2012

CITY OF LIME SPRINGS

Comprehensive Plan

Prepared by:
Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission
325 Washington Street, Decorah, IA 52101

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Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC)
UERPC was created to promote regional cooperation and meet the planning and economic development needs of local governments in the five Northeast Iowa counties of Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek.

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ADOPTION RESOLUTION

Resolution 11062012-2

Adoption of the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Smart Plan 2012

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Lime Springs is responsible for the preparation and adoption of the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Smart Plan

WHEREAS, the City desired to have a plan for the community to refer to when addressing potential uses and impacts from the reuse of properties and the development of the vacant parcels in the City; and

WHEREAS, The City desired to be proactive in dealing with regional and inter-municipal issues, protecting its resources, and planning for community and/or service needs; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Lime Springs, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and its planning consultants undertook a comprehensive study of the historic and existing conditions in the City, the surrounding vicinity and the rest of the County; identified issues and opportunities; analyzed numerous topics and potential options; and consulted with various boards including the Planning and Zoning Board, committees and other representatives, County departments/agencies and officials, surrounding municipalities, business groups, environmental and civic groups, as well as various Federal, State and regional organizations; and developed goals, strategies and action recommendations and implementation strategies which resulted in the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Smart Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Smart Plan 2012 is a long-range document which identifies the important positive attributes and components which provides a blueprint for the future; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Smart Plan 2012 will provide guidance to decision makers, residents, property owners and organizations through its goals, strategies and actions relevant to the Iowa Smart Planning Elements of: Public Participation; Community Character; Land Use; Housing; Public Infrastructure and Utilities; Transportation; Economic Development; Agricultural and Natural Resources; Community Facilities; Hazards; Intergovernmental Collaboration; and Implementation; and

WHEREAS, there has been public participation throughout the process, including public workshops and a public hearing held on November 6 and review of background documents and drafts of the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Smart Plan 2012;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Lime Springs, Iowa, that the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Smart Plan 2012 is hereby approved.

Passed and approved this 6th day of November, 2012 by the City Council of the City of ~~McGregor~~ Lime Springs, Iowa.

~~Barb Robinson, Mayor~~
Kevin Bill, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

Carla Moser, Clerk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Executive Summary for the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 contains selected excerpts of the full plan and serves as a stand-alone synopsis of the full document. The executive summary, along with the Community Action Plan can be utilized by city stakeholders as a quick reference guide in future decision-making.

Introduction

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 is the first such comprehensive planning undertaken by the community. The plan provides extensive background for a set of goals, strategies and actions intended to assist local officials as they make future decisions regarding growth, management and preservation of the community.

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 was developed utilizing Smart Planning Principles as recommended through the Iowa Smart Planning Legislation of April, 2010. The intent of the principles is to "produce greater economic opportunity, enhance environmental integrity, improve public health outcomes and safeguard Iowa's quality of life. The principles also address the need for fair and equitable decision-making processes" (Iowa Smart Planning Legislative Guide, 2010). The legislation identifies several elements that may be included in a plan, and the City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 is organized with each of the following elements as the basis for each section or chapter:

- Public Participation
- Community Overview (Issues and Opportunities)
- Community Character and Culture
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Community Facilities
- Public Infrastructure and Utilities
- Natural and Agricultural Resources
- Land Use
- Hazards
- Intergovernmental Collaboration
- Implementation

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 was developed with a focus on the renewal of the city proper and an expectation of future growth occurring toward Highway 63. The City of Lime Springs will be an active participant in influencing actions by developers or other governments that affect the quality of life they wish to enjoy in their community.

Ultimately, the implementation of projects included in the plan will depend on the leadership of the City of Lime Springs. With proactive leadership from the Mayor and City Council, the City Planning Commission, other boards and organizations and the city administration, Lime Springs

can become a stronger, more beautiful community that provides its residents with a high quality of life.

Public Participation

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 engaged Lime Springs' residents and leadership through committee meetings and public input sessions. The majority of the public input was collected through a series of four evening "Community Think Tanks" to which the entire community was invited. Several members of the community attended each week to review pertinent background information on each element of the plan and participate in discussions to articulate the city's strengths, issues and opportunities. Ideas were prioritized for inclusion in the final plan.

Community Overview

Lime Springs has historically shown a fluctuating population of decline followed by growth; with its current population being the eighth largest in its history. The 2010 Census marks the first time that Lime Springs has experienced a back to back decade population increase since the Census of 1900. Lime Springs enjoys a steady population of children and young adults, an increase in the middle-aged population and a constant senior population. As with most small rural Iowa communities, Lime Springs has very little diversity in race, with all but three counted in the 2010 Census self-identifying as "white." Ethnically, 43% of the community is of German ancestry, with Irish and Norwegian ancestries making up another 17% each (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

Community Character and Culture

The community of Lime Springs is a caring, family friendly community whose residents take pride in its charm and way of life. Lime Springs has much to offer in the way of character and culture. Its unique downtown buildings, rich history, special events and community amenities are valued by the residents of Lime Springs. It is the strong social capital of Lime Springs that sustains most of the character and culture present in the community today. During the planning process, the residents of Lime Springs indicated that maintaining a small-town quality of life is very important to the future of the community. The community has identified several opportunities and issues to focus on in the coming years. Issues include the appearance of aging buildings, a lack of new volunteers and expensive facility rehabilitations. Opportunities were noted in the community's ability to capitalize on its rich history, its proximity to the Upper Iowa River and its community events.

Housing

The housing picture in Lime Springs is a positive one overall. Housing values are steadily increasing, but remain affordable to families and attractive to commuters. A growing population and low vacancy rate suggests that Lime Springs could see some housing development in the future. With the growing population, concerns arose over the need to welcome and orient new residents to the community and its social opportunities. The idea of a "welcome wagon" was suggested as a way for the community to help new residents get familiarized with all that Lime Springs has to offer. Lime Springs has a nice mix of housing types that fit the current makeup of the community. There were some concerns voiced about the lack of rental properties for younger families and an eventual lack of housing in town suitable for seniors. The community will monitor these situations to ensure adequate housing for all. Some issues over property upkeep exist and many can be solved through existing ordinance enforcement and a little neighborly assistance (e.g. shoveling snow on sidewalks). The community will be more proactive in sharing housing program information with residents to promote housing rehabilitation.

Economic Development

The city has become a small bedroom community, with 94% of its workforce commuting out of Lime Springs for employment with an average commute of 28 minutes; 24% travel farther than 50 miles. The community wishes to attract retail and services that support a more convenient lifestyle for its busy residents. In addition, the community expects to continue beautification projects that make it a more attractive place, and market the recreational opportunities it has to offer in order to attract tourists, businesses and workforce.

Demonstrating a strong work ethic, nearly 78% of its residents over the age of 16 are in the labor force, in contrast to 69% on a countywide level. As a whole, Lime Springs residents fall into a bell curve distribution of educational achievement, with 80% of residents over the age of 25 having a high school diploma or greater. Most Lime Springs workers are employed in manufacturing, education, health care or social work. Long term, the community hopes to attract industry that complements this skill set to the existing industrial park just off Highway 63 by fully marketing this convenient location and its labor force.

Transportation

For the most part, Lime Springs' residents are reliant upon automobile transportation to get to and from the community. While public transit is available, the lack of adequate ridership makes the cost of this service unaffordable to most in the community. Infrastructure improvements that increase the connectivity of the community and the safety of walkers and bicyclers are a

priority for the city. All residents expect that children should be able to safely walk or bike to school, the swimming pool or a city park; and that elderly residents should be able to easily walk to the community center or clinic, if desired. Improvements to community infrastructure in certain areas are necessary for this to become a reality. Long term goals for the community include connecting the community to existing trails and recreational amenities.

Community Facilities

Lime Springs has a strong record of supporting and improving community facilities. The city's multi-use community center was built in 2003 and houses city hall and the fire station. The community center provides meeting and activity space for community clubs and organizations. Going forward, the city hopes to increase utilization of this space to ensure its long term sustainability. The city maintains two city parks, park and recreation activities, an outdoor swimming pool and a recently expanded library. The city will need to take action soon to upgrade the swimming pool to ensure ADA compliance. Additional facilities, such as the school, child care center and clinic, while not city-owned, provide essential and desired services to the community. The elementary school and new child care center are tremendous assets to the community, promoting quality education and care in a safe and friendly setting. The city is committed to ongoing communication with the school district to promote the value of maintaining an elementary campus within Lime Springs. The clinic ensures that community members who need care close to home have adequate health services and, if needed, is affiliated with more intensive care nearby. Private and state parks and recreation areas offer additional opportunities for active living for community members and visitors alike.

Public Infrastructure and Utilities

Lime Springs provides water and sewer services for residents living in the core of the community. Future growth, especially in the area between the community and Highway 63, will require an expansion of the system. The city is fully aware of the aging condition of its water and sewer infrastructure and is working on repairs and upgrades to ensure a reliable system for the future. Other utilities are provided through private entities, although natural gas is not offered within the community at this time. Citizens are generally satisfied with the electric, telephone and cable services, although some expressed concern about spotty wireless coverage in the city. Garbage collection and recycling are contracted by the city, so residents need not seek out a private provider. Overall, the community's infrastructure is sound and the city will be putting together a long term maintenance plan so that future maintenance is not ignored.

Natural & Agricultural Resources

Lime Springs is fortunate to be located in an area with several natural resource assets accessible to the public. Situated on the transition line of two landforms, the Iowan Surface and the Paleozoic Plateau, Lime Springs benefits from natural resources indicative of each. Slowly rolling landscapes surround the community to the west and south, and the Driftless Area with its characteristic bluffs, caves and rivers begins just northeast of the community. Foresight on the part of local, county and state organizations have preserved many natural sites for public enjoyment near the community. The community hopes to capitalize on the many visitors that these assets draw to the area. Integral to being able to receive benefit from the area's natural resource assets is the ability to protect them from harm. The community intends to do its part by encouraging residents and businesses to implement energy efficient and environmentally sound building and landscaping practices, as well as incorporating these practices into city projects where possible.

Land Use

Lime Springs is looking west for expansion opportunities. As floodplains to the east pose a hazard for development, the increased utilization of Highway 63 to the west is an attractive area for growth for the community. The community has identified two potential annexation areas: the section north of A21 to 40th Street and south of the A21 corridor section to 50th Street. This would bring the total acres in the community from approximately 565 to 825 acres. The community has quite a bit of room to grow without any annexation as 44% of the current land use within the city limits is classified as agricultural use. The city has identified the existing agricultural land from the Travel Plaza east to the edge of the current residential area as having good potential for commercial or industrial growth and has designated the area as such. North of the current residential area to 40th Street is noted as a viable location for additional residential uses. As the city looks to expand or fill its existing borders, it will plan appropriately for infrastructure expansions and support projects that use vacant lots with existing infrastructure.

Hazards

Lime Springs is susceptible to several hazards including flooding and severe weather. Flooding from local waterways and sudden heavy downpours are troublesome, and sometimes dangerous, for residents. Wet basements and road blockages can occur during these events. Managing the debris in the creek beds, encouraging more absorptive landscapes and lessening the pooling of stormwater on city roadways are efforts being undertaken by the city to mitigate the impacts of flooding in the community. Severe weather, as in all of Iowa, is a potential

hazard for Lime Springs. The city is taking action to construct a tornado safe room for residents in partnership with the school district, obtain more backup power generators for essential community facilities and improve early warning systems in the city.

Intergovernmental Collaboration

Lime Springs looks to strengthen its current partnerships and develop new collaborations that address the long term goals of the community. Partnerships that reduce costs for the community or create better results are possible in most of the elements included in the comprehensive plan. The county and region have organizations dedicated to housing, transportation, economic development, agriculture, natural resources, hazards and character and history. The City of Lime Springs will access these resources as possible as community projects and initiatives are proposed.

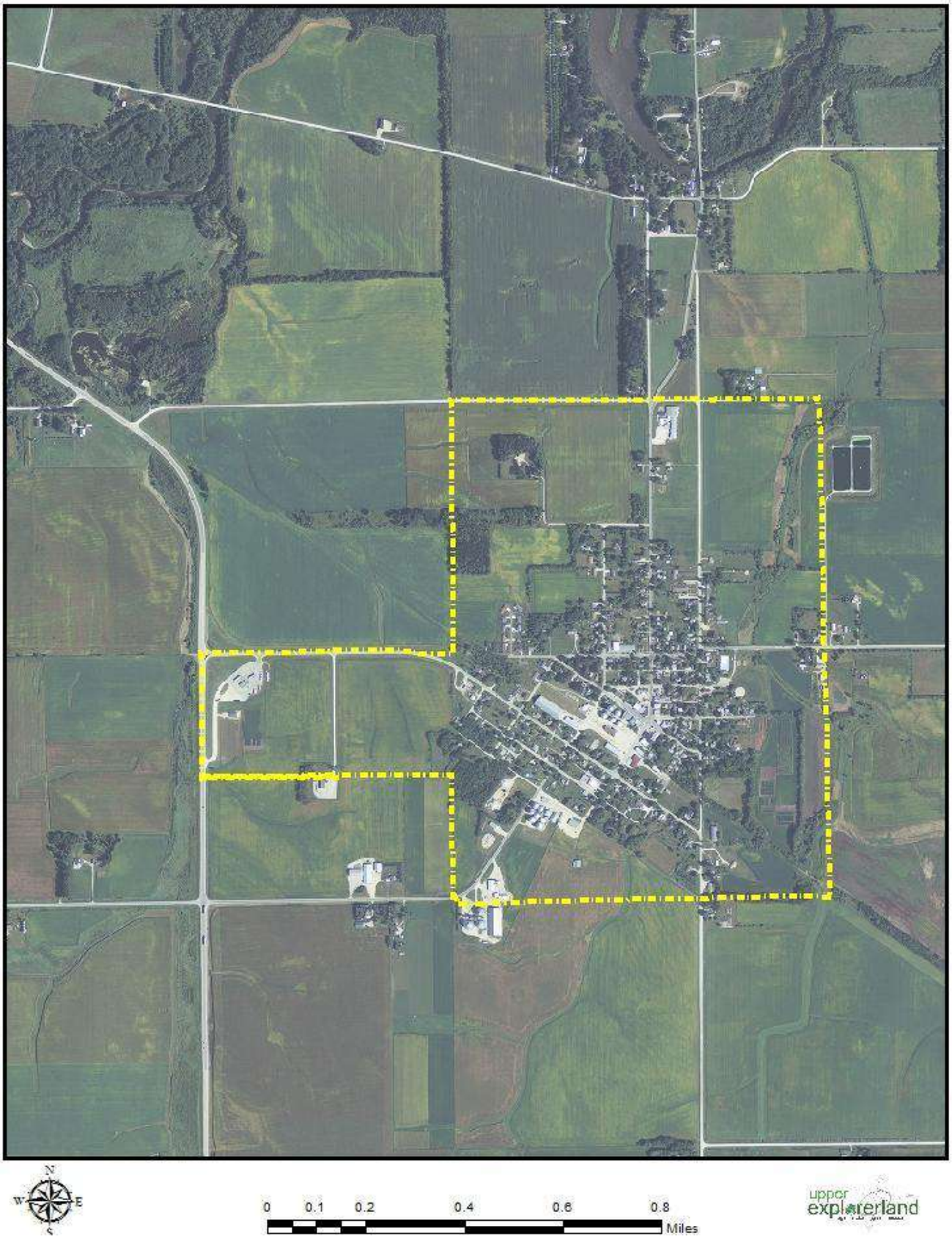
Lime Springs plans to continue to gather public input and solicit local volunteers for future projects. Public engagement and volunteerism are important aspects to the success of community projects. With limited budgets, it is often a grassroots effort that drives many projects beyond the dreaming phase and into reality. Opportunities to improve public engagement include an active city website, promoting and recognizing the efforts of volunteers and establishing a "welcome wagon" to get new community members involved.

Both intergovernmental cooperation and public engagement share the core requirement of effective communication. Together, collaboration and public engagement are important ways to make the most efficient use of the community's limited resources and ensure fair and equitable decision-making processes. The city is fortunate to have strong partners throughout the county, region and state that are available to serve as resources in a variety of community development projects and initiatives.

Implementation

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 addresses many important components critical to sustaining a healthy community while preserving the area's natural resources and history. The Community Action Plan is a table of all the actions identified in each section of the plan with a timeframe and potential resource allocations necessary to implement the actions and is the tool used to guide implementation of the plan. As change is inevitable, the plan may need to be amended to appropriately reflect those changes and it is recommended that a review occur every five years, with a full update in 20 years.

Figure 1: Aerial Photo of Lime Springs



INTRODUCTION

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 is the first such comprehensive planning undertaken by the community. The plan provides extensive background for a set of goals, strategies and actions intended to assist local officials as they make future decisions regarding growth, management and preservation of the community.

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 has been developed for a time horizon of 20 years and the city is encouraged to review the plan for needed adjustments every five years. The planning area that was studied to determine the background, conditions and needs of the community included an approximate distance of two miles from the periphery of the current city limits and, in some cases, the entire county.

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 was developed with a focus on the renewal of the city proper and an expectation of needed management for possible future growth occurring toward Highway 63. The city should be prepared for such renewal and growth with appropriate plans, goals, strategies and actions that may be used as renewal and growth occur. The City of Lime Springs should not be a passive actor with respect to actions by developers or other governments that affect the quality of life they wish to enjoy in their community.

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 was developed utilizing Smart Planning Principles as recommended through the Iowa Smart Planning Legislation of April, 2010. The intent of the principles is to "produce greater economic opportunity, enhance environmental integrity, improve public health outcomes and safeguard Iowa's quality of life. The principles also address the need for fair and equitable decision-making processes" (Iowa Smart Planning Legislative Guide, 2010). The legislation identifies several elements that may be included in a plan, and this document is organized with each of the following elements as the basis for each section or chapter:

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- Hazards
- Intergovernmental Collaboration
- Implementation

A list and description of Iowa's ten Smart Planning Principles and 13 planning elements are included as Appendix A of this document.

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan 2012 was developed by Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission with the assistance and input of Lime Springs residents, members of the City Planning Commission, members of the City Council, the Mayor and city administration.

Many of the public improvements necessary to implement the plan may depend upon the development of other subsidiary plans such as public facility plans and/or a capital improvement plan. The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan and these subsidiary plans may also need adopted implementation measures for those plans such as amendments to the city's Code of Ordinances.

Ultimately, the implementation of projects will depend on the resolve of the leadership of the City of Lime Springs. With proactive leadership from the Mayor and City Council, the City Planning Commission, other boards and organizations and the city administration, Lime Springs can become a stronger, more beautiful community that provides its residents with a high quality of life.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

Public participation is an important element in the comprehensive planning process. For successful implementation of the plan, city residents must support the goals and strategies within. To that end, residents' ideas, thoughts and opinions need to be considered throughout the process. The City of Lime Springs is a small rural community with a neighborly population. Familiarity among residents ensures that all community members are well aware of the strengths and issues of their neighbors, and the city.

In an effort to fully engage the public, Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission and the city invited residents to a series of "Community Think Tanks" held at the Lime Springs Community Center. The evening events were publicized in advance via the local newspaper, posters on community boards, table tents in restaurants, announcements in water bills, church bulletins and community emails. The series was presented as four sessions, each covering different elements of the plan. Each session ran well over two hours as residents were provided with some pertinent background information on each element, and then worked together to identify and prioritize issues, opportunities and solutions for their community. Notes from the public input sessions are attached as Appendix B.

Photograph 1: (A, B & C) Public Input Sessions, Jan-Feb 2012

CHAPTER 1: COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section includes information relating to the primary characteristics of the municipality and a description of how each of those characteristics impacts future development of the municipality. Such information may include historical information about the municipality, the municipality's geography, natural resources, natural hazards, population, demographics, types of employers and industry, labor force, political and community institutions, housing, transportation, educational resources, and cultural and recreational resources. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify characteristics and community aesthetics that are important to future development of the municipality.

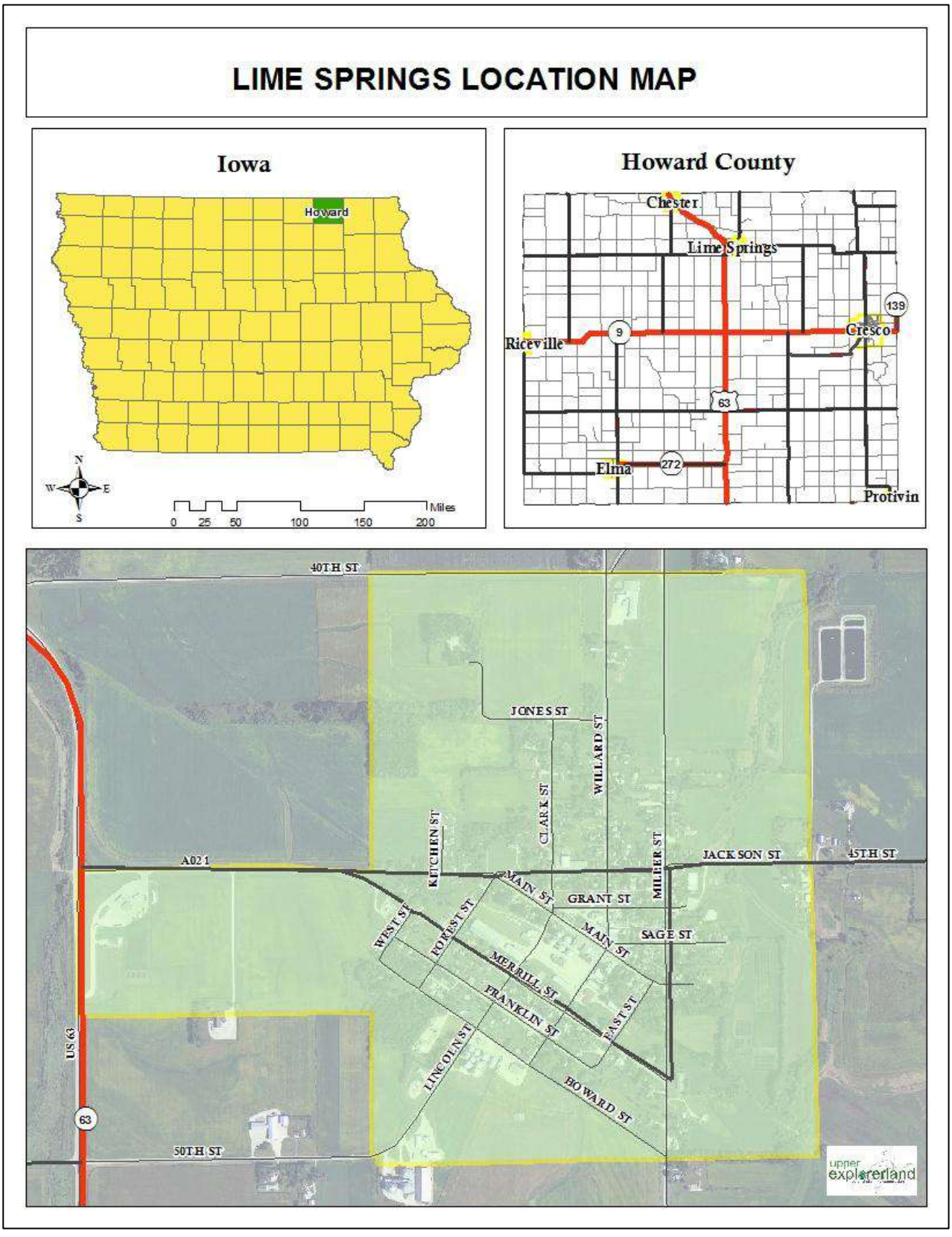
Introduction

Development of Lime Springs' Comprehensive Plan begins with an overview of the community based on known information from past to present and projections for the next 20-year planning horizon. This section gives an overview of location, history, demographic trends and background information including past, present and future population.

Location

The City of Lime Springs is located in Howard County in Northeast Iowa. Lime Springs sits on the Northern Howard County border, just a few miles from the Minnesota state line. US Highway 63 travels along the western edge of the city. The Upper Iowa River flows just north of the community. Figure 2 illustrates the location of the city in relation to the county, region and state.

Figure 2: Location Map



History

The history of Lime Springs begins in a location north of the current town on the banks of the Upper Iowa River. This "old town" of Lime Springs was first settled by Oscar Chesebro and Joseph Knowlton, in the year 1854; and in 1857, the town was platted by land speculators, O. and W. O. Wood. The village soon grew to comprise two stores, one blacksmith shop, a wagon maker, tavern, school house and 12 to 14 homes by 1859. In that year, a grist mill was built by M. M. Marsh and finished in 1860. Over the years it has milled grains and provided hydroelectric power to surrounding communities. Today the mill, now known as Lidtke Mill, is an historic site open for tours that offer visitors a look into an entirely preserved mill. The rollers, silk bolter, fanning mill, grain elevators and complex belt system remain exactly as they were in 1960 when Herman Lidtke closed up the business (Northeast Iowa Tourism Association, 2012).

In 1868, the railroad located its Lime Spring Station about a mile south of the "old town" of Lime Springs, which caused both businesses and residents from the "old town" to move closer to the station over time. The town was then known as Lime Spring Station, but it was also known formally as Glen Roy Post Office to avoid confusion with the "old town." Lime Spring Station soon grew into a bustling town with many businesses, residents, churches and a school. Lime Spring Station was platted in 1867 and the community of Lime Spring was incorporated in 1876 (Fairbairn, 1919). In 1949, the "s" was officially added to the end of Lime Springs by the post office (Howard County Economic Development, 2011).

Over its history the community has suffered two devastating fires. In 1901, the "Big Fire" destroyed all the buildings along both sides of Main Street. This led to the rebuilding of brick buildings, which still stand today. A second fire occurred on Easter Sunday in 1927 and destroyed eight buildings including the opera house and lumber yard on Center Street (Howard County Economic Development, 2011).

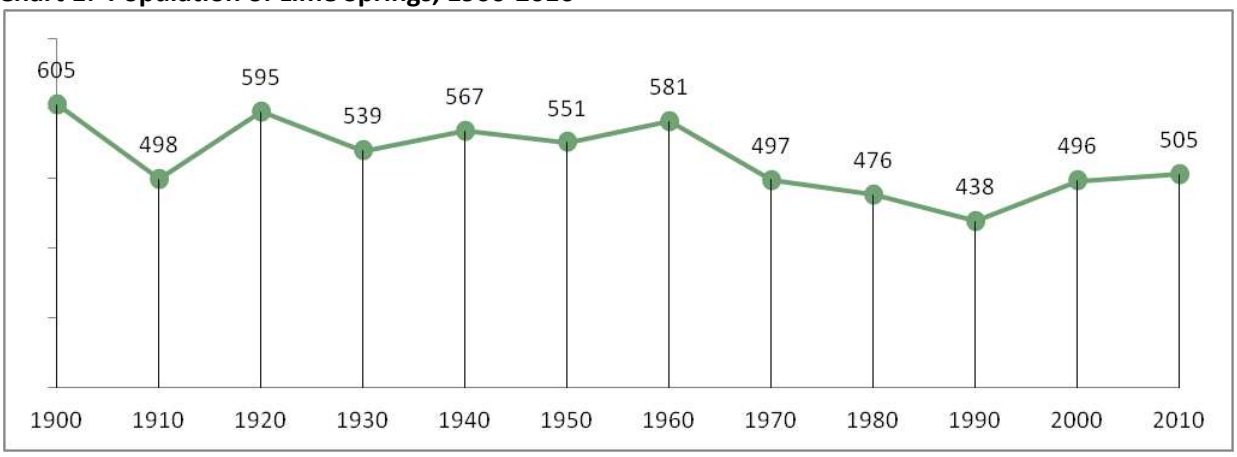
Population Characteristics

The study of population within a Comprehensive Smart Plan is important because it provides a statistical and historical profile of the community. This section will provide a variety of information that describes demographic trends and projections compiled for the City of Lime Springs.

Population Trends

The population of Lime Springs is 505 as of the 2010 Census. The community experienced its highest population of 605 in 1900. Since that time, the population has fluctuated, but has experienced an overall decline of 100, a negative growth rate of .15%. The following chart shows the decline in the population of Lime Springs since the turn of the century.

Chart 1: Population of Lime Springs, 1900-2010



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

The following table shows, by decade, historical trends of the population for Lime Springs in comparison to Howard County. The community has experienced a population increase since 1990. The last time Lime Springs had over 500 residents was in 1960. Howard County's population has also decreased overall through the decades but the 2010 population is the lowest the county has ever reported.

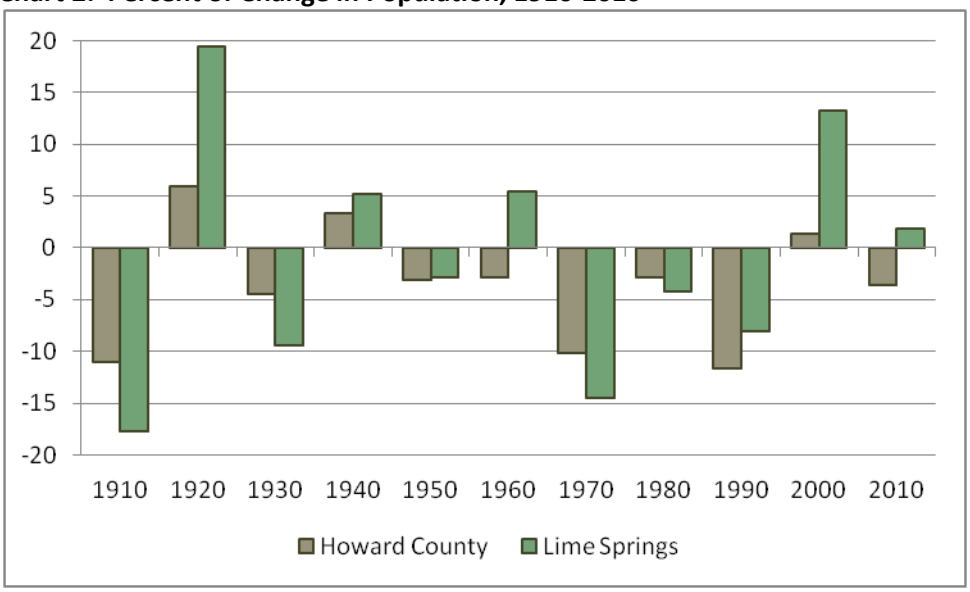
Table 1: Historical Population Trends for the City of Lime Springs and Howard County

Year	Lime Springs		Howard County	
	Number	Percent Change	Number	Percent Change
1900	605		14,512	-
1910	498	-17.7	12,920	-11
1920	595	19.5	13,705	6
1930	539	-9.4	13,082	-4.5
1940	567	5.2	13,531	3.4
1950	551	-2.8	13,105	-3.1
1960	581	5.4	12,734	-2.8
1970	497	-14.5	11,442	-10.1
1980	476	-4.2	11,114	-2.9
1990	438	-8	9,809	-11.7
2000	496	13.2	9,932	1.3
2010	**505**	**1.8**	**9,566**	**-3.6**

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012); (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011)

Chart 2 demonstrates the variation in the percent of population change over time in Lime Springs as compared to the county. While both follow the same general change, Lime Springs, because of its lower overall population, suffered larger percentage fluctuations in all but three time periods, whether positive or negative. The loss or gain of 30 people can present a big change to a community the size of Lime Springs.

Chart 2: Percent of Change in Population, 1910-2010



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

Table 2 shows the population figures for all of the incorporated communities in Howard County, as well as the state and county populations. As previously noted, Lime Springs experienced a decrease in population from 1970 to 1990, but is since on an upward trend. In contrast, the other communities and the county have all had a declining population from 2000 to 2010.

Table 2: Population Trends of Selected Communities

Community	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Chester	185	175	158	151	127
Cresco	3,927	3,860	3,669	3,905	3,868
Elma	601	714	653	598	546
Lime Springs	**497**	**476**	**438**	**496**	**505**
Protivin	333	368	305	317	283
Riceville	877	919	827	840	785
Howard County	11,442	11,114	9,809	9,932	9,566
State of Iowa	2,825,368	2,913,808	2,776,755	2,926,324	3,046,355

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)(U.S. Census Bureau, 2011)

Table 3 provides a detailed age breakdown of the city's population, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2000 and 2010. In general, this table shows which age cohorts grew and which declined between 2000 and 2010. The largest age group increase was the 45-54 year range and the largest decrease was noted in the 35-44 year range.

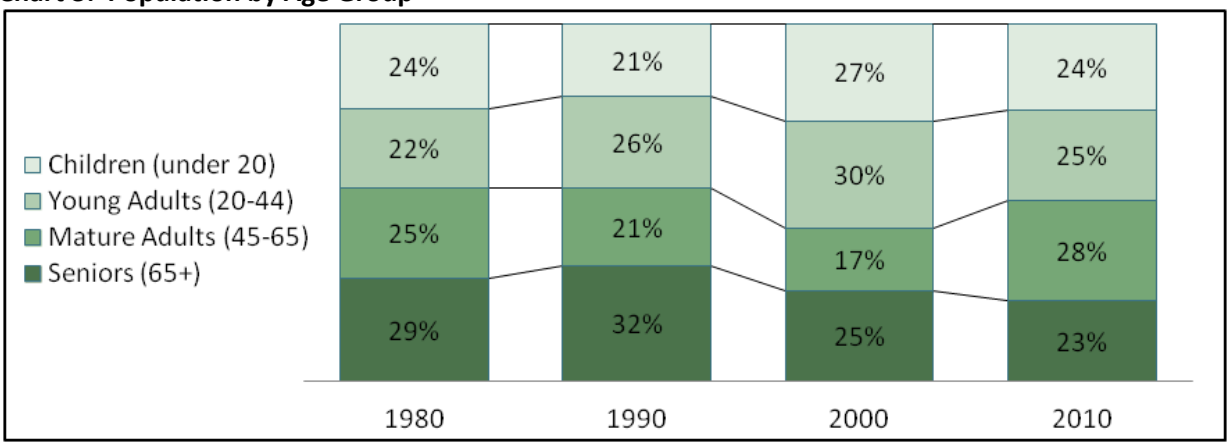
Table 3: Age Cohorts for the City of Lime Springs

Age Cohort (in years)	2000		2010		Population Change
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	
Less than 5	30	6.0	26	5.1	-4
5-9	29	6.0	42	8.3	13
10-14	44	9.0	29	5.7	-15
15-19	32	6.5	26	5.1	-6
20-24	18	3.6	20	4.0	2
25-34	50	10.0	58	11.5	8
35-44	81	16.3	49	9.7	-32
45-54	53	10.5	82	16.3	29
55-64	33	6.7	59	11.7	26
65-74	57	11.5	42	8.3	-15
75-84	57	11.5	47	9.3	-10
85+	12	2.4	25	5.0	13
Total	**496**	**100.0**	**505**	**100.0**	-9

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

Chart 3 demonstrates the change of Lime Springs' population distribution from 1980 to 2010 reduced to four age groupings. Lime Spring's young adult and children population groupings fluctuate a fair amount, but stay around 50 percent, indicating an ability to retain younger families within the community. The senior population saw a large decline in the 90s, but has since stayed fairly steady at 23 percent. In 2000, the mature adult group saw its smallest population percentage in the last four decades, but has rebounded significantly, indicating that many in the young adult age group have continued to stay in the community. As of the 2010 Census, Lime Springs has a fairly even distribution of its population across age groups.

Chart 3: Population by Age Group

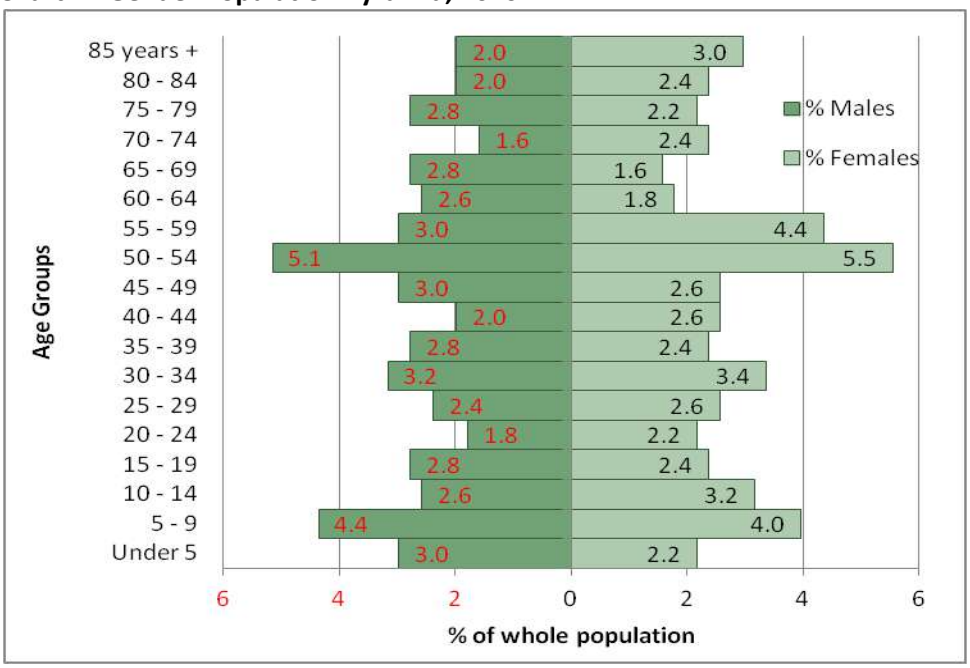


Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

Another way to look at the population distribution within a community is to place data into a population pyramid. A community should also be aware of its gender balance as it may provide insight into a healthy community balance and useful information to potential employers and

businesses looking to locate in the community. Lime Springs' population remains fairly balanced gender-wise until the age of 55 and older, when females become the larger part of the total population (see Chart 3). After the 55-59 age groups, the male and female breakdown fluctuates back and forth with females having the largest population in the 85 and over age group. This is most likely explained by female life expectancy being longer than males. It should also be noted that health advancements have continually increased the life expectancies of both genders. The community recognizes the importance of this trend and will take the necessary steps to ensure the aging population's needs are met.

Chart 4: Gender Population Pyramid, 2010



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

Population Projections

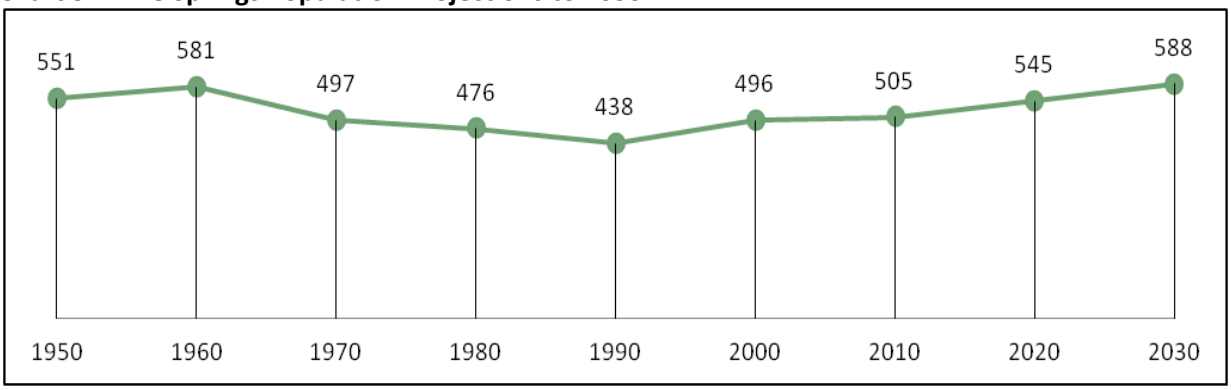
Future population statistics can be impacted by several factors, including culture, infant mortality, quality of health care, life expectancy and others. Table 4 projects the population of Lime Springs to the year 2030. The numbers were calculated based on Lime Springs' 20 year growth rate of .76%. These projections were made using historical population trends as their basis and do not express an exact population figure. If the city continues to see an annual growth rate of .76% Lime Springs could reach a population of 588 by the year 2030. Chart 5 indicates what this projection looks like as a continuation over the decades from 1950.

Table 4: Lime Springs Projected Population Based on Previous Two Decades (2011-2030)

YEAR	PROJECTION		YEAR	PROJECTION
2011	509		**2021**	549
2012	513		**2022**	553
2013	517		**2023**	557
2014	521		**2024**	561
2015	524		**2025**	566
2016	528		**2026**	570
2017	532		**2027**	574
2018	537		**2028**	579
2019	541		**2029**	583
2020	545		**2030**	588

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012); (UERPC, 2012)

Chart 5: Lime Springs Population Projections to 2030



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012); (UERPC, 2012)

Population Summary

Lime Springs has historically shown a fluctuating population of decline followed by growth; with its current population being the eighth largest in its history. The 2010 Census marks the first time that Lime Springs has experienced a back to back decade population increase since the Census of 1900. Lime Springs enjoys a steady population of children and young adults, an increase in the middle-aged population and a constant senior population. As with most small rural Iowa communities, Lime Springs has very little diversity in race, with all but three counted in the 2010 Census self-identifying as "white." Ethnically, 43% of the community is of German ancestry, with Irish and Norwegian ancestries making up another 17% each (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY CHARACTER & CULTURE

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This element identifies characteristics and qualities that make the municipality unique and that are important to the municipality's heritage and quality of life.

Introduction

Community character encompasses all the characteristics that make a community unique. The physical character of a community, such as its architectural styles and open space, is visually apparent. Other qualities that are part of community character are less tangible, such as heritage, culture and values. Community character encompasses those aspects of the city that are important to the quality of life in Lime Springs.

The community of Lime Springs is a caring, family friendly community whose residents take pride in its character and culture. When asked to identify or define what makes Lime Springs a special place, residents identified several cultural, historical and natural resource amenities. This section will explore the community facilities, events, clubs and natural resources that residents feel are important and would like to preserve.

Visual Characteristics

Some of the visual characteristics of Lime Springs that make it unique are its downtown buildings. After the fire of 1901, Main Street was rebuilt with red brick buildings which have their own style and give the community a rich historic look. Landscaping, murals and recently completed beautification projects, such as planters and way finding signage, are also visual characteristics that make Lime Springs unique. The following photographs show some of the community's unique buildings, murals and décor.

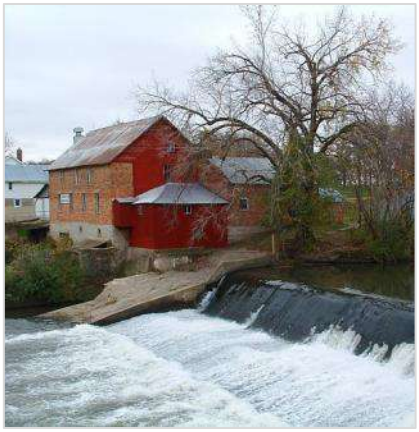
Photograph 2: (A & B) Lime Springs Buildings and Murals

Historic Places

The National Historic Preservation Act was passed by Congress in 1966. The Act pledged federal matching funds for historic preservation, authorized the National Register of Historical Places and provided a measure of legal protection for registered properties. While Lime Springs has several unique architectural buildings, it does not currently have any sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places within it city limits.

Lidtke Mill

Lidtke Mill, just north of the community, was added to the National Register of Historical Places in 1977. The mill is one of the few remaining examples of an 1860 flour mill in Iowa and retains the original equipment with working turbines. The mill sits on the bank of the Upper Iowa River at the location of the original Lime Springs site, referred to as "old town." At one time 150 homes were in the town and one still stands. The remaining home is a 1900 Victorian style home featuring late Victorian décor (Northeast Iowa Tourism Association, 2012); (IowaBeautiful.com, 2012). The turbine at the mill provided electricity to Lime Springs and Chester in the 1920s.



Photograph 3: Lidtke Mill

Community Culture

Community Organizations

Lime Springs has several community organizations which help build the social capital of the community. These groups work to support many of the community's activities.

The Lime Springs Community Club

The Lime Springs Community Club is a membership organization whose main purpose is "to promote the city by sponsoring events throughout the year" (Lime Springs Community Club, 2012). In addition, the group maintains the community's website and supports a Junior Community Club for children and youth from 3rd to 12th grades. Through the Junior Community Club, the group expects that participants gain a sense of pride in their community, find opportunities for volunteer service and build a long term commitment to the Community Club so that they remain engaged as adults.

The Oneota Club

The Oneota Club is a group of women in the Lime Springs area dedicated to the betterment of the community. Members volunteer at the local school, preschool, library, churches, community events and help with various projects. Members are also responsible for maintaining and decorating Kitchen Park. Each year the group raises funds at the annual Sweet Corn Days event which are then distributed to various community organizations as mini-grants for community projects (Lime Springs Herald, n.d.).

Scouts

Lime Springs supports Boy and Girl Scout troops engaging youth of all ages. One long term tradition is the Boy Scout Chicken Barbeque held each Father's Day at Lidtke Park. Eagle Scouts have been a great resource for the community as several Eagle Scout community betterment projects can be found about the community. Lime Springs scout groups lead and assist with many activities throughout the year to help the community and its residents.

Other Groups

Many other organizations work to improve Lime Springs and include several community church groups, the Library Board, the Pool and Park Board, Spring Ahead Learning Center, the Senior Citizens group, Lime Springs Legion and Legion Auxiliary, Lime Springs Elementary PATT group and the Lime Springs Fire Department. While each has its own focus and area of interest, the activities and projects undertaken by these community organizations make Lime Springs a better place for all residents.

Community Events

Sweet Corn Days

Sweet Corn Days are held each year on the second weekend in August and have been a tradition since 1982, when it was originally called Flea Market Day. The purpose of the original event was to raise money for new street signs. The event gave away free sweet corn and watermelon as an attraction to draw visitors. Today, the event lasts an entire weekend with activities such as a street dance, omelet breakfast, flea market, softball tournament, talent show, tractor pull and a parade.

Christmas in Lime Springs

This event, held the first Sunday in December, includes a craft show, performers, wagon rides and Santa Claus arriving by horse drawn wagon. Also featured is the Candlelight Festival of Trees contest winner and a silent auction to raise money for the community center.

Farmers Market

The Farmers Market in Lime Springs is held every Saturday morning throughout the summer at the City Park. As Lime Springs does not currently have a grocery store, this is a great opportunity to get produce close to home while supporting local producers. The Lime Springs Farmers Market is part of the Howard County Farmers Market circuit.

Arts & Recreation

Lime Springs Children's Theatre Troupe

The Lime Springs Children's Theatre Troupe is an artistic learning opportunity for the youth of the community. The Theatre Troupe got its start in 2006 as a fundraising event for the library and has since grown to produce several performances a year. The group has strong community support and attendance at the shows is always high.

Hayden Prairie State Preserve

The Preserve is located just west of Lime Springs and offers access to 240 acres of virgin prairieland. The preserve has inventoried over 200 different plant species, 46 species of native birds and 20 species of butterflies (Northeast Iowa Tourism Association, 2012).

Other Recreational Opportunities

Lime Springs' location near the Upper Iowa River offers an exceptional recreation opportunity for fishing, tubing and canoeing. Other opportunities include the city's outdoor pool, sports fields and recreation leagues.

Community Priorities

Funding

Lime Springs takes pride in its community and cares about its history and its visual character. The community has many ideas about improvements and upkeep but limited funding prevents the implementation of many of them. Opportunities to help with funding include recruiting citizen benefactors, establishing a city endowment fund and continued exploration of available grants and other funding opportunities.

Outdoor Pool

Photograph 4: Lime Springs Swimming Pool

The outdoor pool in Lime Springs is a treasured asset of the community and a unique amenity for the residents. The cost of maintenance, upkeep, employment and new regulations for the pool can be overwhelming considering the limited budget and size of Lime Springs. Keeping the pool in operation is an annual struggle for the community and new ADA compliance issues are expected to require costly improvements to the pool. However, prioritization of the pool by the city, and the support of community residents and local groups, are a large reason that the pool is able to continue operations. The city expects that efforts to draw in new visitors and the continued community pride and support of residents will be needed each year in order to maintain this community asset.

Veterans and History

Lime Springs is proud of its veterans, both current and past, and would like to build upon that history and offer remembrance. Ideas to accomplish this include a community plaque or stone, expansion of the local Memorial Day event, collecting veteran histories, newspaper articles and other items that can be displayed in a public location. In addition, the community seeks to celebrate more of its history and is researching historical military and stage coach trails.

Events

Events such as Sweet Corn Days are an important part of Lime Springs and efforts to encourage volunteerism and quality are something that will be maintained. Ensuring that each event is well-planned and well-executed will allow the event to continue to draw many people to the community. Community organizations rely on these events to raise funds for their activities and programs.

Volunteers

Volunteers make most of events in Lime Springs possible, and volunteer support of the community's recreational and cultural assets is vital to their existence. As in most small rural communities, utilizing local volunteers is imperative, as budgets limit what local governments can accomplish alone. In Lime Springs, many members of the community commute to other towns for employment, limiting the time many community members have available to be a part of committees or volunteering. In addition, a smaller population means a smaller pool of individuals from which to draw from. Renewed efforts to recruit untapped volunteers as well as younger residents can help ensure that the city's events, facilities and character that

residents enjoy will continue. The community sees potential in utilizing the school district's "Silver Cord Program," a community service program for high school youth. Engaging more community members as volunteers can help prevent "volunteer burnout" as well, by supporting the existing volunteers in their efforts.

Upper Iowa River

The Upper Iowa River offers a potential tourism draw for the community given its many recreational opportunities. Community members listed several recreational events that could be hosted or promoted: canoeing, fishing, boating, kayaking, paddle boating, rope swinging, camping, picnics and snowmobile races. One issue raised about the use of the Upper Iowa River is that nearby access is "silted in" and not in optimal condition for some activities.

Community Character and Culture Summary

Lime Springs has much to offer in the way of character and culture. Its unique downtown buildings, rich history, special events and community amenities are valued by the residents of Lime Springs. It is the strong social capital of Lime Springs that sustains most of the character and culture present in the community today. During the planning process, residents indicated that maintaining a small-town quality of life is very important to the future of the community. The community has identified several opportunities and issues to focus on in the coming years. Issues include the appearance of aging buildings, a lack of new volunteers and expensive facility rehabilitations. Opportunities were noted in the community's ability to capitalize on its rich history, its proximity to the Upper Iowa River and its community events.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: The distinct characteristics that Lime Springs residents consider unique and special to the identity of the community are preserved.

Strategy 1.1: Maintain and improve the community's "small town" characteristics.

Action: Support downtown building owners in beautification efforts.

Action: Honor veterans through the collection, education and display of items and stories as well as a public memorial.

Action: Establish a community endowment fund to provide perpetual support for community projects and activities.

Action: Continue the farmers market and look for unique ways to utilize the market to offset the lack of a grocery store.

Strategy 1.2: Maintain and improve the community's cultural and recreational facilities.

Action: Promote the utilization of the community center for events.

Action: Bring focus to other unique aspects of the community such as the old jail, the stage coach trail and military trail.

Action: Make needed improvements to the community pool: roof on concession stand, plumbing updates and concrete deck repair.

Action: Ensure Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance at community pool.

Strategy 1.3: The community's events are well-attended and strongly supported by the community.

Action: Continue to host the annual Sweet Corn Days and ensure a quality event for long term sustainability.

Action: Recruit new and younger volunteers for events and committees by looking for group sponsors, making direct calls and utilizing the Silver Cord Program.

Action: Demonstrate appreciation for volunteers through public acknowledgement and coupons for local establishments, etc.

CHAPTER 3: HOUSING

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

Introduction

In addition to reviewing population statistics, a comprehensive plan reviews pertinent housing data. Housing characteristics are indicative of the social and economic conditions of a community and are an important element of a comprehensive plan. Information in this section will provide data about the current housing stock as well as identify significant changes in the number of housing units and other housing characteristics. The ability of a community to provide an adequate housing supply for all persons and income levels is integral to its economic prosperity and the wellbeing of its inhabitants.

Existing Housing Characteristics

Occupancy Characteristics

As is the case in most Iowa communities, the predominant type of housing unit in Lime Springs is the single-family home. Table 5 provides general housing information from the 1990, 2000 and 2010 Census counts. There were 253 housing units in Lime Springs as of the 2010 Census, with a vacancy rate of about 6%. This was the lowest vacancy rate of the communities in Howard County.

As noted in Table 5, the number of total housing units has increased over the years and in the past decade, the vacancy rate declined significantly. Lime Springs has noted an increasing number of residents commuting to larger employment centers, yet choose to remain in Lime Springs because of its location and affordability.

Table 5: General Housing Information for the City of Lime Springs

Statistic:	1990	2000	2010
Total Persons	438	496	505
Total Housing Units	223	243	253
Occupied	203	220	238
Vacant	20	23	15
Vacancy Rate	8.9%	9.4%	5.9%
Persons Per Housing Unit	2.16	2.25	2.12
Average Family Size	2.65	2.81	2.77
Number of Families	140	145	143

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012); (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011)

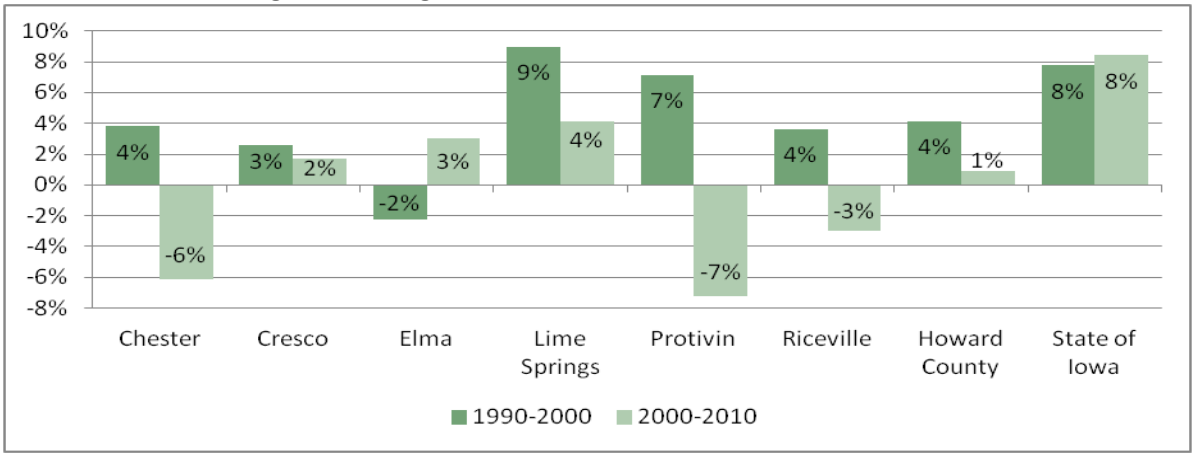
Table 6 provides a comparison of the total number of housing units between Howard County communities, the county and the state. Lime Springs experienced an increase in the number of housing units across all decades. Cresco, as well as the county and the state, also reported growth over each decade. Chart 6 shows the percent of change in housing units for each community, the county and the state. Lime Springs saw a greater percentage increase over both time periods than any other community and the county.

Table 6: Number of Housing Units in Selected Communities

Community:	1990	2000	2010
Chester	79	82	77
Cresco	1,746	1,791	1,821
Elma	270	264	272
Lime Springs	223	243	253
Protivin	168	180	167
Riceville	387	401	389
Howard County	4,155	4,327	4,367
State of Iowa	1,143,669	1,232,511	1,336,417

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

Chart 6: Percent Change in Housing Units



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

Table 7 compares the percentage of rental occupied housing units in each community, the county and state. In total numbers, Lime Springs reported a decrease of 12 rental units from 1990 to 2000 and an increase of 12 rental units from 2000 to 2010. While the number of rental occupied units has fluctuated over time for most of the county's communities, overall, the communities have similar rental occupancy rates.

Table 7: Percentage of Rental Occupied Units for Selected Communities

Community:	1990	2000	2010
Chester	25%	17%	20%
Elma	23%	24%	25%
Lime Springs	24%	21%	25%
Cresco	21%	14%	20%
Protivin	21%	22%	20%
Riceville	20%	22%	20%
Howard County	22%	21%	20%
State of Iowa	30%	28%	28%

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012); (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011)

Median rental rates for selected communities are shown in Table 8. Specifically, the table shows that each of the selected jurisdictions, including Lime Springs, reported significant increases in their median rents between 1980 and 2010. The fact that the rental rates have increased so dramatically, coupled with the fact that the number of rental units have also increased in Lime Springs, may indicate that there is a demand for rental units in the city.

Table 8: Median Rent for Selected Communities

Community	1980	1990	2000	2010	% increase, 1980-2010
Chester	$107	$210	$313	**$375**	250%
Cresco	$125	$237	$359	**$520**	316%
Elma	$79	$192	$317	**$385**	387%
Lime Springs	**$108**	**$223**	**$250**	**$525**	386%
Protivin	$75	$166	$270	**$338**	351%
Riceville	$119	$212	$315	**$499**	319%
Howard County	$112	$233	$333	**$508**	354%
State of Iowa	**$175**	**$336**	**$470**	**$607**	247%

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012); (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011)

Housing Permits Issued

Table 9 provides a breakdown of building permits issued by the City of Lime Springs over the last decade. Building permits are issued for the buildings themselves; total units are the number of living quarters within those buildings. From 2001 to 2005 Lime Springs saw 11 new single family units built, but since that time has only seen one new unit.

Table 9: Building Permits

Type of Housing	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Single Family	0	2	3	3	0	3	0	1	0	0	0
2-Family	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3-4 Family	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5+ family	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total units	**0**	**2**	**3**	**3**	**0**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Source: (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2011)

Value Characteristics

A breakdown of the 1990, 2000 and 2010 housing unit values for the city are shown in Table 10. In analyzing this information, it becomes apparent that the number of units valued between $50,000 - $99,999 increased significantly between 2000 and 2010; meanwhile, the number of units valued under $50,000 decreased dramatically. The reason for the increase in value is most likely due to inflation. Housing values in Northeast Iowa did not experience the housing bubble that much of the rest of the country did, and as a result, the region did not experience a price or value decline.

Table 10: Value of Owner-Occupied Single Family Dwelling Units in Lime Springs

Unit Value Ranges	1990		2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than $50,000	132	94.3	92	51.7	57	**30.3%**
50,000-99,999	6	4.3	76	42.7	113	**60.1%**
100,000-149,999	2	1.4	8	4.5	13	**6.9%**
150,000-199,999	-	-	2	1.1	2	**1.1%**
200,000-299,999	-	-	-	-	3	**1.6%**
300,000-499,999	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
500,000 or more	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Total	**140**	**100.0**	**140**	**100.0**	**188**	**100.0**

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) Note: 2010 data from 2005-2009 ACS

As in previous tables, Table 11 selects county jurisdictions and compares their housing values. The value of the units provides understanding of a community's housing stock and affordability. Lime Springs had the third highest median housing value in Howard County in 2010.

Table 11: Median Value of Specified Owner Occupied Units in Selected Communities

Community	1980	1990	2000	2010
Chester	22,500	18,800	49,000	**61,300**
Cresco	32,400	33,400	63,200	**77,600**
Elma	19,100	19,100	34,400	**57,100**
Lime Springs	**25,300**	**21,700**	**48,300**	**69,200**
Protivin	26,600	27,800	45,000	**61,300**
Riceville	24,300	24,800	48,500	**70,200**
Howard County	29,500	30,200	59,500	**84,800**
State of Iowa	**40,600**	**45,500**	**82,500**	**115,800**

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) Note: 2010 data from 2005-2009 ACS

Age Characteristics

One factor that may provide insight into a community's housing stock is the actual age of the existing units. Table 12 compares the age categories of existing housing units for Lime Springs, Howard County and the State of Iowa. Lime Springs has a slightly larger percentage of houses built before 1940 than does Howard County. Conversely, the city has a higher percentage of units that were constructed between 1960 and 1969.

Table 12: Age of Housing Units in 2010

Year Unit was Built	Lime Springs		Howard County Percent	State of Iowa Percent
	Number	Percent		
2000-2010	6	2.1%	3.8%	9.0%
1990-1999	25	8.8%	7.5%	11.0%
1980-1989	5	1.8%	5.4%	7.6%
1970-1979	19	6.7%	13.7%	15.5%
1960-1969	36	12.7%	11.4%	10.6%
1950-1959	23	8.0%	7.9%	11.2%
1940-1949	21	7.4%	8.6%	6.4%
1939 or Earlier	149	52.5%	41.7%	28.9%
Total	284	100.0%	100.0	100.0

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

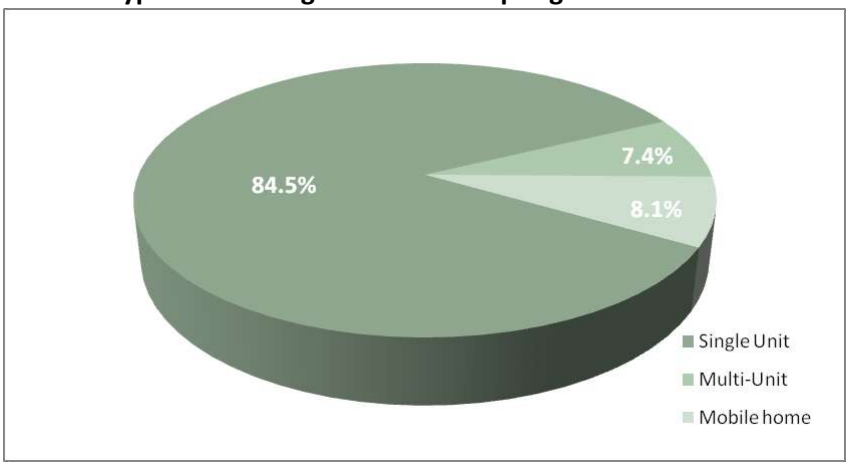
A higher percentage of older housing represents a high probability of maintenance issues inherent in older homes: plumbing, electrical, roofing, energy efficiency and for many, handicap accessibility. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), housing units built prior to 1980 contain the highest potential for lead paint hazards. In Lime Springs, over 87% of the homes face this risk.

Structural Characteristics

Lime Springs' housing stock is mostly single unit structures. As noted in Chart 7, about 85% are single unit structures, 7% are in multi-unit structures and 8% are mobile homes. According to

Census data, the multi-unit structures in Lime Springs consist of a duplex, a triplex and one 16-unit structure.

Chart 7: Types of Housing Units in Lime Springs



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) 2005-2009 ACS

Housing Projections

Table 13 shows the number of housing units that would be necessary to accommodate the population projections previously calculated. The figures in Table 13 were calculated by dividing the population projections documented in Table 4 by the current average household size of 2.12. In order to estimate the demand for future housing units in the community, it should be noted that there were 253 housing units reported by the Census Bureau in 2010. In addition to assuming the current average household size (2.12) will not change over time, this study also assumes that the figures in Table 13 are not affected by vacancy rates and that all of the units existing in 2010 are safe, habitable structures. Given the housing and population projections, Lime Springs could "need" about 35 additional housing units by 2030, which equates to about seven new units every five years. Lime Springs has averaged roughly one new unit every year over the last decade.

Table 13: Population and Housing Projections to 2030

Year	Pop. Projection	Housing Projection		Year	Pop. Projection	Housing Projection
2011	509	240		**2021**	549	259
2012	513	242		**2022**	553	261
2013	517	244		**2023**	557	263
2014	521	246		**2024**	561	265
2015	524	247		**2025**	566	267
2016	528	249		**2026**	570	269
2017	532	251		**2027**	574	271
2018	537	253		**2028**	579	273
2019	541	255		**2029**	583	275
2020	545	257		**2030**	588	277

Calculations based on 2.12 average household size per dwelling unit

Housing Programs

The City of Lime Springs utilizes several federal, state and regional housing programs to serve its residents. The following list identifies several housing assistance programs available to the city and its residents that are administered through regional agencies.

Section 8 Rental Assistance is HUD's federally funded program to provide rental assistance to low-income families to secure decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing in a non-discriminatory manner from the private rental market.

Lease Purchase Affordable Housing Program is a rent to own program through Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation (NEICAC). It includes the creation of housing advisory committees in each county. Committee findings are used to determine what is missing as part of each county's affordable housing scenario. NEICAC's Board of Directors evaluates these findings to guide the housing program towards its next project. NEICAC has recently built six affordable homes in the neighboring community of Cresco. These are three bedroom homes that are rented for one to three years by a first-time homebuyer family who meets the program's income guidelines. These homes are built for families who are at an income level that does not exceed 60% of the local average monthly income. Then, after taking the required Homebuyer Education Classes, the renter can buy the home for about half the cost of construction.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) through NEICAC provides many Northeast Iowans with the means to remain in their homes in safety, comfort and affordability. Services include a cost effectiveness energy audit, air leakage checks, insulation and all combustion appliances inspection for repair and/or replacement. NEICAC's own crews provide all but appliance and furnace repair services.

Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) provides assistance to those individuals who, without this assistance, would be homeless. To qualify, household income must be 50% or less of the average median income for the county. Income is determined at current monthly gross income projected forward for 12 months. An application may be made through a Family Service office.

The Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is designed to aid qualifying low-income Iowa households (homeowners and renters) in the payment of a portion of their residential heating costs for the winter heating season, to encourage regular utility payments, to promote energy awareness and to encourage reduction of energy usage through energy efficiency, client education and weatherization. All clients applying for this program will simultaneously be making an application for weatherization assistance as required by state law.

The Northeast Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund assists residents in a four-county region, which includes Howard County, with incomes less than 80% of Iowa Statewide Median Family

Income through low, no-interest or forgivable loans. The goal of the program is to develop, redevelop, rehabilitate and renovate single-family and/or multi-family owner-occupied and rental dwellings. Funds may be used for roof repair, furnace repair and replacement, energy efficiency updates, electrical and plumbing upgrades, handicap accessibility and homebuyer assistance.

Other Programs

A list of additional federal and state programs available to the city and its residents is attached as Appendix C.

Affordable and Accessible Housing

Housing affordability is an important consideration for a community and its residents. Affordable homes can attract and retain employees to the community. This can be a selling point and a competitive advantage for area employers. Affordable homes also support the local workforce so they can live closer to their jobs. A healthy mix of housing options ensures opportunities for all individuals to improve their economic situation and contribute to their communities. Chart 7 indicates the median home value and median household income for Lime Springs over time. One rule of thumb is that to be "affordable" the purchase price of housing should be no more than three times a household's annual median income. In lieu of a purchase price, one can compare median housing values to median income. Using this comparison, the median value of a home in Lime Springs is 1.6 times the median household income in 2010. This places the local housing market within the affordable range for Lime Springs' residents.

Chart 8: Median Home Value Compared to Median Household Income

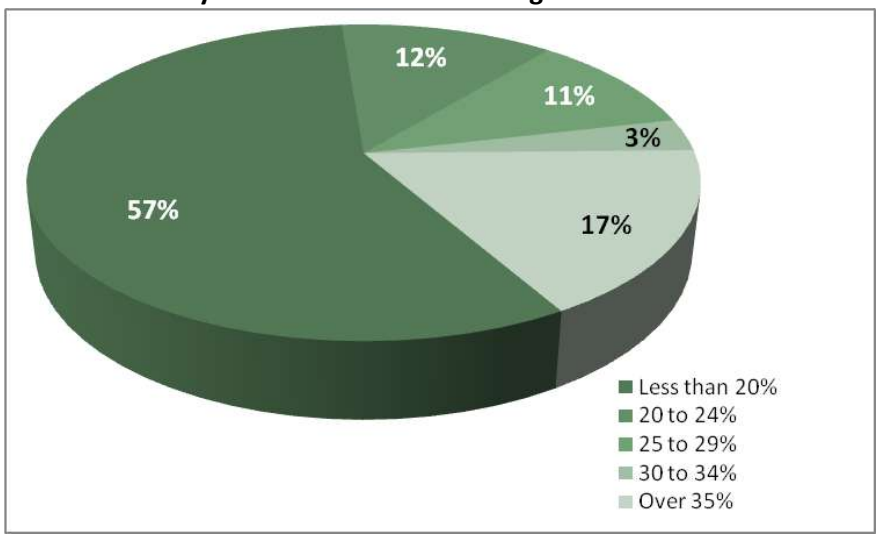
	1990	2000	2010
Median Home Value	$21,700	$48,300	$69,200
Median Household Income	$22,059	$33,750	$42,596
Maximum Affordable Housing	$66,177	$101,250	$127,788

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012)

Another generally accepted definition of affordability is that a household to pay no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. Families who pay more than 30 percent of their

income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2012). Looking at Chart 9 below, roughly 20 percent of Lime Springs' households have housing costs that are considered unaffordable by these HUD standards.

Chart 9: Monthly Owner Cost as a Percentage of Household Income



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) 2005-2009 ACS

Community Priorities

Preservation & Rehabilitation

Residents in Lime Springs expressed concern that some homes in the community are in need of repair and upkeep. Lime Springs has several homes that have historic significance and should be preserved and maintained. The condition of a community's housing stock is an important aspect to quality of life, pride and the attractiveness of a community. Potential solutions include a housing rehabilitation program or some other type of assistance, enforcement and or creation of ordinances to address blight.

Photograph 5: Lime Springs Housing Example

Housing Diversity

Residents feel the community has a sufficient number and variety of housing to meet the needs of its current and future residents, but recognized some issues. While Lime Springs has a large number of single family homes in the community, it is lacking rental units that are affordable to young families and elderly residents. Population forecasts indicate a steady population increase, and a city goal to attract more residents to the community means more housing is

potentially needed to meet those demands. Ensuring that different housing options are available can help entice new residents to the community. Opportunities include rehabilitation of existing structures, possibly turning bigger single story homes into multi-unit properties, fixing up second story units in the downtown and keeping an inventory of lots for potential new development.

Attraction & Incentives

Attracting potential residents and developers to the community is a challenge as employment and shopping options are limited. Lime Springs is developing into a bedroom community for commuters to employment centers in nearby Cresco, New Hampton and even Rochester, MN. Encouraging business growth that provides shopping and other services can help attract more new residents to the community. Additional opportunities include identifying existing businesses that could offer services and retail that the community is currently lacking and establishing incentive programs, grants and other programs for new retail businesses.

Flood Potential

Lime Springs does have some areas in the community, especially along the south eastern portion of the community, that have flooding potential. Ensuring no new development of homes in the floodplain and that proper flood mitigation measures are taken should be reflected in the city ordinances.

New Residents

Community members noted that new residents in the community do not always feel welcomed. One idea for changing this perception is to establish a "welcome wagon" that would offer information about the community and an invitation to participate in community activities. This effort would help inform new residents of different clubs, events and businesses available in the community and help with the community's goal to recruit new volunteers. Another opportunity identified was the need to add available housing information to the community website.

Housing Summary

Overall, the housing picture in Lime Springs is positive. Housing values are steadily increasing, but remain affordable to families and attractive to commuters. A growing population and low vacancy rate suggests that Lime Springs could see some housing development in the future. With the growing population, concerns arose over the need to welcome and orient new residents to the community and its social opportunities. The idea of a "welcome wagon" was suggested as a way for the community to help new residents get familiarized with all that Lime

Springs has to offer. Lime Springs has a nice mix of housing types that fit the current makeup of the community. There were some concerns voiced about the lack of rental properties for younger families and an eventual lack of housing in town suitable for seniors. The community will monitor these situations to ensure adequate housing for all. Some issues over property upkeep exist and many can be solved through existing ordinance enforcement and a little neighborly assistance (e.g. shoveling snow on sidewalks). The community will be more proactive in sharing housing program information with residents to promote housing rehabilitation.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: A variety of quality housing opportunities exist for all segments of the city's current and future population.

Strategy 1.1: Promote adequate housing opportunities for all persons including low and moderate income, elderly and residents with special needs.

Action: Conduct a housing survey to assess needs.

Action: Develop a housing rehabilitation program to maintain affordable housing in the community.

Action: Encourage the development of rental housing in Lime Springs that accommodates low-to-moderate income families.

Strategy 1.2: Utilize and support local initiatives to improve the housing conditions within the city.

Action: Work with local non-profit agencies to identify and promote housing assistance and rehabilitation programs to residents.

Action: Apply for funding assistance for homeownership and for the rehabilitation of substandard or vacant housing units.

Strategy 1.3: Rehabilitate and preserve the existing housing stock in the city.

Action: Review, update and enforce housing codes such as nuisance ordinances.

Goal 2: Encourage housing that supports sustainable, healthy and quality development patterns.

Strategy 2.1: Encourage housing development to conserve natural resources and make efficient use of the land.

Action: Work with local real estate agents and land owners to inventory existing lots and properties to determine whether existing infrastructure (water, sewer, roads) is site ready.

Action: Update the city's website to include available properties in the community.

Action: Establish zoning to keep housing development away from potential flood prone areas and other land use conflicts.

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section identifies goals, strategies and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of economic development and employment opportunities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an analysis of current industries and economic activity and identify economic growth goals for the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify locations for future brownfield or grayfield development.

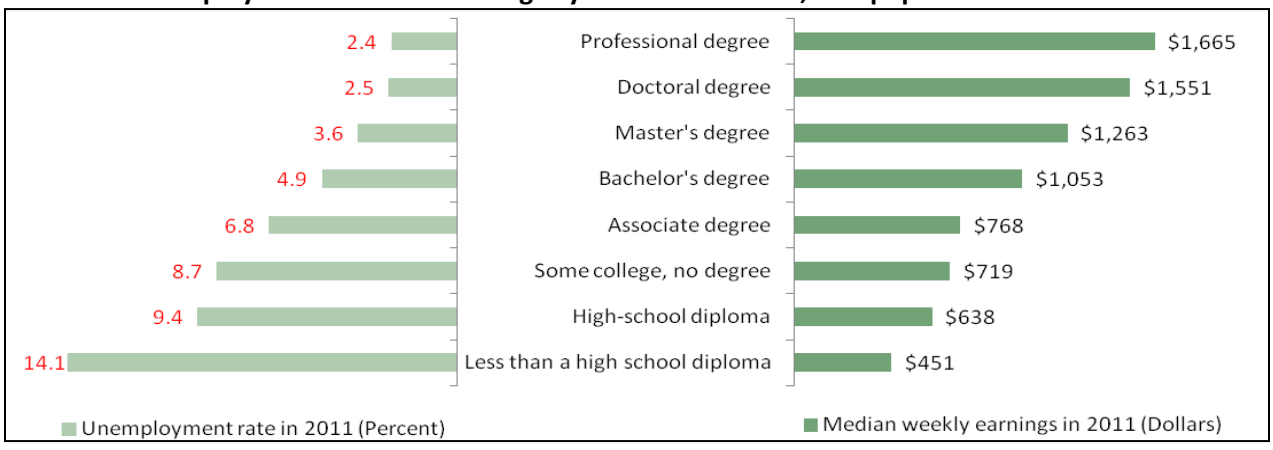
Introduction

Economic development is reliant upon understanding the community's workforce and its existing business environment. Knowing this information can help community leaders develop a plan to create sustained economic growth. Sustained economic growth is important for providing sufficient incomes for the local workforce, profitable business opportunities for local employers and tax revenues for the city. There is no alternative to private sector investment as the engine for economic growth, but there are many initiatives that communities can support to encourage investments where the community feels they are needed the most, whether to improve the workforce or support businesses. This section will provide background on the community's workforce and existing business structure and set forth goals for future economic development in the community.

Educational Attainment

One factor that has influence over personal income and employment is a person's educational level. Recent data from Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) shows the correlation between education, weekly earnings and unemployment. Chart 10 illustrates BLS data showing that higher education levels result in higher earnings and lower unemployment rates.

Chart 10: Unemployment Rate and Earnings by Educational Level, U.S. population 25 Years and Over



Source: (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012)

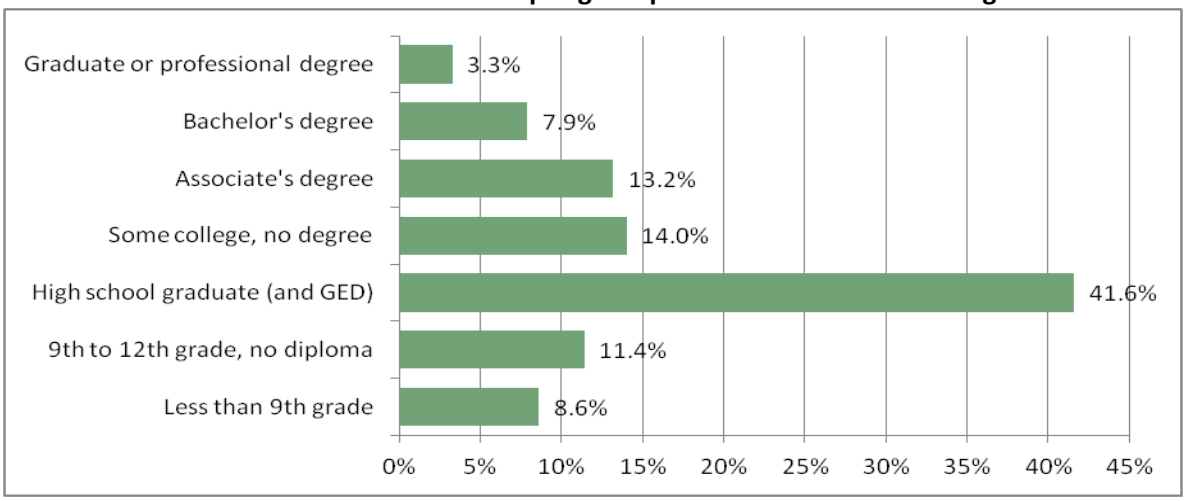
Understanding the relationship between education, earnings and unemployment provides insight into a community's own situation. Table 14 compares the levels of education for Lime Springs and Howard County residents for 2010. As is common for a small community in Iowa, the majority of residents graduated from high school and some went on to obtain some college experience. Lime Springs has a higher percentage of individuals who have only achieved a 9-12th grade education with no diploma than the county overall. Of those in the county without a high school diploma, Lime Springs' residents over 25 account for 9% of the total. 38% of Lime Springs residents have some college experience or higher, slightly less than the overall county achievement of 41%. Chart 11 offers an additional visual for the educational attainment of persons over 25 in Lime Springs.

Table 14: Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years of Age and Older in 2010

Category	Lime Springs		Howard County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	34	8.6%	523	8.0%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	45	11.4%	336	5.2%
High School Graduate, Includes GED	164	41.6%	2,962	45.4%
Some College, No Degree	55	14.0%	1,381	21.2%
Associate Degree	52	13.2%	569	8.7%
Bachelor's Degree	31	7.9%	552	8.5%
Graduate or Professional Degree	13	3.3%	195	3.0%
Total	394	100%	6,518	100%

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) 2006-2010 ACS

Chart 11: Educational Attainment of Lime Springs' Population Over 25 Years of Age



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) 2006-2010 ACS

Not all persons over the age of 25 are in the labor force for a variety of reasons. The following section will focus on the segment of the population that is considered to be in the labor force.

Labor Force

Aging workforces and a shortage of critical talent are among the biggest challenges facing today's rural businesses. As such, an area's labor force will play a key role in expanding or creating new businesses or industries within the community. Community stakeholders can monitor education levels, current worker skill sets, occupations and unemployment rates to target economic development efforts that fit its existing workforce strengths. The availability of skilled workers is critical to the success of all businesses, especially when competing in an increasingly global economy. A community can further seek out opportunities and partnerships to develop its workforce to meet existing industry trends. The following table (Table 15) breaks down the labor force characteristics for Lime Springs and Howard County.

Table 15: Labor Force Characteristics, 2010

	Lime Springs	Howard County
Persons 16 +	431	7,566
Labor Force	334	5,221
% in Labor Force	77.5%	69%
Employed Labor Force	324	5.010
% Employed in Labor Force	75.2%	66.2%
Female 16 +	215	3,839
Females in Labor Force	159	2515
% in Labor Force	74%	65.5%

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) 2006-2010 ACS

Unemployment Rates

Unemployment rates are shown in Table 16. Iowa Workforce Development does not report individual statistics for Lime Springs; however, it is important to note that Howard County stayed fairly consistent with the state, with the exception of 2009 and 2010 when the nationwide recession had a local impact. Howard County felt the impact when its largest employer had to lay off much of its workforce. Iowa overall has fared well in comparison to the rest of the nation during the recession.

Table 16: Unemployment Rate Trends by Year

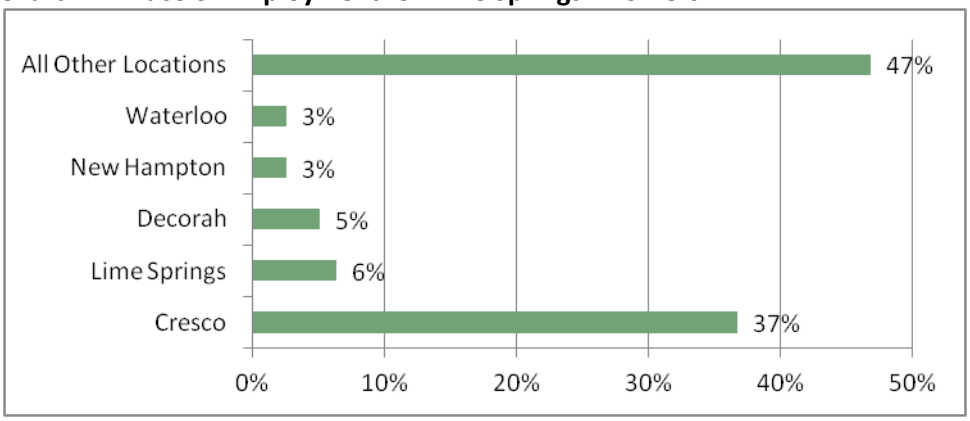
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Howard County	3.3%	4.0%	4.3%	4.7%	4.4%	3.6%	3.7%	4.9%	8.1%	6.9%	5.9%
State of Iowa	3.3%	3.9%	4.4%	4.6%	4.3%	3.7%	3.7%	4.4%	6.0%	6.1%	6.0%

Source: (Iowa Workforce Development, 2012)

Commuting

As previously noted, the working residents of Lime Springs often commute out of town for employment. A full 94% of Lime Springs' residents commute out of town for jobs. Chart 12 indicates where Lime Springs' workers are employed. The top five of "other locations" included Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, Mason City, Protivin and Ankeny. In addition, residents identified Rochester, MN as another location to which several community members travel to work.

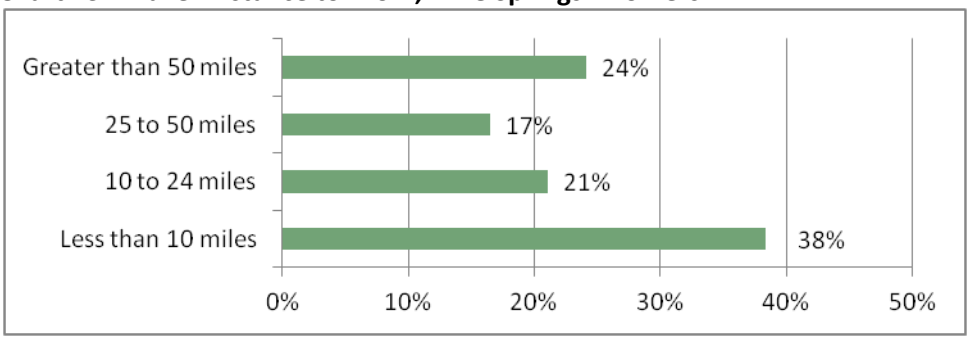
Chart 12: Place of Employment for Lime Springs' Workers



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2012)

Chart 13 indicates how far Lime Springs' workers commute for employment. According to a recent Laborshed Analysis for the county, those who are seeking to change or accept employment in the Howard County laborshed area are willing to commute an average of 27 miles one way for employment opportunities (Iowa Workforce Development, 2011). Census data indicates that as a whole, county residents travel an average of 16.5 minutes for daily commutes; in comparison, Lime Springs' residents travel an average of 28 minutes to their current employment location (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

Chart 13: Travel Distance to Work, Lime Springs' Workers



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2012)

Economic Base

Employment by Industry

Employment by industry identifies the types of industries in which residents of Lime Springs are employed. As noted in the Commuting section, many of these industries are located outside of Lime Springs. Table 17 indicates that the two leading employment industries for both Lime Springs and the county's residents are manufacturing and education, health care and social work. The last column in Table 17 calculates the number of Lime Springs' workers as a percent of the county's overall representation in each industry. Lime Springs accounts for 6% of the county's total employed persons, but in certain industries, such as construction and finance, insurance and real estate, Lime Springs accounts for 15% of the total employed persons.

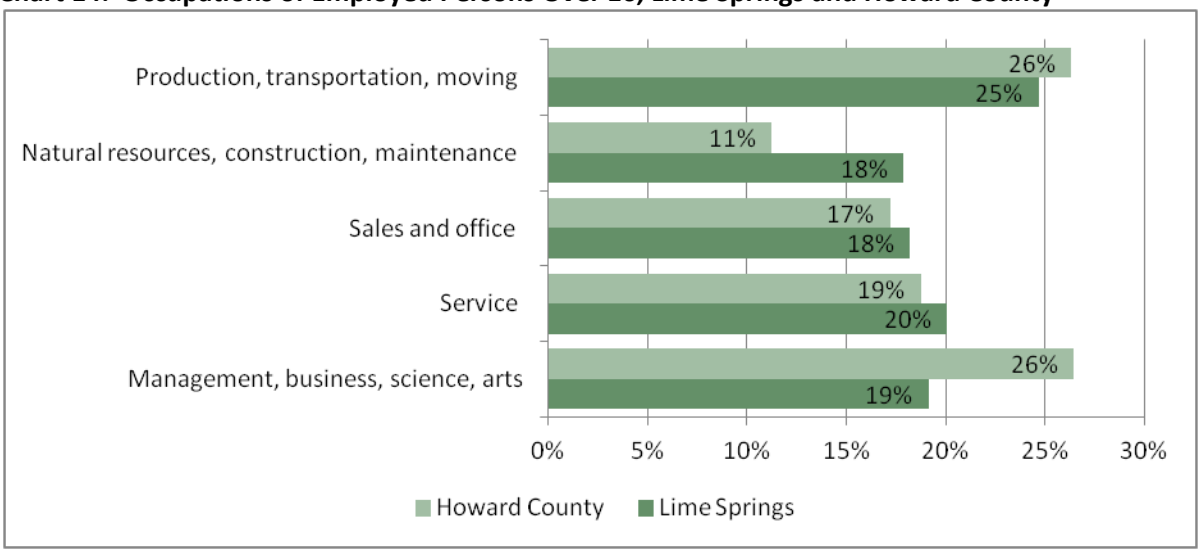
Table 17: Industry Classification of Employed Civilians, Over 16

INDUSTRY:	Lime Springs		Howard County		Lime Springs as a % of total employed
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Agriculture, mining, etc.	2	1%	492	10%	0%
Construction	40	12%	272	5%	15%
Manufacturing	56	17%	1,122	22%	5%
Wholesale trade	16	5%	256	5%	6%
Retail trade	12	4%	624	12%	2%
Transportation, utilities	19	6%	141	3%	13%
Information	0	0%	43	1%	0%
Finance, insurance, real estate	41	13%	267	5%	15%
Professional, management, admin	10	3%	109	2%	9%
Education, health care, social work	50	15%	984	20%	5%
Arts, recreation, hotel, food services	35	11%	273	5%	13%
Other services	40	12%	258	5%	16%
Public administration	3	1%	169	3%	2%
Total Employed Persons	324	100.0	2010	100.0	6%

Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) ACS 2006-2010

Chart 14 indicates the occupations of employees from Lime Springs and the county as a whole. Occupations describe the type of work in which an employee is engaged, regardless of the industry. There is no significant distribution difference among occupation types for Lime Springs' workers, but the highest percentage (25%) work in production, transportation and moving occupations. Lime Springs has a higher percentage of employed persons in the natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations than the overall county, and a lower percentage of workers in management, business, science and arts occupations.

Chart 14: Occupations of Employed Persons Over 16, Lime Springs and Howard County



Source: (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) 2006-2010 ACS

Business Retention and Growth

Lime Springs' residents indicated that attracting new businesses that offer basic necessities, such as groceries and hardware is a high priority. In addition, residents placed a high priority on supporting existing businesses. As previously noted, existing businesses currently employ 6% of its labor force (U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2012). Whether providing goods, services or jobs, Lime Springs' businesses all play critical role in the current and future success of the community.

Lime Springs has over 30 businesses which provide around 106 jobs, 14.2% of which are filled by Lime Springs' residents (U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2012). It is interesting to consider that if all of the jobs were filled by the available labor force in Lime Springs, 33% of the labor force could be working in Lime Springs, rather than 6%.

Retail

Lime Springs' residents expressed a desire for more retail opportunities; the lack of retail was a large concern, yet a potential opportunity. Table 18 provides information about the current retail trade situation in Lime Springs. "Retail sales" estimates the sales to consumers by establishment excluding sales to businesses. "Sales potential" estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. "Surplus/Leakage" presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. The table indicates that Lime Springs has a significant leakage in all retail trade areas. A negative value represents "leakage" of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A positive value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from

outside the trade area. Note this is just an analysis and current leakage does not necessarily indicate that a retail business would be sustainable in the community.

Table 18: Lime Springs Retail Trade Surplus and Leakage

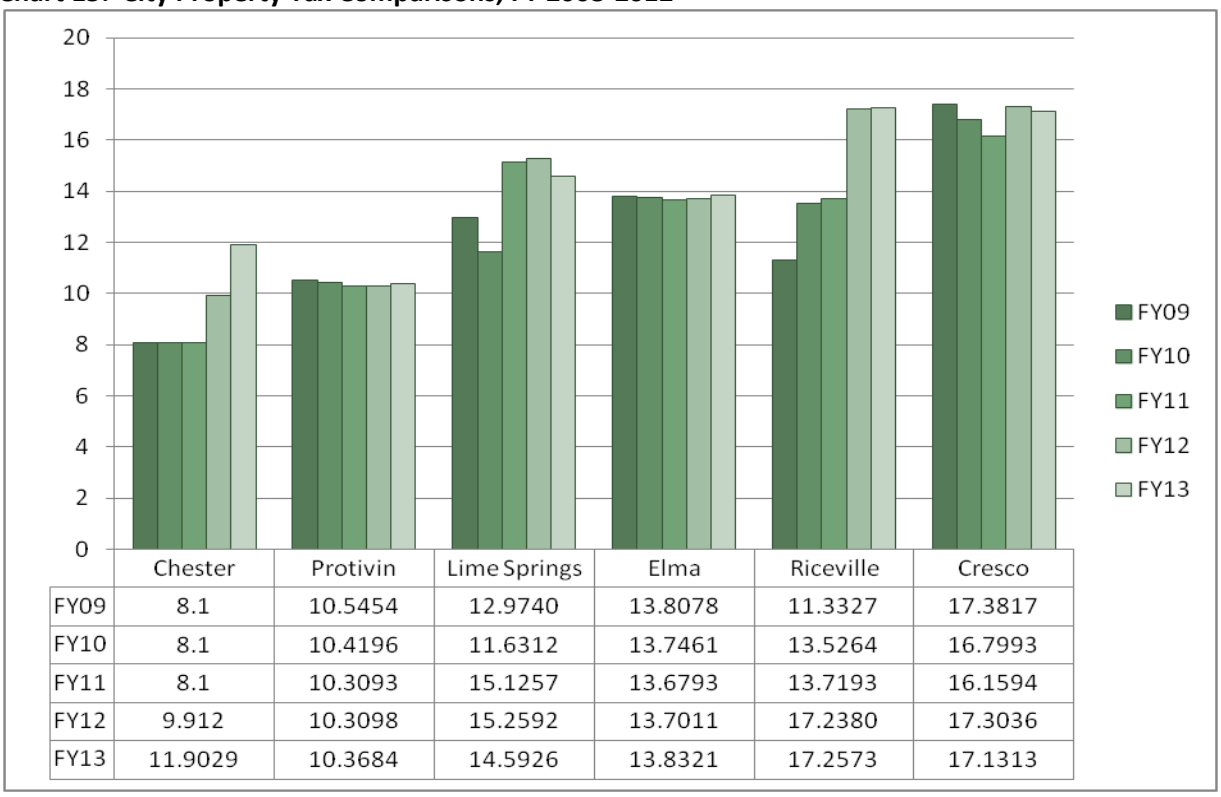
Industry Group:	Sales Potential	Retail Sales	Surplus/ Leakage	% Surplus/ Leakage
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	$984,996	$0	($984,996)	-100%
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores	$116,782	$0	($116,782)	-100%
Electronics & Appliance Stores	$74,996	$0	($74,996)	-100%
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	$199,650	$88,681	($110,969)	-56%
Food & Beverage Stores	$730,832	$209,269	($521,563)	-71%
Health & Personal Care Services	$154,489	$0	($154,489)	-100%
Gasoline Stations	$998,449	$0	($998,449)	-100%
Clothing & Clothing Accessories	$135,785	$0	($135,785)	-100%
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	$32,059	$0	($32,059)	-100%
General Merchandise Stores	$321,135	$0	($321,135)	-100%
Florists	$23,762	$0	($23,762)	-100%
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gifts	$1,558	$0	($1,558)	-100%
Used Merchandise Stores	$2,175	$0	($2,175)	-100%
Other Miscellaneous Stores	$4,687	$0	($4,687)	-100%
Nonstore Retailers	$341,361	$0	($341,361)	-100%
Full-Service Restaurant	$310,209	$88,215	($221,994)	-72%
Limited-Service Eating Places	$127,837	$0	($127,837)	-100%
Special Food Services	$13,556	$0	($13,556)	-100%
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	$26,888	$18,844	($8,044)	-30%
Totals:	**$4,601,206**	**$405,009**	**($4,196,197)**	**-91%**

Source: **(Esri, 2010)**

City Financials

An understanding of the financial condition of a community is very important in the planning process. Understanding where revenue comes from and where expenditures are going will assist a community in determining potential resources for future projects. Chart 16 provides a comparison of the city's portion of property tax rates for Lime Springs and the surrounding communities. Lime Springs' rates have fluctuated over the years, but generally the comparison illustrates that the higher the population of the community, the higher the tax rate becomes.

Chart 15: City Property Tax Comparisons, FY 2008-2012

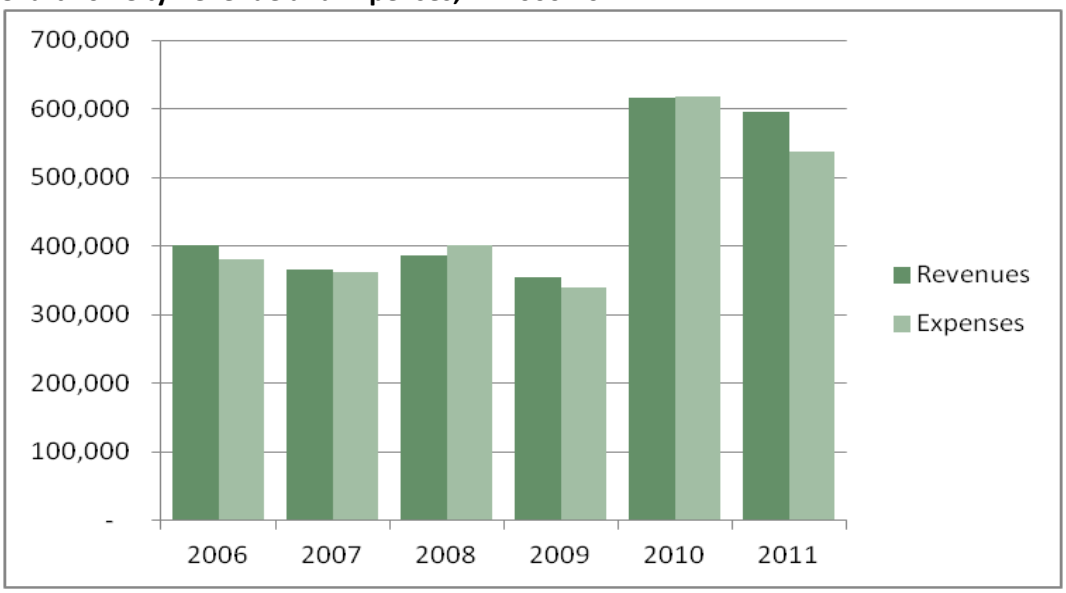


	Chester	Protivin	Lime Springs	Elma	Riceville	Cresco
FY09	8.1	10.5454	12.9740	13.8078	11.3327	17.3817
FY10	8.1	10.4196	11.6312	13.7461	13.5264	16.7993
FY11	8.1	10.3093	15.1257	13.6793	13.7193	16.1594
FY12	9.912	10.3098	15.2592	13.7011	17.2380	17.3036
FY13	11.9029	10.3684	14.5926	13.8321	17.2573	17.1313

Source: (Iowa Department of Management, 2012)

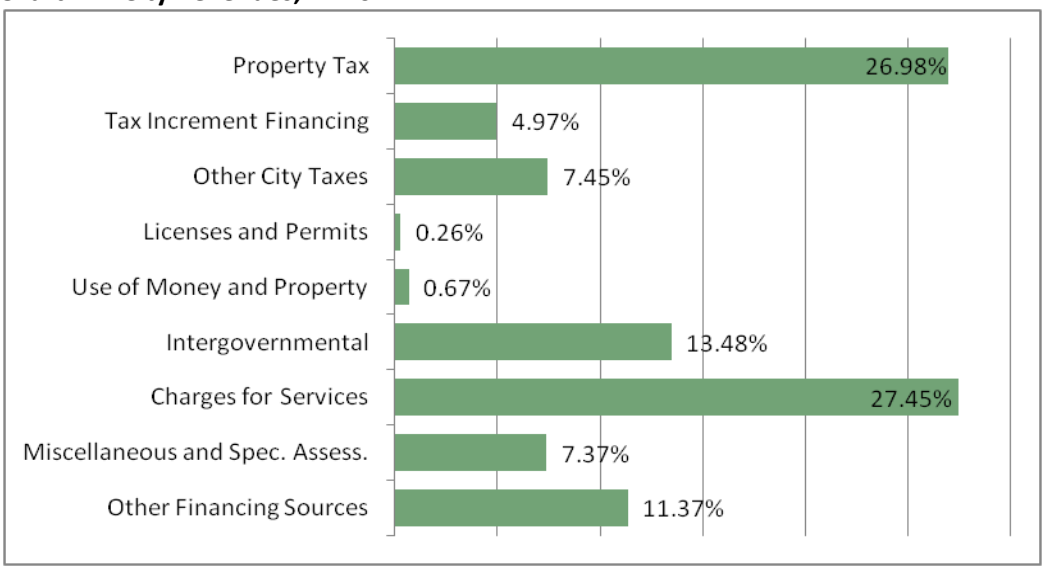
Chart 16 shows the city's revenue and expenses over the last six years. Lime Springs saw a large increase in expenses and revenue in 2010 likely due to community project expenses paid by bonding or grants.

Chart 16: City Revenue and Expenses, FY 2006-2011



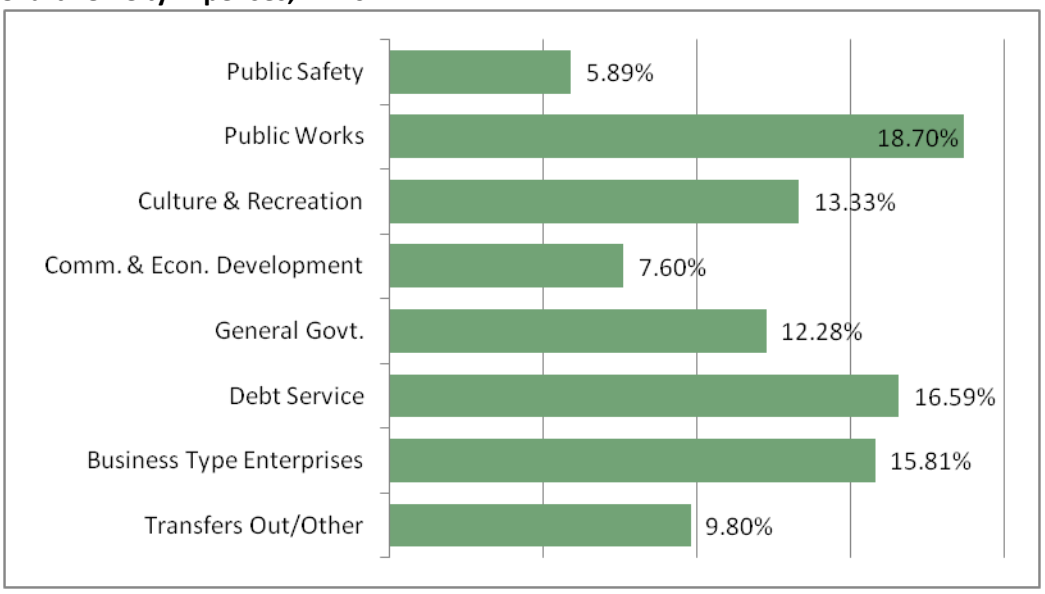
As Lime Springs plans for its future, an overview of how the city receives revenue and where it spends that revenue can identify areas with extra resources or potential savings. Charts 17 and 18 illustrate city's revenue sources and expenses for the 2011 fiscal year. The majority of the community's revenues came from two sources in the 2011 fiscal year: charges for services, such as water and sewer, and property taxes. Expenses are distributed across several categories. In the 2011 fiscal year, public works and debt service were the largest expense categories. Revenue and expense categories can fluctuate from year to year as larger community projects are undertaken.

Chart 17: City Revenues, FY 2011



Source: (Iowa Department of Management, 2012)

Chart 18: City Expenses, FY 2011



Economic Development Organizations and Programs

Economic Development Organizations

Howard County Business and Tourism (HCBT) is an invaluable resource for the City of Lime Springs. HCBT offers economic development, community development and tourism resources to the county's communities. In addition to technical assistance to communities, HCBT has funding opportunities available for existing and new business start-ups, business planning resources and assistance, as well as business workshops and seminars.

Loan Opportunities

Howard County Economic Development (HCED) Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) provides low interest gap loan financing up to $50,000 or 30% of project value.

HCED Board of Supervisors RLF offers a low interest gap loan program with financing up to $50,000 or 30% of project value.

Howard County Million Dollar Loan Program offers low interest loans from $10,000 to $100,000 for business growth or rehabilitation.

Other Local and Regional Opportunities

Enterprise Zone Benefits are available in Howard County to businesses and developers who meet a qualifying investment and create or retain at least 10 jobs. Potential benefits include a local property tax exemption, funding for training new employees, a refund of state sales, service, or use taxes paid to contractors or subcontractors during construction, and an investment tax credit of up to a maximum of 10% of the qualifying investment, amortized over five years.

Hawkeye Tri-County Rural Electric Cooperative (REC) RLF offers low interest loans for business growth within its service territory.

North Iowa Venture Capital Fund (NIVCF) II is looking to invest in early-stage, emerging and growth companies and attractive acquisition opportunities. Typical funding could provide $100,000 - $230,000 in direct equity or convertible debt financing.

Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Revolving Loan Fund (**RLF)** offers loans for natural resource-based business development. The fund has $50,000 to $60,000 available for lending. Businesses cannot be in agricultural production.

Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC) RLF and Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) provides financing up to $150,000 to new and expanding businesses in the UERPC service area. Eligible projects include any project that will create permanent employment, diversification of the local economy or increase the local tax base. Funds may be

used for land acquisition, site preparation, building acquisition, building construction, building remodeling, machinery and equipment, furniture and fixtures and working capital for business start-up and expansion activities.

Other Programs

A list of additional federal and state programs available to the city and its businesses is attached as Appendix C.

Community Priorities

Beautification

Lime Springs has implemented small aesthetic projects around the community such as planters around the business district, landscaping and light fixtures. The community looks to continue these efforts as projects and funding are identified. The potential for improving energy efficiency and storm water management should be considered when planning new beautification projects.

Photograph 6: Community Mural and Landscaping

Marketing & Signage

Improving the community's gateway at Highway 63 is a priority for the city. Lime Springs' downtown is one mile east of Highway 63, making beautification and marketing along the highway an area of high importance. Improving the landscape and information available to motorists on the highway could help draw in businesses and tourists, as well as offer a sense of community pride. Efforts could also be made to work with the Travel Plaza on Highway 63 to ensure that front line employees are trained in how to greet visitors, and given the tools necessary to promote the community's tourist and business attractions. Community members recommended the installation of an informational kiosk at the Travel Plaza as well. As the community expects growth to occur in the section between the highway and the city, maintaining a visually appealing gateway is vital for attracting prospects to the community.

Photograph 7: (A & B) Highway 63 and Signage at Lime Springs Corner

Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction

Lime Springs has lost several businesses in the last couple of years and efforts to support the remaining businesses are a main concern for residents. The city plans to develop a network of community stakeholders who have an awareness of the business climate and understand the potential city assistance available, who can act as business "first responders" as issues and opportunities arise. The community will place a marketing priority on filling existing buildings and lots where infrastructure is already in place.

Incentives

The community would like to develop incentives to attract new businesses or assist entrepreneurial startups. Incentive ideas the city will consider include establishing a tax incentive program such as tax increment financing (TIF) or tax abatement, water and sewer payment relief for businesses willing to occupy a vacant building, start-up assistance loans, facade improvement grants, etc.

Natural Resources

Lime Springs' location near the Upper Iowa River, Hayden Prairie and Lidtke Mill is an asset on which the community hopes to capitalize. Lime Springs needs to identify how to attract tourists and recreational users and how they can possibly use it for business growth and drawing in potential residents.

Economic Development Summary

The city has become a small bedroom community as 94% of its workforce is commuting out of Lime Springs for employment. The average commute is 28 minutes and 24% are traveling farther than 50 miles. The community wishes to attract retail and services that support a more convenient lifestyle for its busy residents. In addition, the community expects to continue beautification projects that make it a more attractive place and market the recreational opportunities it has to offer in order to attract tourists, businesses and workforce.

Demonstrating a strong work ethic, nearly 78% of its residents over the age of 16 are in the labor force, in contrast to 69% on a countywide level. As a whole, Lime Springs residents fall into a bell curve distribution of educational achievement, with 80% of residents over the age of 25 having a high school diploma or greater. Most Lime Springs workers are employed in manufacturing, education, health care or social work. Long term, the community hopes to attract industry that complements this skill set to the existing industrial park just off Highway 63 by fully marketing this convenient location and its labor force.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Provide an atmosphere for business expansion and development throughout the community, including the city's industrial park and downtown.

Strategy 1.1: Plan for, market and support new development as well as existing businesses.

Action: Encourage infill of vacant commercial structures by identifying or establishing specific incentives.

Action: Continue to support existing businesses and encourage their growth and expansion through a business retention and expansion (BRE) program.

Action: Plan for necessary infrastructure to attract and support economic development.

Action: Collaborate with and support Howard County Business & Tourism on issues such as marketing and employment growth.

Action: Continue to improve street maintenance to provide adequate access to local businesses for numerous modes of transportation.

Action: Consider a feasibility study for a grocery store or look for unique ways to obtain basic groceries through grocery delivery options, local business collaborations or the farmers market.

Strategy 1.2: Promote downtown as pedestrian friendly and safe by ensuring areas are clean, well-lit and offer proper signage and pedestrian amenities, such as benches and visual aesthetics that encourage foot traffic.

Action: Establish a Downtown Beautification Committee or group.

Action: Create a beautification plan that includes facade improvement projects, planters, parks, gardens and trees.

Action: Identify funding opportunities for community beautification when plan is in place.

Goal 2: Market the assets and businesses of Lime Springs.

Strategy 2.1: Utilize the traffic generated from Highway 63 to market businesses.

Action: Establish signage or a kiosk near Highway 63 to inform travelers about the businesses and services available in the community.

Action: Improve the gateway entrance off of Highway 63 onto Merrill Street through beautification project and signage.

Action: Work with the Travel Plaza to train and provide information to front line employees about Lime Springs' attractions and amenities.

Strategy 2.2: Capitalize on Upper Iowa River tourism and other recreational assets.

Action: Identify ways to link current businesses to the recreational assets of the area and promote new businesses that cater to these opportunities as a draw to the community.

CHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section includes goals, strategies and programs to guide the future development of a safe, convenient, efficient and economical transportation system. Plans for such a transportation system may be coordinated with state and regional transportation plans and take into consideration the need for diverse modes of transportation, accessibility, improved air quality and interconnectivity of the various modes of transportation.

Introduction

The transportation network is the backbone upon which a community bases its economy. It provides access to resources and connection to other communities to form a critical link for continued development and growth. Maintenance and repair, in addition to periodic additions and enhancements to this system, are essential for preserving connectivity for residents, visitors and businesses. Keeping pace with changes in transportation trends and network use is also essential to anticipate needed improvements and potential additions to the transportation network.

Inventory of Existing Transportation Facilities

Transportation facilities in the City of Lime Springs are basic and range from city roads to state highways and sidewalks. Residents of Lime Springs rely heavily on personal vehicles to meet most of their transportation needs. Lime Springs offers a limited sidewalk system, providing pedestrian access throughout the community (see Figure 5). A transit service is provided by Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation as an alternative to privately owned vehicles. Figure 3 shows the local, county and state transportation networks available in Lime Springs.

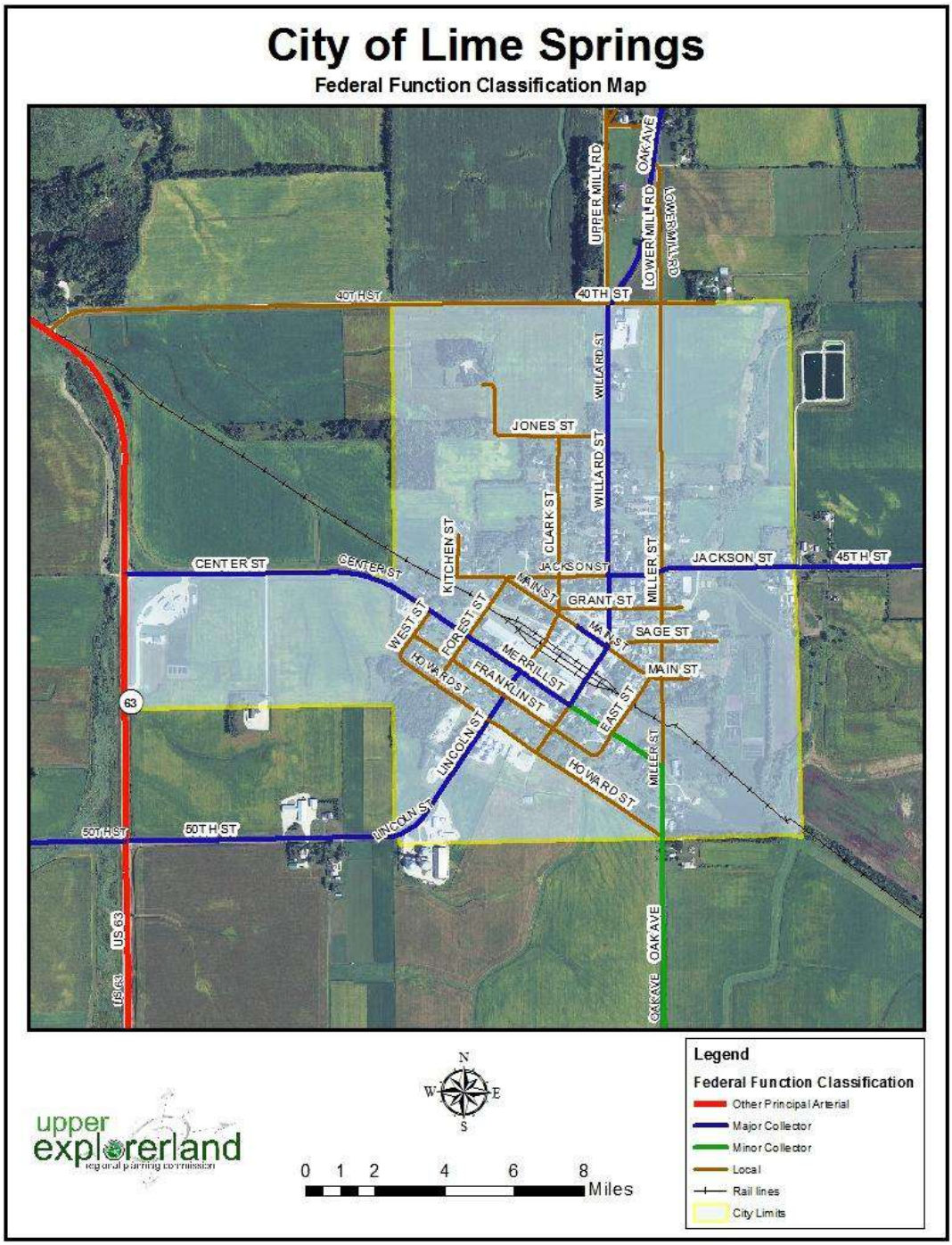
Functional Classification System

Chapter 306 of the Code of Iowa sets the functional classification of all highways, roads and streets in the state into categories according to the character of service they provide. The classification of streets and roads in each county is periodically updated to be current with city boundary changes and the function of the streets. The classification system serves as a basis for determining future priorities, funds distribution and jurisdiction over the various highway, roads and streets in the state.

Municipal streets are classified into three categories: the municipal arterial system, the municipal collector system and the municipal service system. Municipal streets that provide continuity to the state primary and county secondary road systems are classified as extensions to these systems. These range from freeway-expressway, principle and minor arterial and

major and minor collectors. The freeway-expressway system includes those roads that connect and serve major urban and regional areas with high volume and long-distance traffic movements. There are no roads classified in the county or the city as part of the freeway-expressway system. The nearest freeway-expressway roads are I- 90 (40 miles), I-380 (75 miles) and I-35 (60 miles).

Figure 3: Federal Function Classification Map



Principle Arterial: US Highway 63 runs north-south just west of Lime Springs

Major Collectors:

- Center Street to Merrill Street
- Merrill Street to Willard Street
- Willard Street north to 40th Street
- Jackson Street east out of town
- Lincoln Street south-west out of town towards 50th Street

Minor Collectors:

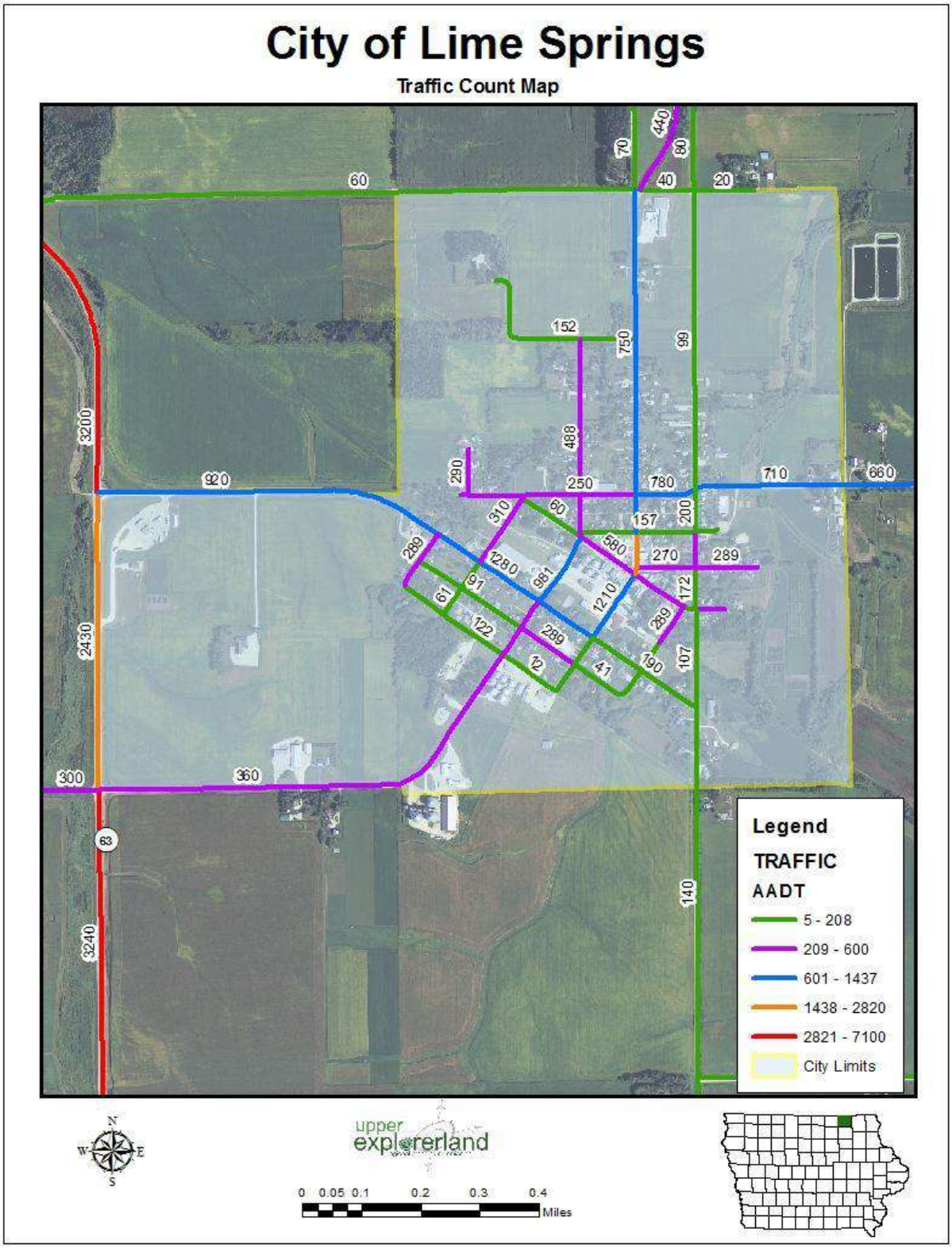
- Oak Avenue going north to East Merrill Street
- East Merrill Street to Lincoln Street intersection

All other roads in the Lime Springs planning area are classified as local roads by the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT).

Traffic Volumes

Traffic counts made by the Iowa DOT in 2009 (see Figure 4) identify the north-south principle arterial, Highway 63, as the busiest roadway in or around Lime Springs. Average daily traffic counts on Highway 63 near Lime Springs reach 2,956 vehicles per day (VPD) with a high of 3,240 VPD in the highway's busiest area near Lime Springs. Highway 63 has the highest traffic counts of all the roads in the county, reaching a maximum count of 3300 VDP at the southernmost part of the county. In the city limits, the highest VPD count was 1,580 on a section of Willard Street between Main Street and Grant Street.

Figure 4: Lime Springs 2009 Annual Average Daily Traffic Count



Streets

The City of Lime Springs has approximately 7.2 miles of roadway within the city limits, of which 4.7 are local streets. The street surfacing is seal coated, asphalt or concrete with some gravel streets. Maintenance of the streets such as snow removal, seal coating, street signage, painting and sweeping is done by the city street department. The city has several dead-end streets within the community which can impede maintenance such as snow removal, and affects development and access throughout the community.

Traffic Controls

There are no traffic lights in Lime Springs. The city utilizes stop, yield and pedestrian signs along with painted crosswalks as traffic control devices. The justification of traffic signals is based on the volume of vehicle and pedestrian traffic on major and minor streets, in accordance with provisions outlined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). If the traffic volumes increase and traffic patterns change with future development or redevelopment of areas in Lime Springs, additional traffic control measures at street intersections may be required. Currently, intersection congestion and accident histories do not appear to support the addition of signals. Most of the street intersections in Lime Springs are controlled by two-way or four-way stop and yield signs. Traffic control with stop signs generally provides for traffic movement along the principle streets leading to the central business district. The installation of traffic signs is based on design criteria established in the MUTCD.

Alternate Modes of Transportation

Although private vehicles are the primary mode of transportation in Lime Springs, other modes utilized in the community and Howard County include air transportation, public transit, private transit, trucking and multi-use trails.

Railroads

Railroad service is not currently available, although The Chicago Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway has served the City of Lime Springs in the past, abandoning the railway sometime in the 1980s. Figure 3 shows the location of the old rail bed through town.

Air Transportation

The nearest airport is the Ellen Church Field Airport located one mile southwest of Cresco. The airport was built in 1963. The airport has a concrete operational runway, which is 2,949 feet long by 50 feet wide. The runway is lit with low intensity runway lights (LIRL). The concrete

strength is 29,000 pounds single wheel loading. The nearest commercial airport to Lime Springs is the Rochester International Airport, 40 miles north off of Highway 63.

Public Transit

The Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation (NEICAC) - Transit Program is designated by the Iowa DOT as the Regional Public Transit Provider for the counties of Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek in the Northeast corner of Iowa. NEICAC – Transit offers public transportation to all citizens residing in their service area. NEICAC - Transit offers demand response transportation through a fleet of 53 vehicles, equipped with ramps or lifts to provide accessible transportation for individuals confined to wheelchairs or affected with other disabilities which restrict mobility.

Photograph 8: NEICAC - Transit Bus

Private Transit

There are no private transit services such as taxicabs or buses available in the City of Lime Springs. Most private transportation is through personal vehicle or rides from family and friends. The Howard County Office of Veterans Affairs operates a van to transport veterans to the VA clinic in Decorah and hospitals in Iowa City and Des Moines.

Trucking and Water Transportation

Highway 63 carries significant large and heavy truck traffic. According to the Iowa DOT, nearly 20% of the traffic on Highway 63 near Lime Springs is truck traffic. The nearest waterborne transportation option is the Mississippi River. Barge terminals can be accessed at McGregor or Lansing.

Multi-Use Trails

Lime Springs does not currently have any trails in or directly around the community, but is interested in connecting to the trail networks in both Minnesota and Howard County. The abandoned rail bed in Lime Springs is an obvious target for such a project, as this same rail bed has already been made into a trail from Cresco to Calmar. Converting a rail to a trail is often preferred because of the infrastructure that is already in place.

Community Priorities

Connectivity and Walkability

Residents identified a desire for improved community connectivity for pedestrians as currently sidewalks are missing sections in some areas or have no sidewalks at all. Historically, the city has allowed residents to remove sidewalks without replacing them, leading to gaps throughout the community. Existing sidewalks are in poor condition in some areas or too narrow for easy walking. Equitable enforcement of a sidewalk ordinance is difficult when many city-owned properties do not have sidewalks. The city wishes to update its codes to support sidewalks and establish a sidewalk replacement plan to repair or install sidewalks to ensure safe travel and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance throughout the community.

Photograph 9: Where the Sidewalk Ends...

Public Transportation

Lime Springs' size, like many other communities in rural areas, often makes commuting to other communities for employment, groceries and medical services necessary. Residents in small communities such as Lime Springs rely on their own personal transportation or on family, friends and neighbors to reach their necessary destinations. Residents raised concern that, while available, public transit is not affordable for many Lime Springs residents. The community would like to pursue options to improve affordability on a city, county and possibly regional level through subsidy programs or regular routing. Improving awareness of the NEICAC – Transit service could grow ridership and subsequently warrant a regular route. Other community ideas included establishing a local carpooling network and a possible joint effort with surrounding communities for a bus to and from Rochester, MN or other major employment centers.

Safety and Ease of Access

Lime Springs' size should make walking and biking throughout the community an easy mode of travel. However, the condition of many sidewalks, the lack of painted crosswalks, cracks, unevenness and missing sidewalk sections can make this unsafe. The community plans to establish a sidewalk infill and maintenance plan along with updating city codes and ordinances to improve these infrastructure conditions and increase safety. Better signage is also an opportunity to encourage safe walking and biking. The city can ensure that crosswalks are properly marked and visible and update signage reflectivity to meet new DOT requirements.

For new development, the city will encourage the use of complete streets design so that all modes of travel are considered.

Maintenance

Several streets in Lime Springs need improvement. Given a limited budget, the city will be prioritizing projects as funding becomes available. Special consideration will be given to the useful life of repair projects in comparison to replacement projects to understand the costs and benefits per project. Lime Springs faces some issues with inadequate drainage in the streets leading to storm water runoff, standing water and seepage that causes potholes and cracks in the roads. As projects are undertaken, the city will consider these issues and implement practices that will extend the useful life of projects.

Bike Trail Connectivity

The City of Lime Springs plans to get involved in the regional efforts to develop a comprehensive trail system in Northeast Iowa. A community committee has formed to explore some initial options for a trail from the community to Lidtke Mill. Other opportunities include working with the county's trail groups through Howard County Conservation and the Regional Planning Affiliate to stay informed of regional plans, have a voice at the table and ensure that Lime Springs' goals are understood by regional partners.

Transportation Summary

For the most part, residents of Lime Springs are reliant upon automobile transportation to get to and from the community. While public transit is available, the lack of adequate ridership makes the cost of this service unaffordable to most in the community. Infrastructure improvements that increase the connectivity of the community and the safety of walkers and bicyclers are a priority for the city. All residents expect that children should be able to safely walk or bike to school, the swimming pool or a city park; and that elderly residents should be able to easily walk to the community center or clinic, if desired. Improvements to community infrastructure in certain areas are necessary for this to become a reality. Long term goals for the community include connecting the community to existing trails and recreational amenities.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Provide for and encourage a safe, convenient and cost-effective transportation system that is accessible and accommodates alternative options, such as walking and biking.

Strategy 1.1: Encourage diverse modes of transportation.

Action: Inventory existing sidewalks through Safe Routes to School Plan and create a sidewalk maintenance and infill plan.

Action: Update and enforce existing sidewalk ordinances.

Action: As new development or street projects occur, encourage complete streets design.

Action: Establish a network of neighbors, friends and family willing to carpool and post list in locations around the community and on the website.

Action: Inventory signs and update to meet new DOT reflectivity requirements.

Strategy 1.2: Work with the county, Regional Planning Affiliate (RPA) and Iowa DOT to coordinate transportation planning.

Action: Work with Howard County Conservation as it plans future trail connectivity.

Action: Work with surrounding communities on feasibility study to determine whether a bus to area employment centers is viable.

Strategy 1.3: Ensure the transportation system is maintained and accommodates future needs.

Action: Prior to any street improvements check the condition of underground utilities and make repairs prior to the start of street construction.

Action: As feasible, continue street extensions to prepare community for future growth and development.

Action: Replace West Jackson Street.

Action: Resurface Main Street, a four block area of Miller Street and other identified spots.

Action: Address in-town gravel road issues such as dust and potholes.

CHAPTER 6: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section includes goals, strategies and programs to assist future development of educational facilities, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, law enforcement and fire protection facilities, libraries and other governmental facilities that are necessary or desirable to meet the projected needs of the municipality.

Introduction

Community facilities are buildings, lands and programs that provide desired and essential services to the public, such as parks, schools, police and fire protection, health care facilities and libraries. The City of Lime Springs, along with some private and nonprofit agencies, maintains several community facilities for residents. This section will identify the use and capacity of existing community facilities and the need for improvements or additions to ensure continued service to the residents of Lime Springs. Figure 5 provides a location map of the various community buildings in Lime Springs.

City Hall

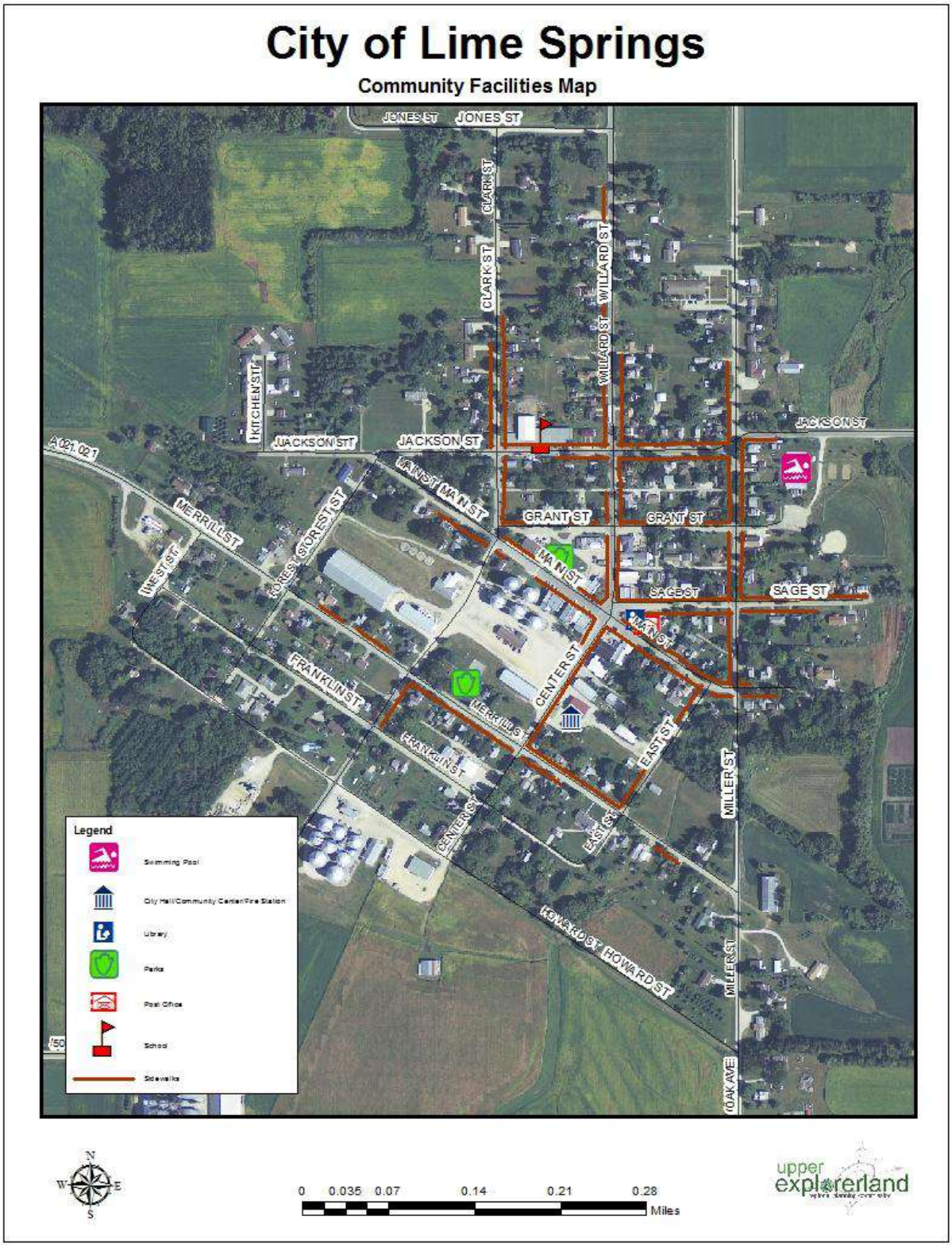
The operations of city government are directed from city hall, currently located at 201 Center Street. Several services are provided to the community from city hall including the city's administration, the mayor's office and city council and utility management. City hall serves as the meeting location for city commissions and boards. The building was constructed in 2003 as a multi-use facility and also houses the fire department and community center.

Photograph 10: Lime Springs Community Center/City Hall/Fire Station

Fire Department

The City of Lime Springs receives fire protection from the Lime Springs Fire Department. The department had been fully incorporated but was recently integrated into the city's area of responsibility. The department is staffed with 18 volunteer firefighters and owns a fleet of four vehicles for firefighting and rescue operations. The city maintains 50 fire hydrants for fire suppression, 10 of which are currently inoperable or have an inadequate water supply.

Figure 5: Community Facility Locations



Law Enforcement

Law enforcement for the City of Lime Springs is provided by the Howard County Sheriff's Department which patrols 480 square miles of the county. The sheriff's office is the chief law enforcement for Lime Springs, Chester, Elma, Protivin and the unincorporated areas of the county. The city has a 28E agreement with the sheriff's office for law enforcement protection.

Medical Services

Hospital

The city's nearest hospital is located in Cresco, approximately 13 miles away. Regional Health Services of Howard County (RHSHC) is affiliated with the Mercy Health Network and provides a continuum of care for the residents of Howard County and its surrounding areas. RHSHC offers acute and skilled medical/surgical care as well as obstetrical, emergency, rehabilitative and diagnostic services in a 25-bed critical access hospital. In addition to hospital services, RHSHC operates two clinics and a residential care facility and can also provide access to other specialists and facilities including Mercy Medical Center of North Iowa, Mayo Clinic and Gundersen Clinic.

Clinic

The Lime Springs Medical Clinic is operated by RHSHC and has one advanced registered nurse practitioner on staff. Residents can access care at the local clinic three days a week in its convenient location on Main Street.

Photograph 11: Lime Springs Medical Clinic

Dental Services

Lime Springs' residents have access to one local dental practice that provides general dentistry services for patients of all ages.

Child and Senior Care Services

Senior Care

Lime Springs does not have senior care facilities in the community, the closest facilities are in Cresco.

Child Care

Lime Springs has one licensed child care center and no registered home providers. The Spring Ahead Learning Center (SALC) is currently being built as an addition to the Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School. The addition will be a 5,030 square foot building with four classrooms, an office, kitchen service and a community storm shelter. It will offer full-service child care for up to 60 children from infants to age 12. This new facility will provide a convenient child care option for many area parents with preschoolers whose school-age siblings attend the elementary school.

Parks and Recreation

Parks

Lime Springs has two city parks, Brown Park and Kitchen Park and one privately owned park, VanderBie Park. Brown Park offers bathrooms, playground equipment, basketball and tennis courts, horseshoe pits, picnic tables, shelter house and ice skating in the winter. Visitors to Kitchen Park can enjoy a gazebo and lovely landscaping. VanderBie Park is open to the public and is located next to the community's well-recognized mural commemorating the city's train history. VanderBie offers a board walk through native landscaping.

Photograph 13: Brown Park

Photograph 12: (A & B) Kitchen and VanderBie Parks

Outside the city limits, Lidtke Park consists of 10 acres of scenic natural resources for visitors and residents to explore and enjoy. Lidtke Park is located on the west side of County Road V-36, just north of Lime Springs. The park is located along the Upper Iowa River and offers camping with electrical hook-ups and showers, fishing, canoe landing, shelter house, boat ramp and playground equipment.

Lime Springs Pool and Park Board

The Lime Springs Pool and Park Board offers programs for all ages and maintains recreational facilities for residents wishing to participate in healthy activities and recreation.

The Lime Springs Pool and Park Board organizes team softball, and seeks volunteers to organize other sports opportunities such as basketball, softball, tennis, T-ball, baseball, swimming and volleyball.

Lime Springs Municipal Swimming Pool

The Municipal Swimming Pool was opened in 1955 and cost $20,000 to build; it holds 250,000 gallons of water. The pool averages 50-60 swimmers per day in the open season and employs 10-12 lifeguards each year. The pool is also located next to sand volleyball courts and a softball field. A new roof was recently constructed to cover the bathrooms and the slope will help with leaking in the guard house as well as protect the new plumbing.

Photograph 14: (A & B) Lime Springs Little League and Swimming Pool

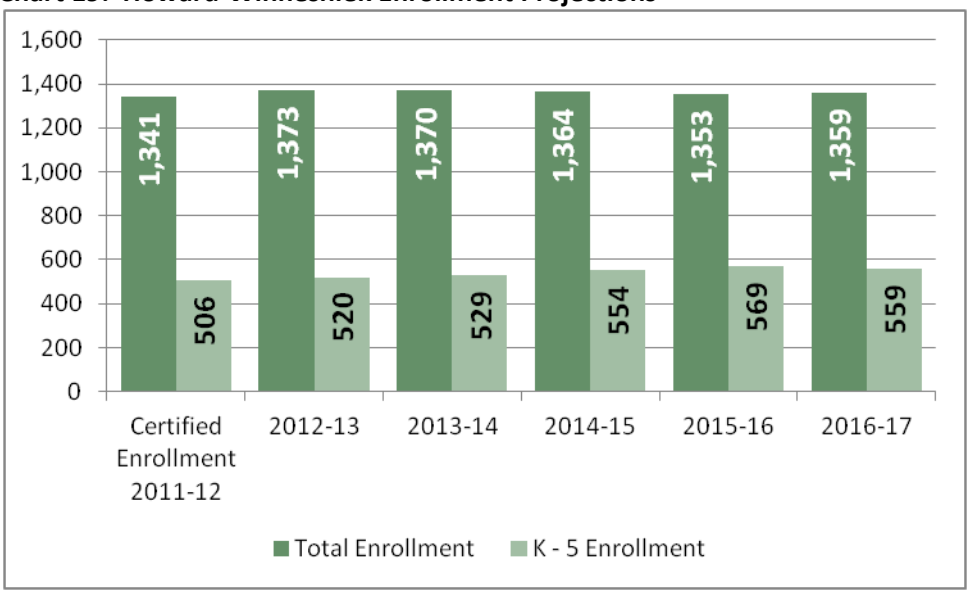
Schools

Howard-Winneshiek Community School District

Photograph 15: Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School

Students in the City of Lime Springs attend the Howard-Winneshiek Community School District. The Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School enrolls children from pre-kindergarten to 5th grade and is located in the city. In addition to the Lime Springs attendance center, schools are also located in Elma (PK-6) and Cresco, which has elementary (PK-5), junior high (6-8) and high school (9-12) facilities. The area covered by the school district is the third largest in the state of Iowa. The Howard-Winneshiek Community School district had a certified enrollment of 1,341 students in the 2011-2012 school year (Iowa Department of Education, 2012). The district as a whole is projected to see a slight increase of 1.3% to 1,359 by the 2016-2017 school year, with K–5 elementary numbers increasing 10.5% to 559 (see Chart 19). With the closure of outlying campuses always a threat for small rural communities, these numbers are encouraging for Lime Springs.

Chart 19: Howard-Winneshiek Enrollment Projections



Source: (Iowa Department of Education, 2012)

Table 20 provides a breakdown of enrollment numbers from 2001-2012 for the Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School. The 2004-2005 school year was the last year that Cresco children were bused to Lime Springs and prior to the 2010-2011 school year, 6th grade was consolidated at the Cresco elementary, impacting enrollment numbers at the Lime Springs campus. The community is concerned about further consolidation of the school campuses and will monitor the situation closely to encourage the continued use of the Lime Springs facility.

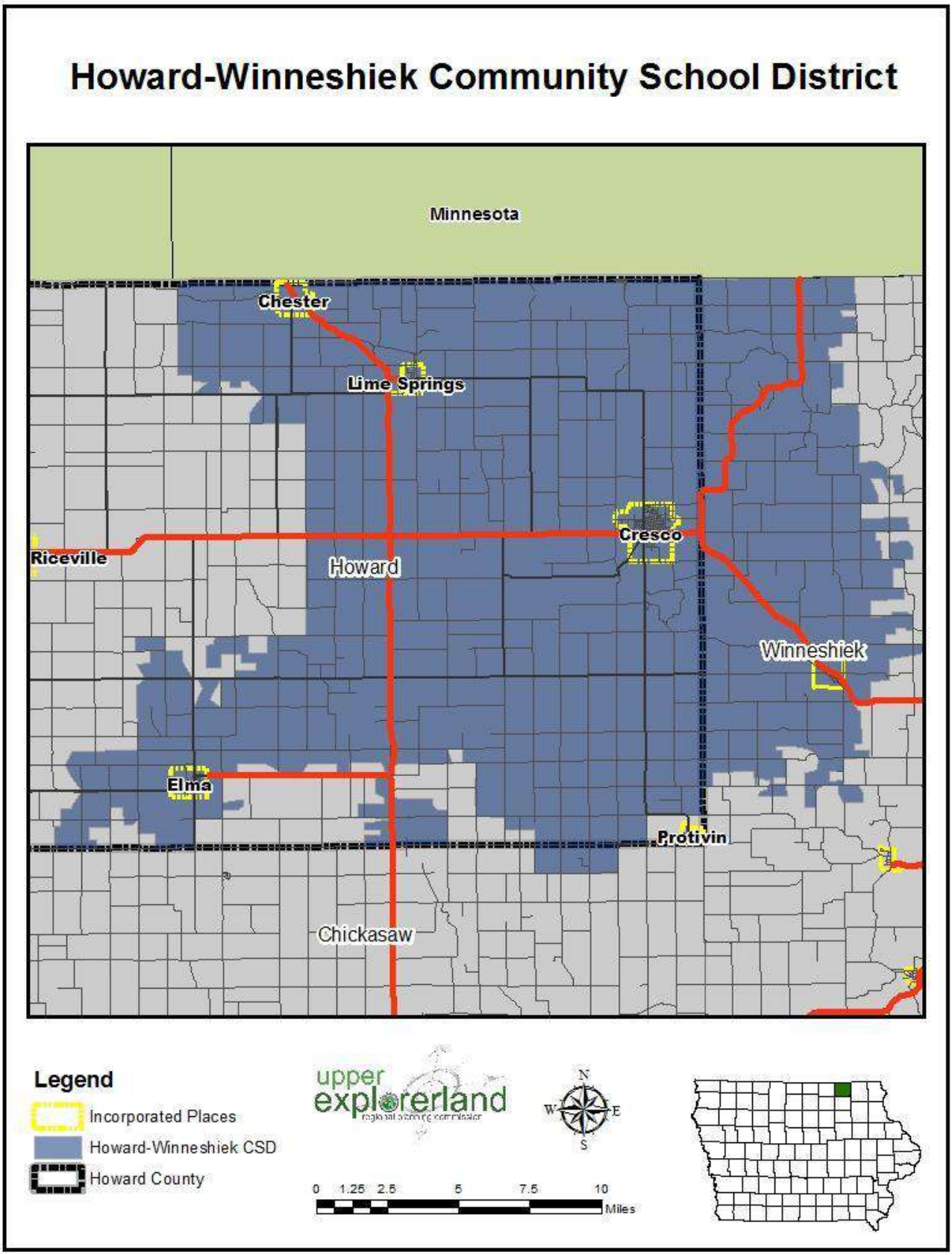
Table 19: Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School Enrollment

Year	PK	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Total
2011-2012	9	16	15	13	9	14	11	0	**87**
2010-2011	13	20	16	10	16	13	10	0	**98**
2009-2010	9	20	12	17	16	14	12	12	**112**
2008-2009	13	15	16	13	15	11	14	13	**110**
2007-2008	0	16	12	15	14	15	16	15	**103**
2006-2007	0	14	16	16	15	18	16	17	**112**
2005-2006	0	17	15	14	19	15	19	15	**114**
2004-2005	0	14	12	18	18	20	14	13	**109**
2003-2004	0	11	20	20	18	13	12	23	**117**
2002-2003	0	16	21	18	13	14	23	19	**124**
2001-2002	0	20	17	18	21	24	22	24	**146**

Source: (Iowa Department of Education, 2012)

Figure 6 on the following page shows the boundaries of the Howard-Winneshiek Community School District. The district covers a large portion of Howard County and the western edge of Winneshiek. All of the district buildings are located within Howard County.

Figure 6: Boundaries of Howard-Winneshiek Community School District



Northeast Iowa Community College

The Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) Cresco Center opened in 2002 and offers year-round, day, evening, credit and continuing education classes. The Cresco Center also supports training opportunities for local businesses. Class instruction is offered face-to-face as well as over the Iowa Communications Network (ICN). The Cresco Center includes a computer lab, three classrooms, a health lab, ICN room, multi-purpose shop lab/classroom, commons area, conference room and the Featherlite Welding Lab. Currently, high school students can take classes for college credit. Taxes pay for the courses and students pay for their books.

Libraries and Other Cultural Amenities

The Lime Springs Public Library

The Lime Springs Public Library was established in 1950. In March of 1964 it was moved to the current location at 112 Main Street, which previously housed the old town hall. In 2007, the library expanded into the empty space once occupied by city hall and the fire department. Currently the library has over 7,000 items available for checkout, including books, periodicals, DVDs, video tapes and audio tapes. The library sponsors numerous programs for residents of all age groups, including a monthly adult game night. Five computers are available for Internet and general use (City of Lime Springs, 2010).

Photograph 16: Lime Springs Public Library

Churches and Cemetery

There are three places of worship in Lime Springs. Churches are important social assets for the community and its residents. Many church groups participate in events and programs that support community betterment and provide community fellowship.

The community does not have a cemetery within city limits, however, Pleasant Hill Cemetery is located just east of the community about a quarter mile on A23.

Photograph 17: Methodist Church in Lime Springs

Community Priorities

Municipal Swimming Pool

The swimming pool is unique for a city of Lime Springs' size and is an important asset to the community and its residents. Maintenance and repair is an ongoing struggle for the community and volunteers, grants and fundraisers have been necessary to keep the pool operational. Recent Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements will necessitate the addition of compliant access into the pool and improvements to the slope of the large hill leading to the pool. The community recently explored the costs of these improvements and expects that ramps for wheelchairs could cost $20,000, and a lift for pool access would have to be installed on a new cement slab that could obstruct the view of lifeguards. The costs associated with maintaining ADA compliance are an issue for the city as the deadline for compliance is in 2013.

Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School

The elementary school experienced a decline in enrollment when the 6th grade classroom moved to the Cresco campus. With the consolidation of many schools around the state, residents are concerned about the possible loss of the Lime Springs campus in the future. Residents hope that with the new child care center in place, the Lime Springs campus will remain viable and attractive to families within the district. District enrollment projections show an expected increase in elementary-aged students, but Lime Springs residents will need to remain actively involved in district decision-making processes in order to maintain a cost-effective attendance center in the community.

City Parks

Lime Springs' parks are an important asset for the community and of high priority for continued maintenance and equipment replacement. The community will seek a variety of funding sources, both public and private, to ensure the safety and attractiveness of the parks.

City Storage Shed

Clearing out the city storage shed has become a priority for community members. The city has collected a lot of items over the years and equipment and materials have begun to pile up inside and outside of the shop, taking up valuable space and becoming an eyesore and a potential safety hazard. The city will identify potential options for the disposal of unused or underutilized items and also look into upgrades to the facility.

Community Center

The new community center, which also houses city hall, the fire department and senior center, is a source of pride for the community which worked very hard to secure funding for the center. The community will maintain efforts to keep it in excellent condition and expand the use of the facility. A current issue for attention is leakage from the air conditioner.

Funding

Funding for community facilities is a challenge for small communities. Lime Springs will prioritize facility improvement projects and institute an improvement plan and budget where possible. Options for funding include:

- The Grace Hughes Foundation, formed by Grace Hughes, a lifelong resident of Lime Springs, gives away an estimated $20,000 annually to local organizations. Primary consideration is given to Dollars for Scholars in the local district, the Lime Springs Cemetery Association, Dr. Robert Schuller Ministries, the Lime Springs United Methodist Church, the town of Lime Springs and any such tax-exempt beneficiaries. Grants are to be used exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes.
- The Howard County Community Foundation, which makes grants in the areas of arts and culture, community affairs and development, education, environment education and protection, health, historic preservation and human services.
- KaBOOM! offers occasional grants and serves as a technical assistance resource for playgrounds.
- Park sponsorship campaigns (trees, swings, benches, etc.)

Community Facilities Summary

Lime Springs has a strong record of supporting and improving community facilities. The city's multi-use community center was built in 2003 and houses city hall and the fire station. The community center provides meeting and activity space for community clubs and organizations. The city maintains two city parks, park and recreation activities, an outdoor swimming pool and a recently expanded library. Additional facilities, such as the school, child care center and clinic, while not city-owned, provide essential and desired services to the community. The elementary school and new child care center are tremendous assets to the community, promoting quality education and care in a safe and friendly setting. The clinic ensures that community members who need care close to home have adequate health services and, if needed, is affiliated with more intensive care nearby. Private and state parks and recreation areas offer additional opportunities for active living for community members and visitors alike.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Community services and facilities are of high quality and accessible to all.

Strategy 1.1: Continue cooperation and communication between the Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School and surrounding communities on projects that maintain and upgrade school facilities to collectively provide for quality educational opportunities.

Action: Monitor school board conversations to ensure voice at the table when or if consolidation is discussed.

Strategy 1.2: Provide residents shelter from hazardous occurrences.

Action: Review and update the public on shelter locations once Spring Ahead Learning Center is completed.

Action: Purchase generator for community center as it also a community shelter.

Strategy 1.3: Provide a variety of recreational opportunities for residents, including access to parks, trails, swimming pools, picnic areas and other recreational facilities. This may also include access and connectivity to the Upper Iowa River.

Action: Plan for continued maintenance and necessary upgrades of municipal swimming pool.

Action: Itemize and prioritize park improvement projects and develop funding plan.

Strategy 1.4: Maintain community facilities and promote increased utilization.

Action: Encourage more events at the community center to help with maintenance and funding.

Action: Promote municipal swimming pool and possible events to help with maintenance and ensure it can remain open.

Action: Replace boiler at the library.

Action: Develop and carry out plan for improvements at the city storage facility.

Action: Support the use of the community clinic as possible to avoid closure or reduction in hours.

CHAPTER 7: PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section includes goals, strategies and programs to guide future development of sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities and telecommunications facilities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include estimates regarding future demand for such utility services.

Introduction

Public infrastructure and utilities provide essential services to the community. Services such as sanitary sewers, water, electricity, natural gas, communications and waste and recycling facilities are integral to a high quality of life. This section identifies and evaluates the existing infrastructure and utilities in the City of Lime Springs. Understanding the location, use and capacity of infrastructure and utilities is important when planning for the future. In Lime Springs, water and wastewater treatment systems are municipally owned and operated while other services such as electricity and communications are provided by private companies.

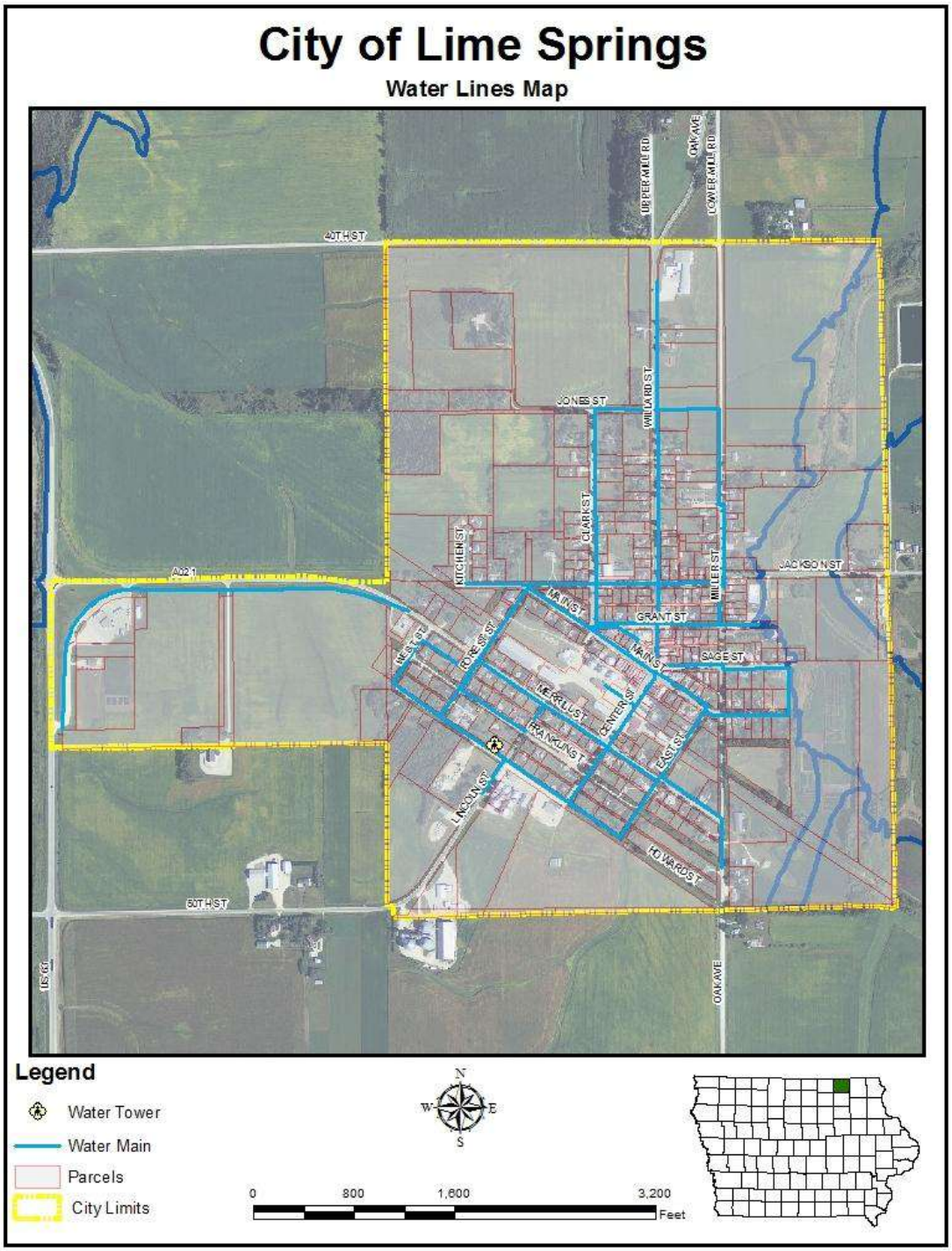
Water Supply

Lime Springs provides water to its residents through a municipal utility. The city has one elevated water tower with a 100,000 gallon capacity. Lime Springs utilizes groundwater from two active public wells that average a depth of 280 feet. The system has approximately eight miles of water main, with a majority of the mains ranging in diameters of 4-8 inches. The system can handle a peak demand of 347,000 gallons per day.

The Lime Springs Public Works Department has two employees who are responsible for the Water Treatment Plant and the distribution system. Tasks required include the testing and treatment of the water and working with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Testing is performed seven days a week, 365 days a year. These tests are sent to the Iowa DNR on a monthly basis to verify that the city is operating in a safe and approved manner. The public works department flushes the water mains through fire hydrants annually to improve water quality and inspect the hydrants. The department is responsible for repairs or replacements throughout the entire distribution system including water mains, valves, hydrants and meters. Figure 7 indicates where water service lines run in the community.

The amount of unaccounted-for water (non-revenue water, the difference between the amount of water pumped to the system and the amount of water actually used or sold) is 40,000 to 80,000 gallons, far more than is expected for a community of this size. An excessive amount of unaccounted-for water (20% or more of water pumped) may indicate a leaky system, or abnormally high use of unmetered water (hydrant flushing and other uses). The community is aware of these issues and is currently working to correct the situation.

Figure 7: Lime Springs Water Lines Map



System Improvements

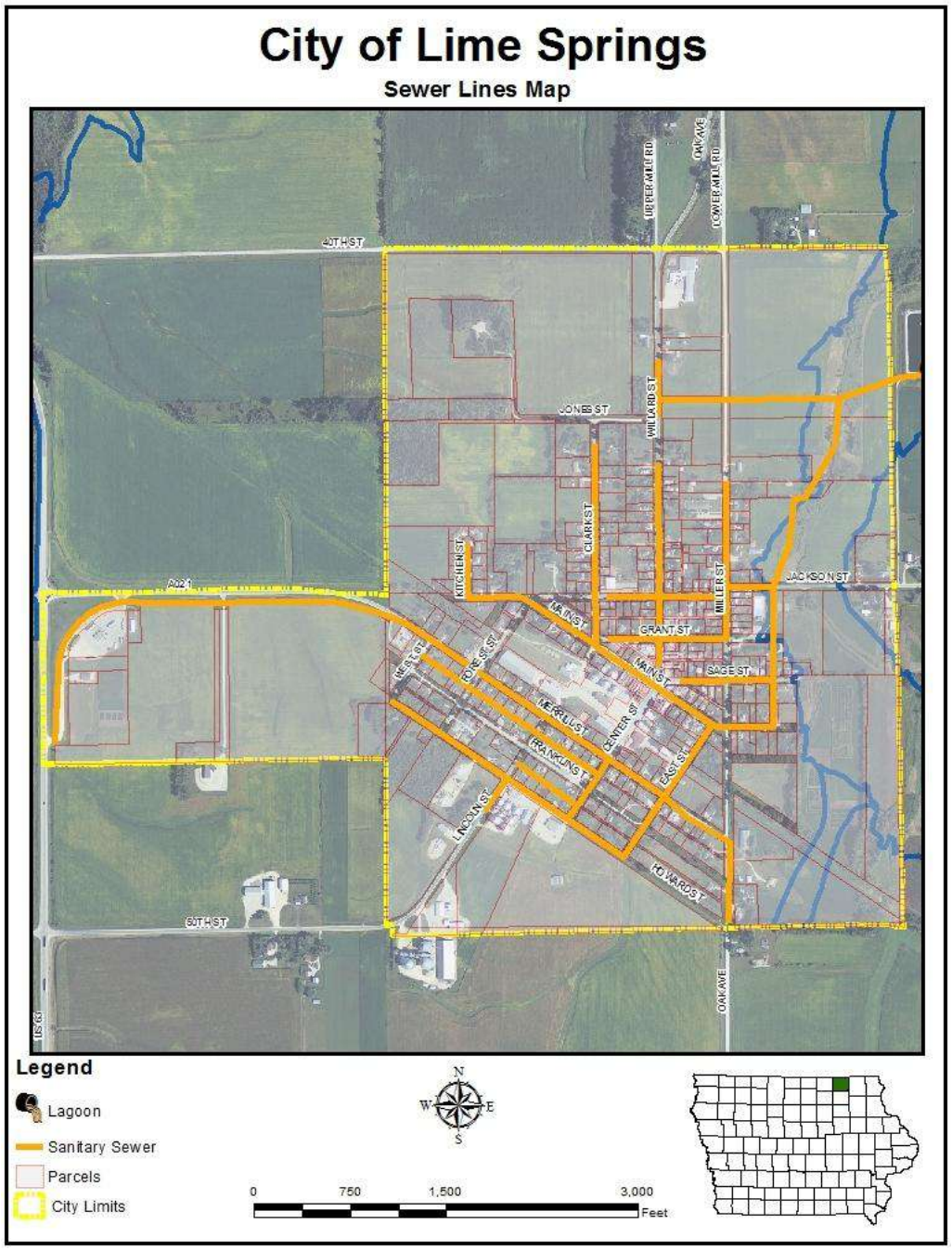
Within the past year, the City of Lime Springs replaced a lift pump and an aerator. In 2011, the water tower was sandblasted and painted. In addition, the city purchased a new digital chlorine test kit. Going forward, the city will be working on several improvements. The water tower requires more work, the pump house is in need of serious maintenance or replacement, two lift pumps will need to be replaced in the near future and one aerator will need replacing. The city has instituted a meter replacement schedule to replace three meters each month. City leaders have acknowledged that maintenance was severely ignored over the past 30 years, and it is important to act in a responsible way to make the necessary upgrades to the system. In addition to raising rates, the city will seek technical assistance from the Iowa Rural Water Association and the DNR, and look at potential funding through the Iowa Finance Authority's State Revolving Fund for drinking water and wastewater projects.

Sanitary Sewer System

The existing sanitary sewer system is municipally owned and operated. The system consists of 11 miles of collection lines (most of which are clay), two lift stations and a treatment plant (see Figure 8). The facility is designed to treat 0.28 million gallons per day (MGD), the city average demand is 0.07 MGD with a peak demand of 457,000 GD. The treatment plant is a mechanically activated sludge facility with a 100,000 gallon sludge storage capacity. The treatment facility is in a flood plain, but is able to operate under a flood plan development permit. The outfall of the treated water flows to a tributary of the city's creek. City leadership has determined that the existing system is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of the community.

The Lime Springs Public Works Department is also responsible for the collection system, which includes all of the sewer mains, manholes and lift stations in town. Businesses, residences and industries are responsible for the maintenance of sewer lines from their homes or buildings to the city's main sewers. The collection system is what diverts all of the wastewater to the treatment plant. Once there, employees are responsible for treating the wastewater to meet both state and federal regulations prior to its discharge. Treatment consists of flowing wastewater through a series of screens and tanks at the treatment plant. Testing is done both on site and off site at private labs to ensure regulations are being met. There are many pieces of equipment in the collection system and at the plant that are operated and maintained by one certified employee. Figure 8 indicates the sewer line system in Lime Springs.

Figure 8: Lime Springs Sewer Lines Map



System Improvements

The city is concentrating on getting more aerators at the sewer plant working. The lagoon was set up to take 12 aerators. Four aerators are working at present with two more being repaired. They will be added to the first lagoon when they are operational. In addition, the city has installed a new float and a new lift pump. With pending growth in the industrial park, the city

will need to complete more repairs and necessary extensions, along with upgrades to ensure compliance with DNR regulations.

Stormwater Management

Lime Springs does have an underground stormwater drainage system and surface runoff follows paved streets until it reaches the creek. However, a majority of the streets in the city are at property level with no curb or gutter, making proper drainage an issue in some areas.

Solid Waste Disposal and Recycling Facilities

The City of Lime Springs contracts with Hawkeye Sanitation for weekly residential curbside solid waste pickup and bills residents monthly for the service. Curbside recycling is also contracted through Hawkeye Sanitation and is picked-up every other week.

Electricity, Gas, Internet and Phone

Electrical services are provided by Alliant Energy; natural gas service is currently not available as the closest line is about two miles from Lime Springs. According to the 2006-2010 American Community Survey, 72% percent of Lime Springs' residents rely on bottled, tank or LP gas for heating (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Several residential properties and the community center utilize geo-thermal systems. High-speed Internet service is provided through Mediacom and Windstream, which also offers land line services. Cell phone coverage is provided through US Cellular and Verizon.

Community Priorities

Energy Efficiency

The City of Lime Springs and residents wish to update and replace utilities on an “as needed” and planned basis. The opportunity to replace or upgrade utilities with energy efficient designs and products will help the city and residents save resources and lessen environmental impacts. The city will explore options such as energy efficient light bulbs, solar street lights and upgrading to high BTU rated heating and air-conditioning units in city buildings. Efforts will also be made to inform businesses and residents about potential energy audits and other programs being offered to assist with energy efficiency.

Telecommunications

In today’s competitive economy, access to the latest technology and technology infrastructure is a necessity for businesses, schools, residents and city governments. Ensuring that the

community has adequate technology infrastructure will promote business growth. Industry, retail and home-based businesses all rely on fast connections to remain competitive in the market. City governments rely on adequate communications for emergency or disaster response, as well as day-to-day operations. Opportunities to improve cell phone coverage, Internet speeds, infrastructure and competition among providers should be continually sought out for the benefit of the community and region.

Sanitary Sewer & Water

Lime Springs' water and sewer infrastructure is aging and a replacement and maintenance plan will be developed. The community will be budgeting for the needed improvements and repairs, as well as seeking grants and loans to ensure the plan is implemented. The industrial park, given its convenient location to Highway 63, is expected to attract businesses wishing to build. The community is working hard to ensure that the existing water and sewer infrastructure and facilities have the capacity to handle such growth.

Storm Water

Maintaining water quality in the surrounding rivers and streams is very important to Lime Springs as it hopes to capitalize on these natural assets for tourism and recreation. Reducing and cleansing storm water runoff from the community's roads and yards will help improve water quality. Opportunities for managing runoff include promoting green space, rain gardens and other methods of absorbing and cleansing water runoff as well as considering best practices in water retention and cleansing when approving new development and completing infrastructure projects.

Public Infrastructure and Utilities Summary

Lime Springs provides water and sewer services for residents living in the core of the community. Future growth, especially in the area between the community and Highway 63, will require an expansion of the system. The city is fully aware of the aging condition of its water and sewer infrastructure and is working on repairs and upgrades to ensure a reliable system for the future. Other utilities are provided through private entities, although natural gas is not offered within the community at this time. Citizens are generally satisfied with the electric, telephone and cable services, although some expressed concern about spotty wireless coverage in the city. Garbage collection and recycling are contracted by the city, so residents need not seek out a private provider. Overall, the community's infrastructure is sound and the city will be putting together a long term maintenance plan so that future maintenance is not ignored.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Ensure adequate services and utilities are provided throughout the community.

Strategy 1.1: Ensure that water and sewer upgrades and maintenance continue.

Action: Replace water meters throughout the community, beginning at the water tower and larger businesses and eventually to all residents and businesses.

Action: Repair aerators if feasible, otherwise replace.

Strategy 1.2: Continually investigate alternative service provision options that may be more effective in providing services to residents.

Action: Update and expand internet infrastructure and backbone in the community.

Action: Be proactively involved in any discussion about bringing a cell tower into the area.

Strategy 1.3: Encourage storm water management.

Action: When financially feasible, establish a rock base before pouring any concrete or asphalt on city streets to help with water runoff and improve road life.

Action: Review ordinances to ensure consistency with best practices in storm water management so that residents can implement techniques as desired.

Strategy 1.4: As new development is proposed, encourage available locations that currently offer sewer and water infrastructure and have not been developed to capacity before extending sewer and water to new locations.

Action: Create and keep current GIS infrastructure maps.

CHAPTER 8: NATURAL & AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section includes goals, strategies and programs addressing preservation and protection of agricultural and natural resources.

Introduction

This section includes an inventory and an analysis of the natural and agricultural resources in and near the City of Lime Springs. Within the following narrative, various components of the community's natural resource base are examined at a broad level in order to provide the community with the necessary information to make informed decisions about future growth and development and its potential impact to, or benefit from, these assets.

Photograph 18: Upper Iowa River

Environment

Climate

Lime Springs' climate is characterized by four distinct seasons, with wide variations in temperature and precipitation throughout the year. Temperatures range from an average high of 26°F during the winter months to an average high of 80° in the summer months. Total average precipitation is 36.47 inches. The highest recorded temperature was 102°F in 1955 and the lowest recorded temperature was -36°F in 1996 (The Weather Channel, 2012). Table 21 shows the average temperatures and precipitation amounts for each month.

Table 20: Lime Springs' Average Climate

Month	Avg. High	Avg. Low	Avg. Precip.
Jan	23°F	5°F	0.98 in.
Feb	28°F	9°F	1.04 in.
Mar	41°F	21°F	1.94 in.
Apr	57°F	33°F	3.54 in.
May	69°F	44°F	4.10 in.
Jun	78°F	55°F	5.16 in.
Jul	82°F	59°F	4.55 in.
Aug	80°F	57°F	5.25 in.
Sep	72°F	47°F	3.84 in.
Oct	59°F	35°F	2.50 in.
Nov	42°F	23°F	2.15 in.
Dec	27°F	10°F	1.42 in.

Source: (The Weather Channel, 2012)

Soils

Lime Springs is located in the Cresco-Clyde-Protivin Association. This soil association is characterized by long gentle slopes with slightly rounded hills. Drainage in the association ranges from well-drained to poorly-drained, depending on the specific soil type. In the Lime Springs area, the most common soils are Clyde, Floyd, Cresco and Protivin. Clyde soils are poorly-drained and are in and adjacent to natural ditches and streams. Floyd soils are also poorly-drained and are generally adjacent to Clyde soils, as is the case in most of the Lime Springs area. Cresco soils are moderately well-drained and can be described as gently sloping. Cresco soils are generally found on hill tops and sides. Protivin soils are also described as gently sloping. Found on broader hill tops and lower sides, below Cresco soils, Protivin soils are somewhat poorly-drained. There are several other soil types in the Lime Springs area, including Kenyon, Rockton, Marshan and Saude. Additional soil types can be found, but generally consist of less than 2% of the area per soil type (USDA-NRCS, 2012); (Buckner & Highland, 1974). Figure 9 delineates soil types in the Lime Springs area and classifies land as to its capabilities.

Topography

Lime Springs is on a landform region of Iowa called the Iowan Surface, just on the edge of the Paleozoic Plateau. The Iowan Surface is characterized by gently rolling terrain scattered with glacial boulders and is a result of weathering and leveling during the last period of intense glacial cold. The Paleozoic Plateau is an area of Iowa missed by glacial activity (the Driftless Area) and is known for its bluffs, waterfalls, caves, springs and sinkholes (The Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 2012). These landforms are visually identifiable in the Lime Springs area with the land west, south and southeast appearing as very gentle slopes and the area to the northeast of the community illustrating the characteristics of the Paleozoic Plateau, especially near the Upper Iowa River. The community sits about 1,250 feet above sea level with a slight incline in elevation going east to west through the community, see Figure 10.

Figure 9: Lime Springs Soils Map

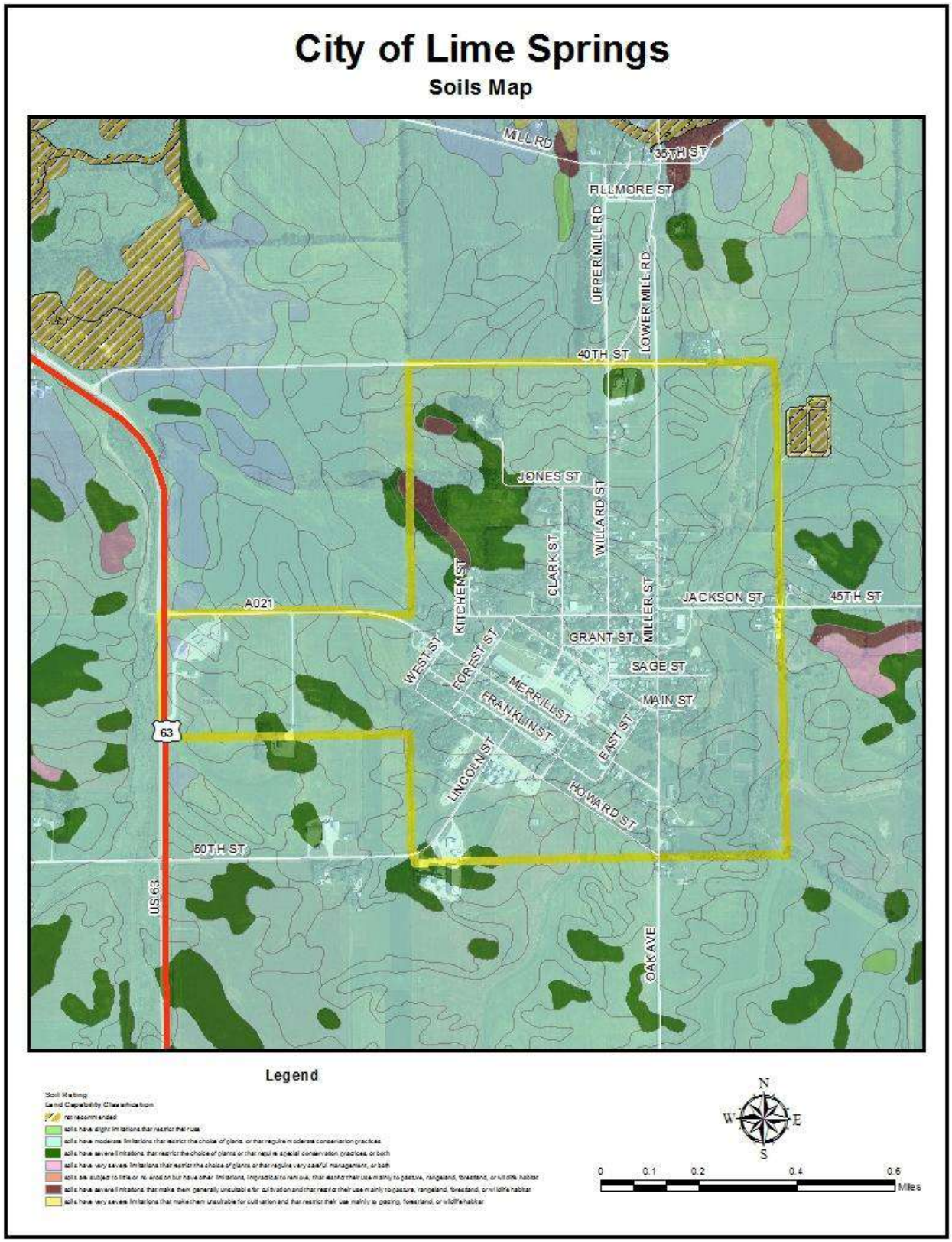
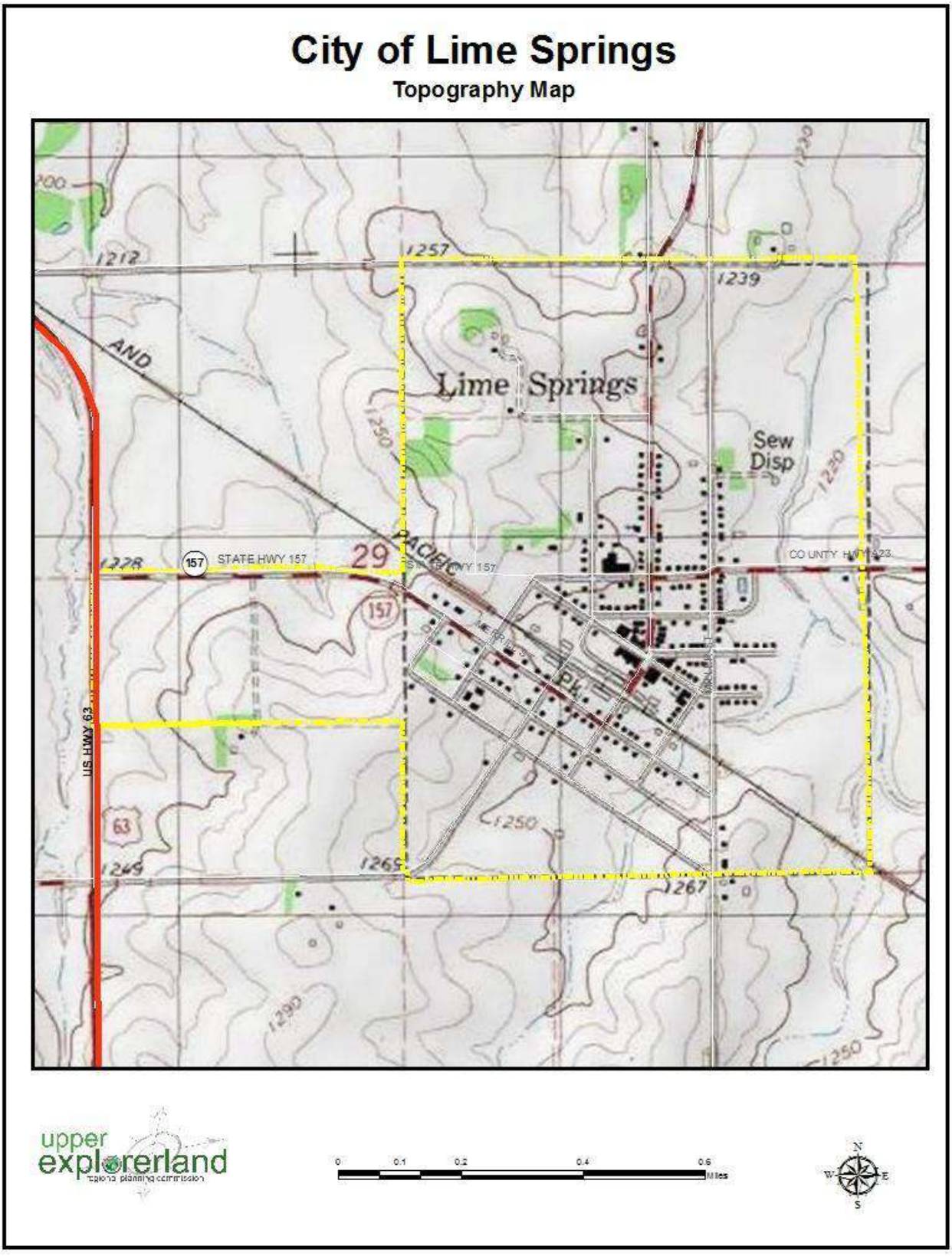


Figure 10: Topography Map



Watersheds, Wetlands and Surface Water Resources

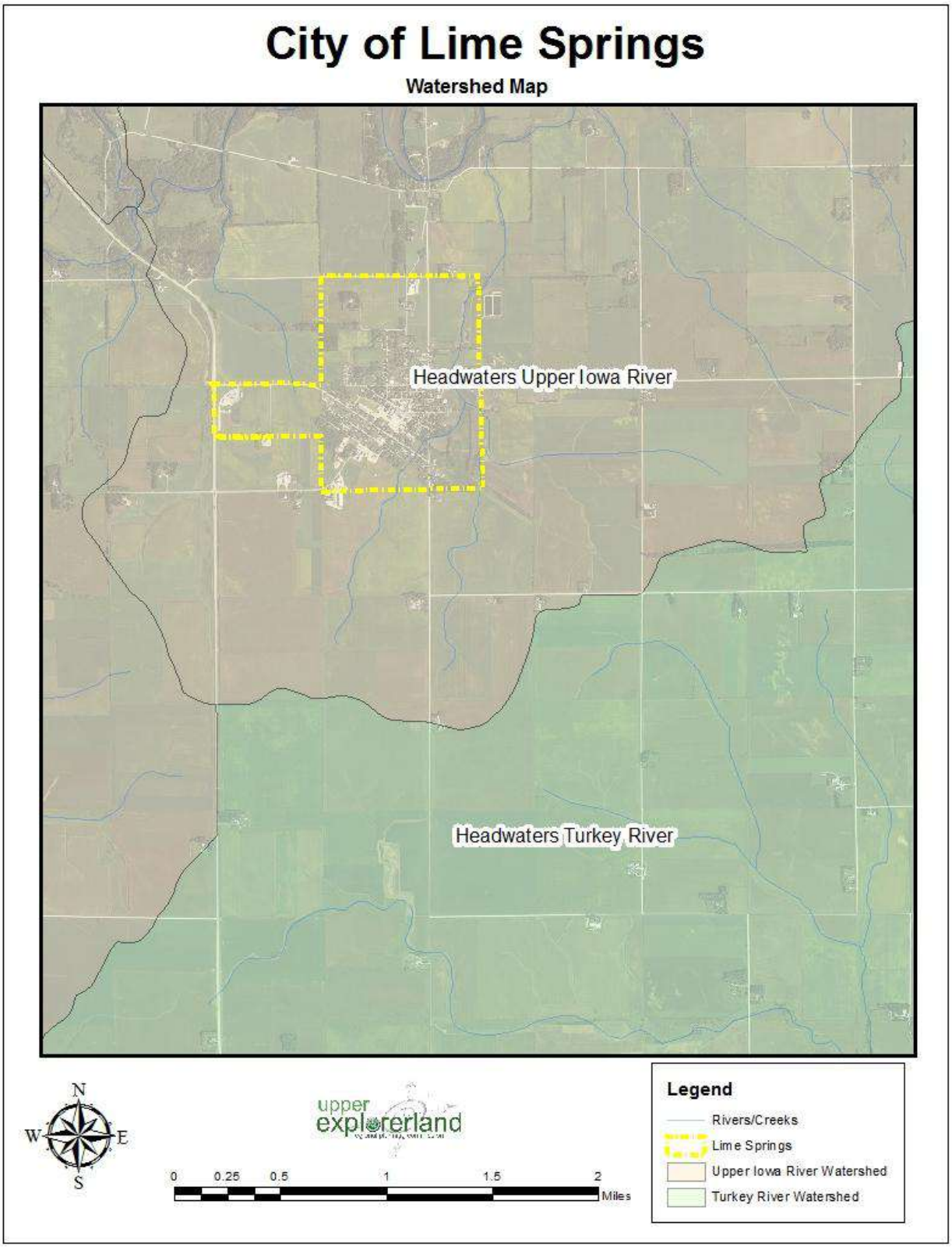
Lime Springs is part of the Upper Iowa Watershed. The Upper Iowa Watershed is a 1,000 square mile watershed located in Northeast Iowa and Southeast Minnesota, containing 30% of the state's coldwater streams. There are about 1400 major river and stream miles in the watershed. The Upper Iowa Watershed is the last remaining habitat for the native Brook Trout, with 11 streams showing evidence of natural reproduction. Nearly 98% of the land in the watershed is privately owned and the major resource concerns for the watershed are sediment and erosion control, stormwater management, drinking and source water protection, animal waste management, nutrient management and wetland management (USDA-NRCS, 2008). Figure 11 shows the location of Lime Springs in relation to the Upper Iowa Watershed and its proximity to the Turkey Watershed.

The main channel of the Upper Iowa River is north of the city limits, with a small tributary creek entering the northeast corner of the city. The Upper Iowa River flows from Lake Louise in Minnesota through Howard, Winneshiek and Allamakee Counties to the Mississippi River. Other waters in and around Lime Springs include Beaver Creek to the west of town and the creek that travels through the community from the northeast corner along the eastern border. The community has several small freshwater emergent wetlands in and around its limits. Freshwater emergent wetlands are also known as marshes, meadows and fens and generally maintain the same appearance year after year with perennial plants. In some years these areas can revert to an open water phase with an extreme rain event (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2012).

Vegetation

Community vegetation consists of sporadic treecover throughout the community with agriculture surrounding the city's developed areas. Originally the land consisted of natural prairie which can still be experienced at Hayden Prairie. Lime Springs is also close to several county and state wildlife and access points. Although these resources are not in the city, they are an important asset to the community.

Figure 11: Watershed Map



Natural Resource Preserves and Parks

Dieken Wildlife Area

Dieken Wildlife Area is a 14-acre natural area located on the west side of Highway 63 between Lime Springs and Chester. This is a long and narrow wooded area which borders the spring fed Beaver Creek; it offers walk-in access for visitors and is an excellent wildlife habitat.

Evans-Hughes Forest

Located northeast of Lime Springs about five miles is the 36-acre Evans-Hughes forest area. The forest is in two sections and is used to practice timber stand improvements. The forest consists of rolling hills with oak, hickory and walnut trees.

Hayden Prairie

Hayden Prairie is located about five miles west of Lime Springs and is a 240-acre preserve offering visitors the chance to experience an original tallgrass prairie area. The experience is rare in Iowa as less than one tenth of one percent of tallgrass prairie are remains from what once covered much of the state. Hayden Prairie has inventoried over 200 unique plant species, 46 species of native grassland birds and 20 species of butterflies. Acquired by the state of Iowa in 1945, the preserve includes a three mile trail for hiking and also allows hunting.

Souhrada Forest

Located about four miles northeast of Lime Springs, Souhrada Forest is a 117-acre corridor overlooking the Upper Iowa River. The area contains excellent timber and wildlife habitat and is maintained as a game management area.

Souhrada Wildlife Area

Souhrada Wildlife Area is a 155-acre preserve located about five miles south of Lime Springs. The area is another game management area and is covered with mostly native grasses, offering upland hunting opportunities.

Upper Iowa River Access

The River Access is a 10-acre natural area just north of Lime Springs on the east side of County Road V-36. The park is a tract of river bottomland along the Upper Iowa River. The area is lightly timbered with fishing and canoe access to the Upper Iowa River.

Natural Resource Preserves and Parks source: (Howard County Conservation, 2012)

Agricultural Resources

The City of Lime Springs has approximately 170 acres of land within its city limits that is currently in use for agriculture. One measure of agricultural value is the Corn Suitability Rating (CSR). CSR is an index that rates soil types based on their productivity for row-crop production. CSR values can range from a high of 100 to a low of 5 index points per acre. The average cropland CSR in Howard County is 76 (ISU Extension and Outreach, 2010) and can be calculated down to any size tract of land. The Howard County Assessor's site offers CSR ratings for each agricultural parcel. As development occurs, communities are encouraged to consider alternate sites for growth, if possible, to avoid taking valuable cropland out of production. In addition, CSR can help communities set cash rent on farmland they may own while waiting to develop an industrial park.

Natural & Agricultural Resources Protection Programs

There are many programs in place to assist with the protection of natural and agricultural resources. A few examples of the opportunities available are the Watershed Protection Program, Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Iowa Water Quality Loan Fund, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). The USDA Customer Service Center located in Cresco houses the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Services Agency (FSA) offices, where most of these programs are administered. Many of the programs listed are currently being utilized by landowners in the planning area.

Community Priorities

Natural Resource Protection

Lime Springs has many natural resources in and around the community that offer recreational opportunities that contribute to the quality of life in the community. Lime Springs wants to ensure that these resources are protected and available for future generations. In 2002, Lime Springs was named a Tree City USA and plans to continue maintaining the four standards of the program. Opportunities include: continuing to maintain parks and green spaces throughout the community, establishing a tree replacement plan, working with county and local jurisdictions on watershed management, considering stormwater management practices around the community and ensuring that as zoning is established it considers environmentally sensitive areas.

Recreation

The Upper Iowa River is an asset on which the community would like to capitalize. The city sees opportunities for attracting recreational tourists who would otherwise bypass the community by establishing businesses and amenities that complement recreational activities.

Energy Efficiency and Green Infrastructure

Lime Springs would like to encourage efforts to preserve its natural resources by keeping the public aware of energy efficient and green building opportunities. One opportunity is to inform residents about the different methods, programs and products available to homeowners through pamphlets and on the city's website. A good resource for the community is Iowa's Center on Sustainable Communities (COSC), a nonprofit organization that works to educate communities and their businesses and residents on the best practices in sustainable building (COSC, 2010)

Natural and Agricultural Resource Summary

Lime Springs is fortunate to be located in an area with several natural resource assets accessible to the public. Situated on the transition line of two landforms, the Iowan Surface and the Paleozoic Plateau, Lime Springs benefits from natural resources indicative of each. Slowly rolling landscapes surround the community to the west and south, and the Driftless Area with its characteristic bluffs, caves and rivers begins just northeast of the community. Foresight on the part of local, county and state organizations have preserved many natural sites for public enjoyment near the community. The community hopes to capitalize on the many visitors that these assets draw to the area. Integral to being able to receive benefit from the area's natural resource assets is the ability to protect them from harm. The community intends to do its part by encouraging residents and businesses to implement energy efficient and environmentally sound building and landscaping practices, as well as incorporating these practices into city projects where possible.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Protect sensitive environmental resources through conscious decision-making and enhance access and awareness to natural resources.

Strategy 1.1: Protect the waterways, wetlands, wildlife habitats, woodlands, open spaces, farmlands and groundwater resources.

Action: Plan for the treatment or removal of ash trees in the city right of way and city parks to prevent Emerald Ash Borer infestation.

Action: Investigate tree replacement policy and consider Trees Forever funding.

Action: Collaborate with Howard County and surrounding communities on watershed awareness and improvement.

Action: Maintain membership in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) through enforcement of NFIP floodplain development ordinance.

Action: Consult Howard County Soil Survey, U.S. Geological Survey Maps and Reports and Corn Suitability Ratings (CSR) when considering location options for new development.

Goal 2: Incorporate more renewable energy and materials in community projects.

Strategy 1.2: Promote and utilize renewable energy and materials.

Action: Provide residents access to a list of potential energy saving techniques and materials available.

Action: When feasible, replace city utilities with energy efficient and cost saving practices such as solar energy or energy efficient street lighting.

CHAPTER 9: LAND USE

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section includes goals, strategies and programs that identify current land uses within the municipality and that guide the future development and redevelopment of property, consistent with the municipality's character. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include information on the amount, type, intensity and density of existing land use, trends in the market price of land used for specific purposes and plans for future land use throughout the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify and include information on property that has the possibility for redevelopment, a map of existing and potential land use and land use conflicts, information and maps relating to the current and future provision of utilities within the municipality, information and maps that identify the current and future boundaries for areas reserved for soil conservation, water supply conservation, flood control and surface water drainage and removal. Information provided under this paragraph may also include an analysis of the current and potential impacts on local watersheds and air quality.

Introduction

This section examines the existing land use patterns and development projections and proposes a future land use scenario for the City of Lime Springs. A primary purpose of land use planning is to ensure the protection of existing conforming properties and future development from encroachment by incompatible uses. This protection benefits residents, landowners, developers and investors alike.

Existing land uses are evaluated, and the proposed distribution, location and extent of future land uses are designated. The principles and standards for implementing the Future Land Use Plan will need to be specifically defined in the city's land development regulations and the zoning codes and regulations. The land development regulations are the foremost means of implementing the guidelines in the Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan and controlling the uses of land in the city.

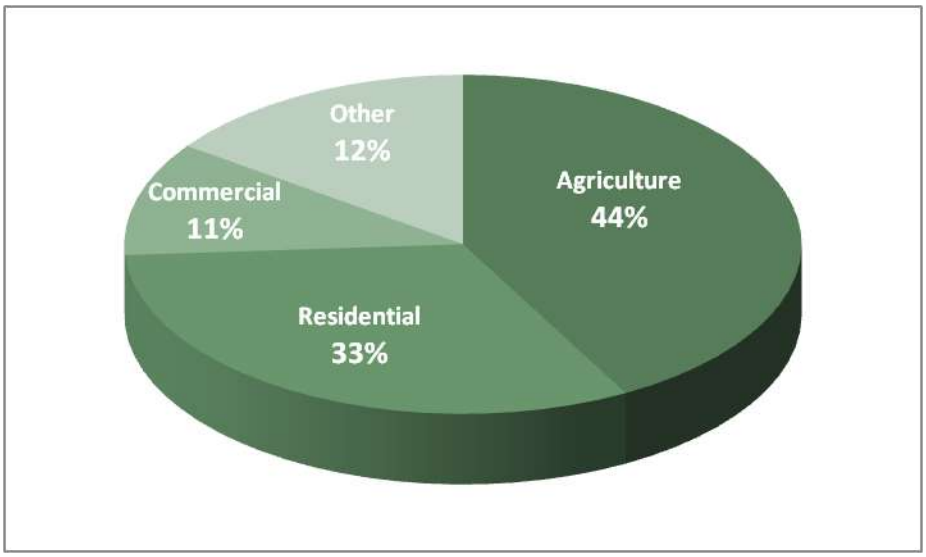
Land Use Documents

The City of Lime Springs controls land use and protects community character through a building permit process and a comprehensive code of ordinances, including zoning and a flood plain ordinance. The community may want to consider adding and/or updating other land use tools such as an erosion/sediment control ordinance, an historic preservation ordinance, site plan regulations, mechanical and plumbing codes, a zoning map or other ordinances.

Current Land Use

The current land uses in Lime Springs are illustrated on Figure 12, the Current Land Use map. Chart 20 breaks down the community's current land use by type. The largest use of land is currently agricultural, with approximately 44% of the city's acres in farm production of some type. The next largest category is residential, with 33% of the acres. Commercial use covers 11% of the acres and the remaining 12% includes negligible acres of industrial use, tax-exempt and government-owned properties.

Chart 20: Current Land Use Breakdown



Source: (Howard County Assessor, 2012)

Future Land Use

The City of Lime Springs has developed a Future Land Use Map (Figure 13) to guide decisions regarding future growth and development. The map offers a graphic view of anticipated, potential or future land use growth for the entire community. The community expects to see future development, either commercial or industrial, to occur west of the community toward Highway 63. If mutually beneficial, annexation could occur in those areas as well, both north and south of the existing A21 corridor. Residential expansion is expected north of the community toward 40th Street. While the future land use map designates how the community would like to utilize the land, the city's zoning ordinances and zoning map will identify specific uses. If annexation occurs as mapped, Lime Springs could grow a size of from .88 square miles to approximately 1.3 square miles, a nearly 50% increase. This map will serve as a good guide for the community in the future as infrastructure expansions are considered and planned.

Figure 12: Current Land Use

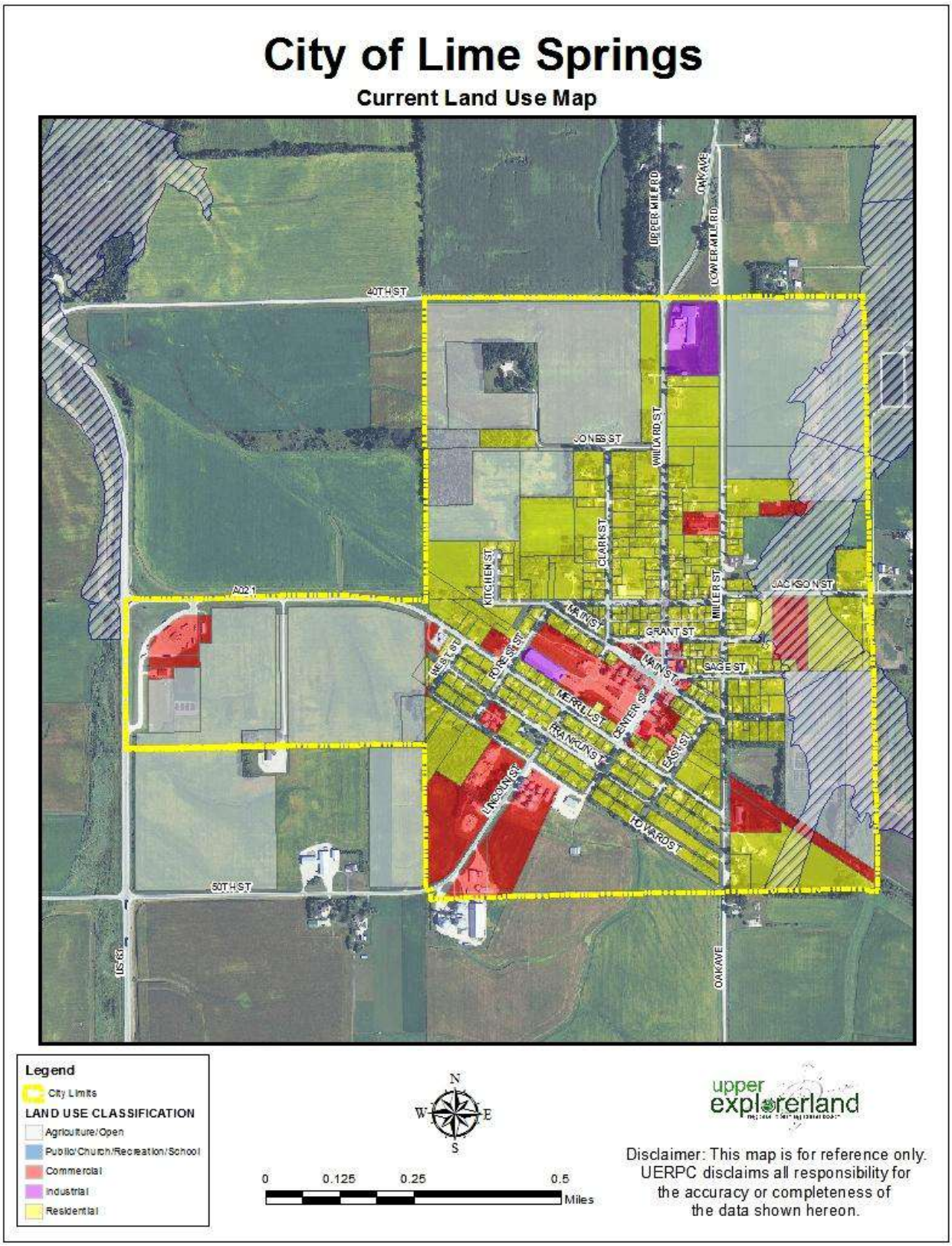
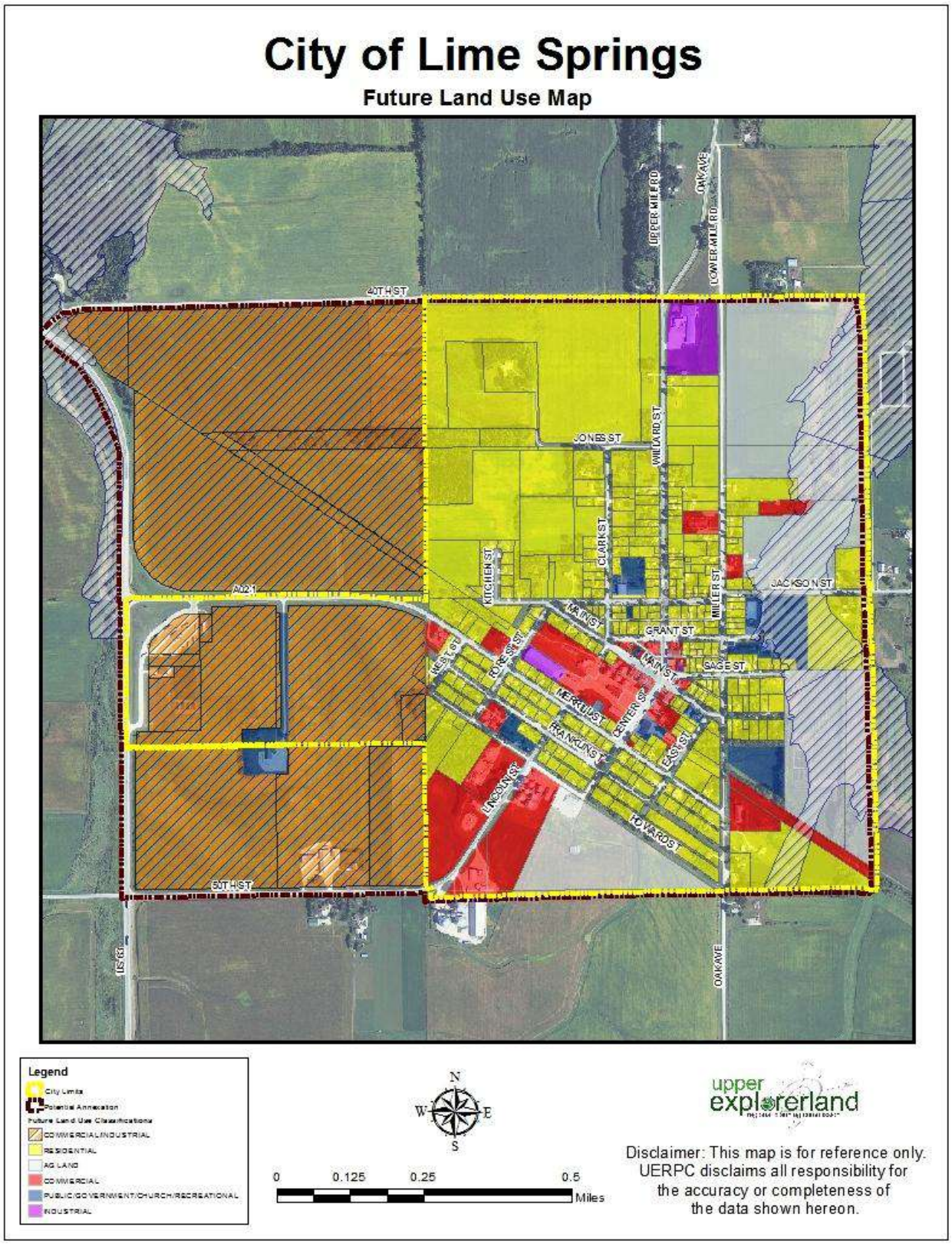


Figure 13: Future Land Use Map



Community Priorities

Compatible Land Use

Lime Springs strives to ensure that any new land development is compatible with existing and future uses. The community is currently working to update its code of ordinances, including a zoning ordinance. As the community grows and changes, it will need to review zoning periodically to ensure that it continues to protect the community's character.

Annexation

Lime Springs has two potential areas it may look to annex in the future. Both locations are on the western edge of the community along Highway 63. Until recently, the southwestern edge of the city limits had been identified as extending as far south as 50th Street, but it was discovered that this section is currently not part of the community. Many maps still show this border incorrectly, the U.S. Census included. Annexing this area makes future sense for the community. The other potential annexation area is the northwest section just outside of the city limits. This area is also along Highway 63 and would offer great visibility and easy access for motorists. As annexation moves closer to reality, city leaders should look for ways to make the transaction a win-win situation for all parties involved.

Mapping

Lime Springs would like to continue its community mapping efforts using GIS and other computer-based programs to assist with long term planning efforts. Opportunities include developing comprehensive inventories of infrastructure, utilities, facilities and housing to create informative maps for city leadership and potential businesses, developers and residents.

Flooding

Lime Springs is aware of the floodplain in the eastern portion of the community and will work to ensure that any future development takes flooding into consideration when establishing zoning and/or authorizing development.

Zoning

Lime Springs does have zoning but it is very broad and does little to protect residents and prevent land use conflicts. The city plans to update its zoning ordinances to reflect the needs of the community.

Infill

Lime Springs is working through several maintenance issues with its community infrastructure including roads, water and sewer. The community plans to encourage the infill of vacant lots with existing infrastructure and address needed repairs before extending or expanding to undeveloped areas.

Land Use Summary

Lime Springs is looking west for expansion opportunities. As floodplains to the east pose a hazard for development, the increased utilization of Highway 63 to the west is an attractive area for growth for the community. The community has identified two potential annexation areas: the section north of A21 to 40th Street and south of the A21 corridor section to 50th Street. This would bring the total acres in the community from approximately 565 to 825 acres. The community has quite a bit of room to grow without any annexation as 44% of the current land use within the city limits is classified as agricultural use. The city has identified the existing agricultural land from the Travel Plaza east to the edge of the current residential area as having good potential for commercial or industrial growth and has designated the area as such. North of the current residential area to 40th Street is noted as a viable location for additional residential uses. As the city looks to expand or fill its existing borders, it will plan appropriately for infrastructure expansions and support projects that use vacant lots with existing infrastructure.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Promote development and redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services.

Strategy 1.1: Before approving new development, consider infill of existing sites.

Action: Inventory vacant sites within the community.

Goal 2: Through proper land use planning, encourage variety in residential, commercial, industrial and recreational types and densities that help meet the needs of all citizens within the community.

Strategy 2.1: Establish zoning that protects the character of the community.

Action: Update zoning ordinances and variance procedures.

Action: Develop standards for area residential development such as lot sizes, minimum square feet, setbacks and regulations.

Action: Create zoning regulations that will encourage commercial and industrial development while protecting the characteristics of the community.

Strategy 2.2: Balance individual property rights with community interest and goals.

Action: Consider compatibility of adjoining or surrounding land use before approving new development.

Action: Consider the impact and demand that development or expansion will have on infrastructure such as city streets, water and sewer prior to development.

Action: Consider the impact development will have on the environment as well as how the environment could affect development.

Strategy 2.3: Buffers in the form of natural barriers of streams and wooded areas, landscaping and screening will be provided when industrial uses adjoin residential and other incompatible uses.

Action: Update city code and ordinances to include buffer requirements.

Strategy 2.4: Solar access rights and energy conservation are encouraged in the review process of subdivision plats and site plans.

Action: Update zoning ordinances to include clear definition and regulations solar access rights and energy conservation.

Strategy 2.5: Support and encourage the preservation of historically significant buildings and structures in the city.

Action: Consider land use tools that identify and preserve historically significant areas of the community.

CHAPTER 10: HAZARDS

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section includes goals, strategies and programs that identify the natural and other hazards that have the greatest likelihood of impacting the municipality or that pose a risk of catastrophic damage as such hazards relate to land use and development decisions, as well as the steps necessary to mitigate risk after considering the local hazard mitigation plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Introduction

This section identifies hazards that carry the greatest risk of negatively impacting the City of Lime Springs. The Howard County Multi-Jurisdictional (MJ-6) Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in May of 2012. This plan goes into great detail regarding these risks and the mitigation strategies identified to address or avoid potential damage, injury and destruction that can be caused by an event. The county-wide plan ranked tornado, sever winter storm, flash flood and river flood as the hazards with the highest significance in the county. Each of these is likely to occur in or near Lime Springs given its proximity to the Upper Iowa River and its two creeks for flooding potential and the gently sloping hills to the west that allow blowing and drifting snow.

Existing & Potential Hazards

In addition to the four hazards identified by the county as "high" in significance, other hazards exist that have the potential to negatively impact the City of Lime Springs. Some are typical of any location in Iowa, such as hail, wind and other severe weather. Other hazards are common to almost any city such as fire, infrastructure failure and traffic incidents.

Flooding

Lime Springs is aware that its location near the river and creeks is a benefit, but it can be potentially dangerous as well. Figure 14 identifies the floodplain around and within Lime Springs. It should be noted that the map shows the 100-year floodplain, which means that on average this area has a 1% chance of flooding each year. To provide the city with some flood warning, a solar river gauge was installed west of Lidtke Mill on the Upper Iowa River in June of 2011. The creeks in the community are primarily tile fed; when the creeks rise out of their banks, it causes basement flooding in multiple homes and road blockages. The city ballpark is also susceptible to flooding. The old railroad tracks have created a berm that collects trees and debris which may be adding to the creek flooding issues. In the past the community has tried dredging the creek bed to widen and smooth out the banks while removing trees and debris.

Severe Weather

The City of Lime Springs is in need of a shelter to house citizens during severe weather. The space could be used to store supplies in the event of a natural disaster. The community is currently working with the Spring Ahead Learning Center to incorporate a tornado safe room into its new facility.

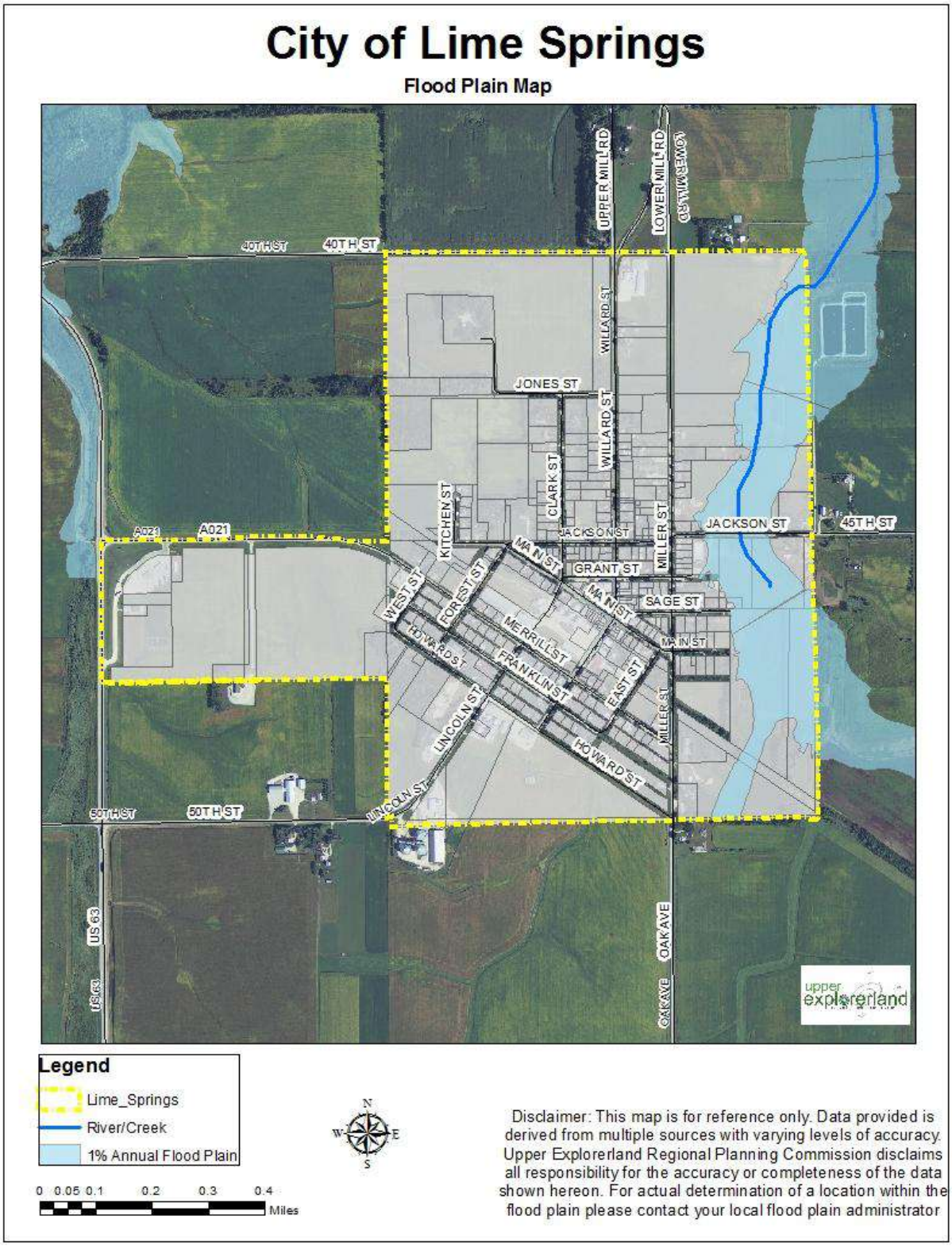
The City of Lime Springs has one warning siren currently in use, but the sound does not carry well across the town, especially when the trees are fully leafed out. The current siren was installed in 1931, approximately 20 feet above ground level and is affixed to two wooden power poles behind the city library. In this location, the library also acts as a sound barrier. The siren can only be activated manually and ideally, the Howard County Sheriff's Office should be able to remotely activate the siren.

Severe weather occurrences have caused the community to occasionally experience extended periods of electrical outage. These outages not only cause business operation to cease, but more importantly, put the school children, faculty, staff, businesses owners and residents at risk. In addition, critical electronic infrastructure including life-safety and security-monitoring systems fail. The city currently utilizes a small, 25 year-old generator, which is stored at the old city garage. The current generator is the backup power for the city sewer plant and water tower. The community center, which serves as a provisional community shelter, currently does not have a source of back-up power.

Fire and Rescue

In the history of Lime Springs, two devastating fires have seriously changed the downtown landscape of the community. As a result, the community actively supports the ongoing development of the Lime Springs Fire and Rescue Department. Currently, 18 fully trained volunteers serve as members of the fire department, with an additional three volunteers fully trained as first responders.

Figure 14: Floodplain Map



Community Priorities

Floodplain Development

The east edge of Lime Springs is in a floodplain with a majority of the land currently being used for agriculture or open space. However, several homes and roads can be impacted by creek flooding and flash flooding from heavy rains. The city looks to minimize the effects of flooding by updating city zoning ordinances and its permitting process to ensure that the approval of any future development or growth has considered the potential for flooding.

The Creek

Lime Springs plans to manage the creek running through town by using innovative storm water management practices including creating greenways, open space, pocket parks and community gardens to encourage more water absorption and less runoff near the creeks edge and around the community where road runoff is a problem. The city will continue the process of debris cleanup as it collects at the old rail road tracks to lessen the impact of future flooding.

Hazard Mitigation Plan

Lime Springs will continue to implement the hazard mitigation projects identified in the county's hazard mitigation plan in a coordinated effort with the comprehensive plan. The city can consider combining more projects such as the childcare center/tornado shelter or partnering with other county jurisdictions to save resources while achieving the same goals. The city will seek the expertise of the Howard County Emergency Manager in implementing practices that help mitigate potential hazards and continually assess potential hazards as new development is planned.

Hazards Summary

Lime Springs is susceptible to several hazards including flooding and severe weather. Flooding from local waterways and sudden heavy downpours are troublesome and sometimes dangerous for residents. Wet basements and road blockages can occur during these events. Managing the debris in the creek beds, encouraging more absorptive landscapes and lessening the pooling of stormwater on city roadways are efforts being undertaken by the city to mitigate the impacts of flooding in the community. Severe weather, as in all of Iowa, is a potential hazard for Lime Springs. The city is taking action to construct a tornado safe room for residents in partnership with the school district, obtain more backup power generators for essential community facilities and improve early warning systems in the city.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Minimize vulnerability of the people and their property to the impacts of hazards.

Strategy 1.1: When considering approval of any new developments identify potential hazards.

Action: Update codes and establish zoning to ensure future development along the creek mitigates potential flood damage and loss of life.

Goal 2: The community is able to effectively respond to an emergency.

Strategy 2.1: Be prepared and equipped to respond to any incident at any time.

Action: Install transfer switches at facilities used for shelters and emergency services.

Action: Purchase backup generators for critical community facilities.

Strategy 2.2: Provide adequate warning and protection for residents through enhanced warning equipment and shelter.

Action: Purchase and install warning sirens.

Action: Review and update public about shelter locations once Spring Ahead Learning Center is complete.

Action: Equip emergency shelters with appropriate emergency supplies.

Strategy 2.3: Improve and protect infrastructure to ensure protection of lives.

Action: Replace water mains between 4-8 inches, not meeting current water flow demands for fire hydrants.

Action: Repair or replace 10 inoperable fire hydrants.

Strategy 2.4: Maintain critical facility functions during power outages.

Action: Purchase and install adequate generators for the sewer plant, water tower and community center.

Goal 3: Strengthen communication among agencies.

Strategy 3.1: Improve communications between local and county emergency response agencies.

Action: Continue to participate in county-wide emergency response exercises.

Action: Ensure all new city response personnel are provided training in emergency protocol and are provided the Howard County Emergency Support Function Plan.

CHAPTER 11: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

Iowa Smart Planning Guidelines: This section contains goals, strategies and programs for joint planning and joint decision-making with other municipalities or governmental entities, including school districts and drainage districts, for siting and constructing public facilities and sharing public services. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify existing or potential conflicts between the municipality and other local governments related to future development of the municipality and may include recommendations for resolving such conflicts. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify opportunities to collaborate and partner with neighboring jurisdictions and other entities in the region for projects of mutual interest.

Introduction

Intergovernmental collaboration involves working with neighboring communities, school districts and other agencies to understand how their future planning and development activity may impact the City of Lime Springs and vice versa. At a minimum, this should involve sharing plans that may conflict or coincide with neighboring jurisdictions and local agencies so that cooperation results in an optimum implementation process. The City of Lime Springs has a strong record of cooperating with nearby communities, county government, the local school district, state agencies and regional agencies.

Intergovernmental Collaboration

Local Government and Other Agencies

Howard County Business and Tourism (HCBT) offers technical assistance and some funding for economic development, community development and tourism to all of the county's communities and can provide assistance toward meeting many of the goals within Lime Springs' plan. HCBT manages the only county-wide farmers market in Iowa and Lime Springs, along with every other Howard County city, is a host location

The City of Lime Springs has worked with Cresco on several projects including the funding of this comprehensive planning process. The neighboring communities of Chester and Elma are also potential collaborators, and as a group, Cresco, Chester, Elma and Lime Springs support the Howard-Winneshiek School District.

Various departments within county government will be valuable to the community as they work to maintain a high quality of life for residents. The following list illustrates a few of the many resources available at the county level:

- The City of Lime Springs has a formal agreement with the sheriff's department to provide law enforcement protection.
- The county engineer's department will work with the city streets department to coordinate street upgrades, repairs or maintenance on county roads through town (A21 and A23).
- The county conservation department can assist the community with trail development plans and natural resource concerns.
- Emergency management and response is coordinated through the county emergency management office.
- The environmental health department can serve as a resource to the community in matters of environmental regulations

Regional Agencies

Regional partnerships can also benefit the community and have been noted throughout this document. Key regional agencies that can help implement strategies in this plan include:

- Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission (UERPC) provides services in community planning, government grant writing (community facilities, sewer/water, downtown revitalization and housing), workforce, housing rehab and rental assistance programs and transportation projects.
- Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) provides services and programs that support natural resource conservation and enjoyment. Water quality, forestry and trail development are among the areas of focus for RC&D.
- Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation (NEICAC) provides programming and services in child and family health and wellbeing, home energy assistance, low-income housing and weatherization, and also serves as the region's transit agency.

State Agencies

The following is a list of state agencies whose departments and areas of expertise could assist the community as it moves forward with the implementation of this plan:

- Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA)
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT)

Public Engagement

In addition to important intergovernmental collaborations, Lime Springs wishes to promote more public engagement in its activities. Informing and involving the public is an essential part of providing transparency in community governance. Specifically, the city hopes to update its website and tap into electronic media as a way to better engage its busy population. Lime Springs understands that getting good results in community development depends upon the support of its residents and will continue to look for ways to promote its activities and decision-making process to build more productive resident engagement.

Community Priorities

Collaboration

Lime Springs looks to strengthen its current partnerships and develop new collaborations that address the long term goals of the community. Partnerships that reduce costs for the community, or create better results are possible in most of the elements included in this plan. The county and region have organizations dedicated to housing, transportation, economic development, agriculture, character and history, natural resources and hazards. The City of Lime Springs will access these resources as community projects and initiatives are proposed.

Public Engagement

Lime Springs plans to continue to gather public input and solicit local volunteers for future projects. Public engagement and volunteerism are important aspects to the success of community projects. With limited budgets, it is often a grassroots effort that drives many projects beyond the dreaming phase and into reality. Opportunities to improve public engagement include an active city website, promoting and recognizing the efforts of volunteers and establishing a welcome wagon to get new community members involved. The city plans to reach out to the current administrator for www.limesprings.com to see whether city administration could have direct access to update the site, lessoning the burden on this community volunteer and ensuring that information is timely and comprehensive.

Intergovernmental Collaboration Summary

Both intergovernmental cooperation and public engagement share the core requirement of effective communication. Together collaboration and public engagement are important ways to make the most efficient use of the community's limited resources and ensure fair and equitable decision-making processes. The city is fortunate to have strong partners throughout the county, region and state that serve as resources in a variety of community development projects and initiatives.

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 1: Lime Springs will collaborate and communicate with local, regional, state and federal agencies to pool resources and plan effectively to benefit residents and the entire region.

Strategy 1.1: Collaborate with Howard County regarding annexation and development, and maintain coordination and cooperation.

Action: Coordinate with Howard County on land use decisions within the two mile annexation area of Lime Springs to ensure land use compatibility.

Action: Work with Howard County and surrounding jurisdictions on Watershed Management.

Strategy 1.2: Work with the surrounding communities, counties and the Iowa DOT to coordinate the development and maintenance of a consistent and cohesive trail and street/highway system that enables residents to travel throughout the region in a safe and efficient manner.

Action: Maintain communications with the RPA through the county engineer and county conservation director's participation on regional transportation committees.

Strategy 1.3: Continue communication with surrounding agencies, jurisdictions and residents for improved collaboration and support.

Action: Continually review, update and utilize the city website.

Action: Collaborate with and support Howard County Business & Tourism.

Action: Distribute the comprehensive plan to Howard County Board of Supervisors, surrounding communities, Howard-Winneshiek Community School District, City Library and Howard County Business & Tourism.

Action: Make the comprehensive plan available on the city website and encourage local residents, business and surrounding jurisdictions to continually review the plan.

CHAPTER 12: IMPLEMENTATION

Iowa Smart Planning Guidance: This section includes a compilation of programs and specific actions necessary to implement any provision of the comprehensive plan, including changes to any applicable land development regulations, official maps, or subdivision ordinances.

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to explain how this plan will be implemented to achieve the desired goals as set forth by the City of Lime Springs. The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan addresses many important components critical to sustaining a healthy community while preserving the area's natural resources and history. As change is inevitable, the plan may need to be amended to reflect those changes. This section includes a table of all the actions highlighted in each previous section of the plan, with a timeframe for those actions. In this way, the implementation section serves as the master "to do" list for implementing the plan.

Action Plan

The action plan is laid out in table form for easy reference by community leaders. Each action is assigned a potential time frame, an agency or agencies responsible for ensuring that the action is carried out and the resources required to complete the action.

Time Frame

This category assigns approximate time frames in which the implementation of the action can be expected. Some actions will take significantly longer than others, so this document will simply refer to the proposed starting time and does not address the length of a project, unless it is ongoing. The time frames used in this document are as follows:

- 0 to 2 years
- 2 to 5 years
- Ongoing

Responsible Agencies

The City of Lime Springs and its departments will be the main agencies responsible for ensuring the implementation of the plan. In many cases, other agencies may provide a vital support role or even take the lead on some actions. The following list indicates the partners whose participation will be crucial to success. On the Action Plan, these agencies or departments will be abbreviated and the first agency listed in the table is assumed to be the lead agency.

COLS	City of Lime Springs (administration)
HC	Howard County
HCBT	Howard County Business and Tourism
HCCF	Howard County Community Foundation
HWSD	Howard-Winneshiek Community School District
LSCC	Lime Springs City Council
LSCClub	Lime Springs Community Club
LSFD	Lime Springs Fire Department
LSLB	Lime Springs Library Board
LSOC	Lime Springs Oneota Club
LSPR	Lime Springs Parks & Recreation Board
LSPZ	Lime Springs Planning and Zoning Commission
LSPW	Lime Springs Public Works Department
LSR	Lime Springs Residents
NEICAC	Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation
NICC	Northeast Iowa Community College
NEIRCD	Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development
UERPC	Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission

Resource Needs

Resource needs include the potential direct costs of the project or initiative as well as overhead. This document simply categorizes possible resource needs into three levels:

- Minimal: Indicates resource needs to implement the action are expected to take less than $10,000 in direct expenditures and could be accomplished within the schedules of existing staff and/or volunteers of the responsible parties.
- Moderate: Indicates resource needs to implement the action are expected to take more than $10,000 and less than $50,000 in direct expenditures and would require some coordination between agencies and increased staff time.
- Significant: Indicates resource needs to implement the action are expected to take more than $50,000 in direct expenditures and would require significant coordination among agencies and significant staff time.

Table 21: Community Action Plan

ELEMENT: COMMUNITY CHARACTER					
Goal 1: The distinct characteristics that Lime Springs' residents consider unique and special to the identity of the community are preserved.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Maintain and improve the community's "small town" characteristics			Support downtown building owners in beautification efforts.	LSCC, LSCClub	Minimal
	Honor veterans through the collection, education and display of items and stories as well as a public memorial.			LSCClub, LSOC, LSR	Minimal
		Establish a community endowment fund to provide perpetual support for community projects and activities.		LSCC, LSCClub Service partner: HCCF	Minimal
			Continue the farmers market and look for unique ways to utilize the market to offset the lack of a grocery store.	COLS, LSCC, HCBT	Minimal
Maintain and improve the community's cultural and recreational facilities.			Promote the utilization of the community center for events.	COLS, LSCClub, LSOC	Minimal
	Bring focus to other unique aspects of the community such as the old jail, the stage coach trail and military trail.			LSCC, LSCClub, LSR	Minimal
	Make needed improvements to the community pool: roof on concession stand, plumbing updates and concrete deck repair.			LSCC, COLS, LSPR	Moderate
	Ensure ADA compliance at community pool.			LSCC, COLS, LSPR	Moderate

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
The community's events are well-attended and strongly supported by the community.			Continue to host the annual Sweet Corn Days and ensure a quality event for long term sustainability.	LSCClub, LSCC, COLS	Minimal
	Recruit new and younger volunteers for events and committees by looking for group sponsors, making direct calls and utilizing the Silver Cord Program.			LSCClub, LSCC, LSR	Minimal
			Demonstrate appreciation for volunteers through public acknowledgement, coupons for local establishments, etc.	LSCCLub, LSR	Minimal
ELEMENT: HOUSING					
Goal 1: A variety of quality housing opportunities exist for all segments of the city's current and future population.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Promote adequate housing opportunities for all persons including low and moderate income, elderly and residents with special needs.	Conduct a housing survey to assess needs.			LSCC Service partner: UERPC	Minimal
	Develop a housing rehabilitation program to maintain affordable housing in the community.			LSCC Service partner: UERPC, NEICAC	Moderate
		Encourage the development of rental housing in Lime Springs that accommodate low-to-moderate income families.		LSCC Service partner: NEICAC	Moderate - Significant

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Utilize and support local initiatives to improve the housing conditions within the city.	Work with local non-profit agencies to identify and promote housing assistance and rehabilitation programs to residents.			COLS, LSCC Service partner: UERPC, NEICAC	Minimum
	Apply for funding assistance for homeownership and for the rehabilitation of substandard or vacant housing units.			LSCC, COLS Service partner: UERPC	Minimum – Moderate
Rehabilitate and preserve the existing housing stock in the city.			Review, update and enforce housing codes such as nuisance ordinances.	LSPZ, LSCC, COLS, LSPW	Minimum
Goal 2: Encourage housing that supports sustainable, healthy and quality development patterns.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Encourage housing development to conserve natural resources and make efficient use of the land.	Work with local real estate agents and land owners to inventory existing lots/properties determine whether existing infrastructure (water, sewer, roads) is site ready.			LSCC, COLS, LSPW, LSR	Minimal
			Update the city's website to include available properties in the community.	COLS, LSCClub	Minimal
	Establish zoning to keep housing development away from potential flood prone areas and other land use conflicts.			LSPZ, LSCC	Minimal

ELEMENT: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT					
Goal 1: Provide an atmosphere for business expansion and development throughout the community, including the city's industrial park and downtown.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Plan for, market and support new development as well as existing businesses.			Encourage infill of vacant commercial structures by identifying or establishing specific incentives.	LSCC Service partner: HCBT	Minimal-Moderate
	Continue to support existing businesses and encourage their growth/expansion through a business retention and expansion program.			LSCClub, HCBT	Minimal
	Plan for necessary infrastructure to attract and support economic development.			LSCC, COLS, LSPW, HCBT	Minimal-Moderate
			Collaborate with and support Howard County Business & Tourism on issues such as marketing and employment growth.	LSCC, COLS, HCBT	Minimal
			Continue to improve street maintenance to provide adequate access to local businesses for numerous modes of transportation.	LSCC, COLS, LSPW, HC (road dept.)	Minimal-Significant
	Consider feasibility study for a grocery store or look for unique ways to obtain basic groceries through grocery delivery options, local business collaborations or the farmers market.			LSCC, COLS, HCED	Minimal

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Promote downtown as pedestrian friendly and safe by ensuring areas are clean, well-lit and offer proper signage and pedestrian amenities, such as benches and visual aesthetics that encourage foot traffic.	Establish a Downtown Beautification Committee or group			LSCC	Minimal
	Create a beautification plan that includes facade improvement projects, planters, parks, gardens and/or trees.			LSCC, Downtown Beautification Committee, LSOC	Minimal
	Identify funding opportunities for community beautification when plan is in place.			LSCC, COLS, Downtown Beautification Committee	Minimal
Goal 2: Market the assets and businesses of Lime Springs.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Utilize the traffic generated from Highway 63 to market businesses.	Establish signage or kiosk near Highway 63 to inform travelers about the businesses and services available in the community.			LSCC, COLS	Moderate
	Improve the gateway entrance off of Highway 63 onto Merrill Street through beautification project and signage.			LSCC, COLS, HC (road dept.)	Moderate-Significant
	Work with travel plaza to train and provide information to front line employees about Lime Springs' attractions and amenities.			LSCC, HCBT	Minimal
Capitalize on Upper Iowa River tourism and other recreational assets.		Identify ways to link current businesses to the recreational assets of the area and/or promote new businesses that cater to these opportunities as a draw to the community.		LSCC, HCBT Service partner: NEIRCD, HC (conservation)	Minimal

ELEMENT: TRANSPORTATION					
Goal 1: Provide for and encourage a safe, convenient and economic transportation system that is accessible and accommodates alternative transportation, such as walking and biking.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Encourage diverse modes of transportation.	Inventory existing sidewalks through Safe Routes to School Plan and create a sidewalk maintenance and infill plan.			LSCC, COLS, LSPW Service partner: UERPC	Minimal
	Update and enforce existing sidewalk ordinances.			LSCC, COLS, LSPW	Minimal
			As new development or street projects occur, encourage complete streets design.	LSCC, LSPW	Moderate
	Establish a network of neighbors, friends and family willing to carpool and post list in locations around the community and on the website.			COLS, LSCClub, LSR	Minimal
			Inventory signs and update to meet new DOT reflectivity requirements.	COLS, LSPW	Minimal-Moderate
Work with the county, Regional Planning Affiliate (RPA) and Iowa DOT to coordinate transportation planning.			Work with Howard County Conservation as it plans future trail connectivity.	LSCC, COLS, LSPR Service partner: HC (conservation)	Minimal
	Work with surrounding communities on feasibility study to determine whether a bus to area employment centers is viable.			LSCC, COLS, Chester, Cresco, New Hampton, etc. Service partner: NEICAC	Minimal

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Ensure the transportation system is maintained and accommodates future needs.			Prior to any street improvements check the condition of underground utilities and make repairs prior to the start of street construction.	LSPW	Minimal-Significant
		As feasible, continue street extensions to prepare community for future growth and development.		LSPW, LSCC	Moderate-Significant
		Replace West Jackson Street.		LSPW, LSCC	Moderate-Significant
	Resurface Main Street and a four block area of Miller Street and other identified spots.			LSPW, LSCC	Moderate-Significant
			Address in-town gravel road issues like dust and potholes	LSPW, LSCC	Moderate-Significant
ELEMENT: COMMUNITY FACILITIES					
Goal 1: Community services and facilities are of high quality and accessible to all.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Continue cooperation and communication between the Lime Springs/Chester Elementary School and surrounding communities on projects that maintain and upgrade school facilities to collectively provide for quality educational opportunities.			Monitor school board conversations to ensure voice at the table when or if consolidation is discussed.	LSCC, LSR Service partner: HWSD	Minimal

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Provide residents shelter from hazardous occurrences.	Review and update the public on shelter locations once Spring Ahead Learning Center is completed.			COLS, LSFD Service partner: HC (emergency management)	Minimal
	Purchase generator for community center as it also a community shelter.			LSCC, COLS, LSFD	Minimal-Moderate
Provide a variety of recreational opportunities for residents, including access to parks, trails, swimming pools, picnic areas and other recreational facilities. This may also include access/connectivity to the Upper Iowa River.	Plan for continued maintenance and necessary upgrades of municipal swimming pool.			LSCC, COLS, LSPR	Moderate-Significant
	Itemize and prioritize park improvement projects and develop funding plan.			LSPR, COLS, LSCC	Moderate

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Maintain community facilities and promote increased utilization.			Encourage more events at the community center to help with maintenance and funding.	COLS, LSCClub	Minimal
			Promote/advertise municipal swimming pool and possible events to help with maintenance and ensure it can remain open.	COLS, LSPR	Minimal
	Replace boiler at library.			COLS, LSLB	Moderate
	Develop and carry out plan for improvement at the city storage facility.			COLS, LSPW	Minimal
			Support the use of the community clinic as possible to avoid closure or reduction in hours.	LSR	Minimal
ELEMENT: PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES					
Goal 1: Ensure adequate services and utilities are provided throughout the community.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Ensure that water and sewer upgrades and maintenance continue.			Replace water meters throughout the community, beginning at the water tower and larger businesses and eventually to all residents and businesses.	LSPW, LSCC, COLS	Minimal – Moderate
	Repair aerators if feasible, otherwise replace.			LSPW, LSCC, COLS	Moderate-Significant

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Continually investigate alternative service provision options that may be more effective in providing services to residents.	Update and expand internet infrastructure and backbone in the community.			LSCC, LSPZ	Minimal
	Be proactively involved in any discussion about bringing a cell tower into the area.			LSCC, LSIDC	Minimal
Encourage storm water management.			When financially feasible, establish rock base before pouring any concrete or asphalt on city streets to help with water runoff and improve road life.	LSPW, LSCC	Moderate
	Review ordinances to ensure consistency with best practices in storm water management so that residents can implement techniques as desired.			LSPZ	Minimal
As new development is proposed, encourage available locations that currently offer sewer and water infrastructure and have not been developed to capacity before extending sewer and water to new locations.			Create and keep current GIS infrastructure maps.	COLS, LSPW, LSPZ Service partner: HC (GIS), UERPC	Minimal

ELEMENT: NATURAL AND AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES					
Goal 1: Protect sensitive environmental resources through conscious decision-making and enhance access and awareness to natural resources.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Protect the waterways, wetlands, wildlife habitats, woodlands, open spaces, farmlands and groundwater resources.			Plan for the treatment and/or removal of ash trees in the city right of way and city parks to prevent Emerald Ash Borer infestation.	LSPW, COLS, LSPR, LSCC Service partner: NEIRCD	Minimal-Moderate
	Investigate tree replacement policy and consider Trees Forever funding.			COLS, LSCC	Minimal
			Collaborate with Howard County and surrounding communities on watershed awareness and improvement.	COLS, LSCC Service partner: HC (conservation), NEIRCD	Minimal
	Maintain membership in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) through enforcement of NFIP floodplain development ordinance.			COLS, LSCC Service partner: HC (emergency management), Iowa DNR	Minimal
			Consult Howard County Soil Survey, U.S. Geological Survey Maps and Reports and Corn Suitability Ratings (CSR) when considering location options for new development.	COLS, LSCC, LSPZ, HCBT Service partner: HC (assessor), ISU Ext.	Minimal

Goal 2: Incorporate more renewable energy and materials in community projects.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Promote and utilize renewable energy and materials.			Provide residents access to a list of potential energy saving techniques and materials available.	COLS Service Partner: NEIRCD, Center on Sustainable Communities, IDALS	Minimal
			When feasible, replace city utilities with energy efficient and cost saving practices such as solar energy or energy efficient street lighting.	LSPW, LSCC	Minimal-Moderate
ELEMENT: LAND USE					
Goal 1: Promote development and redevelopment of lands with existing infrastructure and public services.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Before approving new development, consider infill of existing sites	Inventory vacant sites within the community.			LSCC, COLS, LSPZ	Minimal
Goal 2: Through proper land use planning, encourage variety in residential, commercial, industrial and recreational types and densities that help meet the needs of all citizens within the community.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Establish zoning that protects the character of the community	Update zoning ordinances and variance procedures			LSPZ, LSCC, COLS	Minimal
	Develop standards for area residential development such as lot sizes, minimum square feet, setbacks and regulations			LSPZ, LSCC, COLS	Minimal
	Create zoning regulations that will encourage commercial and industrial development while protecting the characteristics of the community.			LSPZ, LSCC, COLS	Minimal

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Balance individual property rights with community interest and goals			Consider compatibility of adjoining or surrounding land use before approving new development.	LSPZ, LSCC	Minimal
			Consider the impact and demand that development or expansion will have on infrastructure such as city streets, water and sewer prior to development.	LSPW, LSCC	Minimal
			Consider the impact development will have on the environment as well as how the environment could affect development.	LSPW, LSCC	Minimal
Buffers in the form of natural barriers of streams and wooded areas, landscaping and screening will be provided when industrial uses adjoin residential and other incompatible uses.	Update city code and ordinances to include buffer requirements.			LSPZ, LSCC	Minimal
Solar access rights and energy conservation are encouraged in the review process of subdivision plats and site plans.	Update zoning ordinances to include clear definition and regulations solar access rights and energy conservation.			LSPZ, LSCC	Minimal

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Support and encourage the preservation of historically significant buildings and structures in the city.	Consider land use tools that identify and preserve historically significant areas of the community.			LSPZ, LSCC	Minimal
ELEMENT: HAZARDS					
Goal 1: Minimize vulnerability of the people and their property to the impacts of hazards.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
When considering approval of any new developments identify potential hazards.	Update codes and establish zoning to ensure future development along the creek mitigates potential flood damage and loss of life.			LSPZ, LSCC	Minimal
Goal 2: The community is able to effectively respond to an emergency.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Be prepared and equipped to respond to any incident at any time.	Install transfer switches at facilities used for shelters and emergency services.			LSPW, LSFD	Minimal
	Purchase backup generators for critical community facilities.			LSPW, LSFD, COLS	Minimal-Moderate
Provide adequate warning and protection for residents through enhanced warning equipment and shelter.	Purchase and install warning sirens.			LSFD, COLS	Moderate
	Review and update public about shelter locations once Spring Ahead Learning Center is complete.			COLS, LSFD	Minimal
			Equip emergency shelters with appropriate emergency supplies.	COLS, LSFD	Minimal

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Improve and protect infrastructure, ensuring protection of lives.			Replace water mains between 4-8 inches, not meeting current water flow demands for fire hydrants.	LSPW, LSFD	Moderate
	Repair/replace 10 inoperable fire hydrants.			LSPW, LSFD	Moderate
Maintain critical facility functions during power outages.	Purchase and install adequate generators for the sewer plant, water tower and community center.			LSPW, LSFD	Minimal-Moderate
Goal 3: Strengthen communication among agencies.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Improve communications between local and county emergency response agencies.			Continue to participate in county-wide emergency response exercises.	LSFD, COLS	Minimal
			Ensure all new city response personnel are provided training in emergency protocol and are provided the Howard County Emergency Support Function Plan.	LSFD, COLS	Minimal

ELEMENT: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION					
Goal 1: Lime Springs will collaborate and communicate with local, regional, state and federal agencies to pool resources and plan effectively to benefit residents and the entire region.					
Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Collaborate with Howard County regarding annexation and development, and maintain coordination and cooperation.			Coordinate with Howard County on land use decisions within the two mile annexation area of Lime Springs to ensure land use compatibility.	LSPZ, HC (P&Z)	Minimal
			Work with Howard County and surrounding jurisdictions on Watershed Management.	LSPW, COLS, HC (conservation)	Minimal
Work with the surrounding communities, counties and the Iowa DOT to coordinate the development and maintenance of a consistent and cohesive trail and street/highway system that enables residents to travel throughout the region in a safe and efficient manner.			Maintain communications with the RPA through the county engineer and county conservation director's participation on regional transportation committees.	COLS, LSPW Service partners: HC (road dept. and conservation) UERPC (the RPA)	Minimal

Strategy	0-2 years	3-5 years	Ongoing	Responsible Agency	Resources
Continue communication with surrounding agencies, jurisdictions and residents for improved collaboration and support.			Continually review, update and utilize the city website.	COLS, LSCClub	Minimal
			Collaborate with and support Howard County Business & Tourism.	COLS, LSCClub, LSCC, HCBT	Minimal
	Distribute the comprehensive plan to Howard County Board of Supervisors, surrounding communities, Howard-Winneshiek Community School District, City Library and Howard County Business & Tourism.			COLS	Minimal
	Make the comprehensive plan available on the city website and encourage local residents, business and surrounding jurisdictions to continually review the plan.			COLS	Minimal

Plan Adoption

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan was reviewed by the Planning and Zoning committee on September 20th, presented to the public on October 29th and reviewed by the public at a public hearing on November 6, 2012. The City Council reviewed the plan and voted to adopt Lime Springs' Comprehensive Plan on November 6, 2012.

Integration and Consistency

It is especially important that all elements of the plan be integrated and made consistent. As a result of the comprehensive plan being developed in a coordinated and simultaneous effort, the planning process has ensured that the development and review of each element is consistent with the others; based on that analysis, there are no known inconsistencies between the planning elements. The city should work toward making all City Codes and Ordinances consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Measurement of Plan Progress

As part of the comprehensive planning process, a number of actions were developed that when implemented, are intended to build stronger relationships and give direction to the various city boards and its residents. Many of the actions are long term, while some can be accomplished in the next couple of years.

To help the city in measuring progress of the comprehensive plan, the community action plan has been created that identify the action, key parties, time frames and possible funding requirements to accomplish those actions. The identified actions will provide guidance to the planning commission which can measure the progress of achieving implementation of the comprehensive plan. It is recommended that the plan be continually reviewed by the various city boards and have copies available at each meeting location.

Plan Monitoring, Amendments and Updates

The City of Lime Springs Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a living document. Over time, social and economic conditions and values tend to change. The Comprehensive Plan should be updated periodically to reflect these changes. Systematic, periodic updates will ensure that not only the statistical data is current but also the plan's goals, strategies and actions reflect the current situation and modern needs. It is recommended the plan be reviewed for consistency every five years, with a full update planned every 20 years.

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APPENDIX A: SMART PLANNING PRINCIPLES AND ELEMENTS

Iowa's Ten Smart Planning Principles:

1. Collaboration

Governmental, community and individual stakeholders, including those outside the jurisdiction of the entity, are encouraged to be involved and provide comment during deliberation of planning, zoning, development and resource management decisions and during implementation of such decisions. The state agency, local government, or other public entity is encouraged to develop and implement a strategy to facilitate such participation.

2. Efficiency, Transparency and Consistency

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should be undertaken to provide efficient, transparent and consistent outcomes. Individuals, communities, regions and governmental entities should share in the responsibility to promote the equitable distribution of development benefits and costs.

3. Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should be undertaken to promote clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency.

4. Occupational Diversity

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should promote increased diversity of employment and business opportunities, promote access to education and training, expand entrepreneurial opportunities and promote the establishment of businesses in locations near existing housing, infrastructure and transportation.

5. Revitalization

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should facilitate the revitalization of established town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that conserves land, protects historic resources, promotes pedestrian accessibility and integrates different uses of property. Remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures and infrastructure is preferred over new construction in undeveloped areas.

6. Housing Diversity

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should encourage diversity in the types of available housing, support the rehabilitation of existing housing and promote the location of housing near public transportation and employment centers.

7. Community Character

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should promote activities and development that are consistent with the character and architectural style of the community and should respond to local values regarding the physical character of the community.

8. Natural Resources and Agricultural Protection

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should emphasize protection, preservation and restoration of natural resources, agricultural land and cultural and historic landscapes, and should increase the availability of open spaces and recreational facilities.

9. Sustainable Design

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should promote developments, buildings and infrastructure that utilize sustainable design and construction standards and conserve natural resources by reducing waste and pollution through efficient use of land, energy, water, air and materials.

10. Transportation Diversity

Planning, zoning, development and resource management should promote expanded transportation options for residents of the community. Consideration should be given to transportation options that maximize mobility, reduce congestion, conserve fuel and improve air quality.

Iowa's 13 Smart Planning Elements:

A. Public Participation Element

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

B. Issues and Opportunities Element

Information relating to the primary characteristics of the municipality and a description of how each of those characteristics impacts future development of the municipality. Such information may include historical information about the municipality, the municipality's geography, natural resources, natural hazards, population, demographics, types of employers and industry, labor force, political and community institutions, housing, transportation, educational resources and cultural and recreational resources. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify characteristics and community aesthetics that are important to future development of the municipality.

C. Land Use Element

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

D. Housing Element

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

E. Public Infrastructure and Utilities Element

Objectives, policies and programs to guide future development of sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities and telecommunications facilities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include estimates regarding future demand for such utility services.

F. Transportation Element

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

G. Economic Development Element

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

H. Agricultural and Natural Resources Element

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

I. Community Facilities Element

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

J. Community Character Element

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

K. Hazards Element

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

L. Intergovernmental Collaboration Element

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

M. Implementation Element

A compilation of programs and specific actions necessary to implement any provision of the comprehensive plan, including changes to any applicable land development regulations, official maps, or subdivision ordinances.

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC INPUT MEETING COMMENTS

Community Character and Natural/Agricultural Resources	
Priorities	**Opportunities**
Funding	Pursue Upper Iowa River for more recreational opportunities
Recruit citizen benefactors	Share history of Lime Springs (Prairie Fire, W.C. Brown, etc.)
City endowment fund	Prime area for small businesses and visitors
Continue to explore grant opportunities	Military Trail (where is it located?)
Community Center	Stage Coach Trail
Promote activities	Children Theater Group
Maintain	Marketing and advertising to tourists
Optimize use	Honor veterans- Educate people
Outdoor pool	Old Jail
Generally maintain	Civil War reenactment
Replace roof over concessions	**Strengths/Assets**
Update plumbing	Sweet Corn Days
Concrete deck repair	Outdoor swimming pool
Honor Veterans	New preschool/childcare/storm shelter
Consider community plaque (stone)	Hayden Prairie
Event on Memorial Day	Library
Collect veteran history	2 active churches
Bring existing veteran items to public space	Fire Department
Newspaper stories	Community Center
Sweet Corn Days	2 Parks
Maintain and keep quality	Lidtke Mill
Corn-cooking dilemmas	Newspaper
Bike trail connections	Upper Iowa River
Continue to pursue	Travel Plaza
Volunteers/recruit younger	Elementary School (concerts)
Ask directly	Community Club
Group sponsors	Oneota Club
Silver Cord	Jr. Club
Upper Iowa River	Boy/Girl Scouts
Canoeing	**Limitations/Challenges**
Fishing	Money
Boating, Kayaking	Not enough active young people
Paddle boating	River silted in
Rope swing	Volunteers
Camping	Keeping up with park improvements
Picnics	Aging infrastructure- appearance
Snowmobile races	People will drive further with the perception that they are spending less

Economic Development	
Priorities	**Opportunities**
Community beautification with resident support	LeRoy grocery delivery
Research beautification grants	Vacant spots for retail
Grocery and Hardware	Prime area for small businesses
Hwy 63 marketing	Co-op/cooperative management business or space sharing (food, art, retail)
Signage (what is here)	
Kiosk- information on community available	Travel Plaza
Recreational draws	Hwy 63 marketing
Cooperative arrangements for businesses/ entrepreneurs	Recreational Draws (supporting businesses)
	Lime Springs "Gem"
Art, food, retail	
Front line group	**Challenges**
Website	Town location
Collect Information on existing vacancies for business	Public transportation challenges
	Lost 6 businesses recently
Friendly people	Need grocery and hardware
Big city services	Advertising- expensive?
Existing structures not suitable	Insurance liability and property
	Existing structures not suitable for new business
Strengths	No incentives
Good diversity of businesses	Road conditions (appearance, truck delivery)
Has service that a big city has	
Age of workforce is spread out	
Pool of blue collar workers	
Friendly people	
Location (1 mile from major hwy)	

Housing	
Priorities	**Limitations**
Welcome wagon or other welcoming materials for residents	Older homes
Not enough rental properties for young families	Homes and property in need of repair and upkeep
People don't shovel sidewalks	Not too many rental properties for young families
Homes in need of repair and upkeep	Commuter ownership
Need "something" to attract residents	Ownership succession problems
Ownership succession problems	People don't shovel sidewalks
Website-update to add available properties	Need "something" to attract residents
Strengths	**Opportunities**
Not too many vacant	Welcome Wagon or other welcoming materials for new residents
Availability	Website-update to add available properties
Historic homes	Housing rehab programs
Have affordable and accessible houses for both rent or purchase	
Newer families	
Transportation	
Priorities	
Sidewalks maintenance and infill plan needed	
Enforcement of existing sidewalk ordinances	
No affordable public transportation	
Explore bus option to Rochester	
Determine how many potential riders to attract delivery system	
Develop a network of drivers and place list around the community (library, post office, community center)	
Strengths	**Opportunities**
Plenty of parking	Develop a network of drivers
Transit available for non-drivers	List in library, post office, community center
Neighbor support systems for providing rides	Well marked crosswalks by pool
	Sidewalk infill plan
Challenges	Sidewalk maintenance plan
Increased truck traffic	Enforcement of existing sidewalk ordinances
Gaps in available sidewalks	Crosswalk signage or guards by school
Sidewalk maintenance needed	
Some places not handicapped accessible	
No affordable public transportation	
Explore bus options for Rochester	
Determine how many potential riders to attract delivery system	

Infrastructure/Community Facilities	
Priorities	**Opportunities**
Road have all issues – concrete, asphalt, gravel Ex. base under roads for drainage	Office equipment at city hall
	More energy efficient in replacement of LED lighting and possibly solar street lights
Project consolidation and beware of "you get what you pay for"	Better cell phone coverage
Prioritize projects	Buy a bench program for public areas or some type of sponsorship program for trees, playground equipment, picnic tables, etc.
Water/sewer	City storage shed
Pipe replacement and maintenance plan	Community clean campaign
City storage	Buy your sign campaign
Junk liquidation	
Park equipment replacement	Limitations
Sponsorship program	Roads- concrete roads breaking up, asphalt pot holes, gravel roads
Tree City committee	Sign issues such as reflectivity (could do sign inventory
ADA compliance for pool and parks	2 bridges need replacement
Loss of school	Sidewalks-cracks and buckles is responsibility of home/business owner (establish plan for fixing or adding)
Demonstrate support	ADA compliance at pool and parks (have a list of items)
Building child care center to build enrollments	Wireless coverage shaky
Cracks and buckling of sidewalks	Water/sewer is old (need plan for pipe replacement based on age or usage)
	Pumps and aerators in process of replacement
Strengths	Hydrants
Curb side recycling	Water meter replacement
New community center/senior/fire station/ city hall	Concern of clinic closing, local residents insurance not always compatible, reduce hours, no pharmacy
Recently remodeled library	Concern of losing school campus
Clinic recently refreshed	Equipment replacement at parks (playground and seating)
High speed internet available from 2 providers	City stockpile/garbage
Pool, ball diamonds and parks available	
Will have brand new child care center	
Strong school of pre-k through 5th	
Freshly painted water tower	

APPENDIX C: FEDERAL & STATE PROGRAMS

Community Development Tools and Resources

IEDA Public Facilities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - Water/sewer funds are available annually on a competitive basis to communities for projects that include sanitary sewer system improvements, water system improvements, water and wastewater treatment facilities, storm sewer projects related to sanitary sewer system improvements and rural water connections.

IEDA Community Facilities and Services Fund (CDBG) – Communities can apply for facilities and services grant funding for a variety of projects and activities primarily benefiting low- and moderate-income persons, including day care facilities, senior centers, vocational workshops and other community services such as storm water projects.

IEDA Contingency Fund, Imminent Threat (CDBG) – Communities can apply for emergency funding for projects that correct an imminent threat to public health, safety or welfare. This program has also been used to fund projects that demonstrate sustainable community activities.

IEDA Downtown Revitalization Fund (CDBG) – Communities may apply for funds for downtown revitalization projects.

Vision Iowa: Community Attraction & Tourism (CAT) — Communities can apply for these grant funds for projects that promote recreational, cultural and educational or entertainment attractions that are available to the general public.

Vision Iowa: River Enhancement Community Attraction & Tourism (RECAT) — Communities can apply for RECAT funds to support projects that promote and enhance recreational opportunities on and near rivers or lakes.

Endow Iowa Tax Credits - Endow Iowa was created to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of this state through increased philanthropic activity by encouraging investments in existing community foundations. The major component of the Endow Iowa Program is a state tax credit of some annually fixed percentage of the gift given to a qualified community foundation. Communities and nonprofit organizations can set up funds within their community foundations to support local projects, and donors can take advantage of the tax credit.

Community-Based Seed Capital Funds — This tax credit program is designed to encourage groups of local investors to engage in venture capital investment to help attract and retain fast growing companies to their communities. Investors can receive tax credits equal to 20% of the amount of an equity investment in a Community-Based Seed Capital Fund.

EPA Brownfields Program - Communities can apply for funds to inventory, characterize, assess and conduct cleanup planning for properties that may have hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants present. Additional funding may be available for clean-up.

IDOT Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy (RISE) - This state program was established to promote economic development in Iowa through construction or improvement of roads and streets. Communities can apply for grants or loans to fund "immediate opportunity" projects or "local development" projects. Immediate opportunity projects are an immediate, non-speculative opportunity for permanent job creation or retention. Jobs created are to be value-adding in nature (e.g. manufacturing, industrial, non-retail) and the relocation of jobs within the state does not qualify. Local development projects support local economic development but do not require an immediate commitment of funds such as industrial parks or tourist attractions. Projects must involve construction or improvement of a public roadway.

IDOT Traffic Safety Improvement Program – This transportation program can provide funding for traffic safety improvements or studies on any public roads. Eligible projects fall into one of three categories: construction or improvement of traffic safety and operations at a specific site with an accident history; purchase of materials for installation of new traffic control devices such as signs or signals, or replacement of obsolete signs or signals; or transportation safety research, studies or public information initiatives such as sign inventory, work zone safety and accident data.

IDOT Pedestrian Curb Ramp Construction – This program can provide funding to assist communities in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on primary roads. The community must engineer and administer the project and improvements must involve a municipal extension of a primary road.

IDOT Safe Routes to School Program – This program provides funding for infrastructure and non-infrastructure improvements that result in more students walking or bicycling to school. Infrastructure improvements (e.g. sidewalks, road crossings, etc.) resulting from funding must be maintained as a public facility for a minimum of 10 years.

IDOT/IDNR Fund – Communities can apply for funds to cover the cost of materials and installation of seed or live plants for roadside beautification for any primary system corridors. The area to be planted must be on primary highway right-of-way, including primary highway extensions.

Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund - Implement Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management programs (IRVM) – These funds are available for various projects on city, county or state rights-of-way or publicly owned areas adjacent to traveled roadways. Categories of eligible projects are as follows: roadside inventories; gateways; education/training; research/demonstration; roadside enhancement; seed propagation; and special equipment.

IDOT Recreational Trails Program – This program was established to fund public recreational trails. Communities may apply for proposed projects that are part of a local, area-wide, regional or statewide trail plan. Trails resulting from successful applications must be maintained as a public facility for a minimum of 20 years.

USDA Community Facilities Grants/Loans – Available to fund the development of essential community facilities for public use in rural areas and may include hospitals, fire protection, safety, child care centers and many other community-based initiatives

USDA Rural Community Development Initiative - Provides technical assistance and training funds to develop the capacity and ability of private, nonprofit community-based housing and community development organizations and low income rural communities to improve housing, community facilities, community and economic development projects in rural areas.

USDA Broadband Loan Program - This program is available to local nonprofit and for-profit entities and provides loans for funding the costs of construction, improvement and acquisition of facilities and equipment to provide broadband service to rural communities.

USDA Distance Learning And Telemedicine Grant/Loan Program (DLT) – This program can provide grant funding for the technology and technical assistance needed to support distance learning and telemedicine projects in rural communities.

USDA Water and Waste Disposal Direct Loans and Grants – These funds can be used to develop water and waste disposal systems in rural areas and towns.

USDA Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants (ECWAG) – These funds are available to assist rural communities that have experienced a significant decline in quantity or quality of drinking water due to an emergency, to obtain or maintain adequate quantities of safe drinking water.

USDA Water and Waste Disposal Guaranteed Loans – This program provides loan guarantee support to local lenders for the construction or improvement of water and waste disposal projects in rural communities.

IDNR Solid Waste Alternatives Program (SWAP) - SWAP provides financial and technical assistance to businesses, government agencies, public and private groups and individuals to assist with the implementation of waste reduction, recycling, market development, public education and other solid waste management projects that improve their environmental performance as well as their bottom line.

IDNR Derelict Building Program – This program provides small Iowa communities and rural counties financial assistance to address neglected structures in order to improve the appearance of their streets and revitalize local economies. Derelict buildings must be located in a town or unincorporated county area of 5,000 residents or less and the building must be owned or in the process of being owned by the community or county. The program can provide funds to assist with certified ACM inspections, removal and disposal of ACM, structural engineering analysis to determine ability to renovate the building, Phase I & II Environmental Assessments and building deconstruction or renovation

IDNR Clean Water Loan Program - Iowa's Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) is an option for financing publicly owned wastewater treatment, sewer rehabilitation, replacement, construction and storm water quality improvements.

IDNR Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) – This is a loan fund that can finance the design and construction of drinking water systems to help ensure public health and provide safe drinking water.

IDNR General Non-Point Source – This loan fund offers landowners affordable financing for a variety of water quality projects. Projects include but are not limited to: Landfill closure, remediation of storage tanks, restoration of wildlife habitat, stream bank stabilization and wetland flood prevention areas.

IDNR Planning & Design Loans – Zero interest loans to cover costs incurred in the planning and design phase of a water infrastructure project. The funds can be used by communities to cover engineering fees, archaeological surveys, environmental or geological studies and costs related to project plan preparation. The loans may be rolled into a State Revolving Fund (SRF) construction loan or can be repaid when permanent financing is committed. The project planning and design costs must be directly related to proposed eligible projects such as the construction of treatment plants or improvements to existing facilities, water line extensions to existing unserved properties, water storage facilities and wells.

IDNR Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) - REAP funds are available to communities through competitive grants for city parks and open space improvements. Typical projects include park land expansion and multi-purpose recreation projects.

SHPO Certified Local Government Program (CLG) - The CLG program supports local governments' historic preservation programs. Direct benefits include free historic preservation training and technical assistance from the State's historic preservation staff, a start-up preservation reference library for use in developing and administering the program, qualification for REAP Historic Resource Development Program (HRDP) grants for rehabilitating community-owned properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and qualification for a small, competitive, matching CLG grant program that is open only CLG program participants. These grants can be used to underwrite all historic preservation activities except rehabilitation.

Cultural District - A cultural district is a well-recognized, labeled, mixed-use, compact area of a community in which a high concentration of cultural facilities serves as the anchor. Cultural districts are established to encourage local governments to partner with a local community nonprofit or for profit organization, businesses and individuals to enhance the quality of life for citizens of the community.

Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning Program – This program provides professional landscape planning and design services to rural Iowa communities. The Iowa DOT, ISU and Trees Forever collaborate to engage communities in participatory decision-making processes and implementation strategies, and each community receives a conceptual design plan that can be used to implement landscape and transportation enhancements. Possible projects include transportation corridor enhancements, community signage, downtown streetscape improvements and recreational trail development.

Trees Forever - This statewide nonprofit organization was formed to protect Iowa's natural resources. Trees Forever works with communities to improve water quality, preserve and enhance forest areas and beautify roadsides. Trees Forever provides facilitation for a wide range of activities including community tree planting, GreenForce™ youth engagement programs, Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning, trails visioning, watershed protection and many more programs.

HSEMD Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) – This program provides grants to communities for long term hazard mitigation projects after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the program is to reduce the loss of life and property in future disasters by funding mitigation measures during the recovery phase of a natural disaster. Projects include planning, safe rooms, acquisitions, elevations and relocations.

Economic Development Tools and Resources

IEDA Grow Iowa Values Financial Assistance Program (GIVFAP) - Formerly the Direct Financial Assistance Program, this state fund offers direct financial assistance to companies that create new employment opportunities and/or retain existing jobs and make new capital investment in Iowa. The funds, in the form of loans or forgivable loans can help finance projects that are focused on job creation or retention, value-added agriculture and entrepreneurial efforts and can help a wide variety of business operations including biosciences, advanced manufacturing, information technology and financial services. Funds can be used for building construction or remodeling, land or building acquisition, site preparation, machinery and equipment purchases, computer hardware purchases, furniture and fixtures.

IEDA Enterprise Zones - Enterprise Zones are designed to stimulate development by targeting economically distressed areas in Iowa. Businesses and developers can qualify for state and local tax incentives by making new investments and creating or retaining jobs in these areas.

IEDA Iowa New Jobs Training Program – This program assists businesses that are creating new positions or new jobs through expansion or location in the state by providing flexible funding to train and develop new employees. The assistance available ranges from highly specialized educational programs to basic skill training for new positions. Businesses that have entered into an agreement are also eligible for the New Jobs corporate income tax credit if they expand their Iowa employment base by 10% or more.

IEDA Iowa Jobs Training Program - Like the new jobs training program, this program also invests in customized training, but for existing employers. Iowa's community colleges provide businesses with funding and support for this program.

IEDA High Quality Jobs Program — This program is designed to promote the creation or retention of quality jobs by assisting businesses locating, expanding or modernizing their facilities in Iowa through a package of tax credits, exemptions and/or refunds to approved businesses.

IEDA Targeted Small Business (TSB) Program – This program assists women, minorities and the disabled in starting or growing a small business. TSB-certified businesses receive technical assistance and are eligible to apply for financial assistance through grants and loans.

IEDA Job Creation, Retention and Enhancement Fund - EDSA, PFSA and Career Link (CDBG) - These three programs within the fund are the Economic Development Set-Aside (EDSA), the Public Facilities Set-Aside (PFSA) and Career Link. Communities can apply to these programs at any time. EDSA and PFSA are designed to assist businesses either through a direct or forgivable loan or through infrastructure projects. Career Link is an industry-driven training program designed to help the underemployed and working poor obtain the training and skills they need to move into available higher-skill, better-paying jobs.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – This tool is a public financing mechanism that is used to subsidize development, infrastructure and other community-improvement projects in targeted districts. Eligible projects result in an increase in site value which generates an increase in tax revenues. These future new revenues can be used to repay the debt issued by the community for the project, or to reimburse private investment in the project.

IEDA Demonstration Fund - The Demonstration Fund is available to small and medium-sized Iowa-based companies in the industries of advanced manufacturing, bioscience or information technology. The fund provides financial and technical assistance to support high technology prototype and concept development activities that have a clear potential to lead to commercially viable products or services within a reasonable period of time. The primary purpose of the fund is to help businesses with a high-growth potential reach a position where they are able to attract later stage private sector funding.

IEDA Iowa Small Business Loan Support Program (ISB) - This loan program assists Iowa entrepreneurs and small businesses in their efforts to access capital for business purposes including start up costs, working capital, business procurement, franchise fees, equipment, inventory, as well as the renovation or tenant improvements of an eligible place of business that is not for passive real estate investment purposes. Iowa small businesses that are located in Iowa, are owned, operated and actively managed by an Iowa resident, and have 750 or fewer full-time equivalent employees are eligible to apply.

IEDA Assistive Device Tax Credit — Reduces taxes for small businesses that incur costs through making physical changes to the workplace to help employees with disabilities to get or keep their job.

IEDA Brownfield/Grayfield Tax Credit Program — Projects can receive tax credits for qualifying costs of a Brownfield project and if the project meets green building requirements. Grayfield projects can get tax credits for qualifying costs and projects that meet green building requirements.

Research Activities Tax Credit — This is a refundable tax credit created to incent a company's research activities. Companies must meet the qualifications of the Federal Research Activities Credit in order to be eligible for the credit in Iowa.

Iowa Innovation Acceleration Fund - The Iowa Innovation Acceleration Fund promotes the formation and growth of businesses that engage in the transfer of technology into competitive, profitable companies that create high paying jobs. The fund provides financing to eligible businesses through three program components that correspond to three different stages of growth:

- *Iowa LAUNCH* —pre-seed capital stage financing through low-interest loans for intellectual property development and evaluation, including in-depth analysis of market potential, conducting competitive analysis, establishing proof of concept of a scientific discovery, prototype design and development and related activities.
- *Iowa PROPEL*— seed capital stage financing through low-interest loans or royalty agreements for advanced intellectual property development and evaluation, including in-depth analysis of market potential, conducting competitive analysis, advanced proof of concept work for a scientific discovery, advanced prototype design and development, research and development needed to attract venture capital financing, hiring key personnel and related activities.
- *INNOVATION EXPANSION*— expansion-stage financing through secured, low-interest loans to fund investments that can be used to hire key personnel and services and the purchase of equipment and facilitate construction costs.

USDA Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan (B&I) Program – Loan guarantees available to support local financing agencies with loans to rural businesses that improve, develop, or finance business, industry and employment as well as improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities.

USDA Intermediary Relending Program (IRP) - Provides loans to local organizations to establish revolving loan funds to assist with financing business and economic development activity that create or retain jobs in disadvantaged and remote communities.

USDA Rural Energy for America Program Guaranteed Loan Program (REAP Loans) - This guaranteed loan program supports local commercial financing of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects for businesses.

USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) - This program provides funding to rural projects through local nonprofit utility organizations. Under the program, USDA provides zero interest loans to local utilities which they then relend to local businesses for projects that create and retain employment in rural areas.

UDSA Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program (RBEG) – This grant program provides funds to communities or nonprofit organizations to be used for rural projects that help finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging rural businesses.

USDA Rural Energy for America Program Grants (REAP) – This grant program is available to small rural businesses and can provide funds for energy audits, feasibility studies or renewable energy development assistance. It may also be used to help rural small businesses purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements.

USDA Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG) - Grants funds are available to local producers and cooperatives for planning activities or working capital for marketing value-added agricultural products and for farm-based renewable energy.

USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grants (RBOG) – Communities and nonprofit agencies can apply for funds to promote sustainable economic development in rural communities by providing training and technical assistance for business development, entrepreneurs and economic development officials and to assist with economic development planning.

SHPO State Historic Preservation and Cultural & Entertainment District Tax Credit – This program provides a state income tax credit for the sensitive rehabilitation of historic buildings. It ensures character-defining features and spaces of buildings are retained and helps revitalize surrounding neighborhoods. The program provides an income tax credit of some percentage of qualified rehabilitation costs.

IowaMicroLoan – Provides loans and technical assistance for start-up, expansion or refinancing of small businesses.

Iowa Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) - The Iowa SBDC conducts research, counsels and trains business people in management, financing and operating small businesses, and provides comprehensive information services and access to experts in a variety of fields. The SBDC is the only nationally accredited entrepreneurial development program in Iowa.

UNI MyEntre.Net - This website is an online business resource site and blog for entrepreneurs. Among its activities are weekly business webinars, regionally hosted EntreBash! networking events and an annual EntreFest! business conference for entrepreneurs.

Housing Tools and Resources

IEDA Housing Fund (CDBG) – Communities can apply for funding that supports owner-occupied rehabilitation projects for low to moderate income, single-family, owner-occupied housing households.

IEDA Housing Enterprise Zones - Developers and contractors building or rehabilitating housing in an established Enterprise Zone may apply to receive state tax incentives such as a refund of state sales, service or use taxes paid during construction and an investment tax credit of up to a maximum of 10% of the investment directly related to the construction or rehabilitation of the housing.

Housing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – When TIF is used for housing development, a percentage of the future tax increment revenues from the project must be used to provide housing assistance to low- and moderate-income families.

USDA Rural Repair and Rehabilitation Loans and Grants – This program provides direct loans or grants to very low-income homeowners to repair, improve or modernize their dwellings or to remove health and safety hazards.

USDA Rural Housing Direct Loan – This program provides direct loans to help low-income individuals or households purchase, build, repair, renovate or relocate homes in rural areas.

USDA Rural Housing Guaranteed Loan – This program supports local participating lenders in financing home purchases for rural families with incomes up to 115% of the area's median income.

USDA Rural Housing Site Loans - These loans are made to nonprofit agencies to provide financing for the purchase and development of housing sites for low- and moderate-income families.

USDA Rural Rental Housing - This program provides loans to a variety of owners to provide affordable multifamily rental housing for families, the elderly or persons with disabilities.

USDA Guaranteed Rental Housing – This program guarantees loans to support local participating lenders in financing the development of multi-family housing facilities in rural areas.

USDA Housing Preservation Grants – This program provides grants to local nonprofit organizations to fund the repair or rehabilitation of low- and very low-income housing.