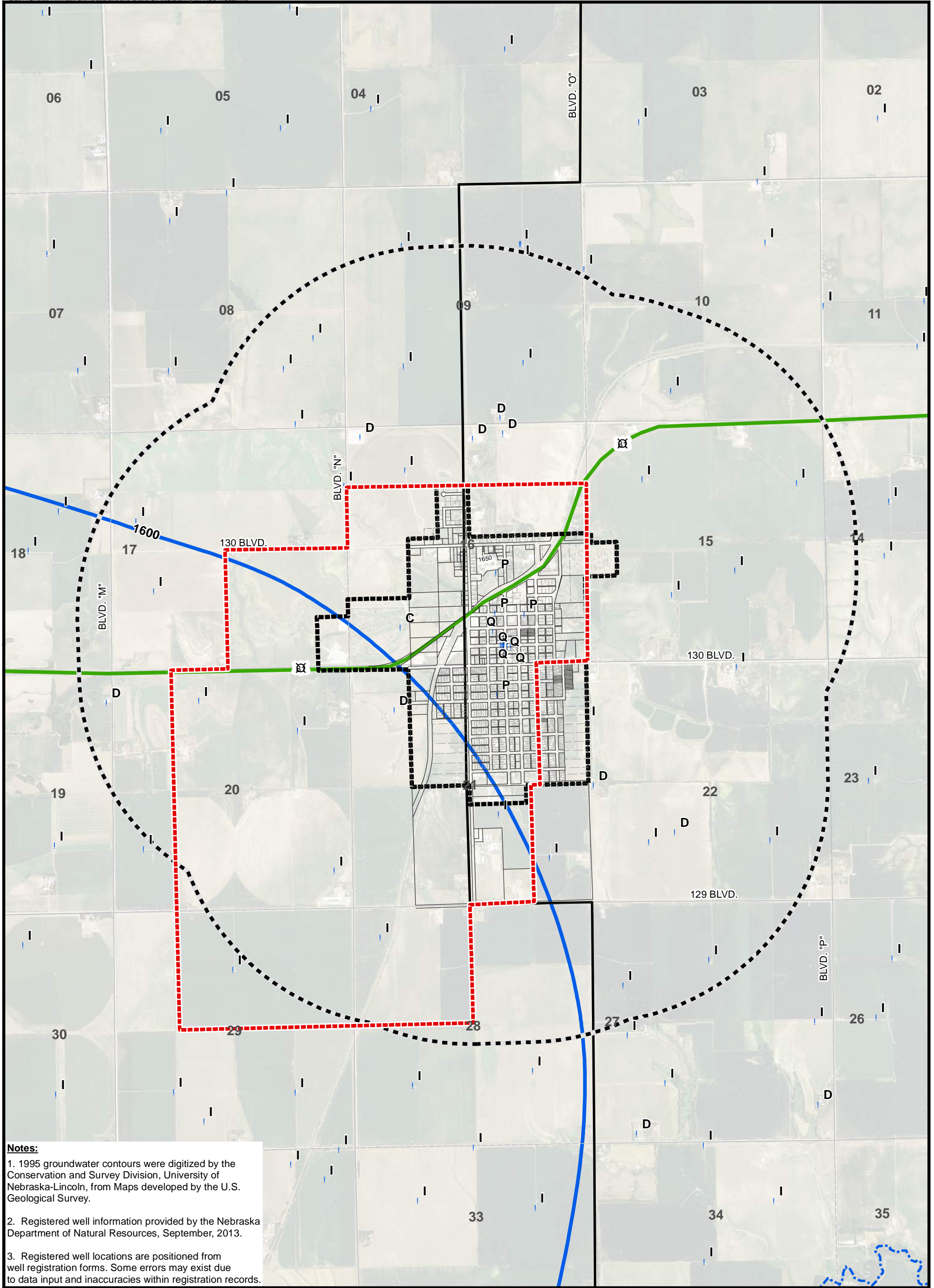
# Water

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

**Figure 3.7** shows all of the registered wells in and around Osceola. The Ogallala Aquifer is the source of water for many irrigation systems and registered wells around Osceola in order to supply water to residents, crop and pasturelands, and livestock. The State of Nebraska receives about 80 percent of its public drinking water and nearly 100 percent of its private water supply from groundwater sources. The agricultural process for which most of Nebraska's communities are dependent upon is directly tied to these aforementioned water sources, which is why contamination is a major concern. Due to the dependence on groundwater supply, the cost of contamination runs high. The State of Nebraska understands the vital importance of the groundwater supply, which is one of the reasons for the Natural Resources Districts (NRD). The Upper Big Blue NRD plays an important role in protecting this natural resource for Osceola and the surrounding areas. It is also part of Osceola's responsibility to protect the quality and availability of drinking water for the region. **Figure 3.7** also shows Osceola's Wellhead Protection Area as covering a majority of Osceola's corporate limits boundary plus more land to the southwest of the community stretching past the City's one-mile jurisdiction. The goal of the Wellhead Protection Area is to protect the land and groundwater surrounding the public drinking water supply wells from contamination. Any endangerment to the supply threatens the public's health as well as the vital farming economy of the region.

Besides the Ogallala Aquifer, there is one major body of water transecting Osceola. The Davis Creek curves along Highway 81 and exits the corporate limits of Osceola in the east central portion of town, south of the cemetery. Several tributaries enter the Davis Creek from the south, northwest and northeast. All four sources of water can create challenges for development because of the possibility of a high water table and floodways and floodplains present with surface water. **Figure 3.8** is the floodplain map for Osceola. This map shows the 1.0 percent annual flood chance or the 100-year flood and the 0.2 percent annual flood chance or the 500-year flood. The Davis Creek drainage should only impact development along the Highway 81 corridor and east side of the community. The 1.0 percent (100-year) and 0.2 percent (500-year) floodplains are designated for the United States by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Surface drainage does not pose a major threat to the urban areas of Osceola; however, drainage issues have plagued areas of the Highway 81 corridor as well as South Nance & Railroad Streets on the west side of the community. As the community continues to grow, future development within the floodplain should only be allowed through the supervision of Local, State, and Federal regulations. It will be important to mitigate run-off from new development while delineating a floodway/drainage way to lessen the impact of new developments.

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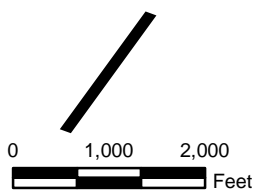


**Notes:**  
 1. 1995 groundwater contours were digitized by the Conservation and Survey Division, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, from Maps developed by the U.S. Geological Survey.  
 2. Registered well information provided by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, September, 2013.  
 3. Registered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

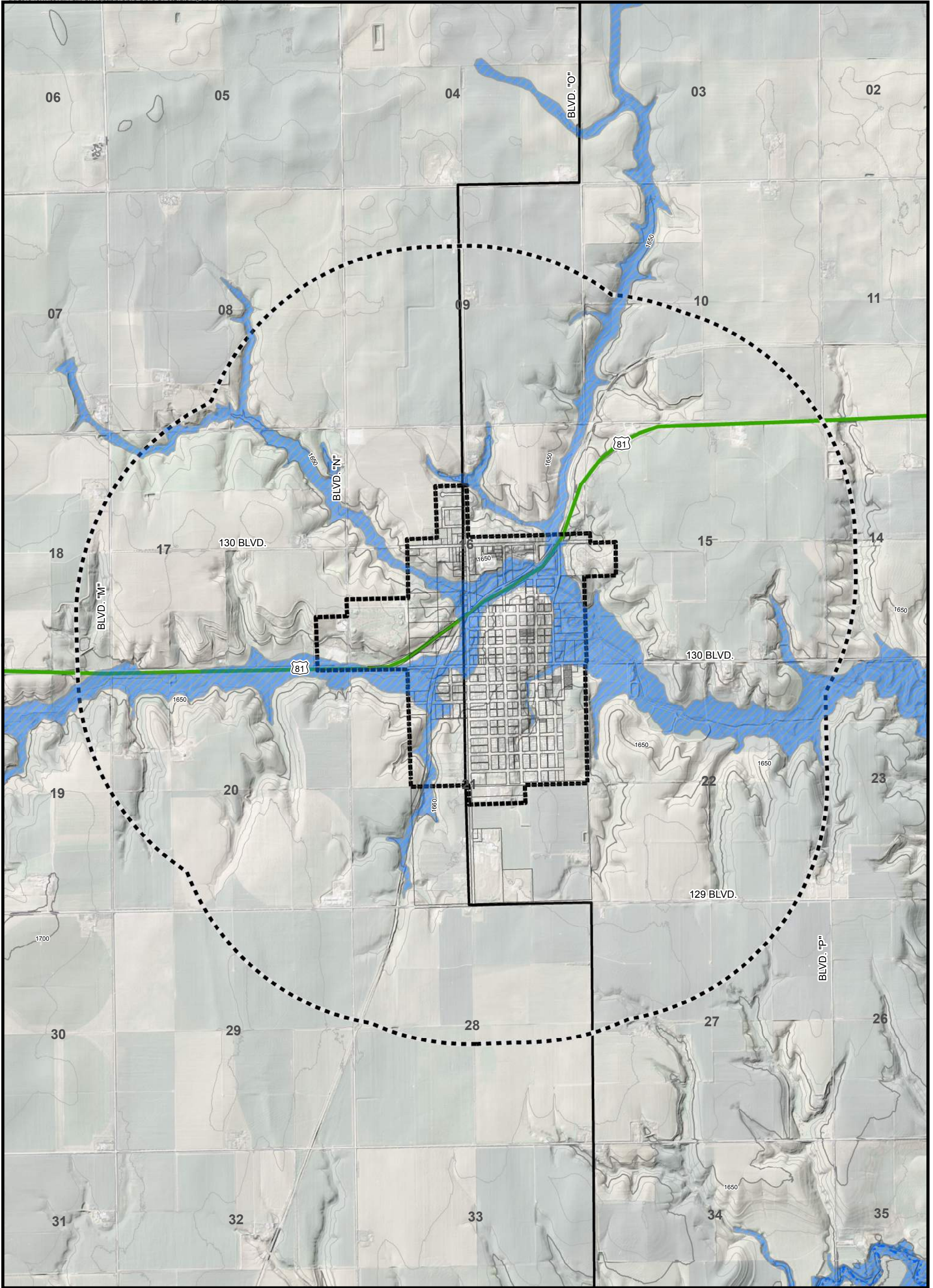
**Legend**

- - - Wellhead Protection Area Bdry.
- ETJ
- Osceola Corporate Boundary
- Groundwater Contour
- | Reg. Well (Use Type)
- "C"= Commercial/Industrial
- "D"= Domestic
- "G"= Ground Heat Exchanger
- "I" = Irrigation
- "L" = Observation (Ground Water Levels)
- "Q"= Monitoring (Ground Water Quality)
- "S"= Livestock

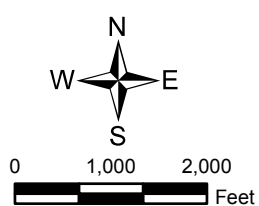
**Figure 3.7**  
**Registered Well & Wellhead Protection Area Map**  
 Osceola, Nebraska







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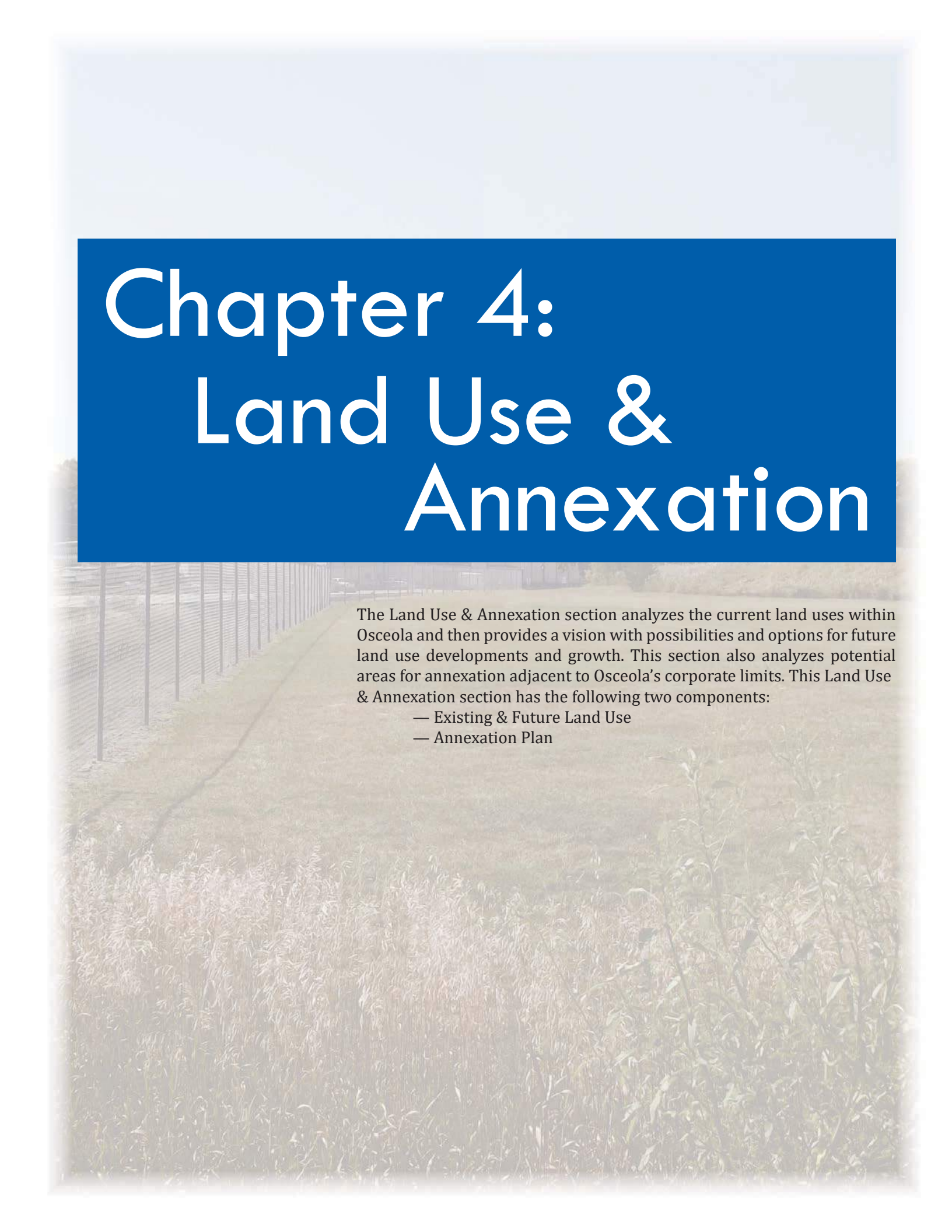


**Legend**  
**Flood Zone**  
 ■ 1.0% annual flood chance (100-year)  
 ■ 0.2% annual flood chance (500-year)  
 - - - - - ETJ  
 - - - - - Osceola Corporate Boundary

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

**Figure 3.8**  
**Floodplain Map**  
 Osceola, Nebraska



The background of the page is a photograph of a rural landscape. On the left, a tall, grey metal fence runs parallel to a dirt path that leads into a field of tall, dry grasses. In the distance, there are some buildings and trees under a clear sky. A large, solid blue rectangular box is overlaid on the upper portion of the image, containing the chapter title in white text.

# Chapter 4: Land Use & Annexation

The Land Use & Annexation section analyzes the current land uses within Osceola and then provides a vision with possibilities and options for future land use developments and growth. This section also analyzes potential areas for annexation adjacent to Osceola's corporate limits. This Land Use & Annexation section has the following two components:

- Existing & Future Land Use
- Annexation Plan

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

### Existing Land Use

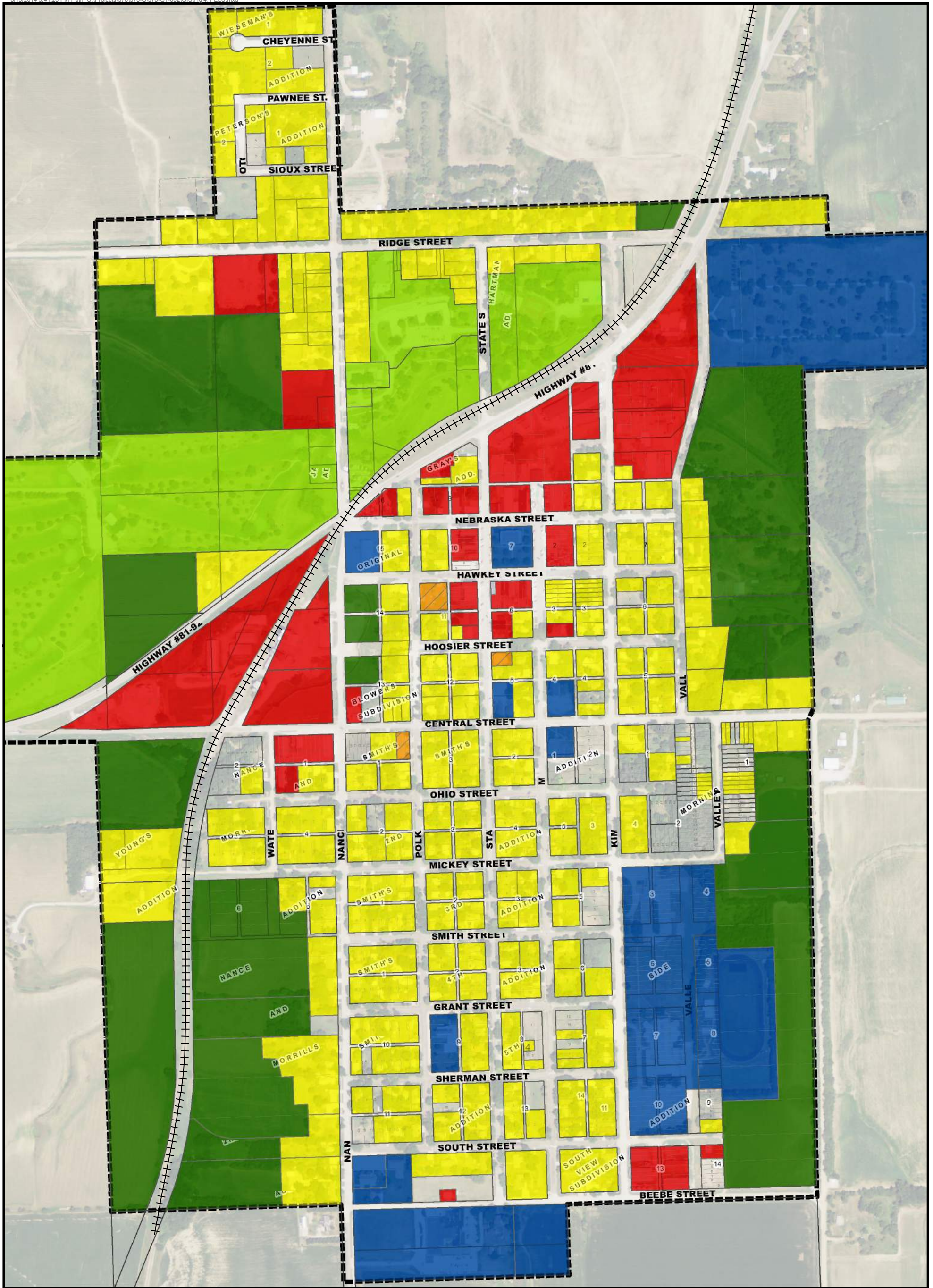
The land use section of the Comprehensive Plan consists of two separate but related parts. The existing land use section is where the community studies and evaluates the pros and cons of Osceola's existing mix of land uses and development patterns. **Figure 4.1a**, the Existing Land Use Map, shows the current land uses in Osceola. Osceola has seven different land use classifications including single-family and multi-family residential, commercial, public/quasi-public, agricultural/greenspace, recreational, and vacant parcels. Commercial land uses are found around the Downtown Square and along the Highway 81/92 corridor. Commercial properties in any community are typically located in those two areas because of the visibility and access it provides for each business. Downtown businesses usually fall under retail and service sectors of the economy. Although, several companies located along the highway may also include retail and service sector businesses but they may require easier access, more parking, or larger space/square footage. Larger economic ventures such as manufacturing, bulk storage, or distribution facilities also fall into the commercial land use category. Highway/railroad and downtown commercial developments tend to attract different types of businesses and they also tend to look and feel dramatically different from one another.

Many communities have separate zoning regulations for the highway corridor commercial district and the central/downtown commercial district. Separate districts are necessary because of the different setbacks, lot sizes, height restrictions, parking needs, and aesthetic desires for each of the areas. Downtown economic development should be catered towards retail, service, and/or hospitality businesses. It is important to protect the look and feel of the Downtown Square because it is the heart of the community. Larger economic ventures are important to the economy because of the revenue and job opportunities they provide for the City; however, these developments should take place along the outskirts of town near Highway 81/92 and/or the railroad. Zoning Regulations are important to steer commercial development into proper zoning districts to ensure the mix of adjacent land uses is conducive to the new business.

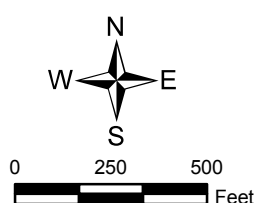
Public/quasi-public land uses include churches, municipal properties, school buildings, healthcare facilities, community buildings, etc. These existing land uses are spread throughout Osceola, and rightfully so. Public land uses need to be available and accessible by every resident in Osceola, not just concentrated in specific areas that could segregate neighborhoods based on available amenities.

A majority of the land that is deemed agricultural/greenspace is around the edge of the corporate limits. Some of this land is still being farmed, and should be until it is needed for a development that will benefit the community. While other areas considered to be agricultural/greenspace may not be farmed but could have development challenges such as topography that have hindered development for those properties; however, these areas lend themselves to adding greenspace and/or buffers between the heart of the community and what lies outside of the corporate limits.





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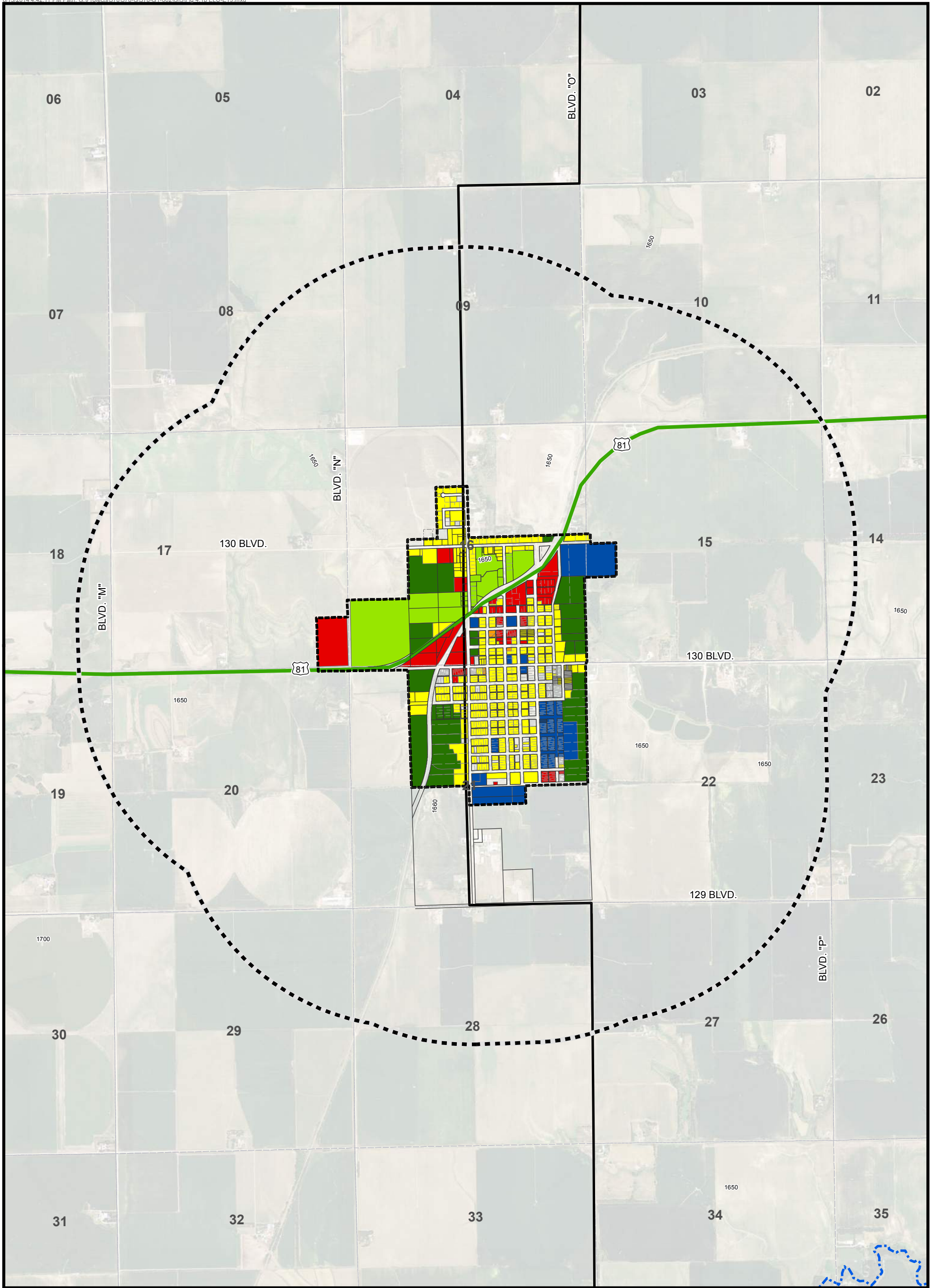


**Legend**

- ++++ Nebraska Central Railroad
- Osceola Corporate Boundary
- Existing Land Use**
- Yellow: Single Family Residential
- Orange: Multi-Family Residential
- Red: Commercial
- Blue: Public/Quasi-Public
- Green: Agricultural/Greenspace
- Light Green: Recreational
- White: Vacant

**Figure 4.1a**  
**Existing Land Use**  
 Osceola, Nebraska





**Legend**

ETJ

Osceola Corporate Boundary

**Existing Land Use**

Single Family Residential

Multi-Family Residential

Commercial

Public/Quasi-Public

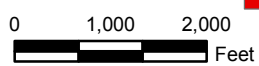
Agricultural/Greenspace

Recreational

Vacant

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**Figure 4.1b**  
**Existing Land Use-ETJ**  
 Osceola, Nebraska



There are also a few vacant parcels of land dispersed throughout the community; these lots are platted parcels of ground that may or may not have ever had a structure built on them. The lots are desirable for infill development because of their vicinity to existing public infrastructure; however, the current lot sizes and conditions may not be conducive to attracting potential builders. When developing vacant, infill parcels it is important to maintain the balance of existing land uses surrounding the potential development. Most of the vacant lots are within residential neighborhoods; however, as previously mentioned, original platted lots may not be suitable for development based on today's standards. Many areas in the community have adjacent vacant parcels making them conducive for infill development. A large percentage of Osceola's vacant residential parcels are on the east side of the community. Although there are a number of vacant parcels in residential neighborhoods in Osceola, several of these lots are not desirable for development because of flash flooding concerns through the lower parts of the community. Without proper grading, these properties would not be conducive for residential development. In these instances, these properties may need to remain as vacant parcels unless the stormwater drainage issues are resolved.

The primary land use in Osceola is residential. Structures of this nature can be found throughout the community. As obvious as it seems, it is important when planning for any future development to maintain or enhance the existing feel of each neighborhood. This is especially true in residential areas of the community; any new structures that are built in those neighborhoods should be residential in nature or fit with the look and feel of the surrounding residential structures. The existing residential land uses include both single-family and multi-family developments with mixes of duplexes, apartments; although the majority of the residential land uses are single-family homes. The majority of low-density residential development is on the south side of Highway 81/92. There are a few multi-family developments with the majority of these units located in the central part of the community within close proximity to the Downtown Square.

There are two main recreational areas in Osceola with the largest in the north-central portion of the community, Osceola City Park. Osceola City Park is home to the municipal swimming pool, several areas of playground equipment as well as picnic tables and benches. The next recreational area located south

of the community approximately one half of a mile and has three ball fields located adjacent to one another. There are also a few greenspaces spread throughout the community including one in a vacant parcel in the Downtown Square. These greenspace areas serve a purpose for the community as a greenspace but some could also be ideal for infill development. Osceola City Park is the largest park in the community; however, a majority of the residents must cross Highway 81/92 in order to get to the park. As Osceola continues to develop to the north and west, City leaders may want to consider additional recreational amenities that would be close to new areas of development. **Figure 4.1b** shows the existing land uses in Osceola in perspective of the entire planning jurisdiction which incorporates the City's one-mile ETJ. **Table 4.1** shows the approximate percentage of each land use category as it compares to the community as a whole. These percentages are only for existing land uses within the corporate limits boundary.

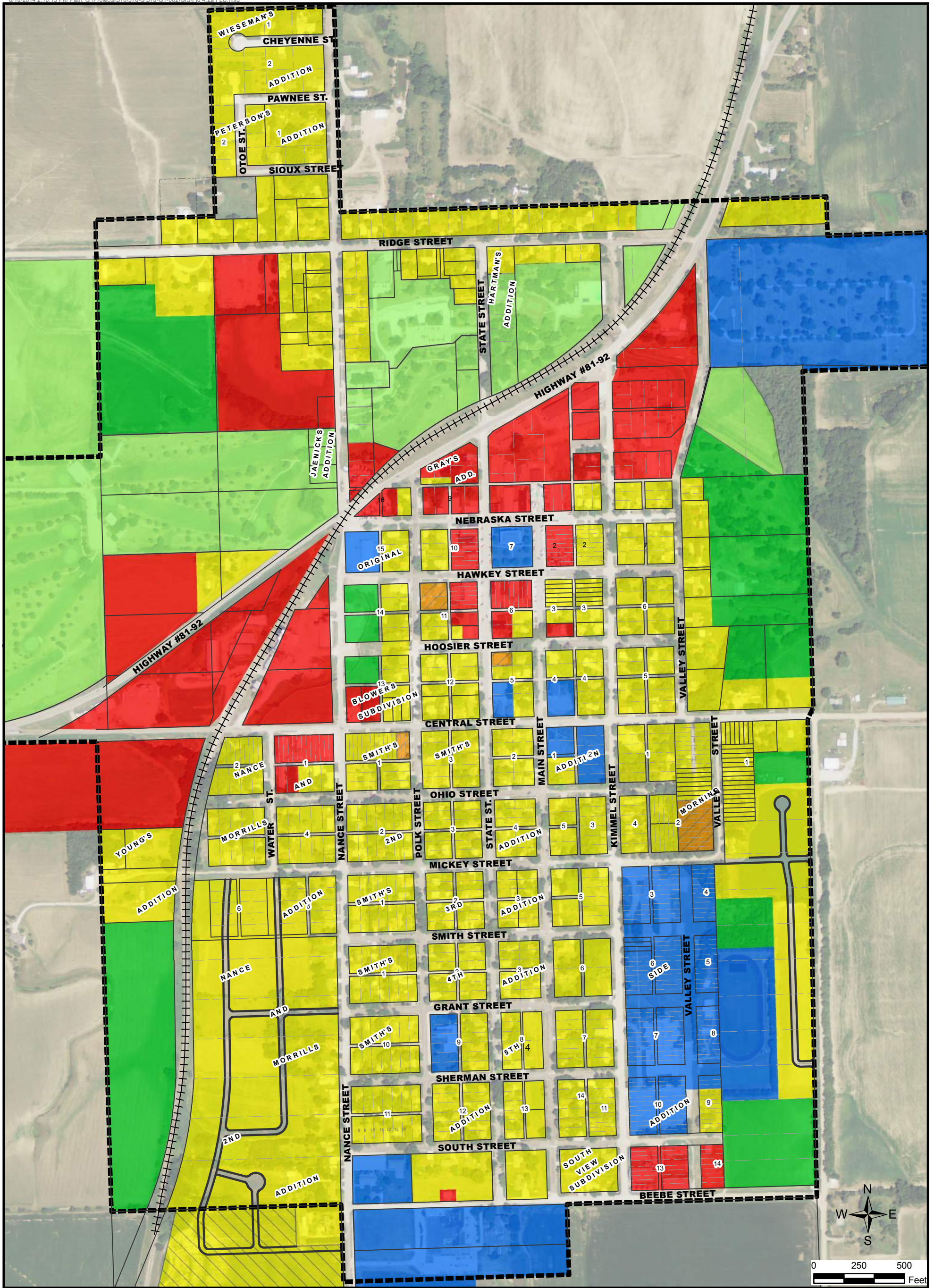
<b>Table 4.1 Existing Land Use Percentages, Osceola, 2014</b>	
<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Percentage*</b>
<b>Single-Family Residential</b>	29%
<b>Multi-Family Residential</b>	0.2%
<b>Public/Quasi-Public</b>	13%
<b>Commercial</b>	13%
<b>Recreational</b>	18%
<b>Agricultural/Greenspace</b>	23%
<b>Vacant</b>	4%
*Percentages were rounded	
Source: M&A	

## Future Land Use

Planning and preparing for future land use options is a vital part of Osceola's Comprehensive Plan. Whether a community is growing or shrinking, there will still be changes in land use patterns; therefore, the purpose of this section is to provide a general guide for future development patterns. The idea is to avoid or minimize conflicts between land uses and the environment. The future land use plan must reflect existing land uses and options for changing land use needs. This plan should be flexible in nature in order to change as the community changes. Also, this plan should be molded to fit the needs, desires, and limitations of Osceola and its residents. Part of the preparation for the Comprehensive Plan was to hold a series of steering group/public input meetings. The input from those meetings was imperative to planning for future land uses. Having an understanding of what residents want and need within the community is important for gaining support and assistance in bettering Osceola. A summary of the input from the steering group meetings can be found in the following chapter. Information gathered at those meetings as well as existing land uses and data from primary and secondary sources was used to develop the future land use plan. A future land use plan should be a vision of what you want the community to look like; a vision of goals with different land uses to encourage 'smart' growth in your community. This vision should be an outlook and a guide for the next ten years.

In order to prepare and plan for the future of Osceola, decision-makers need to have ambitions and goals. Realistically, what is the future of Osceola going to look like, or what do you want it to look like? The main focus should be on keeping the strong community ties and progressive drive while diversifying amenities and the tax base in order to provide a high quality of life for residents. The types of land uses should vary within the community from single and multi-family homes, commercial ventures of different sizes, public areas including recreational amenities and public services, and some vacant land and greenspace. Homes should also vary, based on location, size, and price in order to attract a variety of residents. Having compatible housing is important when trying to appeal to new faces in the community. The housing stock versus household income analysis is an important way to determine the type of housing stock needed to best suit the needs and desires of residents. Improving the commercial sector should involve diversifying what is available to Osceola's residents. Commercial development should be promoted and developed depending on available resources. However, commercial ventures not only add to the tax base for the City but they also create job opportunities for existing or potential residents of Osceola. Envisioning goals as realities is important for the success of Osceola and ideas need to become actions in order to turn them into realities. City leaders are the ones ultimately responsible for making the final decisions for the betterment of the community; however, it is up to the residents to hold City leaders accountable to ensure the short- and long-term goals of the community are being met.

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



**Legend**

- +++++ Nebraska Central Railroad
- Osceola Corporate Boundary

**Future Land Use**

- Single Family Residential
- Large Lot Residential
- Multi-Family Residential

- Commercial
- Public/Quasi-public
- Agricultural/Greenspace
- Recreational

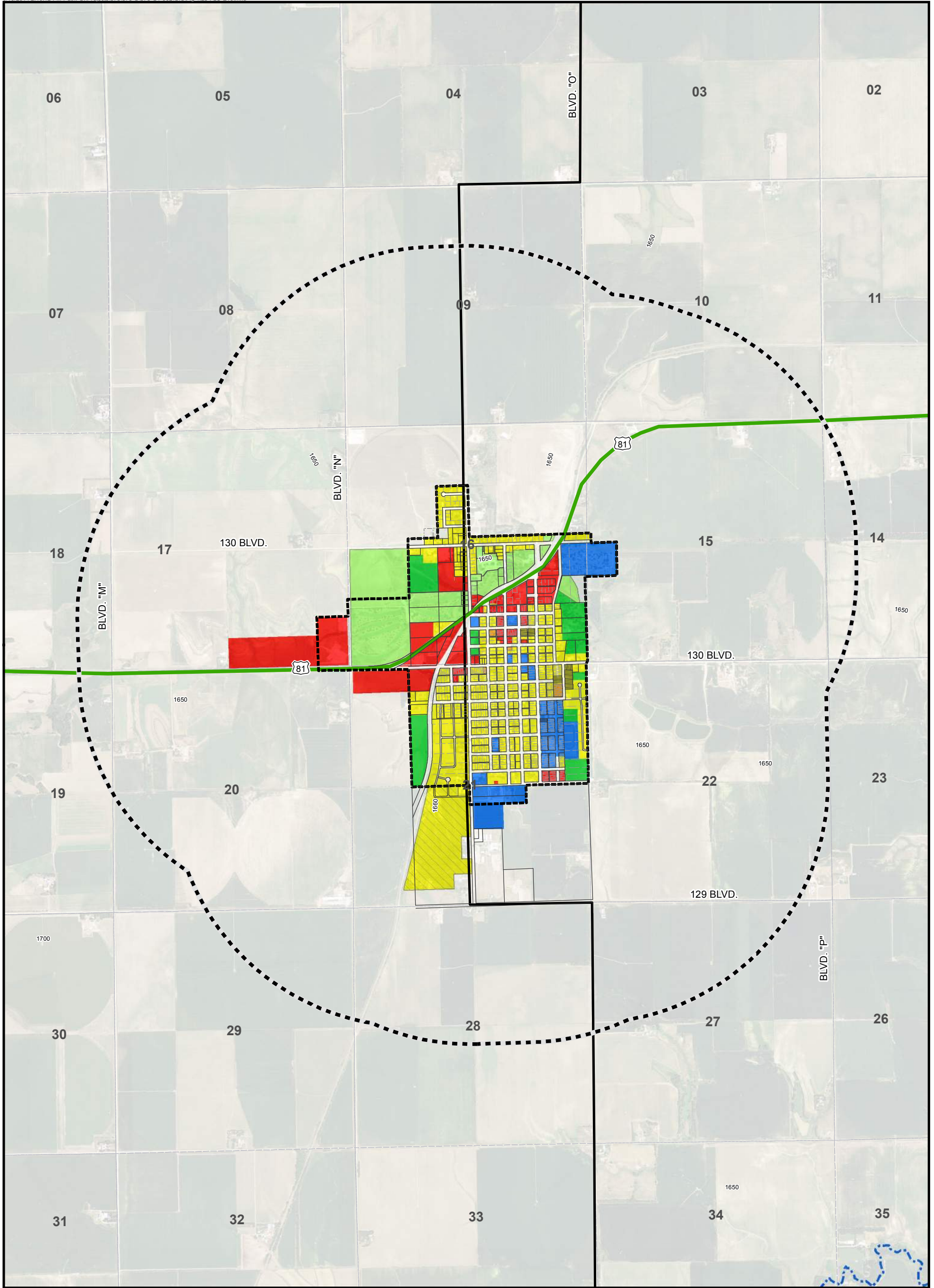
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**Figure 4.2a**  
**Future Land Use**  
 Osceola, Nebraska














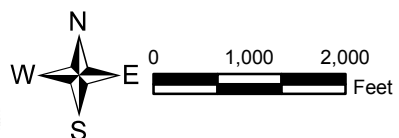
**Legend**

-  ETJ
-  Osceola Corporate Boundary

**Future Land Use**

-  Single Family Residential
-  Large Lot Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Commercial
-  Public/Quasi-public
-  Agricultural/Greenspace
-  Recreational

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**Figure 4.2b**  
**Future Land Use-ETJ**  
 Osceola, Nebraska



Osceola currently has a housing shortage, especially for market-rate homes valued over \$100,000. There are vacant lots throughout town that could be used for infill development; however, those lots, which were originally platted when most people did not even have a garage, may be too small to build a home of today's standards and could possibly have drainage issues creating challenges for development. In order to utilize the vacant lots that are feasible to develop, adjacent properties would need to be combined before there is enough square footage to build a home of today's standards. When the town was originally platted, the largest lots would have been 50-foot wide. Today's standards for homes include three-four bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a two-three car attached garage which is nearly impossible to construct on a 50-foot wide lot. By combining multiple, adjacent lots the builder has more land to work with. However, not all vacant lots have an adjacent vacant lot next to it which makes it difficult to utilize all infill lots. Osceola does have a few options for platted vacant lots that are suitable for infill development; however, for any major housing development to happen in Osceola a residential subdivision will need to be developed.

Areas for single-family residential development, including infill development and other feasible areas for new residential lot development can be seen in yellow in the future land use maps. There are also residential areas, shown in orange, representative of feasible areas for potential multi-family development. These lots are already platted and are adjacent to existing infrastructure which can help lessen the cost of development. Multi-family housing can mean a variety of options including duplexes, townhomes, condominiums, and apartment complexes. These styles of housing can also be considered transitional housing and fill a large need in the community catering to young families, single persons, senior citizens, etc. Many of the vacant platted lots on the north part of Osceola are conducive to multi-family development because of the amount of vacant lots that are adjacent to one another. Because of the lot sizes, it would be necessary to construct multi-family units on multiple lots that are adjacent to one another. These new areas, shown in orange in the future land use map, near Osceola Public Schools on the southeast side of the community, provide the community with the potential to develop duplexes, townhomes, or possibly even apartment complexes.

Because this Comprehensive Plan is a ten-year plan and we are to "dream big" and plan for the future of Osceola, areas for multiple residential subdivisions area shown in the future land use maps. The largest option shown for a residential subdivision is on the southwest side of Osceola west of Nance Street stretching from Mickey Street to south of the corporate limits boundary. This area could be developed to include a variety of lot sizes from typical single-family home lots with an approximate 70-foot width to large lots that may be two to three acres in size. The areas recommended for large lot residential development is south of the existing corporate limits in an area that may also require residents to have their own private septic because of its challenges to tie into the larger sanitary sewer infrastructure network. The future land use map shows a possible plan for street connectivity to ensure there is vehicular flow through the subdivision and that it can connect with the rest of the community. This subdivision is adjacent to the railroad tracks which may cause some dismay over this region; however, these railroad tracks do not have an overabundance of train traffic on a daily basis. Although this may not be in Osceola's immediate future; if the community were to ever need more housing or lots to attract people looking for larger lots near a community.

The second option shown for residential development is to the east of the school connecting with Mickey Street on the north and adjacent to the gravel road on the east edge of the community. Because of its close proximity to the public schools, these lots would be desirable for many home buyers, especially for families with school-aged children. Again, this area shows a proposed layout for vehicular access and mobility. Both of the two proposed residential development options could be developed in phases which would be recommended in order to avoid over development and over spending on infrastructure development. A majority of the western site and all of the eastern site fall within the existing corporate limit boundary and are in close proximity to existing public infrastructure.

Hike/bike trails were a point of discussion during several of the steering group/public input sessions in Osceola. Residents believe the existing hike/bike trail is a strength for the community and they discussed their desires to improve and expand this amenity. Hike/bike trails can easily be constructed in phases which make this recreational feature more attractive and easier to develop. All ages can utilize a hike/bike trail by walking, running, biking, and skating. Also hike/bike trails can help connect several points of interest in the community. The existing trail could be expanded to the east along South Street to connect with Osceola Public Schools; from the public schools, the trail could follow Kimmel Street to the north to connect with Osceola City Park and the municipal swimming pool. This trail would then connect multiple points of interest allowing residents to access key features in the community. As previously mentioned, hike/bike trails can easily be constructed in phases. Expanding upon this amenity would improve recreational features in Osceola as well as pedestrian connectivity.

Commercial development in Osceola is a work in progress. There are a few existing businesses in Osceola looking at expanding and there is also a new business being developed on the east side of town. Commercial lots should border the highway corridor in order to attract businesses. Areas shown in the future land use maps for commercial development include both the east and the west sides of Osceola, along the highway corridor; this highway is an uncontrollable resource Osceola should always try to take advantage of because it provides many opportunities for commercial growth. The railroad provides Osceola with the same uncontrollable resource to market to potential businesses. With land availability, access, and visibility from Highway 81/92 these areas of land shaded in red on the future land use maps are highly feasible areas for commercial and/or light industrial developments such as a manufacturing company, general merchandise stores, bulk grain storage, etc. The City should work with potential small business ventures in the retail/trade sector to encourage development in the Downtown Square whereas the large tracts of ground along the highway and railroad agricultural land until a larger business looking to develop inquires. In order to capture sales and property taxes from potential businesses along the Highway corridor and to be able to provide development incentives to potential businesses, Osceola will need to consider annexing land into the City. Annexing the land would require infrastructure expansion which may require a site survey and engineering design before the full cost-benefit analysis can be completed. Developing along a highway does come with a few constraints including obtaining permits from NDOR to be able to have access onto the highway. NDOR would like to limit the amount of access points for safety purposes because of the high rates of speed people travel on a highway. Frontage roads and cul-de-sacs may need to be constructed in order to best utilize all of the land available while limiting the amount of access points onto Highway 81/92.

Desires for downtown improvements were discussed by several residents. Completing a Downtown Revitalization Plan for Osceola would address those concerns. A Downtown Revitalization Plan will help residents and decision-makers envision an overall look and feel to physically emulate downtown. The plan will provide images and ideas for aesthetic improvements including facades, awnings, signage, and streetscapes as well as provide ideas for improving the economic climate in the downtown district. An idea for a downtown improvement can be seen in the images below. This shows a site where a dilapidated building was razed and in its place the City could develop a 'pocket park' to add greenspace and be able to utilize a currently vacant space.

Looking Southeast, Downtown Square - Existing



Looking Southeast, Downtown Square - Proposed

A final option for land use development is to create gateway entrances into town. The images on the following page show existing pictures of the east and west entrances into Osceola and renderings of what the entrances could look like. Something simple such as signage which includes wayfinding and landscaping can make a statement to travelers passing by on Highway 81/92. An image on the page below provides a visual example of a wayfinding sign that would also grab people's attention. Wayfinding signage is dual purpose; it directs and informs people while also being aesthetically pleasing and attention grabbing. This sign could be placed anywhere along Highway 81/92, as long as it was modified to direct people to the right places. Based on traffic counts, roughly 3,700 vehicles pass through Osceola on Highway 81/92 every day. Of course, some of those travelers are residents of Osceola commuting to and from work. However, lots of those vehicles are visitors to Osceola and the gateway entrance is the City's opportunity to make a good first impression. Also, by beautifying the entrances into town it would add to the aesthetic appeal of the whole community. A gateway entrance helps make a memorable statement to a visitor which is why it is important for Osceola to make a lasting positive memory. This is a "first impression" and beautifying the gateway entrances may also give residents more of a reason to help keep all of Osceola beautiful. Landscaping can be used for aesthetics and screening unwanted sites from vehicles. Land along highway corridors tends to be unsightly in many communities. Screening these land uses from highway travelers can really make a big impact. Zoning regulations are one way to help ensure land along highways and major arterials and connector streets are screened to create an appealing view for travelers.

All of the proposed new developments that are not currently in Osceola's corporate limits should be annexed into the community prior to any construction. This will allow the City to expand its physical size, population, and tax base while also providing potential benefits to the new developments. The following section discusses in more detail about Osceola's annexation plan. All of these ideas discussed in the future land use plan are goals to work towards over the next ten years. This plan is to be used as a guide, and to help develop and steer ideas for future development. When planning for future growth it is important to consider any potential issues that could arise in order to protect the City and its current residents. The goal for any community should be to continually move forward with population and development growth while mitigating the impact on existing residents and property owners. It is important to have ideas and plans in place to steer growth in the right direction. had developed a gateway entrance sign for Highway 6 on the southeast side of the community. This new development could then be carried to the other two gateway entrances into the community, but it was smart for stakeholders to develop this one first because this area of the community gets the most traffic and makes the biggest 'bang for the buck' because it will be seen by many people.

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



Looking West, Highway 81/92 - Existing



Looking West, Highway 81/92 - Proposed



Looking East, Highway 81/92 - Existing



Looking East, Highway 81/92 - Proposed



Wayfinding Signage - Existing



Wayfinding Signage - Proposed

*Osceola's annexation plan should create opportunities for new development as well as to help facilitate the goals of the future land use plan set forth in this document. In order to create opportunities for new development, Osceola needs to have a plan in place to reserve the land that is necessary to carry out the goals of the community. In order to do this, the City may need to consider annexing adjacent territory and expand its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). This annexation plan, like the future land use plan, is a guide or a tool the City can utilize when discussing future growth and development options. This annexation plan is not law; annexation should take place in a manner that will best suit the City's goals and development needs at that time including future goals. The City's annexation plan should do the following:*

# Annexation Plan

## Avoid Jurisdictional Confusion

Having a plan in place will ease the confusion of jurisdictions between the City and the County and will help Osceola plan for future services by establishing an orderly and logical boundary and understand how that growth will affect public infrastructure needs. This process would be very beneficial for both the City and Polk County, especially because changing boundaries between two different jurisdictions can be cumbersome.

## Protect and Enhance the City's Tax Base

Annexation allows each community to protect and enhance the City's tax base for several reasons. Land along the Highway 81/92 corridor and along the railroad are prime real estate options for commercial development. In order for the City to capture property and sales taxes, those companies need to be within the City limits of Osceola. Many new business developments want some incentives to build a new facility in a community. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an incentive communities can offer to a potential business. In order for a business to utilize TIF, the development must be located within the City limits. In another facet of annexation, there are residents and businesses that are located in the fringe of the community yet not in the City limits. Although, these residents and businesses still benefit from the City's parks, streets, utilities, and other facilities and programs without having to contribute to the tax base. By annexing this population into the community, they would then be paying taxes for multiple amenities and services they most likely already utilize.

## Increase Population and Size

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

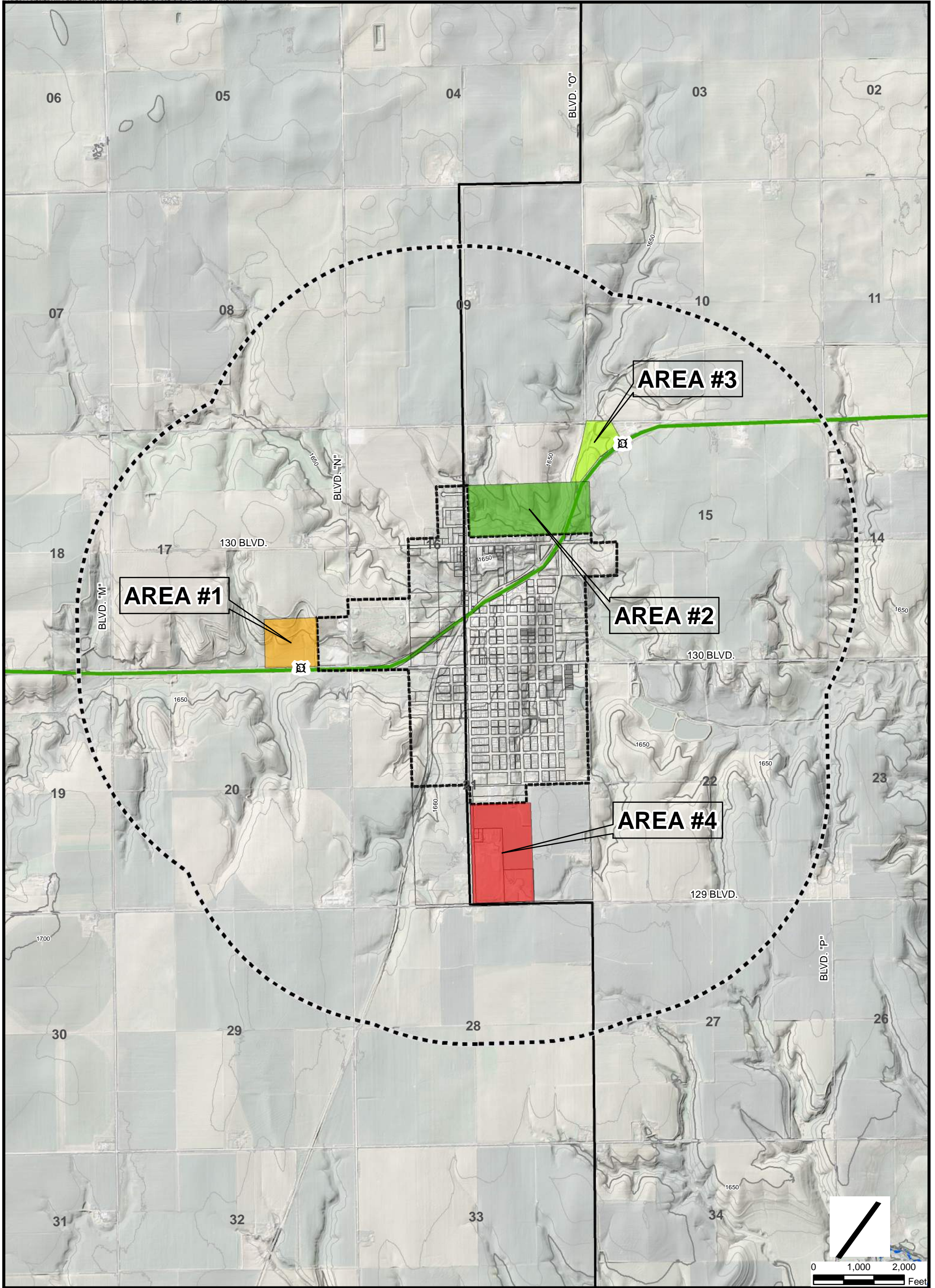
## Control Fringe Development







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

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

1. Area 1 is located north of Highway 81/92 on the west side of the community adjacent to the existing John Deere implement dealership. This annexation would include vacant farmland that would be ideal for commercial development. This property is adjacent to existing public infrastructure lessening the cost of development. Because of the high traffic counts on Highway 81/92, this site has high visibility and easy access to the highway making it ideal for commercial development. This area of land would still be valuable for commercial development if the Highway 81 bypass comes to fruition. If this area were to develop featuring commercial property it would have the opportunity to significantly increase the community's potential tax base.
2. Area 2 is located on the north side of Osceola, north of the existing residential development along Ridge Street. The annexation of Area 2 would include vacant/agricultural land and would include a few existing single family homes. This area is the most desirable land for commercial development with the potential for residential development along the western edge. Because of the access, visibility, and connection to the larger transportation network being located along Highway 81/92, this land has great potential for attracting a commercial and/or light industrial businesses. This area may be challenging to serve appropriately without any improvements made to the existing water system because of the topography; however, it could be possible depending on engineering. This area is adjacent to existing infrastructure and would provide much needed space for future development. A floodplain runs through parts of Area 2 creating development hurdles but not making future development impossible. Due to the floodplain affecting a portion of this location, any potential development would need to be designed in a way to mitigate flooding hazards that would damage any development or surrounding areas.
3. Area 3 is located on the northeast side of town, adjacent to Highway 81/92 and northeast of Area 2. This Highway 81/92 corridor provides many economic development opportunities for the City. Because of the access, visibility, and connection to the larger transportation network, this land has great potential for attracting a commercial and/or light industrial businesses. This proposed annexation includes vacant, agricultural land and is next to the existing Veterinarian Clinic. Because Area 3 is not currently adjacent to the corporate limits boundary, Area 2 would have to be annexed prior to, or at the same time in order to legally annex Area 3.
4. Area 4 is located on the south side of Osceola along Nance Street south of Annie Jeffrey County Memorial Health Center and the Polk County Historical Society Museum grounds. This annexation would include vacant, agricultural land, one single-family home, the Polk County Fairgrounds, and the existing ball fields located south of town. This location of town is great for development because of its proximity and relationship to existing infrastructure. With the ability to be subdivided into a variety of parcel sizes for residential development which would provide lots for construction.





- Legend**
-  ETJ
  -  Osceola Corporate Boundary
  - Annexation Area**
  -  AREA #1
  -  AREA #2
  -  AREA #3
  -  AREA #4

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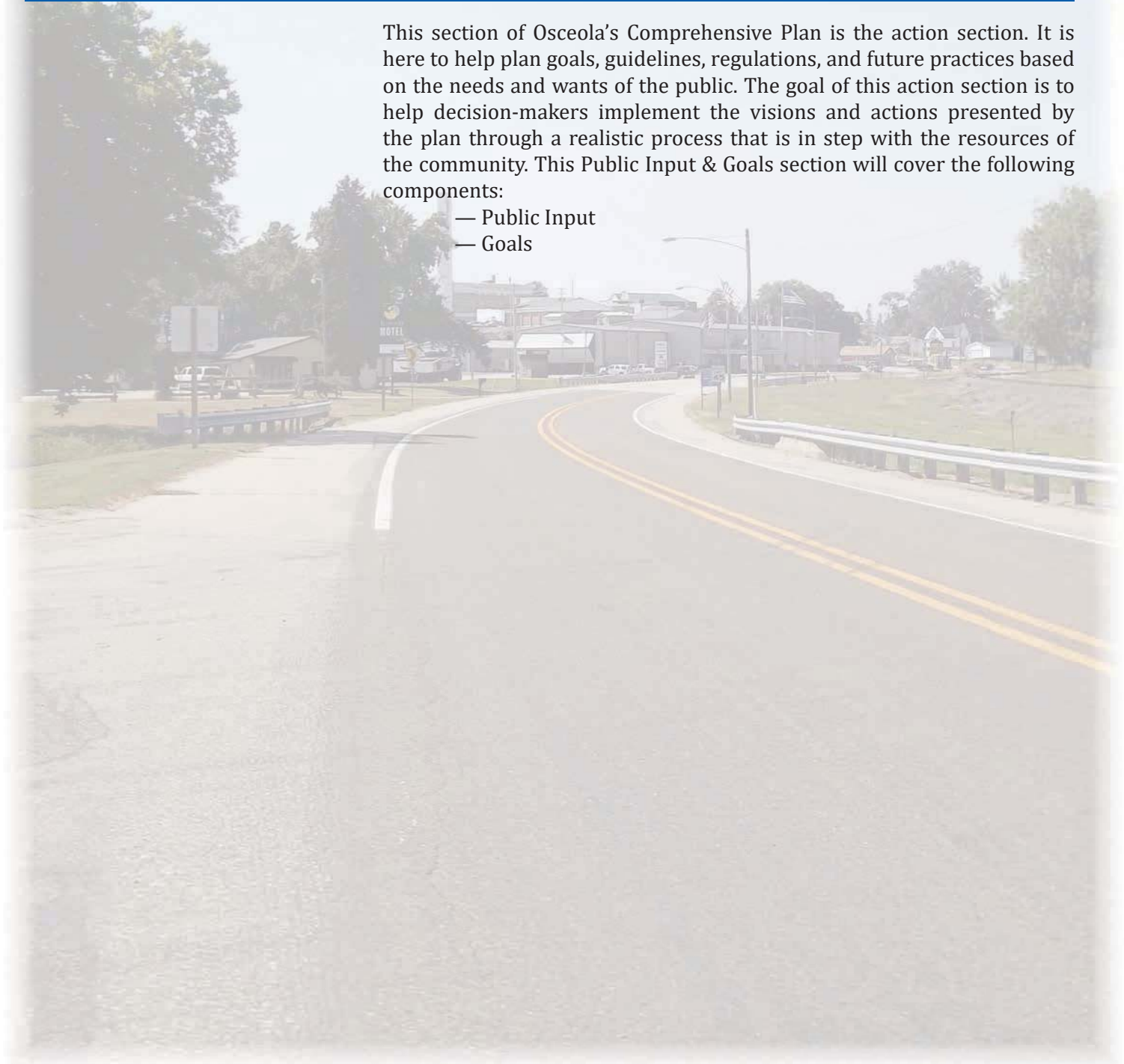
**Figure 4.3**  
**Annexation Plan Map**  
Osceola, Nebraska



# Chapter 5: Public Input & Goals

This section of Osceola's Comprehensive Plan is the action section. It is here to help plan goals, guidelines, regulations, and future practices based on the needs and wants of the public. The goal of this action section is to help decision-makers implement the visions and actions presented by the plan through a realistic process that is in step with the resources of the community. This Public Input & Goals section will cover the following components:

- Public Input
- Goals



*These questions were asked during the first public input session during the planning stages of the Comprehensive Plan. Residents had the chance to openly discuss some of their responses. This analysis is called SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). Strengths are viewed as assets to the community; areas they want to retain and continue to improve. The weaknesses are seen as areas that need improvement for community members. Opportunities are viewed a potential areas of gain in the future, and threats are seen as aspects that may hinder the growth and development of Osceola.*

# Public Input

## Strengths (NOW/INTERNAL-advantages, things that are unique to Osceola)

Community Action Group  
Downtown Square  
Volunteerism  
Welcoming Community (inclusive)  
Swimming Pool  
Park  
County Seat-Federal Officer  
Hospital/Wellness Center  
County Fair  
Federal Offices  
Nursing Home & Assisted Living  
Car Dealership  
Two Farm Implement Dealers  
New Business/new building (Tool & Die Manufacturer)  
Several Local Contractors  
Strong School System (preschool-12th grade)  
Christian School  
New Doctor & Physician Assistant (live in town)  
Golf Course  
County Health Department  
Lots of Contractors (all are busy)  
Professional Offices-(3 Attorneys, Insurance, 2 CPA's)  
Flower/Gift Shop  
Strong Ag Economy  
Main Street Community  
Railroad  
Volunteers  
Bank  
Pharmacy  
Downtown Farmer's Market (every Thursday night in the summer)  
White Eagle (bar and restaurant)  
Grocery Store

Weaknesses (NOW/INTERNAL-limitations, where could Osceola improve, what should we avoid)

- Lack of daycare options
- Several downtown structures are in need of repair or demolition
- Need housing
- Ownership and rentals-some in really poor shape
- Need affordable housing for young families
- City Office in Alley
- Lack of Hairdressers
- Need for Beautification
- Single people needing homes that fit their needs and lifestyles (could open up larger homes for families)
- 5-6 vacant homes
- City Sewer-septic issues on south and east
- South side of Downtown Square (empty spaces)-opportunities, but in poor condition

Opportunities (FUTURE- opportunities for Osceola to improve, grow, attract new people/business)

- New housing development
- TIF financing
- Have investors for projects
- Tonniges Chevrolet expansion or relocation
- Hair dresser
- Place for Breakfast

Threats (FUTURE-what obstacles does Osceola face, what are other communities doing)

- Potential of weakening agricultural economy-no control
- Big Box Retail in Columbus and York

# Goals

*This section is in place to give ideas, summaries, and guidelines for development and growth opportunities for Osceola to work towards over the next ten years. These goals are a combination of information gathered from the public input sessions, research, and data analysis. The importance of these goals is that they are realistic in nature, but allow the community to continually have goals to strive towards.*

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

## **Improve Public Infrastructure and Amenities**

Public infrastructure needs and improvements are listed below according to each infrastructure system.

### *Stormwater Drainage*

The City of Osceola has experienced recurring flooding problems in various parts of the City for many years. Many of these areas are due to topography and lack of or inadequate stormwater drainage infrastructure. Some areas utilize surface drainage, which due to the elevation changes, can pose a few problem as it jumps the curb and gutters. Surface drainage at the lower elevations can cause flooding in the lower lying areas. The City street infrastructure is deteriorating and in the past several years they have been trying to replace some of the poor condition streets and improve drainage where street projects are being replaced. Drainage projects are expensive and with the aging infrastructure the drainage is the easiest to neglect as water and sewer are regulated by the State and Federal governments and street conditions are noticed by all the constituents.

### *Sidewalks/ADA Compliance*

Based on the public input sessions, Osceola’s residents discussed their issues and concerns with the condition and lack of sidewalks in the community. Improving the sidewalks and following ADA compliance guidelines is an important goal for the community. A sidewalk inventory should be used to analyze areas in need of sidewalks and existing sidewalks in need of repair. We know approximately 65 percent of the community is lacking sidewalk infrastructure; however, the other 35 percent of the community that does have existing infrastructure may also need improvements. The sidewalk inventory would analyze each sidewalk and ramp (or lack thereof) to determine the overall needs for the community. At that time the City could formulate a plan for improvements including construction of new sidewalks and improving existing. Again, these improvements require funding as well as support from the residents of Osceola. An idea for implementing a program feasible for the City to utilize would be to create a cost-share program between the City and the property owner to split costs for the new improvements. Some financial assistance may entice residents to put forth some of their funds to assist in the development of ADA accessible sidewalks. The City could budget a set amount each year and residents could apply for funds out of that budgeted amount to assist in making these improvements throughout the City. Pedestrian accessibility throughout the community is important for residents especially between key features in the City such as the swimming pool, school, Downtown Square, medical facilities, public parks, Library, etc. To improve accessibility for all pedestrians the City must continually work to make these improvements a priority.

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

### *Water*

The City of Osceola has recently completed water infrastructure improvements including installation of new water meters in 2010, construction of a new well in 2011, and replacement of 24 blocks of water main in 2012. Future improvement projects that have been identified are replacement of the 1903 riveted steel standpipe with a new elevated storage facility and continued water main replacement. Another future project would be the replacement of the 1985 public supply well if the water quality in the other two wells would not meet the drinking water standards or demand required of all three wells. The City does not currently have an updated water infrastructure map which would be beneficial to the City for a multitude of reasons. Having electronic copies of files is important to protect the longevity of information in the community especially as City staff personnel change or turn-over the information is still kept current and readily accessible for the City. Having up-to-date maps with the possibility of using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology would provide an ease of use and more accurate data for staff working in the field as well as for future improvement projects.

### *Sanitary Sewer*

The City owns and operates a collection system, a lift station, and a three-cell lagoon constructed in 1958 with an improvement project completed in 2007. The design population for the wastewater treatment facility is 921 with a design daily flow of 106,000 gallons per day but the average influent flow in 2012 was 170,000 gallons per day. With the installation of water meters the flow rate to the lagoon has been decreasing.

A NDEQ site inspection was performed in 2012 and some of the suggested wastewater improvements included:

- Elimination of burrowing animals in the dikes and filling in the holes
- Verify the facility is not hydraulically and organically overloaded
- Re-grade the lagoon dikes
- Add/break up the larger portions of the rip rap as the dikes appear to be eroding
- Continue to evaluate the infiltration and inflow to the sewer system

The City has been working on correcting the suggestions made by the NDEQ inspection report. Additional repairs noted by the City include a roof replacement on the control building at the WWTF. Another improvement they City could make regarding the sanitary sewer infrastructure system is to update the infrastructure map. The City does not currently have an updated sanitary sewer infrastructure map which would be beneficial to the City for a multitude of reasons. Having electronic copies of files is important to protect the longevity of information in the community especially as City staff personnel change or turn-over the information is still kept current and readily accessible for the City. Having up-to-date maps with the possibility of using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology would provide an ease of use and more accurate data for staff working in the field as well as for future improvement projects.

### *Paving*

The City of Osceola is currently in the construction phase of a concrete paving project on the south side of the community. This project is listed under the City's one-year road plan. This project was bid as a 15-block concrete paving project to replace concrete pavement, sidewalks, and curb and gutter as well as complete grading and utility adjustments. The City's 1 & 6 Year Road Plan can be found in the Transportation section of Chapter Two in this plan. This map shows road improvements that the City is planning for in 2014 and within the next five years. The six year plan includes future projects and improvements of existing roads. The six-year road plan projects include a mixture of new asphalt and concrete pavement with some projects including the replacement and/or addition of drainage structures and grading to help with stormwater drainage concerns. Continual maintenance of the City's road infrastructure is important to the quality of life for residents as well as economic growth opportunities for businesses because of the importance of a healthy transportation network into and out of the community.

### *Community Services/Amenities*

Currently the City office is located behind a row of downtown businesses on the north side of the Downtown Square. Although there is access to the building, it is set so far back from the main road that it seems to only be accessible through an alley which is not appealing and hard to locate for residents and visitors alike. Also the current building used for the Senior Center, which is leased by the City, is for sale. If someone were to purchase the building, the City may not be able to use that space for the Senior Center anymore. The City has discussed the desire to have a new site for the City offices which could be coupled with a Community Center/Senior Center use. The Downtown Square is the most ideal location for these uses; however, the City may need to look for other possible locations in order to get the parking, accessibility, and square footage desired for these uses. The image below shows a computer rendering of a potential multi-use municipal building in the Downtown Square.

Improving and expanding public infrastructure and amenities is an on-going task. Although there have been recent improvements made, more work needs to be done. As stated above, these projects require planning, time, and funding. Updates will continually need to be made in order to provide the best quality of life for all of Osceola's residents. Community support will entrust decision-makers with the tasks of accomplishing these goals in a timely manner; however, funds must be available in order to begin construction on any one of these projects. Besides the City's annual budget, a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should be completed. The CIP will be a way for decision-makers to plan for capital improvement needs for the next six years. This will outline potential needs, costs, and a timeline for improvements. It will be important to annually update this plan in order to maintain and accomplish the goals that are outlined. Osceola's officials are taking the necessary steps in order to resolve some of the on-going issues with public infrastructure. They have been working with Engineers for assessments, looking into funding options, working hard to balance the community's budget. The most important step is to prioritize the tasks required for updating and improving public infrastructure. Once priorities have been set, the City can then begin to plan and budget for necessary repairs, updates, and improvements.



Multi-Use Municipal Building - Proposed



## **Promote Commercial Development**

Osceola has a vibrant Downtown Square. The Square is home to many existing retail and service industry businesses including the offices, restaurants, personal services, and retail shops. Ideas for creating a distinct appeal for the Downtown Square would come from a Downtown Revitalization Plan. This plan would give the City ideas on aesthetic improvements, traffic and pedestrian flow, parking, and business opportunities. The City of Osceola would need to work to receive the designation of Leadership Community from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development and then they could apply for grant funds to assist with Downtown Revitalization planning and improvement projects. Just as any other planning process including the one for this Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Revitalization planning process should include several opportunities for public input from building and business owners downtown, City officials, and other community stakeholders. The plan would be a guide for development in the Downtown Square. The positive side of following NDED's guidelines for Downtown Revitalization and seeking grant funding for the planning process through the State includes the opportunity to apply for Phase II funds which historically has been for \$350,000 for physical improvements to the Downtown Square that were outlined in the Downtown Revitalization Plan.

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

Recruitment of new businesses should be based on the feasibility of the business being successful in the region as well as how it will complement the existing industries, such as agriculture sector which is vital to the progress and growth of Osceola. Businesses in the agricultural sector currently exist in Osceola, but expanding this sector with complementary businesses could not only benefit the City but also help existing agricultural businesses and possibly lead to necessary expansions for those existing businesses.

The City of Osceola has been compiling a long list of success stories for attracting new businesses and helping existing businesses succeed showing how the City is successful with implementing projects from an idea to an actual business that helps support the community. Some examples of these success stories include the current expansion/improvements of the Co-op, the new development of a Dollar General store, and the implement and car dealers in the community. When potential commercial companies start looking at Osceola, the City should consider how these developments might impact existing businesses within town. To ensure existing businesses have the opportunity to expand, new businesses will need to complement the existing economic industries in Osceola.

In order to maintain a pedestrian friendly, neighborhood feel in the Downtown Square, vacancies should be filled by retail and/or basic service sector businesses. Larger companies or service businesses that provide a unique service may best fit along the Highway 81/92 corridor. In order to have a distinct appeal in the Downtown Square, the sidewalks need to be filled, store fronts need to be decorated, and businesses need to be open. Some businesses, even in the service sector, do not fulfill all of those needs for the downtown district; therefore, the limited retail space should be left to retail oriented businesses which encourage pedestrian traffic throughout the day, evenings, and weekends.

Developing along Highway 81/92 as well as the railroad can be viewed as daunting because it is a challenge to encourage development of commercial space while keeping an aesthetically pleasing corridor. Possible businesses could include a car dealership, strip mall to provide space for the service sector businesses, manufacturing or light industrial businesses, grain storage, and possibly could lead to existing businesses expanding because of the land availability. Having both the Highway and the railroad present in Osceola provides many opportunities for commercial and light industrial development that other communities do not have. Knowing the land is valuable and promoting or marketing its assets to companies is important; companies need to feel like the land was meant for their specific business. When doing any engineering design it is important to understand if the area can be served with utilities and how those utilities will get there, but it is also important to leave some of the land development open for change therefore it can best fit the needs of the business or developer.

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

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

*Target areas for prime commercial development;*

The City should work to target areas of land for prime commercial development. This land should have access to the larger transportation network including Highway 81/92 as well as the railroad. Visibility and land availability are important aspects for commercial business ventures; therefore, those should also be important factors when locating prime commercial real estate. This land should be close to the existing corporate limits and public infrastructure and adjacent to existing commercial and/or light industrial businesses. Once areas have been targeted for commercial development, the pros and cons of allowing other types of development on that property should be heavily weighed in order to prevent unnecessary urban sprawl.

*Market prime commercial real estate to potential businesses and developers;*

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

*Develop annexation plan of prime commercial real estate;*

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

*Complete Blight & Substandard Analysis of prime commercial real estate; and*

Completing the Blight and Substandard analysis is important for the City if they want to be able to offer Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as an incentive tool for new commercial development. It is imperative to complete the Blight and Substandard Study prior to any commercial development taking place and it can be an encouragement to a potential business; therefore, the City should consider meeting this objective prior to marketing the prime commercial real estate.

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

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

### **Improve the Existing Housing Market**

As discussed earlier in this plan, there is a housing shortage in Osceola for both rental and owner-occupied units. In order to solve this issue a few things can be done. The obvious answer is to develop more housing, but in order for that goal to be accomplished private developers or local investors will need to be willing to participate otherwise residential development will only happen when a person/family constructs their own private residence. Typically in communities there are lots available to develop however those lots are not in a desirable location or large enough to construct the type of home a buyer is wanting. Because not everyone is financially able or interested in building their own home, it is helpful when a private developer or group of investors is able to increase the supply of homes available in Osceola in order to help grow the City.

Developing new housing will help to attract new residents to Osceola working as a chain reaction, with new homes available, families could move to town and enroll their children in Osceola Public Schools, keeping Osceola a viable community. With more families in the community, it may also open more jobs which in turn can employ the new residents. Also, if jobs are available in Osceola, employees may want to live in the community and send their children to Osceola Public Schools. Decent, attractive, and affordable homes and shovel ready lots need to be available in order to ensure that those new employees will live in Osceola instead of a nearby community. The housing market plays a key role in the economic forecast of businesses in Osceola and their ability to grow and expand. A lack of suitable, available housing in Osceola can affect businesses ability to hire new employees as well as maintain the employees they currently have. With a close correlation between the housing market and positive economic climate for businesses it is even more crucial that housing market improvements are taken seriously and made a top priority. Wieseman's Addition Subdivision provided lots for new home construction. Those lots filled up quickly proving there is a need and desire for lots for single-family home construction.

A few new housing options that residents discussed included transitional housing and large lot residential development. Residents see the need to expand transitional housing options in the community for potential new residents, residents who do not want to maintain the exterior of their property, residents who are not wanting a large home but are not ready for assisted or convalescent care living, or any other person(s) looking for a two-to-four bedroom housing unit with a garage and decent-sized living space available. Transitional housing could include duplexes, tri-plexes, townhomes, etc. The most important need with transitional housing, as discussed by residents of Osceola, is to offer exterior home maintenance and care services for residents of the units.

The City can be involved in housing improvements in a few different ways. Cleaning up lots and uninhabitable homes in Osceola is an on-going task; however, it will create more lots for new infill development as well as rid the neighborhood of eye sores that are also safety hazards. Improving the condition of the existing housing stock will also help attract new residents to the community because the condition of the homes available would be more appealing to buyers. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) can be used to carry out plans for the demolition of structures in a redevelopment area that they determine to be unsafe or unfit for human occupancy. This is new to the Community Development Law with LB 729 which was passed in a legislative round, and Osceola should look into this option to see how it could benefit the community. Osceola can also access funds for demolition through Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The one stipulation for this grant is that a new housing structure has to be constructed on the newly vacant lot, and it will only be available to those residents that are low-to-moderate income (LMI). This is a way to rid the community of an unsafe, unsightly dwelling and replace it with a new home; however, the new home is only available for select residents who would qualify based off of their annual income. The City could also utilize a nuisance abatement program administered through the City or a third-party source in or to encourage property owners to rid their properties of nuisances. Nebraska Department of Economic Development (NDED) through CDBG has offered owner-occupied housing rehabilitation funds which are a resource Osceola could also utilize for housing improvements. However, funding is diminishing due to Federal and State budget cuts. The City could also work to create incentives for home-owners and people wishing to purchase homes such as down-payment assistance, first-time home-buyers credits, and a home-ownership rehabilitation program to encourage improvements to the housing market. Osceola's officials should look into each of these avenues to determine what resources may be feasible and beneficial for the community.

The public-private partnerships will be key as the City works to accomplish the goal of housing market improvements. If private developers are not able to relieve all of the pressure on the housing market in Osceola, then local investors or a local group or committee may need to implement a plan for home development. Some communities have a group of residents that contribute money to begin the process. Funds contributed would be used to build a spec home, also employing a local contractor. The home is then sold and the money is used to build another spec home, and the process continues. Other communities have proven this to be successful way to construct new homes in the community. Osceola needs to continue to work to move forward ensuring the housing market is capable of expanding to support an increase in population and stimulate growth.

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

*Clean-up vacant out lots and uninhabitable properties;*

All vacant, lots and vacant, uninhabitable homes are properties that could be utilized for infill residential development. The City should access different avenues available to them to assist with the clean-up of vacant lots and uninhabitable properties. There is not a large amount of lots available for infill development; therefore, efforts should be made to create more availability. Also, by cleaning up vacant lots and uninhabitable homes the City will be able to rid the community of unnecessary eye sores and safety and health hazards.

*Promote infill development;*

Infill development, by its nature, is less expensive because there is no need to extend public utility services. Infill development utilizes existing public infrastructure, filling in vacant properties with residences. By promoting infill development, the City can save funds by avoiding sprawl and the need to extend public infrastructure to new developments on the out-skirts of the community. However, once infill development is maxed-out, it will be necessary for the City to develop property adjacent to the existing corporate limits in order to allow for growth to continue in Osceola.

*Located and develop keys areas for future residential growth;*

With a lack of infill development lots readily available throughout the community, Osceola should work to locate and develop land in order to create more lots for residential development. Developing a plan in phases may work best for the community to prevent over development of lots while still providing a few potential sites for new home construction.

*Create home-owner rehabilitation revolving loan fund;*

The City could create their own loan program for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation setting guidelines and regulations based on the needs of the City. This option may be attractive to the City and its residents because the City could help middle-income residents while also boosting the existing housing conditions in the community. There are grants available to create this same type of program; however, they are only available to low-income families in the community that own their own homes. If the City creates their own revolving loan fund, they have the ability to set their own guidelines, income-restrictions, interest rates, pay-back regulations, etc. The City could create their own program to fit the needs of their community.

*Encourage property upkeep; and,*

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

*Locate areas for future residential development.*

With a lack of infill development lots readily available throughout the community, Osceola should work to locate and develop land in order to create more lots for residential development. The City should use the Future Land Use Plan to establish target areas for all types of residential development including large lots, single-family homes, transitional housing, and other types of medium density rental housing in order to fill all of the need within the community. Developing a plan in phases may work best for the community to prevent over development of lots while still providing a few potential sites for new home construction.

### **Develop Marketing Campaign**

Creating a community brand and marketing that brand to existing and potential residents and visitors is important when trying to develop an image. With all that Osceola has to offer its residents, from amenities to local retail businesses, the community does attract visitors. However, the City needs to develop a marketing campaign to promote existing businesses as well as capitalize on its ability to grow.

The City and/or other local organization should also focus on marketing to its own residents. A “shop local” campaign could involve many different marketing strategies to reach various community members. Marketing the City to existing residents is sometimes just as important as marketing to potential visitors. A shop local campaign could consist of yard signs, placement reminders at restaurants, or participation in “Thankful Thursdays” when residents are encouraged to show their support and thanks to local businesses. Social media marketing is one way to share information with existing residents while also marketing the community to potential residents and visitors. Online marketing is a quick and almost instant way to share information. It is also accessible almost anywhere for most people. In today’s society, people want instant information and one way to provide that is to have a strong web presence promoting the City and all that it has to offer including both public places and private businesses. One important thing to remember with online marketing is the fact that outdated information is just as bad for the marketing campaign as not having a web presence at all.

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

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

*Develop a brand;*

By developing a brand for the City to use to market itself, it has an image that can be identified by residents and non-residents alike. Branding and marketing a community is becoming more and more important with today's society. The brand needs to be instantly recognizable and be representative of the entire community. Developing a brand could include a logo, slogan, color scheme, and theme to represent the community.

*Establish responsible roles for marketing;*

As with community amenity development, not all of the marketing should be left to the City. Other community groups such as a local Chamber of Commerce should also be instrumental in marketing for Osceola. These groups, along with the City, should work to establish roles for marketing.

*Create marketing pieces;*

Using the brand developed for the City, marketing pieces should be created that can be utilized online as well as for posters, videos, brochures, etc. Thinking comprehensively to hit all target areas is important when creating marketing pieces. It is also important to continually update the marketing pieces to ensure current information is being utilized and the pieces look modern and up-to-date.

*Maintain updated social media and other online marketing materials;  
and*

Social media can be thought of as a way to get information to large amount of people in a short amount of time. Also, social media sources such as Facebook and Twitter are free resources to use for marketing and most likely a majority of the community's residents and visitors use some form of social media on their own. The City could work to market upcoming events, big happenings in the City, and amenities or services it offers to residents and visitors. Other online marketing tools, such as the previously discussed LOIS website, should also be considered in order to effectively reach potential developers or business owners to show what the City has to offer.

*Market within Osceola.*

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



## **Gateway Entrance & Community Beautification Improvements**

Gateway entrances and overall community beautification were discussed heavily during the public input sessions held for the Comprehensive Plan. Not only were the issues discussed, but ideas were developed to improve the aesthetics of the area. Unappealing gateway entrances will continue to be an issue until someone or a group decides makes some improvements. After an individual has lived in a community for several years, one starts to overlook the negative aspects or the visually unappealing areas. However, a gateway entrance is Osceola's first impression to visitors. Ideas and visuals for this goal can be seen in previous sections of this Comprehensive Plan.

There are many different ways to create beautiful entrances. Typically landscaping, lighting, signage, and screening are the main projects involved. Wayfinding through signage is also an important aspect to consider when developing aesthetic improvements that are highly visible. Wayfinding allows the community to point out key areas of interest to people passing the sign. A Gateway Improvement Authority could be created or an existing community group could help drive these projects or an existing group or board could volunteer their efforts for beautifying the highway corridor entrances into Osceola. It is important to note the two main entrances into Osceola when discussing new gateway entrances. Based on traffic counts, the Highway 81/92 entrance to the west sees slightly more average daily traffic than the entrance to the northeast. Entrance beautification could easily be completed in phases; although, it will be important to achieve continuity in the aesthetic of each entrance improvement.

Having a plan or visuals in place before making any improvements will be important to stimulate public support and a cohesive look for both entrances. Improvements to the entrance on the Highway 81/92 on the west side of Osceola will be seen by more travelers, based solely on traffic counts, than improvements on the northeast and could be completed in a first phase. There is no right or wrong answer to how this process will unfold, and it will be up to the community to determine the best method. The goal is to have these improvements be seen the most by travelers which will allow for the biggest "bang for your buck" type of project.

It will be up to the City and their citizens to make final decisions for the vision of their community; however, this vision should encompass the entire community for all beautification projects as opposed to having a mixture of several different "looks" or products used. Beautification is important throughout the entire community not just the entrances, so any of ideas or themes could be carried into the Downtown Square, public parks, or any residential neighborhood. If the City works to beautify the community and its entrances, it may spark the desire in residents to keep their properties clean. A partnership could also be created with adjacent property owners to ensure everyone is on the same page aesthetically, and hopefully with the support of property owners this goal could be accomplished. As previously mentioned, one group or several groups could work to make this goal become a reality. The most important part is to have an overall plan and vision created before any projects are started; that way there will be a cohesive look throughout the community and every group will know what needs to be done to achieve the community's vision.

Screening will make the most noticeable improvement due to some unsightly land uses located on both sides of the highway corridor. Screening could also be beneficial for property owners because the screening can act as a sound buffer from the highway traffic. Signage should not only be informational, but also attractive. A cohesive look starting from one entrance sign and carrying through the community to the opposite end creates a distinct appeal or 'brand' for Osceola. Creating a cohesive, aesthetic plan; forming a group to spearhead the project; balancing partnerships with adjacent property owners, City officials, and other community beautification groups; and aligning funding will be the keys steps in beautifying Osceola's gateways.

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